



**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT TO INFORM THE PRESENTATION
BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BARBADOS
TO THE ANNUAL MINISTERIAL REVIEW
OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
ON BARBADOS' PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE
MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THE
OTHER INTERNATIONALLY AGREED DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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Executive Summary

This document forms a comprehensive report on Barbados' progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the other Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs). The report will inform the Government's voluntary presentation to the United Nation's Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) in Geneva in July 2007. Speaking to the theme of this year's AMR, "Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development", the report suggests a way forward to build on the country's achievements in partnership with the international community.

The report contains an overview of the successes, initiatives, issues, policy direction and challenges the country is encountering in its pursuit of the full achievement of the national development strategy, the MDGs and the IADGs. In a knowledge-sharing exercise, the document also highlights 'best practices' for other developing countries.

In addressing the issue of poverty, the Government of Barbados' concerns go beyond measures of income and consumption. The concept of poverty reflects the generally accepted understanding of this phenomenon as being multi-dimensional in nature and one that touches all levels of society. It can also include "poverty of the spirit" as defined in Barbados' *National Strategic Plan*. To eradicate poverty also means addressing issues such as inequality, justice and human rights. So while Barbados is not faced with extreme hunger and poverty, it is still faced with the complexities of human development and the need to sustain efforts to ensure that persons achieve their full capacities. Therefore, the focus of the overall development strategy is not simply to achieve the MDGs but to surpass them. In so doing the Government of Barbados has embraced the notion that while economic growth is a necessary condition for human development, it is insufficient by itself to achieve and sustain human development.

Barbados' Sustainable Development Profile

Barbados is a middle-income Small Island Developing State (SIDS) with a fragile natural resource base and an open economy characterized by a narrow range of exports and a heavy dependence on imported goods. Its main foreign exchange earning sectors are tourism, sugar, manufacturing, banking and financial services. Barbados enjoys a relatively high quality of life. The country currently ranks 31 in the UN Human Development Index.

However, the country faces several challenges, which are characteristic of SIDS, and others which are unique to the Caribbean region. Its small economic size, its high degree of economic openness and limited resource base makes it extremely vulnerable to external shocks and impedes its capacity to respond and adjust to them. This lack of resilience is further compounded by the negative aspects of globalization.

Barbados' limited land size, natural resource base and fragile marine ecosystem leave the island susceptible to several environmental threats including: invasive species, flooding, soil erosion, coral reef degradation, climate change and natural disaster. Threats to Barbados' environment have the potential to seriously harm the tourism-

based economy, agriculture and food security. As a SIDS, Barbados must adapt to climate change. However, planning for contingency strategies that may not be resilient enough to withstand the onslaught of rising sea levels or violent hurricane seasons is proving to be challenging. Moreover, the country's small size undermines its ability to absorb the shock caused by natural disasters.

The single largest threat to Barbados' health and social services sector is the HIV/ AIDS epidemic. The Caribbean region has the second highest rate of infection of HIV/ AIDS after Sub-Saharan Africa. HIV/ AIDS has a significant impact on the cost of health care, the provision of social services and the sustainability of the labour force. The epidemic has the potential to undo the gains the country has made in human development. Reversal of the spread of HIV/ AIDS is the one MDG target that is continuing to challenge the region. Many persons are knowledgeable about the disease and prevention strategies, but changing high-risk behaviours remains an obstacle.

Increasing crime and violence, thought to be arising from disparities of income and security, are also of concern and pose a threat to the sustainability of the gains made over the last 30 years. The Caribbean region has become a major illegal drug transshipment route. Drug trafficking brings with it a myriad of related crimes from petty thievery to organized crime. Increased crime erodes investor confidence and causes slowed economic growth. Strained resources have to be redirected to the justice system and away from critical social programming. In the context of these challenges, the closure in 2006 of the UNODC Caribbean Regional Office was highly disturbing to Barbados and the Caribbean Community and it is hoped that this decision will be reversed.

Barbados continues to attract migrants from other CARICOM countries and the wider world in search of greater economic opportunities and improved living conditions. Some enter illegally. The increasing population places a strain on limited social, economic and environmental resources. However, like many developing countries with a well-educated and skilled workforce, Barbados has been experiencing human capital flight as skilled professionals, particularly teachers and medical professionals, seek career opportunities in overseas job markets. The Government is faced with the challenge of delivering quality education and health care with significant skills-loss in these critical sectors.

Progress in the National Development Strategy

Barbados' *National Strategic Plan, 2005- 2025* (NSP) clearly sets out a development strategy that fully integrates the aims and objectives of the MDGs and the various IADGs enshrined in the international instruments to which this island has committed itself. National development objectives seek to maintain access to quality education, health care and sanitation. They also address gender inequality, poverty and discrimination. In addition, these objectives seek to ensure broad-based political participation. Long-term preservation of the environment and cultivation of global partnerships are also key goals. Barbados' Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) will advance pressing policy interventions, objectives and targets over the next two years based on the NSP.

In support of the national development strategy, the Government is preparing its first Human Development Report (HDR), which will be completed in 2009. The HDR will report on Barbados' progress in human development and identify areas which need to be guided by policy and interventions. It also provides an avenue for Barbados to assess its achievements and challenges in developing a socially just and competitive society.

Barbados' National Strategic Plan, 2005-2025

Goal 1: Unleashing the Spirit of the Nation seeks to harness creativity, pride, adaptability and independence. Developing these characteristics will help sustain progress towards the achievements of the MDGs.

Goal 2: New Governance for New Times seeks to address governance issues that reflect MDG8 'Promoting Global Partnerships'. Government's engagement of civil society, the private sector, regional and international organizations will ensure that the country continues to meet the goals.

Goal 3: Building Social Capital aims to promote greater inclusion of vulnerable groups; gender mainstreaming; community development; and improved education and healthcare.

Goal 4: Strengthening the Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment resonates with MDG7 'Ensure Environmental Sustainability' by facilitating environmentally sustainable practices; protecting the island's biodiversity; and maintaining sustainable access to clean water and improved sanitation.

Goal 5: Enhancing Barbados' Prosperity and Competitiveness and Goal 6: Branding Barbados Globally are the goals of an expansive programme to build economic resilience through the strength of the Barbados brand, which will protect and sustain its gains in human development in all MDG areas.

Successes

Barbados has achieved the majority of the MDG targets and the Government remains committed to the concept and vision of the UN's global development agenda in pursuing a MDG-plus mandate.

The Government has ensured that Barbadians have access to free primary, secondary and tuition-free tertiary education. Barbadians can also access the publicly-funded health care system as well as some free pharmaceuticals, including antiretroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS. There is also 100 percent access to clean drinking water and improved sanitation.

Continued sustainable human development remains a major concern of the Government, especially in light of the country's unique vulnerabilities as a SIDS. To help build resilience to exogenous shocks, it is developing a globally competitive society and

economy. The Government is also seeking to continue engaging partners at the local, regional and international levels. It is already achieving this in several meaningful ways.

The unique tripartite social partnership agreement, which brings Government, civil society and the private sector together to address local economic and social issues, has been hailed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other agencies as an innovative good governance model for other developing countries.

In its commitment to regional integration, the Government has been working through several regional frameworks, including the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), to ensure that its economy remains robust enough to adapt to globalization. Moreover, these regional frameworks have also helped to strengthen partnerships in the social, health and environmental sectors.

The Government is currently working with regional partners such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to understand the complex and multidimensional nature of poverty or "social deprivation" in the country through the Support to Poverty Reduction and Assessment in the Caribbean (SPARC) initiative and the Country Poverty Assessment (CPA). The partnership is intended to strengthen evidence-based policy and programming to address issues of poverty, discrimination and social injustice.

The joint Government, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and CDB-sponsored Education Sector Enhancement Programme (Edutech) has sought to increase access to computer technology and the Internet at all levels in the education system, in an effort to endow future generations with the necessary skills to compete in the global economy and information society.

There have been several dynamic partnerships in the health sector to help combat growing health risks; most notably, the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/ AIDS (PANCAP) which comprises CARICOM states as well as regional and international partners. The programme is a regional response to the HIV/ AIDS epidemic. International donors are working through this mechanism to deliver critical aid to CARICOM member states.

The Government has been scaling-up initiatives to promote environmental sustainability, especially given the concerns regarding land development and rising fuel prices. The Government is looking forward to taking full advantage of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) funding that it has received. Additionally, in an effort to build strategic trade and development partnerships, the Government is also exploring South-South partnerships with regional (Brazil) and extra-regional partners (Nigeria) in renewable energy, particularly in the areas of trade and technology transfer.

Challenges

Barbados has consistently expressed the view that the MDGs will only be achieved if the MDG8 'Global Partnership for Development' is fully addressed. It is the Government's view that successful implementation of the eighth goal is a pre-requisite not only for the

comprehensive attainment of the other seven goals, but also in making significant progress beyond the MDG targets and with respect to the IADGs.

Barbados is urging the global community to recognize the needs of developing countries and regions and to take full account of their unique characteristics when prescribing solutions to their problems: *one size does not fit all*. It is also recommending that the international community recognize the particular economic and environmental vulnerabilities of SIDS. Barbados is concerned that few significant achievements have been made in the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of SIDS since its adoption in 1994 and review in 2005. The international community must take concrete action in response to the challenges of SIDS.

The implementation and sustainability of current policies and programming continue to be challenges. Strategic avenues must be explored to achieve timely and effective outcomes. This is an important area where Barbados, like other developing countries, will continue to need the support of the global community.

Having been graduated as a developing country with middle-income status, Barbados no longer has access to a range of funding mechanisms, which once helped to build and sustain gains in human development. Funding through current ODA mechanisms is not distributed internationally with regard to economic and social equity. In particular, no account is taken of the severe pockets of poverty and the dilemmas of vulnerability in middle-income developing countries. Barbados is requesting the international community to provide appropriately equitable access to ODA and to increase and improve ODA for middle-income countries, particularly in the areas of technical cooperation and budgetary assistance.

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List of Acronyms

AIDS – Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ALP – Adaptable Loan Programme
AMR – Annual Ministerial Review
ARV – Antiretroviral
BCC – Behaviour Change Communication
BDS – Barbados National Drug Service
BLP – Barbados Labour Party
BSAB – Basic Skills Assessment Battery
BSDP – Barbados Sustainable Development Policy
BSSEE – Common Entrance Examination
BWA – Barbados Water Authority
BYS – Barbados Youth Service
CARE – Comfort Assist Reach out Educate
CARICOM – Caribbean Community
CARIFORUM – Caribbean Forum
CBB – Central Bank of Barbados
CBO – Community-based organisation
CCH – Caribbean Commission for Health
CDB – Caribbean Development Bank
CDCC – Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee
CDD – Community Development Department
CDERA – Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CDM – Comprehensive Disaster Management Plan
CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CERO – Central Emergency Relief Organisation
CFNI – Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute
CNCD – Chronic Non-communicable Disease
CPA – Country Poverty Assessment
CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSM – CARICOM Single Market
CSME – Caribbean Single Market and Economy
CRT – Criterion Referenced Test
CTP – Community Technology Programme
DAC – Development Assistance Committee
DFID – United Kingdom's Department for International Development
DLP – Democratic Labour Party
DOTS – Directly Observed Treatment and Short Course
DPT – Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus
ECE – Early Childhood Education
ECOSOC – United Nations Economic and Social Council
Edutech – Education Sector Enhancement Programme
EDF – European Development Fund
EPA – Economic Partnership Agreement
ESP – Education Savings Plan
EU – European Union
FAO – United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization

FTAA – Free Trade Agreement of the Americas
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
GEF – Global Environment Facility
GFATM – Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GSHI – Global School Health Initiative
HDI – Human Development Index
HDR – Human Development Report
HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPV – Human papillomavirus
IADG – Internationally-agreed Development Goal
IBC – International Business Companies
ICC CWC 2007 – International Cricket Council's Cricket World Cup
ICT – Information and Communication Technology
IDB – Inter-American Development Bank
IDRC – International Development Research Centre
IEC – Information, Education and Communication
IMF – International Monetary Fund
IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISDA – International Sustainable Development Agreements
IWCAM – Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management in the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean
JPOI – Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
LAC – Latin America and the Caribbean
LDC – Least Developed Country
LEC – Life Education Centre
LRU – Ladymeade Reference Unit
MDG – Millennium Development Goal
MMR – Measles, Mumps and Rubella
MOH – Ministry of Health
MSM – Men who have sex with men
MTSF – Medium Term Strategy Framework
NAFTA – North American Free Trade Agreement
NBSAP – National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCD – Non-communicable Disease
NCSA – National Commission on Sustainable Development
NCSA – National Council on Substance Abuse
NDP – National Democratic Party
NGO – Non-governmental Organisation
NHAC – National HIV/ AIDS Commission
NIS – National Insurance Scheme
NIR – Net International Reserves
NSP – National Strategic Plan
ODA – Official Development Assistance
OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECS – Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PAHO – Pan-American Health Organization
PANCAP – Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/ AIDS Programme
PEP – People's Empowerment Party

PLHIV – People Living with HIV
pMTCT – Preventing Mother-to-Child Transmission
PSIP – Public Sector Investment Programme
PCW – Pinelands Creative Workshop
Q1 – First Quarter
QEH – Queen Elizabeth Hospital
RNM – Regional Negotiating Machinery
SDLIC – Sustainable Development in Low-income Communities
SIDS – Small Island Developing State
SPARC – Support to Poverty Reduction and Assessment in the Caribbean
STI – Sexually Transmitted Infection
SW – Sex Workers
UGALAAB – United Gays and Lesbians against AIDS Barbados
UNAIDS – The Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM – United Nations Development Fund for Women
US – United States
UWI – University of the West Indies
VAT – Value Added Tax
WB – World Bank
WSSD – World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO – World Trade Organisation
YDP – Youth Development Programme
YES – Youth Entrepreneurial Scheme

INTRODUCTION

1. This document summarizes Barbados' progress on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs). The report will inform the Government's voluntary presentation to the United Nation's Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) in Geneva in July, 2007.
2. The report includes the perspectives of multiple stakeholders from Government, regional governments, regional and international agencies, and civil society, which were gathered through national and regional consultative processes. It presents an up-to-date and comprehensive review of Barbados' progress in the implementation of its national development strategy, *The National Strategic Plan*, in the context of the MDGs. The report also contains an overview of the successes, initiatives, issues, policy direction and challenges the country is encountering in its pursuit of the full achievement of the MDGs and the IADGs. In a knowledge-sharing capacity, the document also aims to highlight some 'best practices' arising out of the country's development experience over the past few decades.¹
3. Following the theme of this year's AMR, "Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development", Barbados is seeking to reaffirm its role in recognizing poverty in all of its forms and dimensions throughout the world, and as such, is inviting other international partners to recognize and reaffirm their commitment to meeting the unique needs of Small Island Developing States and middle-income countries. Barbados acknowledges that strengthening global partnerships also means strengthening local and regional partnerships with NGOs, CBOs and other civil society organisations in order to address the complex dimensions of poverty and specific vulnerabilities of societies in the Caribbean. Barbados will continue to actively pursue and advocate for sustainable human development to ensure that every country has the ability to maintain its achievements, and is also equipped to meet its challenges.

¹ Best practices and unique vulnerabilities for Barbados are presented in text boxes throughout the document.

COUNTRY PROFILE: BARBADOS

4. Barbados is the most easterly of Caribbean islands, located at 13° 10` north and 59° 35` west. The island, which is composed mainly of coral limestone, is 21 miles long, 14 miles wide and occupies a total land area of 166 sq. miles. Barbados is relatively flat, rising from the west coast in a series of terraces to a ridge in the centre. The highest point on the island rises to 340 meters above sea level.
5. Barbados has a tropical climate with temperatures mostly falling within the 20° Centigrade to 31° Centigrade range. Annual rainfall averages 1,254mm at sea level to 1,650mm at the highest point.
6. Barbados was founded by a British expedition in 1627. The island never changed hands during the colonial wars of the 17th and 18th centuries and it remained a British colony until it gained Independence from Britain on November 30, 1966. Since then, Barbados has been a member of the Commonwealth. The county was also admitted to the United Nations in December 1966, just months into its first year as an independent nation.
7. The years since independence have been marked by a steady increase in the standard of living; a succession of free and fair elections and changes of government; universal, free and compulsory primary and secondary education and free tertiary education; and a diversification of revenue sources to include tourism, light manufacturing, financial services and informatics.
8. Barbadians generally enjoy a relatively high quality of life; the country was rated number one among developing countries and number 31 globally in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report for 2006. Barbados has one of the highest per capita incomes in the Caribbean, which was estimated at \$16,900² for 2004. Unemployment is at its lowest rate ever, currently standing around 8 percent.

Economy

9. Barbados is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), with a fragile natural resource base and an open economy with a narrow range of exports and a heavy dependence on imported goods. Its main foreign currency earners are tourism, manufacturing, banking, the financial services sector, the sugar industry and other agricultural activities.
10. Over the last decade, Barbados sustained real GDP growth averaging 2.6 percent; a low fiscal deficit of 2.5 percent; a comfortably high Net International Reserves (NIR) level, equivalent to six months import cover; moderate price stability; and unemployment levels in the single digits. However, this small open economy remains vulnerable to a number of external shocks, as evidenced by the slight recession in

² All figures in this report are denominated in Barbados dollars unless otherwise stated; \$2BDS = \$1USD

2001, precipitated by a slowdown in the global economy; the terrorist attacks on the United States that year; and creeping inflation over the last two years driven by high world oil prices.

11. Barbados' economic performance is also susceptible to the internal challenges of:

- Diversifying the economy
- Curbing import growth
- Boosting exports of goods and services
- Maintaining and increasing productivity levels

Demographics

12. Barbados is one of the most densely populated countries in the world with a population of 268,792 persons and a population density of 1,619.2 persons per square mile. For administrative purposes the island is divided into 11 parishes. The capital, Bridgetown, is situated in the parish of St. Michael. The parishes of St. Michael and Christ Church are significantly more developed and populated than other parishes, accounting for 54 percent of the population, according to the 2000 Population Census.

13. There is a relative balance in the male/female distribution of the population, with males accounting for approximately 48.1 percent of the population (129,241) and females, 51.9 percent (139, 551). The number of children under the age of 18 is 66,314 or 24.7 percent of the population and there is an average life expectancy of 76.4 years. According to the United Nations Human Development Report of 2006, Barbados' population grew by 0.2 percent in 2006.

14. The demographic makeup of the Barbadian population is based on the circumstances of its history. There are six major ethnic groups in Barbados – Black, White, Chinese, East Indian, Arab and Mixed. Within Barbados' particular socio-cultural context, the terms "Black" and "Afro-Caribbean" are synonymous and refer to the descendents of African captives brought from the west coast of Africa during the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as part of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The term "White" refers to Euro-Caribbean persons who are the descendants of planters, indentured servants and other European migrants who came to the island after its colonisation by the British in the 17th century. Other population groupings are smaller and were introduced through immigration to the island during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the 2000 Census, approximately 92.9 percent of the population identified themselves as Black and the remaining 7.1 percent comprises persons of White, East Indian, Chinese, Arab and Mixed ancestry.

Religion

15. There is a formal separation in Barbados between church and state, and religious freedoms are constitutionally guaranteed. Barbadians enjoy a rich religious heritage and this is reflected in the numerous denominations, which can be found throughout the island. Though adherents to the Christian faith account for the majority of the

populace, minority religious groups such as Hindus, Muslims, Jews and Rastafarians play a significant role in the social consciousness of the Barbadian community and their religious views are freely expressed and disseminated.

Education

16. Education is considered to be an important pillar of Barbados' development and consequently the Government has consistently invested more than 7 percent of its GDP (from 1993 to 2000) to the provision of education services at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The island has a literacy rate of 98 percent³ and education is free and compulsory from ages 5 to 16 years old and is available and accessible to all, regardless of sex, ethnic or racial background. Education facilities for children as well as adults can be found in all the 11 parishes on the island and these facilities are available through the Government, the Church (various denominations) and the Private Sector. The Government of Barbados is currently focused on a number of areas including expanded skills, ICT (Information and Communications Technology) capacity and ensuring that each household has at least one university graduate by 2025.

Health

17. Barbados' health care system is nationalized and health care services at government facilities are provided free of cost. Government's allocation to the Ministry of Health accounts for approximately 16 percent of total government expenditure. The Ministry of Health is both a provider of health care services, and regulator of the sector. The provision of primary care and health promotion, education and occupational health are its priorities.

18. The publicly funded Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) provides free acute, secondary and tertiary care. A network of five district hospitals provides long-term care for the elderly, a mental health hospital and a half-way house, a long-term care facility and a rehabilitation center for the physically and mentally challenged, and a hostel for homeless persons with AIDS. Services at eight government polyclinics are strategically located for ease of access to the general public.

19. Essential drugs are free to patients seen in government institutions. Drugs of the Barbados Drug Formulary are provided free at private participating pharmacies to children under 16, persons with some chronic non-communicable disease and those 65 years and older. Supplies for medical and other health care purposes are obtained for the public sector through a government central purchasing agency. Most supplies are imported. Antenatal care for pregnant mothers before the 12th week of gestation, and health services for adolescents are also provided at public polyclinics.

20. The private health care market, comprised of more than 100 general practitioners and consultants, is growing. There are also private sector laboratory radiological and

³ By definition, those aged 15 and over who have ever attended school

diagnostic services. The private Bayview Hospital provides acute-care beds while around 37 private nursing and senior citizens' homes provide long-term care for the elderly. A policy for a collaborative arrangement with private sector providers for long term care of the elderly has been approved given Barbados' significant ageing population. Although health care services are financed through significant Government expenditure on publicly provided services, out-of-pocket payments, and private health insurance are also utilized by the public.

Politics

21. Barbados has a long tradition of parliamentary procedure, dating back to 1639 when the first Parliament was established. Until 1951, when universal adult suffrage was introduced, franchise was based on gender (only men) and wealth (a minimum yearly income level or the ownership of property). The social unrest of 1937 precipitated the creation of trade unions and the first modern type political party in 1938, the Barbados Labour Party (BLP). The Democratic Labour Party (DLP) was formed in 1955 when a number of BLP members left to form their own party. A third political party, the National Democratic Party (NDP) was founded in 1989 as an offshoot of the DLP but it is no longer active. The People's Empowerment Party (PEP) was formed in early 2006.
22. The electoral system is patterned after the British Westminster system. This system is multi-party and the party that wins the majority forms the government and may serve a term of five years and may be re-elected. The winning party appoints a leader who will serve as Prime Minister and the Head of Government. Constitutionally, the British Monarch continues to be the Head of State and is represented on the island by a Governor General who is appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister. The Queen does not take part in the Government of the country. The functions of the Governor-General are mainly ceremonial, though not exclusively so. The Governor General has important discretionary powers, including, *inter alia*, the authority to appoint temporary Ministers and to dissolve Parliament. As a rule, the Governor-General exercises his functions on the advice of the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and, in some specified cases, the Leader of the Opposition.
23. The Governor-General appoints the Prime Minister based on the person whom he considers best able to command a majority of members of the House of Assembly. In practice this is usually the leader of the party, which has won the highest number of seats. The Cabinet is the body having overall responsibility for the management of the Government. The Cabinet comprises a minimum of five ministers, in addition to the Prime Minister, who are selected from either the House of Assembly or the Senate. The Attorney General is the principal legal adviser to the Government.
24. Barbados has a bicameral legislature: the House of Assembly is composed of 30 members elected by universal adult suffrage who represent the 30 constituencies into which the island is divided for electoral purposes. The Senate consists of 21 members: 12 members appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister; two members appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition; seven members appointed by the Governor-General at

his discretion to represent religious, social, economic or such other interests as he may deem necessary.

Text Box 1: Tripartite Social Partnership Approach to Governance

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has hailed Barbados' 15-year experience with social partnership agreements as a best practice for other governments to model. The tripartite approach to governance, involving trade unions, employer's organizations and Government, emerged in response to the country's economic and social problems during the economic crisis in the early 1990s. It was a core strategy to avoid the structural adjustment prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which would have devalued the Barbados dollar. Their collaboration eventually sealed the implementation of the First Protocol on Economic Stabilization and Collective Bargaining in which the tripartite partners agreed to an overall strategy for sustained economic development. Five protocols have been negotiated since.

The Social Partnership recognizes that "any sustained social and economic progress in Barbados will depend to a considerable extent upon their on-going individual and collective commitment to a philosophy of governance which is characterized by participatory democracy and the subjugation of their sectoral interests to the national good" (Government of Barbados, 2005b: p. 1). High-level Government inclusion of the a united and well-organized trade union movement as well as a dynamic and broad-based private sector have resulted in a useful model that can be adapted elsewhere.

Successive Social Partnership protocols have addressed issues concerning human development, including, poverty eradication, child labour, Persons with Disabilities, technology, environment, crime, price stability, health, HIV/ AIDS and other life threatening diseases.

The Barbados Constitution, Justice and the Protection of Human Rights

25. The *Constitution* is the Supreme Law of Barbados, if any other law is inconsistent with the *Constitution*, the *Constitution* must prevail and the other law will be declared void to the extent of the inconsistency. The *Constitution* makes provision for a Supreme Court consisting of a High Court and a Court of Appeal. The legal structure in Barbados provides for three (3) levels of adjudication: the Magistrate's Court, the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal.
26. Chapter III of the *Constitution* deals with the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of all individuals in Barbados and in this regard, the fundamental human rights and freedoms are guaranteed.
27. There exists in Barbados a broad-based Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) fraternity, which plays an important role in both the stimulation of debate on human rights as well as the specialised concerns of the various NGOs. These organisations range from grass-roots community groups to local arms of international organisations and have played an integral role in developing a Barbadian society

built on sound democratic principles. The Barbadian NGO community has actively encouraged public participation and interest in the governance process and has fostered human and social development initiatives.

I. Overview of progress towards the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the MDGs

A. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

28. Barbados' national development strategy is outlined in *The National Strategic Plan of Barbados 2005-2025* (NSP). The plan "provides a blueprint for the realisation of Barbados' vision of becoming a fully developed society that is prosperous, socially just and globally competitive by the end of the first quarter of this century" (Government of Barbados, 2005a: 8). There are six goals the Government is seeking to achieve, which are closely aligned with the MDGs.
29. The plan recognizes that Barbados has many strengths and opportunities, which the Government can use to forge a path of economic and social development, including; political stability; social cohesion; an independent and fair judicial system; sound economic management; and an educated workforce (Springer, 2005: 6). On the other hand, the plan identifies several vulnerabilities for the country's social development, which must be considered. These are also challenges to the achievement of the MDGs. However, the NSP outlines some strategies to help build the country's resilience (Government of Barbados, 2005a: 19-24).

1. THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN AND THE MDGS

30. "Global Excellence, Barbadian Traditions" is the thematic underpinning of the NSP, which refers to Barbados seeking a place in a changing global economic order, while preserving continued social cohesion and pursuing international competitiveness. The NSP seeks to build on Barbados' achievements, but it also recognizes that human development is at the centre of the country's development goals.
31. All of the goals of the NSP reflect policy areas which have implications for the continued achievement and surpassing of the MDGs. However, there are some goals that speak directly to specific MDGs and their targets.

<p>National Strategic Plan Goal 1: Unleashing the Spirit of the Nation</p>

32. Goal 1 is concerned with harnessing the creativity, pride, adaptability and independence which have become the hallmarks of Barbadian culture and identity. The Government recognizes that the pursuit of social justice and continued commitment to nation-building will help to sustain progress towards the achievement of the MDGs. This will also require education to go beyond the formal curricula and address other issues such as individuality, innovation and creativity.

**National Strategic Plan Goal 2:
New Governance for New Times**

33. The Government is committed to ensuring that the Constitution remains a "living document", which will evolve to reflect new issues in a changing world. Goal 2 aims to strengthen the Constitution and enhance the political process by promoting greater public and civil society political participation. Maintaining and promoting good governance as well as efficiency in the public service is another focus of Goal 2. In essence, Goal 2 seeks to address national issues that reflect the spirit of MDG8 Promoting Global Partnerships to ensure that the Government maintains and promotes partnerships with diverse sectors of society as well as enhance regional and international partnerships to ensure the island's security. Additionally, Goal 2 will strengthen efforts to deliver effective and efficient programmes that will assist in addressing all of the MDG areas.

**National Strategic Plan Goal 3:
Building Social Capital**

34. Goal 3 speaks to the MDGs related to Poverty, Education, Health and Gender. Understanding the complicated and multi-dimensional aspects of poverty is central to the Government's poverty eradication programme. Over the next two years, the Government will seek to promote greater inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly, persons often vulnerable to poverty and discrimination. Youth empowerment strategies will seek to address youth unemployment and poverty. Addressing community development will also help to strengthen the country's resource base. Security of tenure and access to affordable housing are now important issues for many low and middle-income Barbadians, as they seek to compete in a high-demand market for limited land space. Barbados has been long recognized as one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Goal 3 seeks to bridge the gap in the availability of housing by promoting private-public partnerships and better regulation of the sector.

35. Education continues to be a focus of Government's efforts to build a competitive workforce that will be equipped for engagement in the information society. The Government will expand beyond its current programmes of free access to primary, secondary and tertiary level education for Barbadians, and will be pursuing a MDG plus mandate that will encompass Early Childhood Education (ECE) and community-based continuing education for adults. The provision of quality education is also a focus where students will be urged to reflect on social values and entrepreneurial skills.

36. Goal 3 also calls for the improvement of health for all Barbadians. Meeting this objective calls for greater awareness of communicable (i.e. HIV/ AIDS) and non-communicable diseases (i.e. substance abuse and lifestyle diseases) and their impacts on society. Existing and new strategies will help to expand the range and

improve the quality of the delivery and management of health services; reduce the spread of HIV/ AIDS and other STDs; reduce and prevent substance abuse (especially among young people) and continue to strengthen human resources through training.

37. The Government has undertaken an extensive programme to mainstream gender into all policy areas. Gender, as a cross-cutting issue, has important implications for all objectives related to building social capital, particularly in poverty alleviation, education, health, youth empowerment and access to affordable housing. The Government recognizes that gender-based income and health disparities continue to be societal concerns, and has been actively engaged in addressing these issues.

**National Strategic Plan Goal 4:
Strengthening the Physical Infrastructure and Preserving the Environment**

38. Goal 4 resonates with MDG7 'Ensure Environmental Sustainability'. It acknowledges Barbados' inherent vulnerability as a SIDS to natural disasters and to climate variability and change and the potential devastation this can bring to all that has been achieved. It also calls upon Barbadians to be knowledgeable about their environment in order to ensure the protection of limited resources in the future. The promotion and facilitation of environmentally sustainable use of the country's natural resources is a prime objective of the goal.
39. Goal 4 further outlines strategies to protect the island's terrestrial and marine biodiversity; maintain sustainable access to clean water and adequate sanitation facilities as well as public greenspaces and housing. Building resilience against natural disaster and climate change is also an objective of the goal, including the implementation of a comprehensive disaster management plan. Another objective of Goal 4 is to ensure an efficient and reliable energy sector, decreasing the country's reliance on fuel-imports to generate electricity and the creeping costs of fluctuating global oil prices. Barbados will seek to increase the supply of natural gas and renewable energy. Energy conservation is also a key part of this objective.

**National Strategic Plan Goal 5:
Enhancing Barbados' Prosperity and Competitiveness
and National Strategic Plan Goal 6:
Branding Barbados Globally**

40. Recognizing the vulnerability of the Barbadian economy as a SIDS, the Government has embarked on an expansive programme to build economic resilience to protect and sustain its gains in human development in all MDG areas. Objectives are inextricably linked to the strategies employed in other NSP goals. Goal 5's objectives will increase the sustainable growth rate; promote full employment; strengthen the financial sector; safeguard food and nutrition security; build an entrepreneurial, productive and competitive economy; develop an information economy; encourage export trade and integration into the world economy. Goal 5 also aims to foster local,

regional and international partnerships to help Barbados realize its goals. Goal 6 seeks to “fashion” and “market” the Barbadian brand as a model in social, economic, commercial and sports development.

2. THE MEDIUM TERM STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK, 2007-2009

41. Barbados' Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) is currently being finalized and is the first document to outline pressing policy interventions, objectives and targets to be achieved over the medium term (2007-2009) based on the NSP. The framework was developed through consultations with Government Ministries, the Central Bank of Barbados, the private sector and civil society. It addresses issues in several policy areas, including, economic, social and environmental. It also outlines implementation processes and the financial resources required to fund the MTSF.
42. Many MTSF targets will help Barbados to continue to eradicate poverty; develop education and health care; and ensure environmental sustainability. The majority of the sectors will be financed through the Government. Only health, environmental and housing projects will receive external funding (i.e. Caribbean Development Bank, European Commission, Global Environment Facility or Inter-American Development Bank).
43. The following MTSF policy areas outline strategies and targets, which are relevant to the continued achievement of the MDGs.

Poverty Alleviation

44. Over the next two years, the Government will concentrate on strengthening evidence-based policies and programming, particularly in the social sectors. Government efforts are currently receiving support from the CDB and UNDP under the umbrella of the multi-donor regional Support to Poverty Reduction and Assessment in the Caribbean (SPARC) initiative.⁴ On-going assessment and monitoring of poverty and other MDG areas have been consistent challenges to governments in the region and has inhibited sustainable progress in some areas of social development.

⁴ This multi-donor programme is a coordinated response designed to provide capacity building inputs to support the strengthening of poverty monitoring and social policy development systems in the CARICOM Region. It will build on existing statistical support programmes developed and supported by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, the Caribbean Development Bank, the UN system and other development partner agencies. The participating agencies will focus their support on inputs linked to the achievement of the MDGs and will also support the strengthening of national and regional capacities to systematically collect, analyze and disseminate social data to inform social policy formulation and in the establishing and monitoring of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). The overall outcome of this programme will result in a systematic and coherent flow of donor inputs to support a Caribbean wide system of social data capture, poverty monitoring and policy development. UNDP has led the SPARC process for the last 3 years of its development.

45. The rationalization of social services is also a focus of Government to promote efficiency and responsiveness in Government agencies. Government will strengthen social protection mechanisms for children, the elderly, Persons with Disabilities and the homeless. National policies on children and gender are currently being refined. This will build on the Review of Poverty programmes completed at the end of 2007 with funding from UNDP Barbados and the OECS.

Education and Training

46. Education is one of the pillars of Barbados' national development strategy and has been a longstanding one since the country's independence. Many of the country's successes and achievements can be attributed to the significant investments made in the education and health sectors. Having achieved universal access to primary, secondary and tertiary education, the Government is seeking to improve the quality of education and training. It is also pursuing the goal of Universal Early Childhood Education (ECE). The continued provision of ICT education and training remains a focus. Barbados has long achieved universality by the various systems in place and a historic tradition of development through education. The challenge now is to ensure quality results from education and in particular the return on the investments made through attainment as well as the returns from employment of each educated person.

Health

47. The health sector is currently facing many challenges in spite of achieving several of the global health-related MDG targets. The Ministry of Health is focusing its efforts on the prevention, treatment and control of non-communicable and communicable diseases, particularly lifestyle diseases and HIV/ AIDS. Other pressing health issues, to which the Government will be responding, include environmental and mental health. It is also addressing the shortage in human and financial resources required to provide quality health care as well as seeking to enhance data management systems in order to provide more comprehensive care. Barbados like others in the Caribbean has suffered from a brain drain of teachers and nurses which impact significantly on the number of qualified professionals to support its 2 key development strategies.

Justice, Peace and Security

48. Although Barbados has a relatively low crime rate, small by global standards, attention is being paid to the link between drug trafficking and crime. The Government has embarked on a programme to prevent crime, particularly among youth, through public awareness, community development and value-based learning in schools. Improved surveillance and management of youth involved in crime are being used as a part of a strategy to prevent and reduce crime. Separate facilities and programmes for young offenders are being enhanced.

49. Existing programmes in prisons to provide education, rehabilitation, substance abuse treatment and after-care services for those who are released will be expanded. An HIV/ AIDS treatment programme for inmates will also be continued.

Economic and Social Statistics

50. Formulating and implementing evidence-based policies and programming is one of the challenges for agencies involved in the MDG areas relating to poverty, education, health and gender. The Government is seeking to upgrade the Statistical Service and enhance economic and social data collection in response to enhanced monitoring and response to the challenges that persist and those that may arise in the future. Support will also be provided through regional initiatives such as SPARC and the Government is expected also to benefit from South-South Cooperation in this area.

Labour Market Development

51. In the Government's commitment to ensuring Barbadians are employed in decent work, it is advancing a decent work protocol. Government will also be funding expansion of skills-training centres. Existing educational institutions will be initiating new programmes which will help to bridge the gaps in the labour market by providing the following: training in new standards for construction for artisans; teacher training; on-line learning; ICT training in hospitality, tourism and customer service and entrepreneurial skills. It will also be encouraging the Persons with Disabilities and the aged to participate in the Skills Training Programme.
52. As part of this broader agenda and as part of its ongoing efforts in HIV and AIDS the Government is the recipient of a grant from ILO/US Department of Labour addressing HIV and AIDS in the Workplace. Critical partnerships with the private sector have underscored the successes of this programme including a recent Business Leaders Initiative which has gained support from key companies in Barbados for sustaining ongoing programme segments. The leadership of the Prime Minister in the area of HIV and AIDS has been critical to the advances made in programming at the national level. Strategies to address HIV/ AIDS and other life threatening illnesses in the workplace will continue to be an area for focus for evaluation, policy-making and awareness.

Information and Communication Technology

53. The Government considers enhanced ICT capacity to be a priority objective in the medium term. Barbadians are being prepared for entry into the global information society. Some of the activities over the next two years will enhance science education in schools; promote technology training for teachers and establish funding for research and development. This will build on the ongoing provision of access to ICT and to information at the community level.

Sustainable Development Policy

54. There are several environmental issues which the Government will be addressing in the medium term that relate to the MDG7 on Environmental Sustainability. The Government will be responding to the recent escalation of oil prices by finalizing a National Energy Bill. Recognizing how vulnerable the electricity grid is to natural disaster, a disaster management plan for the energy sector is being formulated. Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is also a clear target outlined in the existing policy framework.
55. The Government is interested in developing a Green Economy to support its sustainable development policies, which includes strategies to improve the Quality of Life (protect water resources; solid waste management; reduce pollution); Conservation of Natural Resources and Economic Efficiency (protect biodiversity; environmental conservation; sustainable economic development); Equity (management that ensures inter-generation equity); and Participation (public awareness and civil society engagement).

Housing and Lands

56. Given rising land and housing prices in an island with limited land resources, the Government is committed to ensuring that Barbadians have access to adequate and affordable housing. Home ownership and security of tenure are key issues for low- and middle-income Barbadians. The Government is exploring several strategies to address these issues.
57. Land use and management are being addressed in the Physical Development Plan, which will ensure that the social, economic, environmental and physical development of Barbados' land resources will be managed sustainably.

Disaster Mitigation

58. In addition to other sectors in which Government is preparing disaster management plans, the Government is especially interested in establishing a catastrophe fund in partnership with multilateral and corporate interests, which would cover housing for low-income earners should a disaster strike. Such an initiative would help in the recovery effort after a natural event and assist low-income Barbadians to restore their lives and livelihoods. A Comprehensive Multi-hazard Disaster Management (CDM) Plan will be developed.

Tourism Sector

59. The Government has formulated strategies which will help to promote disaster management in the tourism sector to protect livelihoods and the economic benefits derived from the tourism industry. Since the island's economy is heavily dependent on this sector, an effective disaster management plan will help to mitigate against losses and economic fallout should a disaster occur. These strategies will also challenge the tourism sector to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Agricultural Sector

60. As a small island with water and land scarcity challenges, the Government recognizes that food security is a primary concern given high fuel prices to sustain imports and vulnerability to food shortages in a disaster both at the national and perhaps more significantly at a global level. The challenges experienced by the region in the wake of 9/11 when air travel within this region was severely limited highlighted this vulnerability significantly. Strategies in the agricultural sector include: the prevention of reliance on food imports; the drafting of a food security plan; and promoting food health and safety. The Agricultural sector will also be expected to support research and development on alternative fuels such as bio-diesel/ ethanol derived from sugarcane.

Fiscal Sector

61. The Government recognizes that the fiscal sector must be managed to ensure the sustainability of MDG-related Government programming. Deficit (reducing the public debt/ GDP ratio) and expenditure management will help to make the Government's financial situation more robust, especially if external shocks to the economy occur.

3. THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

62. The Ministry of Social Transformation's Bureau of Social Policy, Research and Planning is currently preparing the country's first Human Development Report (HDR) with the support of the UNDP Office to Barbados and the OECS. This is expected to be completed in 2009. The HDR will report on Barbados' progress in human development and will identify areas which need to be guided by policy and interventions.

63. Barbados has actively contributed to UNDP's annual reports on international Human Development. However, the country-specific HDR provides a unique opportunity for Barbados to evaluate and measure human development within parameters of specific relevance to the country. It also provides an avenue for Barbados to assess its achievements and challenges in developing a social just and competitive society.

64. The theme chosen for the first report is "Social Transformation" which will speak to the steps necessary to translate a fundamental adjustment in the way in which social development and change are regarded, and the need to develop a new partnership in order to undertake certain measures. It will express the interrelatedness of issues relating to poverty, gender, education, health within the specific context of the Barbadian environment. The Government is seeking to understand poverty in all of its dimensions and what can be done to provide a "hand-up" to those in poverty and/or who are vulnerable so that they may realize their full potential.

65. The HDR will be informed by a Country Poverty Assessment (CPA), which the Bureau of Social Policy, Research and Planning is also undertaking. The CDB will be funding

the CPA under the SPARC initiative, which is facilitating similar assessments in other Caribbean territories to fill a gap in regional poverty reporting, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

4. VULNERABILITY AND THE SUSTAINABILITY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE MDGS

66. Barbados faces several challenges which are characteristic of SIDS, as well as other circumstances that are unique to the region. The Government fully acknowledges these issues, and has charted a national development strategy that acknowledges the need to build resilience in several key areas, such as the economy, the social sector and the environment. It also is recognized that changes in the global economy and environment are difficult to predict, which presents challenges for strategic planning.

Economy

67. While Barbados has managed to sustain economic growth, it still lacks economies of scale and scope, which places it in a precarious position. As a mono-crop economy for the greater part of its history, Barbados has spent the last 50 years developing a strategy of economic diversification that included 'industrialisation by invitation' efforts, tourism development and international business development. The success of these diversification efforts has been limited with tourism replacing sugar as the main driver of the economy. Many industrial entities in the manufacturing and information technology sectors re-located their businesses to other lower cost jurisdictions once their business incentive programmes and other concessions expired. This continues to have a serious impact on the more vulnerable members of society, as the people most disenfranchised by the relocation of these companies are low-skilled workers who are mostly young, single women.

68. While there has been success in attracting international businesses, particularly in the financial services sector, Barbados' reputation has been hurt by the OECD's initiative four years ago to identify the island as one of the jurisdictions it had 'blacklisted' for harmful tax practices. While Barbados successfully argued that it is a low-tax jurisdiction and not a 'tax haven', that misrepresentation continues to hamper the island's attempts to widen the network of double taxation treaties necessary for the continued growth of the international business sector. This has implications for Government revenue as approximately 60 per cent of corporate taxes collected are from the international business community.

69. Barbados' dependence on tourism as the main earner of foreign exchange and main economic driver also leaves the island vulnerable. Barbados' tourism product is a mature one, which faces competition from a number of emerging tourist markets not only within the region – such as Cuba – but further afield. Additionally, Barbados has traditionally pitched its tourism product to high-end travellers, a market which the Middle East is now actively pursuing. While there is continued loyalty particularly among the UK travel market, success in attracting the affluent European travellers

has been limited. Barbados is also vulnerable to external shocks caused by disruptions in the air travel industry due to rising energy prices and the threat of terrorism.

70. Traditional obstacles for the Barbadian economy have been further complicated by recent developments taking place in the international trade arena. As a member of the WTO, Barbados has embarked on a process of opening its economy to foreign trade and investment. However, this changing economic environment has left Barbados open to challenges caused by the erosion of a number of preferential trading arrangements that existed between the Caribbean and the US, the Caribbean and Canada, and the Caribbean and the EU. However, the pace set for global trade liberalization is one that poses issues for Barbados' competitiveness since the island exhibits a high cost of infrastructure relative to the population tax base, high labour costs and a limited amount of natural resources. As a result, more emphasis is needed on realizing Barbados' comparative advantage.
71. Barbados' small economic size, its high degree of economic openness and limited resource base makes it vulnerable to external shocks and impedes its capacity to respond and adjust to such external shocks.

Environment

72. As a SIDS, Barbados is particularly vulnerable to climate change. The country now finds itself in a position where it must adapt to an uncertain future -- planning for contingency strategies that may not be resilient enough to withstand the onslaught of rising sea levels or violent storm seasons.
73. Barbados has not faced the full brunt of a tropical cyclone since Hurricane Janet in 1955 but since the start of this century it has received several close brushes -- including Tropical Storm Lily in 2003 as well as Hurricanes Ivan in 2004 (the strongest hurricane on record that year) and Emily in 2005 -- that have caused significant infrastructural and structural damage, especially to housing stock.
74. The devastation suffered by the neighbouring islands as a result of Hurricane Ivan continues to serve as a lesson for the Barbadian populace, business community and Government. In Grenada, 90 percent of buildings and homes were damaged or destroyed while vital mainstays of the island's agricultural industry were destroyed, including nutmeg (Grenada being the world's second largest producer of the spice). The Grenada model further substantiates the notion that the small size of states undermines their ability to absorb the shock caused by natural disasters, and also the extent to which the disasters may be counterproductive to any meaningful economic growth (ECLAC, 2005a). In 2003, Grenada enjoyed a 5.8 percent rate of growth. In 2004, after Hurricane Ivan, the island's economy registered a negative growth rate. Previous gains in human development are currently being recovered with assistance from regional and international donors, but it is recognized that Grenada is unlikely to achieve the MGS fully by 2015 due to these setbacks.

75. In addition to the hazards associated with a direct strike from a hurricane or other natural disaster, Barbados is acutely aware of the catastrophic effects natural disaster can have regionally, with resulting heavy reliance on neighbouring islands for immediate assistance. Humanitarian relief, displacement and shattered regional economies can place a drain on limited regional resources.
76. In addition, it is recognized that the spate of widespread construction can also present a challenge in managing risk. Significant commercial and residential development is located on the coastline. This has already impacted on coral reefs which enhances coastal vulnerability and also make these properties vulnerable in a hurricane from storm surge and high winds. Moreover, it should be noted that as in the case of small SIDS, many of the response services in Barbados are located on the coast including police, fire and hospitals.
77. Barbados' limited land size, natural resource base and fragile marine ecosystem, leave the island susceptible to several environmental threats including: invasive species, flooding, soil erosion, coral reef degradation. These threats to Barbados' environment have the potential to seriously damage the tourism-based economy as well as agriculture and food security.

HIV/AIDS

78. Insofar as it poses a threat to the sustainable development of Barbados, HIV/AIDS likewise looms as a major limitation to the country's social and economic development. The Caribbean region has the second highest rate of infection in the world, which is just over two percent. It should be noted that these estimates are based on diagnosed cases which are recognized to be a serious under-estimation of infection rates. In recognizing the serious impact that the epidemic can have on Barbadian society, particularly on the productive labour sectors and the economy, the Office of the Prime Minister has assumed responsibility for HIV/ AIDS.
79. The Ministry of Health and several other agencies have been proactive in their efforts to combat and control the spread of the disease in recent years, with a number of public awareness and sexual education programmes, as well as the free distribution of prophylactics and free access to antiretroviral (ARV) drugs. Much of this response has been guided by a National Strategic Plan which is currently being updated. Further the broad-based nature of the HIV and AIDS response which has been highlighted as a best practice has been made possible through a multi-sectoral and stakeholder National HIV and AIDS Commission (NHAC). Barbados' leadership in HIV and AIDS at a global level has been evidenced most recently through the Chairmanship by Dr. Carol Jacobs of the Board of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) over the period 2005-2007. Dr. Jacobs is also the Chair of the Barbados NHAC.
80. However, the nature of the epidemic may impede those very attempts to prevent it, as any one of a number of subtle social factors can cause a rapid increase in the rate of transmission. These social factors are often domestic in nature, and are therefore difficult for the Government to regulate. It is also not possible to de-link tourism

from HIV and AIDS infection. A significant number of tourist and crews visit the island annually. The communicable diseases that may be brought into the island by visitors should also be noted as a challenge to human development, and also as a factor which is difficult to control, or quantify.

Crime and violence

81. The region as a whole has witnessed an upsurge in violence in recent years, and Barbados has not escaped this phenomenon. A contributing factor to the increase in crime and violence is the region's geographic vulnerability as a site for illicit drug transshipment as it lies between the drug-producing South and the consuming North. The nature of the crimes committed has grown to be increasingly violent as new technology and communications have opened the island to a host of challenges unknown as recently as a decade ago. Cultural influences through television and music have also been linked to this development.
82. Statistics from the Royal Barbados Police Force indicate there was a 5 percent increase in crime over 2006 – although the Police Commissioner stated this was the lowest increase in the last 15 years. There were 9,237 crime reports totaled over last year, with the highest increases being in theft, matters relating to theft and public order breaches. Barbados also recorded 35 murders in 2006, the highest rate in 20 years.
83. Domestic violence, in particular, is difficult to regulate and may act as a counteragent simultaneously to the sustainability of any number of the MDGs 1-6. This may affect men, women and children alike, and thus may carry with it profound psychosocial implications that can have an adverse effect on social development.
84. As the cost of living rises, there is also a growing concern for the type of non-violent crimes that may be engendered as a result of persons' inability to make a living on a limited salary. These prospective non-violent crimes include, but are not limited to, drug-trafficking (as a primary or secondary source of income), embezzlement, fraud, and money-laundering.
85. There is also anecdotal evidence to suggest that the deportation of overseas nationals with Barbadian citizenship back to this island from the country in which they committed crimes is contributing to the increasing sophistication of criminal activity in this country. According to a 2002 study, 332 criminal deportees returned to Barbados between 1994 and 2000. However, only 13 percent (43 criminal deportees) had been charged with a criminal offence in Barbados at the time of the study. The average length of time between arrival and being charged with a crime was 17 months, and, with the exception of one murder case, most of the deportees were charged with burglary or drug-related offences. Whether the low correlation between deportees and rising incidences of crime is linked to low levels of surveillance or an actual low rate of recidivism among the criminal deportees is something that requires closer investigation (Griffin, 2001).

Migration

86. Barbados continues to attract migrants from the Caribbean region and the wider world in search of greater economic opportunities and improved living conditions. As a result of the CARICOM single market (CSM), Barbados with its high standard of living and per capita income is particularly attractive to skilled CARICOM nationals looking to migrate to improve their job and living situation. Foreign investment has also created a significant expatriate population. On the other hand, Barbados also draws undocumented migrants who do not fulfil the criteria for skills and educational background currently stipulated by the 'free movement of nationals' clause of the CSM and who still enter Barbados illegally in search of work or other opportunities. The tracking and deportation of such non-nationals places a strain on immigration authorities and police.
87. In turn, returning nationals who re-enter Barbados by way of deportation from the metropolitan country in which they lived before has had a significant impact on the social and economic landscape here and it is an issue that is being grappled with by many countries in this region. These individuals may then contribute to existing problems such as crime and sexual transmission of diseases, or they may create new problems by creating a strain on limited social resources.
88. Like many developing countries with a well-educated and skilled workforce, Barbados has been experiencing the fallout from human capital flight as skilled professionals, particularly teachers and medical professionals, seek career opportunities in overseas job markets. Higher salaries and perceivably better working conditions overseas hinder the ability to retain skilled professionals, particularly in the resource-strained sectors of education and health. This is a source of deep concern to the Government, which is also faced with the challenge of delivering quality education in its MDG plus mandate and health care in the midst of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the impact of other life threatening diseases. The Government has been working to reduce the loss of skills in critical sectors through increased training opportunities and strategic recruitment. Moreover, the Government is urging destination countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada to consider the skills-deficits in source countries.
89. At any rate, any of these factors will have the greater effect of stretching the Government in terms of its ability to fulfil minimum obligations to the public and to actively pursue the principles as set forth by the MDGs.

B. PROGRESS TOWARDS THE MDGS

Millennium Development Goal 1: The Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger

90. Extreme poverty, as defined by the target for the first MDG (individuals earning less than US \$1.00 PPP per day), is not prevalent in Barbados. This is also the case with extreme hunger.
91. The national poverty line was calculated at BDS \$5,503 per annum in 1996/1997, which was based on the last Poverty Assessment Study. At USD \$7 a day, the minimum earning was above the MDG indicator for extreme poverty. It should be noted though that the cost of living in Barbados makes even survival on USD \$7 per day a challenge.
92. Noting that the nature of poverty in Barbados is both complex and multidimensional, the Government has defined poverty in terms of "social deprivation", which can include the following characteristics:
- Lack of/ inadequate income or capital
 - Lack of/ limited access to productive resources
 - Lack of/ limited access to social services
 - Increased morbidity/ mortality from illness
 - Homelessness
 - Inadequate housing
 - Unsafe environments
 - Social discrimination/ exclusion
 - Lack of equal opportunities for Persons with Disabilities
 - Structural barriers to achieving one's full potential
 - Single- income dependency in households
 - Lack of equal opportunities for vulnerable groups such as Persons with Disabilities or people living with HIV (PLHIV)
93. In seeking to address poverty, the Government is tackling issues relating to quality of life and pursuing social justice, particularly for those who are vulnerable, to prevent persons from 'falling through the cracks'. The Government has been successful in addressing non-income poverty by providing access to health care, education, water and sanitation. However, there has been little progress in determining the sources of income-inequality and resource poverty.

Text Box 2: Addressing non-income poverty

Free access to primary, secondary and tertiary school for Barbadians

Free access to publicly-funded health care at polyclinics and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH)

Free access to antiretroviral treatment for HIV/ AIDS (including pMTCT for HIV-infected mothers)

100% access to clean drinking water

100% access to improved sanitation

94. The Ministry of Social Transformation is currently planning to undertake a CDB-funded Country Poverty Assessment (CPA), which will update data and information relating to poverty, vulnerability and deprivation. The previous CPA was completed in 1998. This information will strengthen evidence-based policies and programmes, particularly in the areas of child poverty, gender, ageing, HIV/AIDS and disability. The CPA will also inform the HDR, which will help to flesh out priority areas for development.

Government Initiatives

95. The Government formulated a poverty eradication programme in 1997. The Ministry of Social Transformation was established as part of this programme in 1999. It has since endeavoured to prevent, assist and empower the poor to emerge from and remain out of poverty. The following agencies are involved in poverty alleviation:

- Welfare Department (professional Social Work Services for those with financial, personal and family problems)
- National Assistance Board (social support and recreational services for elderly persons)
- Poverty Alleviation Bureau (creation of economic opportunities for young persons and other individuals and groups)
- Poverty Eradication Committee (provide for immediate acute needs: basic food, shelter and survival)
- Bureau of Gender Affairs (advocacy and monitoring of gender issues)
- Child Care Board (child care and protection)
- Community Development Department (community-asset building and programming)
- Urban Development Commission (improve standard of living for urban dwellers)
- Rural Development Commission (improve the standard of living of rural communities)

- National Disabilities Unit (policy-making and provision of services for Persons with Disabilities)

96. Also, in giving leadership and visibility to the issue of poverty, the Office of the Prime Minister has designated a special mechanism over the last two years to strengthen partnerships in pursuit of the MDGs.

Issues in Poverty Eradication

97. Although Government has made significant gains in creating the infrastructure and programming to address poverty, several segments of the population remain vulnerable, given the current socio-economic environment.

Persons with Disabilities

98. There are more than 13,000 Persons with Disabilities in Barbados.⁵ With increasing numbers of Barbadians suffering from HIV/ AIDS and non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, the number of persons with physical disabilities due to chronic illness, amputation or loss of eyesight is likely to increase.

99. Persons with Disabilities are more likely to be poor and in need of special assistance. Accessibility to training, employment and the workplace are key to empowering Persons with Disabilities to make meaningful contributions to their lives and communities. They are also vulnerable to HIV/ AIDS – and are often not well catered for in programming neither in terms of the presentation of information and awareness building for those who may be visual or hearing impaired nor those with learning difficulties and limited mental functions. There exists the prospect for some Persons with Disabilities of being taken advantage of including sexual molestation and coercion. Though cases such as these have not been significantly recorded it remains an issue for increased attention and focus.

100. The Government has committed resources to assist disabled persons in attaining their rights to education, employment and health, but more needs to be done to address social exclusion and discrimination, particularly for those with mental or intellectual impairments. Although the statutory Barbados National Building code will finally codify minimum accessibility standards, accessibility to the built environment and transportation continue to be major barriers to those with physical impairments -- hindering their ability to work and contribute to society.

101. The Barbados Council for the Disabled works on behalf of Persons with Disabilities in Barbados and is an outspoken advocate of disability rights.

⁵ This number constitutes approximately 5 percent of the population from the last census in 2000. However, the number of Persons with Disabilities is likely to be larger due to the underreporting of impairments and other disabilities.

Ageing

102. There are over 33,000 persons over the age of 65 in Barbados (approximately 13 percent of the population). Like in many countries around the world, several concerns are being raised as Barbados' population ages. The country is one of the only territories in the region with a comprehensive social security system and in addition to providing social support and recreational services for elderly persons, the Government also provides home care and affordable housing for those persons who are in need. However, the sustainable provision of social security and rising health care costs are creating concerns for the future welfare of elderly persons. As family patterns change, incidence of elder abuse and abandonment of elderly relatives requiring care is increasing. With the advances in medical and health care, people are living longer and this has begun to strain the resources provided through the state-managed pension scheme. Moreover, men who find themselves with few social networks into old age are also increasingly vulnerable to poverty.

Inadequate Housing and Homelessness

103. The Government has been responding to the need for access to adequate and affordable housing. In addition to programmes to help repair and upgrade housing, the Government has also been working to increase the housing stock for low-income earners. Housing solutions must be constructed with the island's vulnerability to natural disaster in mind (see 7.6 Access to Secure Tenure, page 73). Low-income female-headed families are in particular need of access to affordable housing.

104. Another issue which is of growing concern is the number of homeless Barbadians, some of which have either lost their homes or find themselves in between addresses. The Government is also aware that inadequate treatment and shelter for those suffering from mental illness is also contributing to homelessness. The Government recently contributed more than half of the money for the \$2.4 million project to redevelop the ageing Salvation Army hostel facility in Bridgetown, which will shelter men on an emergency basis and provide meals for those in need.

Food Insecurity

105. Although there is no evidence of extreme hunger in Barbados, the Government is keenly aware of the need to address factors that contribute to food insecurity. As a net food importing developing country, access and availability to good quality food can be compromised due to several environmental and economic vulnerabilities. Natural disaster, such as hurricanes, storms, flooding, and landslides can devastate the country's limited agricultural industries, not to mention creating food supply issues if imports are restricted due to poor weather or access conditions. Moreover, crops are vulnerable to pests and other biological agents introduced from neighbouring islands and overseas. As a water-scarce country, the island's agricultural producers are also susceptible to dry weather conditions or drought.

106. As a net importer of food, Barbados is subject to volatility in prices on the world market, and it is therefore difficult to control food prices internally. The island's relative high cost of living makes it challenging for low-income earners to purchase good quality, healthy foods, especially fresh produce, which are largely imported from overseas markets. The affordability of healthy foods is of deep concern to policy-makers in light of the increased risk of women and low-income earners developing non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes and cardio-vascular disease.
107. Agricultural development remains one of the key mechanisms for promoting poverty alleviation and food security within this country. Government has stated that it will be initiating a food substitution initiative to tackle Barbados' burgeoning food import bill, which reached \$374 million in 2006. The Ministry of Agriculture has identified 16 food items, including poultry, onions, cucumbers, sweet peppers, tomatoes, hot peppers, fresh milk and table eggs that could be produced on island. The island reportedly spent \$10.7 million importing those commodities last year. Government has also expressed its intention to replace 15 per cent of the fruit, beef and lamb imports with local production. This strategy will bring down the prices of fresh meat and vegetables within the reach of the most disadvantaged while increasing employment opportunities within the sector.
108. It should also be noted that Barbados has benefited from its participation in a FAO-sponsored CARIFORUM technical cooperation and capacity-building programme to address food security and safety in the areas of agriculture, aquaculture, quality assurance and research, particularly targeting food insecurity among vulnerable groups.

Policy Direction

109. Over the next two years the Government is seeking to achieve the following:
- Develop and implement protocols based on the White Paper on Disabilities
 - Facilitate equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in employment and education
 - Develop a White Paper on Ageing
 - Develop and implement a broad-based social protection policy
 - Develop an integrated social policy framework

Challenges

- Rationalization of the delivery of social services
- Strengthen evidence-based policy and programming
- Strengthen human resource capacity

Text Box 3: Civil Society's Role in Sustaining Low-Income Communities

Building on a 10 year success with the Pinelands, St. Michael community, the Pinelands Creative Workshop (PCW) developed the "Sustainable Development In Low Income Communities (SDLIC) Project For Nelson Street" as a means of reducing poverty within the at-risk area of Nelson Street in Bridgetown with the support of UNESCO and the EU. A 2000 Community National Survey characterized the community as having:

- Highest level of marijuana usage in the island
- High levels of violence, burglary, theft, shop lifting and family problems including abuse
- High levels of unemployment (three-quarters of the Nelson Street population was not involved in any form of gainful employment)

The project was designed to raise the awareness and empower youth and their families through non-formal education and training. PCW sourced funding in the amount of \$207,020 from UNESCO and the EU to execute the SDLIC project over a two-year period.

The project adopted a three-pronged approach to achieving these objectives. Focus was placed on:

- Establishing a Micro-Enterprise Development Program
- Developing a Skills Enhancement Program in collaboration with the Barbados Vocational Training Board to promote practical and marketable skills that would open the door for employment and/or self employment
- Developing an Employment Training Program

Sensitisation on HIV/AIDS and issues related to illegal drugs was reinforced throughout the programme.

The project has been successful in training participants in business and employment preparedness. It also helped to raise the profile of the community through the media. More young women are expressing an interest in participating in the programme.

The project can be used as a model by government and other communities for positive social community transformation.

Challenge

- Sustainability of such projects by NGOs or CBOs with limited resources
- Sustaining the future commitment of funding partners

**Millennium Development Goal 2:
Achieve Universal Primary Education**

110. Education is considered to be one of the pillars of Barbadian society and economic development efforts, and has enabled the country to enjoy its sustained high standard of living. Barbados has long achieved the indicators of the MDG2. Universal access to primary education was achieved in Barbados in the 1970s.
111. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports delivers free primary and secondary education, which is compulsory for every child aged 5 to 16 years, and tuition-free post-secondary education is also available at several tertiary-level institutions throughout the island.

Government Initiatives

112. In 2004, public expenditure on education (as a percentage of total government expenditure) was 17.3 percent. The gross enrolment ratio for primary education in 2004/05 was 104.7 while the net enrolment ration was 99.7. There was a gender parity index of 0.97. The primary completion rate was 100. All students complete primary education and move on to the secondary stage. However, the flexible system of transfer allows some children who have the capability to take the examination early to complete primary education at age 10. Conversely, those students who have learning deficits may complete primary education at age 12 by deferring the writing of the examination for one year. During this time, they have the opportunity to benefit from additional tutoring to raise their performance to the required standard.
113. In the area of academic achievement, in 2005/06 the national mean scores for students who wrote the Barbados Secondary Schools Entrance Examination (Common Entrance) were:
- English - males 47.26, females 56.45
 - Mathematics - males 51.02, females 58.29
114. The Ministry of Education has introduced several programmes aimed at enhancing the quality of students' learning and achievement. One such programme is the Basic Skills Assessment Battery (BSAB). This assessment programme was introduced in 2001 and measures students' readiness to begin the curriculum in the first grade of primary school. The results are used by teachers to design appropriate developmental activities for young children.
115. Another important assessment programme introduced by the Ministry of Education is the Criterion Referenced Test (CRT). The CRT was designed as a means of ensuring that students get the opportunity to reap the optimum benefit from their primary education. The CRT which is taken at the end of Infants B (age 6-7) and Class 2 (age 8-9). It seeks to identify students' weaknesses early and to allow teachers to provide the necessary remediation for students before they write the

BSSEE (Common Entrance Examination). It has become an integral part of the teaching and learning process at the primary level.

116. The Ministry of Education operates several programmes to ensure the active participation of Barbadian children in schools, including:
- School Meals at the primary level
 - Text book loan scheme
 - Subsidized bus fares (public transport)
 - Transport assistance (including a pilot programme to provide free transport for some students)
 - Uniform grants
 - Bursaries, grants and government subventions at the secondary level (to private secondary schools)
 - Several bursaries, grants and scholarships at the tertiary level
117. The Government is pursuing an MDG Plus mandate in the provision of quality education, which is intended to commit Government resources to life-long learning from the provision of ECE to adult continuing education.
118. In 2002-2003, 4732 children (aged 3 to 4) were enrolled in government pre-primary schools and 529 children were enrolled at private pre-primary schools. There are 78 public schools and 18 private schools, which provide services for this age group.
119. It is universally accepted that good-quality early childhood care and education contributes to the quality of the education system, particularly primary education. In recognition of the benefits of early childhood education, the Government has committed to achieving universal access to pre-primary education for 3-5 year olds.
120. In 2005-2006 the Ministry of Education embarked on a three-phased Nursery Expansion Programme to provide an additional 1600 places at this level with approximately 550 pupils being afforded access in each phase. Existing Government primary schools with pre-primary departments accommodated 400 pupils in phase 1. Five new Nursery Schools are being established in phase 2. Two of these schools have been officially opened with the remaining three at different stages of construction and are expected to be completed by 2008.
121. The programme is now moving into the third phase where the Government will partner with privately owned nursery schools that have the capability of expanding their operations to admit additional 3 year olds. There has also been the allocation of additional teaching and learning resource materials as well as requisite teacher training to facilitate this expansion programme.
122. The Government has made substantial investments over the last two years to expanding the physical plant of the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus. It has also committed resources to the establishment of the University

College of Barbados, which will amalgamate the services offered by existing tertiary-level institutes (Barbados Community College, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and Erdiston Teachers Training College). Approximately one-third of 90 000 Barbadian households have a graduate from university or college. The Government is seeking to have one university graduate in every household by 2020.

Issues in Education

Maintenance of Infrastructure

123. Apart from the continual demand for the construction of new schools, the ageing facilities at most primary and secondary schools are also a source of concern. Many of Barbados' public schools are in dire need of costly civil works projects, and are often intended to serve as emergency shelters for housing evacuees in the event of a natural disaster.
124. The Ministry of Education reports that improvement projects can cost between \$20,000 and \$100,000 a year. Each year, 15 to 20 primary schools are refurbished on a rotating basis. Improvements are carried out during the annual summer break.
125. Twenty-two schools were rehabilitated during the summer vacation of 2006, whereas such rehabilitation generally consisted of the execution of minor works (i.e. repair or replacement of windows, doors, electrics, etc.). Even with these minor repairs, however, most schools need costly comprehensive overhauls in order to maintain quality delivery of education well into the twenty-first century.
126. Since 1999 the Ministry of Education has been engaged in major civil works on several primary and secondary schools as a vital component of the Education Sector Enhancement Programme (Eductech). To date 22 primary schools, 9 secondary and 4 private schools have been completely rehabilitated under this programme.

Quality of Education and Life-long Learning

127. A strictly quantitative assessment of Barbados would reflect that the goal of universal access to education has long been achieved. However, current questions revolve around the quality of the education being provided.
128. At the primary and secondary levels the Ministry of Education is continuing its curriculum reform programme to enhance the quality of instruction and learning. All Government Nursery and Primary schools have implemented the appropriate revised curricula. For the first time in Barbados' history a National Curriculum has been developed for secondary schools. It comprises a core curriculum that every student has to follow (Mathematics, English, Science, Social Studies, a Foreign Language, Physical Education, Religious and Moral Education and Health and Family Life Education).
129. In addition, Attainment Targets have been developed for the first time in the history of Barbados for teachers and parents to be able to see what students should

know at all stages of development with an empirical mode of tracking student progress. These targets apply to both primary and secondary education. Key targets have been developed for Social and Emotional Learning, since school is also about emotional, social and personal development. In addition there is emphasis on a life-skills approach to the delivery of the new curriculum at both primary and secondary levels.

130. The overall sustainability of the education system requires a significant amount of continued investment. Yet, key stakeholders indicate that a significantly larger provision of budgetary assistance would be necessary to transcend the current barriers.
131. The current demand is for a redefinition of education that would teach young persons life and business skills and in addition to academics; and, would encourage entrepreneurship rather than dependency on the current job market upon leaving school. Such a redefinition could theoretically address several issues that continue to be of concern, including human capital flight; unemployment/ underemployment; gender-based competitiveness; and youth violence and crime. Additionally, recognizing the country's reliance on social capital to build a competitive society, the Government is interested in expanding programming to ensure that all Barbadians, regardless of age or ability, have access to life-long learning and training.

Human capital flight (brain drain) and Unemployment/ Underemployment

132. Increasingly, trained teachers are leaving the Barbadian education system in favour of better pay, career advancement and perceivably better working conditions in overseas job markets (United States, Canada, United Kingdom and Bermuda). In a resource-scare environment, the lack of trained educators poses challenges for the education system, which is not in a position to offer competitive alternatives to overseas job markets. The drain of teachers speaks to the larger issue of the loss of skilled professionals, particularly in education and health, who were trained in the island at the expense of the Government but have chosen to practice overseas. The loss of good teachers places further strain on a system which endeavouring to provide quality education with stretched resources.
133. The Ministry has put in place a policy on teacher recruitment that seeks to safeguard the teaching service. The policy places restrictions on the granting of leave to work in other jurisdictions on certain categories of teachers, particularly those who teach subjects where there is a scarcity of skills such as Mathematics and the Sciences. There is also a Protocol on the recruitment of teachers across Commonwealth countries.
134. It should be noted that "well-educated migrants world-wide are not only a source of revenue but potential actors in their countries' development. Perhaps it is time to stop seeing them as a loss of investment" (UNESCO, 2006).
135. School-leavers graduating with acquired entrepreneurship skills at the secondary or tertiary level would help address unemployment and underemployment, as the

number of graduates each year generally exceeds the number of available jobs that require certification. The increase in acquired entrepreneurship skills would likely hold the additional benefit of building the private sector in such a way that could only bolster Barbados' small economy.

136. Ministry of Education is working in collaboration with the TVET Council and CXC to establish Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (CVQs). In addition, the curriculum reforms have included a component on entrepreneurial education which is delivered as part of the Business Studies curriculum at the secondary level. There is also a component at the primary level.

Gender-based competitiveness

137. As the majority of Barbadian schools are co-educational institutions, concerns have risen surrounding the underachievement of male students in primary and secondary schools, relative to female students (although there has been no comprehensive study analysing perceived gender-based underachievement, there has been a regional study on gender differentials and achievement, which is pointing to some factors which may be related to this). It is believed that more value-based learning from the primary level of education onwards may have the positive effect of minimising gender-based underachievement in schools. Theoretically, male and female students would receive guidance in terms of social skills and gender roles, which do not currently form a part of the curriculum. . It should be noted that though girls and women may dominate the numbers in tertiary education, there is still significant female unemployment in Barbados and in other countries. There also still exist labour market rigidities which mean that women have not always penetrated non-traditional markets in particularly those booming such as construction.

138. The Health and Family Life Education curriculum has modules that teach students about the roles of males and females, in addition to other life skills. Erdiston Teachers' Training College also conducts a Gender in Education course for teachers and principals.

Children with Disabilities

139. The Ministry of Education has recently attached learning annexes for children with disabilities to some public schools. This year was the first year that sight-impaired 11 year old students were able to take their common-entrance examinations with assistive devices. However, more facilities, specialized staff and better teacher-training are needed for educating children with disabilities. Additionally, more support services are required for parents with disabled children. A greater recognition of the diverse needs of children with disabilities would also improve specialized teaching for children who have different impairments (i.e. physical and intellectual impairments as well as learning disabilities).

140. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Erdiston Teachers' Training College and Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia Canada, has provided

training for teachers in Special Needs Education up to the Masters level. To date 35 teachers have graduated from the programme and a further 45 are being trained. As a consequence, Special Needs Education Coordinators have been deployed across primary and secondary schools to coordinate the development of special education programmes and to develop individual education plans to cater to the needs of students where appropriate. There is also a proposal for a comprehensive Special Needs Policy that is now under active consideration by the Ministry of Education.

Youth-related crime

141. Consistent with a trend, which exists throughout the Caribbean, a link has been established between the number of male high school dropouts and the rise in crime and violence in Barbadian society. Analysts generally contend that in its present makeup, Barbadian society demands that young persons earn an income, and that youth-related crimes are the result of the psychosocial anger that comes of the inability to participate in such a society. Also worrying, is the prevalence of substance among youth and its relationship to crime.
142. Government's commitment to Education means that it invests an average of \$ 52,399 in primary and secondary education for each Barbadian student. Youth who do not realize their full potential due to unemployment, under-employment or their involvement in crime, results in a significant loss of investment for the Government (Carter, 2006).
143. Arguably, if introduced at an early stage of a child's development, life skills education could be influential in encouraging students to stay in school and make healthy choices for their lives, thus curbing the potential for outbreaks of youth-related crime.

Policy Direction

144. The Barbadian Government is committed to continuing improvements to the education sector over the next two years through:
- Continued reform of the education system, through greater focus on concepts such as life skills, healthy choices and life-long learning for students
 - Human resource development, in the form of training programmes for teachers
 - Further work towards the achievement of the Universal ECE
 - Increased access to tertiary level education (the UWI at Cave Hill and the University College of Barbados)
 - Enhancing ICT skills for the labour market

 - The Government is also undertaking a plan to introduce an Education Savings Plan (ESP), which will help Barbadians plan for their children's tertiary education, particularly if students wish to avail themselves of

opportunities overseas. The ESP would exempt Barbadians from payment of withholding tax on the interest earned on special savings accounts.

Challenges

- Ageing infrastructure requiring refurbishment and on-going maintenance
- Provision of quality Universal ECE (shortage of ECE-trained teachers and, lack of financial resources and facilities)
- Flight of trained teachers attracted by higher pay and perceivably better working conditions overseas

Text Box 4: EDUTECH and Bridging the "Digital Divide"

As part of the National Strategic Plan's goals to build a competitive human resource base, which is ready for the information society, Barbados has committed itself to the Education Sector Enhancement Programme (Edutech). One of its objectives is increased access for students to computer technology and the Internet in public and private schools across the island. Aimed at increasing computer literacy in the next generation of Barbadians, it is expected that the programme will help to narrow the "digital divide", between them and their counterparts in the developed world.

The programme began in December 1998, with the signing of the loan agreement with actual project activities commencing in 1999 but has met with some implementation challenges since. However, the Government is still committed to completing the programme. Funding secured from the Government of Barbados, the CDB and IDB for the programme totals \$426 million.

Edutech comprises an extensive programme to provide technology infrastructure, training, curriculum development and information management in public and private primary and secondary schools across the island. By the start of the 2007/08 academic year, all schools in Barbados will have high-speed Internet access through the Edutech Programme.

The Ministry of Education has also provided the necessary training for teachers to effectively utilize ICTs in the teaching and learning process. A Teacher Evaluation Unit was established in the Ministry of Education to ensure that teachers are benefiting from all the training that has been provided. Where there are deficiencies, additional assistance will be provided.

The Ministry of Education has proposed that a programme adjustment be made to allow for the faster delivery of a manageable level of technology independent of the ongoing repair and upgrade of the aged or inadequate physical plant of the island's schools. This proposal was submitted to Government, the lending agencies and project stakeholders for approval and was approved by Government in 2005 and the lending agencies in 2006.

Challenges

Sustainability of the Edutech programme continues to be a challenge. Edutech reform has slowed considerably and was unable to be completed in the anticipated 7 year-implementation period due to the extent of the civil repairs required. According to the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, works as at the end of January 2005, only 32 (29 percent) of 110 schools to be worked on had been refurbished including full installation of technology cabling.

<p style="text-align: center;">Millennium Development Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women</p>

145. Barbados has made significant gains in promoting gender equality, but considerable work must be done to ensure that gender issues are integrated into the development process.
146. The Government has ratified the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and has actively pursued legislative reform intended to correct any gender-based discrimination in the Laws of Barbados.
147. Barbados has achieved all of the targets under MDG3. According to the 2006 Human Development Report, 17.6 percent of seats in parliament are held by women. Approximately, half of the managers, senior officials and legislators as well as professional and technical workers are women. Between 1995 and 2003, over 70 percent of women were involved in the non-agricultural sectors (industrial and service sectors). The Government also reports that the number of female applicants for the police force, as well as for other jobs traditionally held by men, continues to increase. According to the Barbados Economic Society, unemployment among women fell over the past two decades and was on course to dip below the rate for men for the first time, in contrast with the figures for 1987, when the female unemployment rate was 10 percentage points higher than that for men.
148. Although as women have made gains in their material status, ideological barriers to full equality and empowerment persist. In contrast, another pressing challenge seems to be that of re-stimulating male engagement in society, particularly young males.

Government Initiatives

149. Issues of gender have been the subject of direct focus from the Government since 1976. The Bureau of Gender Affairs was established in 2000 (replacing the Bureau of Women's Affairs). It has a mandate to act in an advisory capacity to ensure that gender issues are integrated in all Government policies and programming.
150. A Gender Management System has been ensuring that all of Government's policies are gender sensitive. A number of public service officers have been trained in gender analysis to assist in this evaluation. The Government has been involved in a pilot project sponsored by UNIFEM/ Commonwealth Secretariat/ IDRC, which is intended to ensure that budgetary allocations are also sensitive to gender.
151. The Government has been responsible for the implementation of:
- Equal pay for equal work and maternity benefits within the Government Service
 - Job opportunities in service and manufacturing sectors

- Succession Act, 1975, enabling partners and children of common law relationships to inherit property

Issues in Gender and the Empowerment of Women

152. The Government has been making significant strides to address gender issues; however, there are other issues, which continue to impede efforts made towards gender equality in Barbados.

Poverty

153. As previously mentioned, extreme poverty is not prevalent in Barbados. However, the country does suffer from pockets of poverty, and these are comprised of certain strata of society which exist at a comparatively high risk of falling below the poverty line.

154. Barbadian women comprise 44 percent of heads of households. As breadwinners of single-parent families, many of them support multigenerational or extended families. The general increase in the size of the average family due to population growth, increases the burden of care on the adult female Barbadian. In addition, women have not overcome the barrier of unequal pay structures for work of equal value, particularly in the private sector. Meeting the cost of affordable housing also continues to be a critical issue facing working women. All of these factors increase the Government's concern for the adult female working population of Barbados.

Gender-based Violence

155. Rape and domestic violence continue to be a societal concern. The 1992 Domestic Violence Law specifies the appropriate police response to domestic violence, and is intended to protect all members of the family, including men and children. The Domestic Violence Law applies equally to marriages and to common law relationships, as officials of law enforcement and the courts are being sensitized continuously to the needs of survivors of sexual assault and abuse.

156. However, the efforts of the Government and human rights groups are impeded by the reluctance of victims of sexual assaults, domestic violence, incest, and rape to report such incidents.

157. The Business and Professional Women's Club, an affiliate of the National Organisation of Women, runs a crisis centre which has a hotline for victims who wish to maintain their anonymity. The Government, in turn, has funded a shelter for battered women, which is operated by NGOs and accommodates up to 20 women and children. The shelter offers the services of trained psychological counsellors to victims of domestic violence.

158. As more women have moved into the workplace, sexual harassment has become a pressing issue for policy-makers. The Coalition on Sexual Harassment, an advocacy group, has been working with the Department of Labour to develop legislation on

this issue to address the responsibilities of employers and employees in reporting and managing sexual harassment. Women have been afraid to report sexual harassment because they feared victimisation in the workplace.

Men and Masculinity

159. The decisive step to replace the Bureau of Women's Affairs with the Bureau of Gender Affairs arose from the governing party's 1999 manifesto, which stated that "the new Bureau will change the traditional single focus of the Women's Bureau to wider gender issues to ensure that problems facing certain sections of the male population are systematically resolved". This prioritisation of male issues demonstrates Government's commitment to the achievement of sustainable gender balance, and that it has been actively engaged in research on the gender-based issues affecting Barbadian men, including: substance abuse; men and the criminal justice system (men at risk) and parental rights.

Health

160. Communicable and non-communicable diseases have varying impacts on women's health, which must be considered in health planning and policy initiatives. It is acknowledged that future policy should strengthen and further protect the sexual and reproductive health rights of women. Moreover, more attention must be paid to men's health, especially concerning the early detection of colorectal cancers. Men have traditionally been reluctant to use the health care system, particularly specific examination procedures, due to socialization.

Policy Direction

161. In 1992, the Government issued a National Policy Statement on Women; it is recognized that a comprehensive gender policy is needed to advance the cause of gender equality. Over the next two years, the Government will be creating a national policy on gender in consultation with stakeholders and the Centre for Gender and Development Studies at Cave Hill Campus, University of the West Indies.

Challenges

- Strengthen capacity for gender analysis
- Gender must be considered a cross-cutting issue in the pursuit of all of the MDGs and the National Strategic Plan
- Strengthen evidence-based policy-making and programming
- Deepen understanding of the socialization of men

Text Box 5: Media Outreach – Raising Awareness about Gender-based Violence

In recognition of this year's theme for International Women's Day, "Ending Impunity for Violence against Women and Girls", the UNDP Theme Group on Poverty and Gender in Barbados and the OECS, agreed on a media campaign to raise awareness about domestic violence in Barbados.

Initially, two sessions of 'Morning Barbados', a popular local morning television show, were dedicated to the topic. However, the show agreed to extend the media outreach to include a weekly one hour segment for 5 weeks on broad issues within the theme:

- Child Sexual Abuse
- Rape and Sexual Assault
- Sexual Exploitation
- Changing Gender Relations
- The Culture of Sexuality (Child Abuse, Violence against Children and Sexual Assault)

The media outreach was supported by UN agencies, the Bureau of Gender Affairs and the Victim Support Unit. The partnership with the media in highlighting and keeping the focus on such a critical issue is an example of the kind of results UN and country partnerships as well as public-private sector partnerships as outlined in MDG8 can achieve.

**Millennium Development Goal 4:
Reduce Child Mortality**

162. Under Barbadian law, any person under the age of 18 years is considered a child. Barbados has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and is currently working towards developing a national policy on children.
163. Child mortality rates in Barbados have been below global levels for some time. The under-five mortality rate for Barbados is currently 12 deaths per thousand. In 2003, data for the under-five mortality rate in the LAC region stood at 25 deaths per thousand (ECLAC, 2005b: p. 137). Perinatal conditions and congenital abnormalities continue to be the leading cause of death among children under one year. The Ministry of Health is continuing to provide genetic screening and counselling to families in preparation for high-risk births. In addition to neonatal conditions, other causes of death include respiratory diseases and injuries. There are limited cases of HIV/AIDS among children.

Government Initiatives

164. In 2005, the total expenditure on health was seven percent of GDP. Given the country's dependence on a small human resource base, the Government has been committed to delivering quality health services for children and their families. The Government provides budgetary support for the Ministry of Health's operations. Recently, the Government sourced funding from the 9th European Development Fund (EDF) Programme to assist the sector.

Text Box 6: Children's Access to Health Care

Barbadian children have access to a high standard of free health services, which have contributed to low mortality rates among children under the age of five years.

- Free medical attention from publicly-funded polyclinics across the island and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- Free drugs from the Barbados Drug Formulary at participating dispensaries for children under 16 years
- Free dental care is provided up to the age of 18
- Free eye care services are also available up to the completion of secondary school

Parents and children may also access private clinics and hospitals, which provide fee-based medical services.

Government policy has ensured that infants under one year are vaccinated against measles, mumps, Rubella (MMR); diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT); and poliomyelitis. Children receive scheduled immunizations to 12 years. Over 90 percent of the population has received vaccinations against MMR, DPT and poliomyelitis.

Issues in Child Health

165. Having reduced child mortality and the incidence of preventable communicable disease, health authorities are now focusing on health threats relating to lifestyle and child well-being.

Childhood Obesity

166. Higher than expected rates of obesity have already been detected in school aged children aged 11 to 17 years. A life cycle approach is being taken to establish long-term healthy eating habits and promote lifelong physical activity among children to prevent obesity and related disorders in adulthood.

167. The Ministry of Education provides nutritious meals through the School Meals Programme. Several private schools also recommend the provision of nutritious food

choices for students. The Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports recently launched a national health and fitness programme for students, which is in line with the WHO's Global School Health Initiative (GSHI).

168. A multi-sectoral National Commission on Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (CNCDs) was established in February 2007 to focus national attention on the growing epidemic of CNCDs among Barbadians. It is hoped that the Commission will become a model for other Caribbean states which are also experiencing high rates of CNCDs, including obesity.

Substance Abuse

169. Substance abuse is considered a major threat to children's health in Barbados, not to mention a socio-economic developmental issue. In addition to suffering falls or accidents while drinking or using drugs, children can experience developmental delays and cognitive dysfunction. There is evidence to suggest drug abuse can unmask as well as precipitate mental illness. Moreover, early sexual initiation can be a result of drug use. Children can be lured into prostitution to support a habit. Sexually active young people run the risk of contracting STIs and HIV. Young women who use drugs are at risk of becoming pregnant – transmitting HIV to the unborn foetus or causing harm to the unborn child. Children, youth and parents who use drugs can also descend the socio-economic ladder into poverty, particularly when abusers can no longer integrate into productive society. Finally, drug overdoses can result in death.
170. The major legal substance of choice among young people is alcohol, while marijuana remains the major illegal drug of choice. Cocaine-use has been reported, but to a far lesser extent. According to a 2003 study, the average age of first use of alcohol in the 11 to 17 age group is 11 years and the average age of first use of marijuana is 12 years in the same age group (Organization of American States, 2003). These results have prompted further investigations into knowledge of substance abuse as well as usage among the primary school population.
171. The National Council on Substance Abuse (NCSA) operates an island-wide drug use prevention education campaign, which targets all public and private primary and secondary schools. Sanctioned by the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, educators and volunteers use a variety of holistic, child-centred and age-appropriate strategies to educate children as young as 4 years about the dangers of drug use. In addition to drug prevention education, some aspects of the programme include discussion of peer pressure, self-esteem and HIV/ AIDS prevention. Recently, the innovative mobile Life Education Centre (LEC) was launched which visits primary schools to educate children about making healthy life choices, including eating well, exercising and not drinking alcohol.

Child Protection

172. The Child Care Board is responsible for care and protection of children. Child abuse cases are handled through a management system to which physicians, law

enforcement, teachers and social service representatives have access. However, there are constraints that hinder the prosecution of suspected offenders, such as refusal of children to testify; lack of cooperation by parents, and long delays in the court system. In 2005-2006, 277 children were reported physically abused and 226 children were sexually abused. Females accounted for 204 of reported sexual abuse cases (see Text Box 6: Child vulnerability in Barbados, page 45).

Text Box 7: Child Vulnerability in Barbados

In 2005, the Governments of Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines conducted Child Vulnerability Studies to fulfil their obligations to children in terms of the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/ AIDS, the MDGs and other international and regional instruments. UNICEF provided financial and technical assistance to the project.

The study incorporated a random survey of 784 households in Barbados; focus group discussions/ interviews and literature reviews of existing data.

The Government was made aware of several concerns regarding the vulnerability of children (UNICEF Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, 2006):

- 3 out of every 20 children in Barbados live in households that sometimes, rarely or never have enough food ("food-insecure" households)
- Although health and social services are available, poor families feel there is a stigma associated with accessing them
- Respiratory disease among the leading causes of hospitalization for children under 5 years
- More facilities, specialized staff and better teacher-training for educating children with disabilities; more support services for parents with disabled children
- Monitoring of children's health
- High proportion of children were victims of physical abuse
- Children under 12 years are most vulnerable to neglect; while adolescents are vulnerable to sexual abuse
- Legislative ambiguities regarding child labour

Policy Direction

173. Over the next two years, the Government will be:

- Strengthening the nutritional surveillance for over and under-nutrition in the under-five age group
- Developing and promoting nutritional and physical fitness standards
- Producing a comprehensive, multisectoral approach to drug abuse (the Draft Barbados National Anti-Drug Plan 2007-2012)
- Creating a national policy on children

Challenges

174. In order to maintain the gains the Government has achieved in preserving and protecting child life over the past forty years, Barbados must:

- Sustain quality health care provision for children
- Emphasise prevention of nutrition and lifestyle-related disorders
- Address socio-cultural attitudes and behaviour towards substance abuse, particularly alcohol use
- Strengthen child protection legislation, social services and human resource capacity

Millennium Development Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

175. Barbados' maternal mortality rate is one of the lowest in the region at 0.9 per 1000 live births. However, the Ministry of Health recognizes that one death influences the rate significantly and will seek to employ measures to ensure that maternal deaths are prevented. One hundred percent of births are attended by specialized personnel.

Government Initiatives

176. The Maternal and Child Health Programme provides services to monitor progress throughout pregnancy. Women are encouraged to attend free antenatal health clinics, which provide:

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| ▫ Routine care | ▫ Family planning services |
| ▫ Counselling | ▫ Child health services |
| ▫ Medical screening | |

177. Free postnatal care is available at polyclinics. Women also receive information about the benefits of breast-feeding. HIV-infected mothers have access to the pMTCT programme to prevent transmission of the virus to newborns.

178. New mothers also have access to maternity benefits and grants from the contributory National Insurance Scheme (NIS).

Text Box 8: The PMTCT Programme for HIV/ AIDS-infected new mothers

The Government provides free antiretroviral (ARV) treatment to prevent the transmission of the HIV to newborns. The pMTCT programme has been successful in reducing mother to child transmission of HIV. The paediatric department at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) reports that prior to the ARV protocol, the rate of MTCT of HIV in Barbados was 34.9 percent (1990-1995). After the introduction of the protocol, the rate fell to 5.8 percent (1996-2000). In 2004, it stood at 3.1 after the availability of HAART at the national level.

Approximately 3000 pregnant women are screened for HIV infection every year and an average of 36 persons test HIV positive.

The success of the pMTCT programme has been attributed to:

- The system of universal testing
- Availability of antiretrovirals
- The capability to do monitoring through viral load testing and CD4 counts
- A good system of follow-up with clients before and after delivery
- The early establishment of the pMTCT programme in 1995
- Infant feeding practices

Challenges

- Poor attendance by HIV-infected women for medical care and treatment (at LRU the mean attendance of antenatal mothers is 61 percent)
- Under-utilisation of family planning services by clients and under-lying economic issues that fuel the epidemic
- Lack of counselling and social systems for HIV-infected children who are now adolescents and experience stigma and discrimination due to their HIV status

Issues in Women's Health

179. Although Barbadian women have access to quality prenatal and postnatal health care, efforts must be made to increase awareness of other health issues that affect the health of women throughout their lives.

Early Detection

180. The life-cycle approach suggests that sexual, reproductive and overall health are important determinants of the well-being of women and their families. On-going early screening of HPV and other STIs is necessary to promote earlier treatment and prevent transmission. Early detection of breast, ovarian and other cancers can also improve health outcomes and survival. Barbadian women also face increased risk of developing cardio-vascular disease, hypertension, obesity and diabetes, which can have detrimental impacts on productivity and income-generation for women.

Policy Direction

181. The Government is:

- Developing a comprehensive policy on reproductive health in addition to a framework for prenatal and post partum care
- Drafting PMTCT Guidelines and National PMTCT Treatment Guidelines to identify the roles and responsibilities of agencies and health care personnel and to identify the modules of the National PMTCT Training for Barbados

Challenges

- Strengthen evidence-based policy and programming
- Improve sexual and reproductive health
- Strengthen follow-up services for HIV-infected mothers beyond the perinatal period

**Millennium Development Goal 6:
Combat HIV/ AIDS and Other Diseases**

6.1 HIV/ AIDS

182. The Caribbean region has the second highest HIV/ AIDS prevalence in the world after Sub-Saharan Africa. It is estimated that 1.8 percent of Barbados population is infected with HIV/ AIDS. Sexual intercourse is the most common form of transmission. Early sexual initiation; multiple partners; inconsistent used of prophylactics and transactional sex contribute to infection. Though 1.8 percent seems small in the context of rates above 30 percent in parts of the world, what should be noted is who makes up this group, which is almost solely young Barbadians. Furthermore, given the stigma attached to HIV and AIDS, this number represents those who have been tested and is not a true representation of the number of persons who may be affected by the epidemic.

183. The epidemic is likely to have serious consequences for the already limited human resources available in Barbados with long-term productivity likely to be impacted. Certainly, the care and treatment for those infected with HIV/ AIDS has implications for a resource-constrained health sector and also for the families of those affected. The epidemic has the potential to reverse the gains Barbados has made in human development. Moreover, stigma and discrimination can lead to the deterioration of family networks, homelessness and poverty.

184. HIV and AIDS have economic, social and gender-based dimensions – all of which need to be addressed if the spread of the disease is to be reversed. Barbados is also aware that a seemingly low prevalence rate is no justification for comfort. All

countries which have seen spiralling rates of prevalence had similar rates at some point in their history.

Text Box 9: Characteristics of the HIV/ AIDS epidemic in Barbados

- 15 to 49 age group is the most affected
- More males and than females are infected except in the 15-29 age group
- Number one cause of death in young adults between 15-39 years
- Infection rate among women is growing among the 15-24 age group
- Estimated 200 orphans and vulnerable children as a result of HIV/ AIDS

Government Initiatives to Control the HIV/ AIDS Epidemic

185. In recognising the serious socio-economic effects that the epidemic may have on Barbadian society, the Prime Minister has included HIV/ AIDS in his portfolio to give high-level visibility to the issues surrounding HIV/ AIDS and to coordinate the multi-sectoral response to the epidemic. A new National Strategic Plan, 2007-2012, which is currently being finalized, will guide multi-sectoral HIV/ AIDS programming efforts and partnerships.

186. From 2001, the Government has committed US \$50 million over a five year period to the Expanded National Response. This represented a scaling-up of the HIV and AIDs response which had been initiated in the mid 1980s. The Government also secured a loan for US \$1.5 million from the World Bank's Multi-country HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Adaptable Program Lending (APL) for the Caribbean region (see Text Box 14, page 82). The Government of Barbados has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Clinton Foundation to obtain ARVs at reduced rates.

187. In 2004, 89 percent of financing for HIV/ AIDS programming came largely from public funds and World Bank loan (BDS\$ 9.1 million). Private sources contributed nine percent of funding and two percent came from foreign sources. Bilateral agency funding contributed only 0.2 percent. Barbados' status as a middle-income country has prevented the Government from attracting multilateral and bilateral funding for HIV/ AIDS programming. This is a source of deep concern for the Government.

The National HIV/AIDS Commission (NHAC)

188. The NHAC, which was established in 2001, is the central coordination authority of sectors and partners responsible for HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and treatment. Current stakeholders include representatives from the private sector, media, youth groups, and people living with HIV (PLHIV), faith-based organisations, unions, NGOs, employers and medical experts.

189. Engagement with civil society, particularly with PLHIV, has been a critical component of the multi-sectoral response. PLHIV have been represented on successive National Committees and Commissions since 1995. CARE Barbados (Comfort Assist Reach out Educate) has been a key advocacy group for this community. The NHAC provides funding for CARE, UGALAAB (United Gays and Lesbians against AIDS Barbados) and ASOB (AIDS Society of Barbados). Recently, the NHAC has strengthened partnerships with FBOs to help scale-up prevention strategies and awareness.
190. It should be noted that the Government has been committed to addressing HIV/AIDS and other life threatening illnesses. Recent Social Partnership agreements between government, employers' representatives and workers' representatives have focused on disease and discrimination in the workplace. The NHAC supports and encourages the formation of HIV/ AIDS Core Groups in all Government ministries to focus the response to HIV and AIDS. Core Groups, inclusive of representation from the PLHIV community, are required to meet once a quarter.
191. The NHAC is currently negotiating a national Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework for current strategies based on support provided by UNAIDS Regional Support Team 2007-2012. The M&E framework is will strengthen inter-sectoral collaboration, thereby reducing the incidences of programme duplication and fragmentation (National HIV/ AIDS Commission, 2006: 2).

Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS Programme (PANCAP)

192. Regionally, the Government is working in a coalition with CARICOM states, regional and international partners called PANCAP. There are over 70 institutions in its membership. The mechanism provides an integrated and accelerated regional response to the AIDS epidemic in the Caribbean and has been identified as an UNAIDS best practice. International donors are working through this CARICOM mechanism to deliver important aid, to which Barbados would not have access as a middle-income country if it were not a signatory to PANCAP.

Prevention Strategies

193. In 2005-2006, the Behaviour Surveillance Survey of Youth identified the following HIV risk factors, such as: early sexual initiation, multiple sex partners and inconsistent condom use. The mean age of first sexual intercourse was 15.4 years (which is below the age of consent). The survey also revealed that 30 percent of sexually active young people had more than one sexual partner in the preceding four months. With these statistics in mind, the delivery of prevention education and Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) for youth remains priorities for educators. Youth and adults are being encouraged to delay their first sexual encounter (abstinence); be faithful with one consenting partner and use safer sex practices.
194. The Community Development Department operates 14 HIV/AIDS Community Committees, which provide a number of projects and other activities to sensitize and educate communities about the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, safer sex practices,

changing attitudes and minimizing high risk behaviours. Committee members are trained by health personnel. The Division of Youth Affairs operates three Community Committees.

195. The media is also used to spread HIV-prevention messages. The NHAC recently used an extensive media campaign during Cricket World Cup, to spread the message of using safer protection to the local and visiting population.
196. Efforts are also being undertaken to strengthen partnerships with Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) by establishing a multi-dimensional faith-based group chaired by the Anglican Bishop of Barbados. FBOs have also accessed technical and financial assistance for HIV-related faith-based forums and activities, such as the Sex Survey conducted among some FBOs. Churches are natural advocacy mechanism for reaching out to all age-groups on HIV and AIDS and some churches have already undertaken some awareness efforts. It is recognized though that these could be strengthened and the NHAC will initiate a programme for Barbados with outreach to other OECS countries to integrate them more fully into efforts to upscale prevention, care, treatment and support.

Text Box 10: Access to HIV/ AIDS Care and Treatment

The Ministry of Health is responsible for the clinical prevention, treatment and care of PLHIV. There are several treatment options for HIV/AIDS-infected persons, primarily through the Ladymeade Reference Unit (LRU), which has been operating since 2002:

- Access to free antiretroviral drugs
- Prevention and treatment of opportunistic infections
- Reduction of mother-child transmission (MTCT)
- Post-exposure prophylaxis (occupational/ non-occupational)

Ninety-five percent of HIV-infected men and women have access to antiretroviral therapy. Over 90 percent of HIV-infected mothers receive treatment to reduce MTCT.

Several health and social services are available for PLHIV:

- Critical care for advanced cases
- Domiciliary care programme: The Elroy Phillips Centre (hospice facility)
- Crisis intervention
- Community health nurses
- Nutrition counselling and food bank
- AIDS Information Centre and AIDS Hotline

The QEH AIDS Management Team (AMT) and some community-based organisations offer support services and counselling for PLHIV.

Issues in Combating HIV/ AIDS

197. The Government has developed a comprehensive strategy for the continued prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. However, several issues have constrained efforts to reduce infection rates.

Poverty and HIV/ AIDS

198. The various MDGs are intricately linked to each other, with the set of relationships between the MDGs on poverty and HIV/AIDS being the most profound. Impact studies globally have demonstrated that poverty drives HIV and AIDS; and HIV and AIDS can be a driver of poverty. Poverty in developing and in middle income countries is a multidimensional phenomenon, embracing marginalization, deprivation, social exclusion and inequity – all issues which can lead to risky behaviour or vulnerabilities in negotiating safe or safer sex and relationships.

199. The most vulnerable groups, women, youth and Persons with Disabilities often encounter challenges negotiating safer sex with partners and as such are at increased risk of HIV-infection. Although the Government provides free treatment for HIV/ AIDS, it is recognised that without constant vigilance, training and legislation, PLHIV can easily slip into poverty through job loss based on discriminatory practices in the workplace and in the provision of other services. Cross-country studies show relationships between AIDS and declining household wealth; not to mention, that continued mortality increases the dependency ratios as children and elderly are left behind. Nutrition of children can be compromised in HIV-affected households given the limited, reduced or non-existence of resources and also the increasing demands on household income for nutrition to support use of ARVs.

Gender and HIV/ AIDS

200. Gender stereotypes and constructions of femininity and masculinity are linked and help better understand vulnerability in the context of HIV/ AIDS. As young women become more vulnerable in the HIV/ AIDS epidemic, unequal gender relations are increasingly being seen as the root causes and consequences of HIV/ AIDS. Gender relations shape sexual behaviour, social attitudes, economic position, degrees of empowerment and vulnerability affecting both men and women's choices and sexual behaviour. Women and girls are not usually in a position to negotiate safe or safer sex with men; whereas, for men and boys sexual activity is tied to notions of pleasure, power and freedom. For Caribbean men and boys, demonstrations of sexual prowess, "promiscuity", and "productivity" (i.e. fathering babies) are often central to contemporary definitions of masculinity.

201. Gender-based violence limits women's ability to demand safe sexual practices, and sometimes disclosing HIV partners and/ or third parties may increase the risk of violence. Female sex workers who are stigmatised are also not in a strong position to seek information about safer sex and to negotiate safely with partners.

Barriers to Reducing Transmission

202. Stigma and discrimination continue to be barriers to surveillance and treatment of HIV/AIDS in Barbados, particularly among high-risk and vulnerable groups, such as men who have sex with men (MSM), sex workers (SW), prisoners, youth, Persons with Disabilities, migrant workers. Some evidence indicates that infection rates are growing among these groups; however studies are being conducted to provide more understanding of how the epidemic affects these groups.

203. Research has indicated that Barbadians possess a high level of HIV/AIDS awareness. However it is long recognized, particularly in this field, that knowledge is not enough to change behaviour. The Health and Family Life Education programme, which starts at school age, has been in existence for the past three years. However, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and BCC have been the focus of recent efforts in the last year. The new Strategic Plan focuses increasingly on BCC and on prevention efforts.

Policy Direction

204. Some of the proposed activities which will be undertaken in the next two years include:

- Develop legislation to register and investigate reports of discrimination against persons living with HIV/AIDS.
- Conduct more research on HIV/AIDS in vulnerable sectors and productivity
- Conduct an educational awareness programme focused on HIV/AIDS and other life threatening diseases in the workplace
- Ensure that employers consider the needs of employees affected by HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening diseases
- Expand the number of HIV/AIDS Community Committees to provide community-based prevention education

Challenges

- Government is endeavouring to reach the goal of universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010. However, there are major challenges to the National AIDS Programme (NAP):
- Implementation of the Monitoring and Evaluation framework
- Sustainability of existing programmes (i.e. long-term provision of drugs and access to second-tier drugs given high costs, sustainability of training programmes for long-term response)
- Capacity-building in a resource-scarce environment
- Development of a treatment policy for PLHIV who are non-nationals
- Limited access to international development assistance due to discriminatory income-based eligibility criteria (i.e. Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria)
- Including more effective communications for behaviour change (especially amongst children, youth and young women)
- Translating high levels of knowledge into positive health-seeking behaviour
- Strengthening the private sector response
- Addressing stigma and discrimination and encouraging more testing and access to free services

6.2 MALARIA AND OTHER VECTOR BORNE DISEASES

205. Malaria does not pose a major health risk to Barbadians. Reported cases are limited to visitors and returning migrants. However, local officials have been concerned about the increased number of malaria cases in the region. Malaria is not endemic to the island, but the Ministry of Health has issued relevant travel warnings and advisories for regional travellers. Officials have also increased efforts to diagnose and control the disease to prevent similar outbreaks in the country.

206. Incidences of other vector-borne diseases, such as dengue fever and leptospirosis, are of concern. Vector control programmes are in place to help cut the rate of infection. Ministry of Health officers, for example, conduct regular visits to inspect drainage and refuse facilities on properties. Public education programmes are also in place.
207. Drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis are also of concern to the Government, especially as co-infection complicates HIV/ AIDS treatment. The proportion of Tuberculosis cases detected and cured under the Directly Observed Treatment and Short Course (DOTS) programme, decreased from 19 cases in 2004 to 12 in 2005.
208. The Government is aware of the impact global outbreaks of SARS and avian influenza can have on the country's tourism-based economy. In 2005, the Ministry of Health developed a plan with multiple stakeholders to evaluate strategies to address the threat of the H5N1 virus (avian influenza).

6.3 NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

209. The Government has been concerned about the increasing incidence of lifestyle diseases, including obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease, among the Barbadian population. High rates of obesity have been detected in the Barbadian population, and high rates of overweight and obesity are especially worrying among children. Type-II diabetes is now considered an epidemic in the region. Complications from diabetes contribute to cardiovascular disease, kidney failure, amputations and sight-impairment. Deaths from cardiovascular disease and hypertension are three to four times more common in Barbados than in North America (Caribbean Commission on Health and Development, 2005: 3).
210. Costly therapies and medical procedures associated with renal failure, diabetes and heart disease, place significant stress on the country's publicly-funded health care system. Education, promotion of physical activity and better nutrition are key to preventing illness and death caused by lifestyle diseases. The increase cost of morbidity can challenge the Government's development programme.

<p>Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability</p>
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7.1 INTEGRATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES IN POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

211. In 2002, the National Commission on Sustainable Development (NCSO) and the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment finalized the Barbados Sustainable Development Policy (BSDP). The BSDP is based on principles adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Brazil, 1992), UN Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States (Barbados, 1994)

and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002.

212. Goal 4 of the National Strategic Plan includes sustainable development principles to strengthen the physical infrastructure and preserve the environment. The Government has also embarked on "Greening" the economy, whereby sustainable development principles would cross-cut several sectors of the national economy, such as construction, transport, retail and housing.
213. Sustainable development principles have also been integrated into Barbados' Physical Development Plan, which ensures that land usage would be managed in such a way that land and natural resources are protected and conserved.

7.2 MAINTAINING BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

214. As a SIDS, Barbados has fragile ecosystems, which are highly vulnerable to natural disasters and external threats from the introduction of invasive biological agents such as plants, animals and microbes. As a cruise tourism destination, Barbados' marine ecosystem is particularly vulnerable to invasive species facilitated through 'greywater' dumping by cruise ships.

Government Initiatives

215. Barbados has designed a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) in conjunction with UNEP and GEF to satisfy its obligations as a signatory to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. The NBSAP notes the need for the following:
- Legislation and regulatory policies for marine and terrestrial biodiversity conservation
 - Institutional capacity for management and conservation of biodiversity (including Government and NGOs)
 - Identification of threats to biodiversity (i.e. habitat loss)
216. The objectives of the NBSAP call for the mobilization of financial resources; strengthening institutional capacity for management; conducting essential research; revising/ formulating policy; and promoting sustainable development principles.
217. The completion of the Gully Ecosystems Management Study has helped to identify conservation issues and strategies to protect the island's terrestrial biodiversity. Marine biodiversity conservation has been protected in fisheries policies. This will be a priority issue for marine management authorities in the future.
218. Barbados has recently undertaken a project in collaboration with UNEP-GEF to formulate a National Biosafety Framework, which will include the drafting of legislation, developing existing laws and creating administrative systems.
219. Barbados is also a part of the Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management in the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean (IWCAM)

project which will assist Caribbean SIDS in finding integrated multisectoral approaches to management of the island's freshwater and coastal water resources and habitats.

220. Barbados is signatory to the several international instruments which are relevant to biodiversity conservation:

- Convention on Biodiversity
- Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
- Convention of the Law of the Sea
- Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region
- Protocol Concerning Cooperation in Combating Oil Spills in the Wider Caribbean Region
- Convention to Combat Desertification
- UN Fish Stocks Agreement
- FAO Compliance Agreement
- International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

7.3 ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

221. The Government has committed to having renewable energy account for 30 percent of the island's primary electricity by 2012. However, due to the high price of fuel imports, it is trying to achieve this target in a shorter time period. Bagasse and solar water heaters contribute 15 percent of the island's primary energy supply. Currently, the Government is looking to expand the number of sources of renewable energy, which will include wind energy and fuel cane.

Government Initiatives

222. A feasibility study was carried out to build a wind farm in the north of the island. Barbados Light and Power projects that the facility could generate as much as 26 million KWh annually. Given the current price of fuel imports, the facility could save \$4.6 million a year.

223. A Fuel Cane Power Generation feasibility assessment was also carried out. A 30 MW plant could generate 263 million KWh and reduce the fuel import bill by US \$29 million per year. A project unit will be established in the Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC) to prepare a pre-investment plan and budget for the implementation of a fuel cane power generation project. The project is projected to come on stream in 2008.

224. According to the Draft Barbados National Energy Policy, Government is looking to introduce gasohol to Barbados based on a 10 percent ethanol to gasoline mix. Under the reform of the sugar industry it intends for approximately 14.7 million litres of ethanol to be produced annually to meet that requirement. The levels of ethanol

content in the gasoline are to be progressively increased over the 20-year design period. Recognizing that ethanol can be used in the production of biodiesel, Government has pledged to encourage further investment in ethanol production.

225. Barbados consumes approximately 100 million litres of diesel annually. Government has also proposed in the draft policy to mandate two percent biodiesel content for all diesel fuelled vehicles by 2012. This will be increased to 10 percent by 2025. An estimated 4.5 million litres of used cooking oil is generated annually, which can be converted into biodiesel and Government has expressed the intention of providing incentives to the private sector to encourage it to develop the biodiesel industry.
226. Barbados has estimated natural gas reserves of 141.4 million cubic metres, but an annual consumption of 29.17 million cubic metres. With national supplies expected to run out in the next five to fifteen years, Government has turned its attention to its oil-rich neighbour Trinidad and Tobago as a source of natural gas. Cabinet recently approved the importation of gas through the pipeline being constructed by Trinidadian private company Eastern Caribbean Gas Pipeline Co. The pipeline is designed to deliver gas from Tobago to Barbados, St Lucia, Martinique, Guadeloupe and Dominica. The Minister of Energy and the Environment has stated that the increased volume of gas (between 30 million and 40 million cubic feet a day) would allow the national grid to expand in the first five years to supply a further 13 000 households across Barbados with natural gas, while guaranteeing security of supply to the Barbados Light & Power, which is in the process of constructing an 80-megawatt generation plant at Trens, St. Lucy capable of using natural gas.

Policy Direction

227. The Government is looking to increase energy-efficiency by promoting energy-efficient technologies and usage. The Government has recently turned its attention to energy conservation and efficiency in sectors of the economy to promote its vision of "Green Economics". Initiatives in these sectors will include incentives to:
- Manage/ minimize solid waste; promote recycling and separation
 - Promote "Green" building techniques and standards
 - Use alternative fuels/ renewable energy (tax incentives)
 - Purchase "Green" products i.e. solar pumps, solar lights, composters; water-storage/ saving devices
 - Energy conservation in the public sector
229. The Government has also committed to:
- Implementing economic incentives to promote energy conservation; efficient energy use; promoting renewable energy sources
 - Introducing standards for efficient energy use in technologies
 - Encourage the large-scale generation of energy using renewable sources
 - Promoting research and development into renewable energy

- Implementing disaster management initiatives to mitigate against climate change

Challenges

- Acquiring supportive technologies to decrease the country's reliance on imported fossil fuels
- Increased costs due to large capital investments in technology and infrastructure and on-going maintenance
- Building capacity for utilisation and maintenance of technology and infrastructure
- Access and availability of affordable technologies and products
- Developing technologies and products that are appropriate for the region

Text Box 11: Building on Barbados' Tradition of Innovation in Solar Energy**The Solar Water Heating Industry**

Barbados has been a pioneer in solar water heating in the Caribbean for the last 30 years as a result of concessions granted by the Ministry of Finance, which enabled manufacturers to import materials duty-free, and provided consumers with partial or full tax deductions for the cost of the heaters. Well over 30,000 solar water heaters are installed in homes, commercial businesses and hotels across Barbados. This has benefited the environment; saved consumers money; minimised foreign reserve losses; encouraged entrepreneurship; and created employment opportunities. Moreover, the success of the industry has helped the country and the rest of the Caribbean to realize the need to develop appropriate technology for the region.

The solar water heating companies operating in Barbados are Solar Dynamics, SunPower and AquaSol. Government officials have estimated that these companies have the potential to earn at least another \$20 million in product sales per year from the rest of the Caribbean given that a study carried out by the CARICOM Secretariat's Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Project indicated that the Caribbean market potential (product sales and sale of intellectual property) was in excess of \$500 million..

Last year, a group of Barbadian investors backed AquaSol in a joint-venture project with six Nigerian private and public sector entities in the construction of a \$4.26 million solar water heating plant. The company, AKWA SOL Nigeria Limited, is a private sector-driven enterprise with 10 percent equity participation by the Akwa Ibom State Government.

The Solar Energy Model: The Solar Powered House

Minister of Energy and the Environment recently noted that Government spends \$475 million annually in fuel importation, as well as over \$60 million every year in energy costs. Government has embarked on a national energy strategy focused on energy conservation and the promotion of energy generation from renewable sources.

Recently, the Ministry of Energy and the Environment unveiled the first purpose-built solar powered house in Barbados. The model house is powered by photovoltaic panel arrays, which are used to maintain charge in 12 deep cycle batteries to power the house. The batteries generate a direct current (DC) and must be converted to an alternating current (AC) in order for it to be utilised by normal appliances, and this is done using an inverter.

While the cost of a fully-fitted solar house would be higher than that of a standard house, the model demonstrates to homeowners that a high level of fuel energy would be saved.¹ Homeowners could also make money by selling surplus electricity generated to the national grid and Government tax exemptions would assist those who chose solar houses.

1. The estimated cost of a solar house of the variety of the hardwood model put on display was between \$60 000 and \$80 000; plus \$25 000 for special energy efficient features; plus between \$20 000 to \$30 000 for solar electric systems.

7.4 REDUCING CARBON DIOXIDE EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

228. Barbados fulfils its obligations as a signatory to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) through the Sustainable Energy Policy. The combustion of fossil fuels for electric power generation is the chief emitter of carbon dioxide in the island.

Climate Change

229. It is cruel, yet ironic that while SIDS contribute the least to the problem of climate change, they are the most adversely affected and the least able to protect themselves.

230. Barbados, like other SIDS, has taken extensive steps at the national and regional levels to develop and implement climate change adaptation strategies and plans, using for the most part its own resources. Despite this however, the best adaptation strategies and plans will be meaningless in the absence of decisive global action to significantly reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions and comprehensively address climate change.

231. With the release of the IPCC's 4th Assessment report, there is now scientific certainty that the opportunity to avoid irreversible and potentially unimaginable damage will be lost, if urgent and ambitious global efforts are not taken now. Barbados is of the opinion that there is now no reason, scientific or otherwise, for delaying an immediate response to the global crisis of climate change.

232. Barbados is also of the view that the international community must attach the highest priority to completing the ongoing climate change negotiations within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on a post 2012 arrangement by the end of 2008. Any new global agreements must lead to the achievement of substantial emission reductions in the shortest time frame possible and significantly increase the level of resources available to vulnerable developing countries, particularly SIDS and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to assist their adaptation strategies.

233. Barbados wishes to urge the international community including the international financial institutions to integrate the concerns of SIDS into their planning processes and policies. It is imperative that the necessary adaptive capacity of vulnerable countries, such as Barbados, be supported so that they are better able to respond and adapt to climate change.

The SIDS Plan of Action

234. The SIDS Plan of Action identifies global climate change as one of 15 critical areas to be addressed in ensuring sustainable economic development in the region. The recently released fourth assessment report by the Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change (IPCC) projected impacts that affected the islands of this region across the agricultural, health and tourism sectors, which can have devastating effects on gains made in human development. Among the projected impacts of climate change on Caribbean countries are:

- Extended periods of drought and reduced soil quality through increasing soil salinisation especially near coastal areas
- Inevitable rise in food importation costs in response to reduced crop productivity in traditional markets
- Extreme events such as hurricanes, floods and drought can lead to severe damage to food and commercial crops
- Serious impact on water supply and island economies if there is any reduction in average rainfall or increase in sea levels (increased salinity in aquifer sources)
- Inundation, erosion and other coastal hazards resulting from sea-level rise
- Negative impacts on coastal ecosystems such as coastal reefs and mangrove forests and commercial and artisanal fisheries based on those systems
- Increase in the incidence of vector-borne diseases such as dengue fever and malaria
- An increased risk of diseases such as cholera, diarrhea and dengue fever due to shortages of fresh water, poor water quality during periods of drought and contamination of fresh water supplies during floods and storms
- Ciguatera fish poisoning due to warmer sea surface temperatures during El Niño events, causing food security issues
- Accelerated beach erosion, degradation of coral reefs and the degradation of the overall asset value of the coast due to sea level rise and increased ocean temperatures
- Changes that will affect vital environmental components of holiday destinations, which could have repercussions for the tourism-independent economies

235. These threats emphasise the need for Barbados to adapt its policies and practices in order to build resilience to climate change. This adaptation strategy must plan for how the economy will be affected by climate change; the impact it will have on our scarce land resources; the effects of more intense storm activity; the need for disaster planning initiatives to take into account shortfalls; vulnerability assessments; coral reef building; and building code monitoring.

Climate Change and Disaster Management

236. Barbados has already begun to shore up its capacity for natural disaster management with the restructuring of its emergency response agency the Central Emergency Relief Organisation (CERO). The organisation is currently conducting a review of its Structure and Operations. One of the main areas of review will be

disaster management legislation, which is intended to give the organisation legal authority. CERO is also reviewing and consolidating its plans and procedures into a National Multi-hazard Disaster Management Plan. The new national disaster/emergency management system is expected to ensure that disaster management policies and strategies become an essential part of the national development and planning process; and provide for suitable infrastructure and governmental authority to embrace the key elements of mitigation and prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

237. The Barbados-based Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) piloted a project from February 2006 to June 2007 in the parish of St Peter on the Adaptation for Climate Change and Disaster Mitigation: Township Planning Strategies for Storm Surge in the Caribbean. The \$430,000 IDB-funded project has two components. The first component involved storm surge risk assessments, action plans for prevention, preparedness and mitigation measures for storm surge hazards, and national workshops for the validation of the methodologies and plans developed for the pilot countries (Barbados and Jamaica). Under component two, an adaptation to climate change storm surges tool kit was developed for dissemination to town planners, emergency managers, community groups and private sector risk providers throughout the Caribbean.
238. CDERA is also undertaking a review of the current instruments and policies for disaster relief and co-ordination in the states it covers with the view to bring cohesion to disaster response and relief coordination. This Model Integrated Relief Programme is expected to form a foundation for the development of national relief programmes in the CDERA member states. Already in existence at a regional level is the Relief Policy and Donations Management Policy promoted by CDERA; the warehouse module of the Search and Rescue programme, which addresses issues regarding storage and maintenance; and the Relief and Supplies Tracking System software, which electronically tracks the process from the issuance of requests to victims' needs.
239. The UNDP has also funded a project for the formulation of Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management plan for territories in the region; which includes funding for early warning systems, zoning regulations and the formulation and enforcement of building codes.
240. CDERA has also initiated a \$1.6 million IDB-funded project on Regional Disaster Risk Management for Sustainable Tourism in the Caribbean, which commenced in January 2007 and is expected to end in June 2009. The project aims to develop and adopt a regional risk management framework for the Caribbean tourism sector that contributes to the overall goal of reducing the vulnerability of the tourism sector to natural hazards.

7.5 ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES

241. One hundred percent of Barbadians have access to an improved water source or potable water; including those who have access to standpipes or water from a neighbour's property.
242. One hundred percent of the population uses improved sanitation facilities. Sewerage projects undertaken recently have increased the percentage of the population which is connected to a sewerage system. There are two sewerage facilities in operation, which service approximately 4500 connections. Many Barbadians use septic tanks and septic wells.

Government Initiatives

243. The Barbados Water Authority (BWA) is responsible for the supply and distribution of water services for the island. In addition to maintaining the island's water system, it promotes public awareness about water conservation. In response to the demand on the island's aquifer system, a reverse osmosis desalination plant is in operation.
244. Alternative water sources are also being encouraged, such as the Integrated Water Resources Management Programme, which promotes the reuse of wastewater for irrigation of sugar cane crops and golf courses. Residential and commercial users are being encouraged to install water storage devices, such as water tanks, to ensure water availability.
245. Of the approximate 90,000 properties in Barbados, 3,000 properties (3.3 percent) are currently serviced by the South Coast Sewerage Project and 1,500 properties (1.7 percent) are serviced under the Bridgetown Sewerage Project.
246. The third and final major municipal sewerage project planned for the immediate future - the West Coast Sewerage Project is expected to connect a further 8,000 properties (8.9 percent) when completed.

Issues in Water and Sanitation Services

247. Barbados is classified by the United Nations as a water-scarce country. Water shortages are frequent in the dry season in some parts of the island. Various sectors of the economy (tourism, agriculture and industry) as well as residential usage place competing demands on limited water resources. There are currently eight mixed-use hotel and residential projects constructed or under-construction along the north west of the island, which are projected to consume a total of 677,000 US gallons per day of potable water and an average of 1.7 million US gallons per day in water for irrigation purposes. Zoning policies to protect the island's water supply are in place, but illegal dumping and chemical run-off can affect the quality of the water table.

Policy Direction

248. Barbados does not currently have a national integrated water resources management plan. However, a draft policy framework was developed in 1997. The closest approximate is a Draft Policy Framework developed in 1997 and approved and was updated in 2002. The approved 1997 water policy and the updated 2002 policy document embody some of the fundamental principles of integrated water re-use management and endorse the reuse of wastewater.
249. The Environmental Protection Department of the Ministry of Housing, Lands and the Environment has been mandated to develop national regulations and effluent quality standards for wastewater reuse. It is estimated that less than five percent of all wastewater collected on the island is reclaimed.

Challenges

- Lack of water conservation ethic in spite of increase in water tariff in 2005
- Technical support including technology to measure water scarcity
- Support for research and development
- Seasonal water shortages
- Conflicts between water for human consumption and other uses
- Developing new sources of potable water
- Proper management of existing water sources

7.6 ACCESS TO SECURE TENURE

250. Barbados has the fifteenth highest population density in the world, which places tremendous pressure on land and resources. Industrial, agricultural and commercial interests as well as residents and non-nationals place competing demands on the limited supply of land. As speculation on the real estate market increases, many low-income Barbadians are feeling increasingly alienated from the housing market. High construction costs are also exacerbating the problems of access and affordability.
251. Barbados does not have slums; however, pockets of poverty do exist where improved housing conditions and security of tenure are needed.
252. The Government recognizes that property is a key asset for the poor and it has made the provision of affordable and appropriate housing a special focus area for development. The Government is committed to achieving the following goals:
- The provision of adequate shelter for all, that is: improving and maintaining acceptable living and working conditions on a sustainable basis.
 - Home ownership and security of tenure for the majority of the population

Text Box 12: Access to Security of Tenure – The Tenancies Programme

Historically, plantation tenancies have provided the labouring class with access to affordable rented land and housing (which many Barbadians owned), albeit without security of tenure, on or near the sugar plantations where many worked. The Tenancies Programme commenced in November 1980 to give security of tenure to householders who were occupying and renting land, within a tenancy, for a minimum of 5 years. The programme is buttressed with legislation, namely the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, Cap 239B, which lists the eligibility criteria and delineates the procedure for qualified tenants to purchase their lot.

Qualified tenants include householders renting land on Government-owned or plantation tenancies. There are 332 such tenancies across the island. House-spots within these particular tenancies (which are listed in the First Schedule of the Act) are sold at the statutory price of \$1.00 per square metre. Some of the features of the programme include:

- Pensioners on Government tenancies receive their conveyance free of cost
- Some 4,627 of the 6,656 (70%) qualified tenants in scheduled tenancies have already received their conveyances and an additional 100 tenants are at various stages of buying their lot

Non-scheduled (or Private) Tenancies

In non-scheduled (or private) tenancies, qualification is based on if there are more than 5 persons renting from the same landlord for the specified minimum 5 year period. If there are less than 6 tenants, their status at 1st February 1990 would determine whether they qualify. At this benchmark date, tenants must be renting for 20 or more years or were renting from 1985 and had done substantial improvements (i.e. some construction in masonry plus having water borne toilet facilities) to be qualified. These tenants pay \$2.50 per sq. ft. to purchase their lot. Government subsidizes the balance of the market sale price for the lot, up to the first 5,000 sq. ft., and if the selling price exceeds \$2.50 per sq. ft.

There are some 10,000 tenants living in private tenancies. Statistics are not immediately available to indicate the quantum of conveyances received by this subset of tenants. Other features include:

- The programme enables some 20% of households in Barbados to become landowners at prices, well below market rates and on affordable terms
- A tenancy's loan scheme was established at the Barbados National Bank to enable tenants to purchase their lot and even improve their home.
- Tenants who encounter problems in purchasing their lot, may apply to the Registrar of Titles, who would assume the duty of the landlord to convey lots to tenants

Challenges

- Tenants dying before completing the purchase transaction which means that beneficiaries would have to take out letters of administration (if the tenant dies intestate)
- Tenants failure to complete the process (by paying the full purchase price) in order to receive their conveyance

Policy Direction

253. The Government will be sustaining all of its current programmes as well as introducing some new policies to assist the poorest Barbadians in accessing affordable shelter. Some of the policies will:

- Provide more housing solutions in the marketplace (i.e. joint private-public property development)
- Provide security of tenure (i.e. sale of rental units)
- Ensure private low-income rental accommodation have the following amenities: running and potable water, waterborne facilities and electricity.
- Ensure that dwellings are structurally sound and safe for habitation and conform to the standards of the Barbados National Building Code
- Encourage large property developers to invest in low-income housing as part of proposed projects
- Continue Tenancies Programme, which allows tenants to buy land at affordable (government-subsidized) prices
- Upgrade urban housing and neighbourhoods to provide better amenities and disaster preparedness. Security of tenure will also be addressed
- Rehabilitate abandoned or vacant properties to make way for suitable housing or greenspace

254. Over the next two years, the government proposes to make over 8,000 lots available and expand the number of housing solutions for Barbadians.

255. The Building Standards Authority will also ensure that new housing construction adheres to strict standards to prevent damage from hurricanes and other natural disasters.

Challenges

256. International financial institutions (IFIs) consider small-scale housing approaches to upgrade housing for the poor in Barbados (i.e. the "boutique approach") undesirable. They are usually in favour of large-scale replication of housing. IFIs view what is acceptable to low-income earners in Barbados and the Caribbean as being too expensive or grand.

257. Additionally, new and existing housing stock must also be made resilient to natural disasters. Repairs to low-income homes can prove costly, particularly when many low-income earners do not have adequate insurance coverage.

There is a need to:

- Convince IFIs to fund small-scale "boutique" approaches to low-income housing
- Sustain, upgrade and repair new and existing housing stock in preparedness for natural disaster

- Ensure that low-income earners have access to adequate insurance coverage

**Millennium Development Goal 8:
Global Partnership for Development**

258. Barbados has consistently expressed the view that the MDGs will only be achieved if the eighth goal of a global partnership for development is fully addressed. Indeed, the successful implementation of MDG8 is a pre-requisite not only for the comprehensive attainment of the other seven goals, but also to make significant progress beyond the MDG targets. However, there is no evidence as yet that the international community has made significant progress in establishing a global partnership for development.

259. Barbados' drive to achieve MDG8 corresponds primarily with two of the objectives of the NSP, namely the need to:

- Strengthen civil society
- Build stronger development partnerships

260. Barbados has been a very active member of regional and international organisations. Delegations attend virtually all of the major meetings, conferences and summits. Barbados hosts six UN agencies at UN House, including the UNDP Sub-regional Office to the OECS and Barbados. The European Commission for the Eastern Caribbean as well as several Embassies and High-Commissions with development programmes are based on the island, and accredited to Barbados and the OECS.

261. The Government is committed to the concept and vision of the UN's global development agenda. In seeking to fulfil this mandate, Barbados has achieved several of the MDGs and has incorporated MDG-plus objectives into its NSP.

262. In an effort to sustain its gains in human development, Barbados has been advocating on behalf of Caribbean SIDS to ensure that the international community is aware of the unique development needs of the region. Caribbean territories are vulnerable to external shocks such as: rising fuel prices; loss of markets/ market access and high transportation costs. Issues regarding environmental sustainability, disaster management and climate change have also been communicated to the international community in the relevant forums.

263. One of the most pertinent observations of the ten-year review of the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Small Island Developing States was the inadequate international cooperation, external resources and technology in implementing the Programme during the past decade 1994-2004.

8.1 TRADE

264. With globalisation and trade liberalisation continuing to impact on Barbados, there is now increased access to Barbados' markets and the erosion of preferential access to overseas markets, which means increased competition for domestic producers and exporters. The challenge is now for Barbadian producers to improve the quality and competitiveness of their goods and services so as to meet international standards or they will fail to capitalise on the putative opportunities afforded by increased market access.
265. Barbados is involved in a number of multilateral and bilateral trade negotiating arenas at the regional, hemispheric and global levels. A signatory to the CSME, Barbados has committed itself to opening its markets to CARICOM states for the free movement of goods, services, capital and labour. It has also embarked on a programme of fiscal reform to achieve harmonisation of its taxes, interest rates and exchange controls with the rest of its CARICOM neighbours. Barbados is also part of the slightly larger trading bloc CARIFORUM (CARICOM plus the Dominican Republic), which is in the final stages of negotiating an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the EU. This EPA would not only guarantee duty free access for local goods to the markets of the EU but, for the first time, it will require Barbados to commit to open its markets to equal access for EU goods, albeit at a slower pace.
266. Barbados already has preferential access to the Canadian markets and the US market for some of its goods through the CARIBCAN and the Caribbean Basin Initiative, respectively. However, with preferential trade arrangements being phased out in accordance with WTO rules, it is possible that these agreements, which both date back to the 1980s, will be replaced with more WTO-compatible free trade agreements.
267. Barbados, like the rest of CARICOM, has lost ground in its access to the US market since the 1994 creation of NAFTA, which encompasses the US, Canada and Mexico. It is hoped that should the currently stalled FTAA be implemented, this would put the Caribbean region on a better footing relative to Mexico in terms of access for its goods to the US. CARICOM, of which Barbados is a member state, has signed bi-lateral treaties with Costa Rica, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Barbados also has 15 double-taxation treaties in force and is at various stages of negotiations with 12 other nations across the world.

Challenges

268. Caribbean states entering into international trade agreements will be challenged to:
- Produce goods and services competitively
 - Achieve and maintain effective market access for goods and services abroad
 - Promote the region's trade interests at all levels

- Implement trade obligations in a timely manner

269. The region will need significant enhanced capacity to undertake the institutional strengthening necessary to enable the effective development of international trade policy negotiation to respond to global challenges.

8.2 ODA

270. Development aid is increasingly being concentrated on the poorest countries in the world. According to the OECD, its DAC country members – the world's major donors – increased their aid to a record high of US\$106.8 billion in 2005. However, in recent years, only 2 to 3 per cent of ODA has gone to countries with per capita incomes above US\$3000, of which Barbados is one. An ECLAC study reports that, in 2004, Africa and Asia received 82 percent of the net development assistance delivered while Latin America and the Caribbean received 10.9 percent (ECLAC, 2006b). IMF statistics show that between 1990 and 2002, ODA to the Caribbean as a percentage of GDP steadily declined from just about 4 percent to 1 percent. While Latin American and Caribbean countries have higher per capita income levels than those of other regions in the world – hence the significantly lower levels of ODA inflows compared to Africa or Asia – the decline in assistance has serious implications for economic growth and development in the Caribbean.

271. Having been graduated as developing country with middle-income status, Barbados no longer has access to a large range of funding mechanisms, which once helped to build and maintain gains in human development.

272. The Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) has benefited from development assistance through multilateral funding agencies. Between 1999/00 and 2005/05 the cost of the PSIP expanded to \$1707.21 million with the main sources of foreign finance coming from the IDB and CDB. IDB contributed 52 percent of foreign aid with \$154.42 million; the CDB contributed 41 percent with \$125.49 million, while the World Bank contributed \$19.59 million or 7 percent.

273. PSIP projected spending over 2005/06 to 2008/09 is for \$1090.8 million and Government has stated that it intends to increase its efforts to have projects financed by the Chinese government, the European Investment Bank, as well as increasing its requests to the CDB. The projects under consideration are mainly infrastructural, environmental, educational and health-related. Unless Barbados is able to attract the requisite ODA necessary, this could reduce the rate at which the island develops because it would be difficult to raise these funds from internal sources without tightening fiscal and monetary policies further.

8.3 SIDS

274. Caribbean SIDS, regional organisations (i.e. CARICOM and the CDB) as well as civil society have been working together to promote sustainable development principles and articulate the concerns of SIDS, particularly in the areas of trade liberalization and the environment. Caribbean SIDS have also expressed their

concern over regional housing issues. Poverty assessment and participatory mechanisms to evaluating poverty are priority areas. However, the SIDS' efforts have been constrained by the international funding mechanisms and priorities.

275. Since the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of the Small Island Developing States, SIDS have taken on the major burden of implementing the Programme, but their activities were seriously hampered due to a lack of financial and other resources including technology, and capacity constraints to undertake what needed to be done. There was also a serious problem with coordination amongst the different stakeholders, including regional bodies, the various UN system and other multilateral organisations that had the capacity and the mandates to get involved in implementing the different facets of the Programme (ECLAC, 2006a).

Text Box 13: Priorities of Caribbean SIDS

Climate Change and Sea Level Rise
Natural and Environmental Disasters
Management of Waste
Coastal and Marine Resources
Freshwater Resources
Land Resources
Tourism Resources
Biodiversity Resources
Communication and Transport
Science and Technology

8.4 DEBT SUSTAINABILITY

276. In seeking to control the country's debt levels, the Government is endeavouring to reduce the ratio of public debt to under 60 percent (the international standard) by 2012.

8.5 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 15-24 AGE GROUP

277. Youth (15-24 years) comprise approximately 17 percent of Barbados' total population (Carter, 2006). Barbados has a relatively low unemployment rate compared to the rest of the region. In the fourth quarter of 2006, the unemployment rate for the entire working population of 142, 000 stood at 7.6 percent. However, like the rest of the region, the youth unemployment rate remains high. In the fourth quarter of 2006, the youth unemployment rate was 16.1 percent.
278. The minimum legal age for employment is 16 years. Based on 2004/2005 Ministry of Education data on expenditure in the education system, it has been estimated that an unemployed 16 year old represents an idle Government investment of \$52,399. In a cohort of approximately 4000 16 year olds, an

unemployment rate of 20 percent constitutes an idle investment of \$41.2 million (Carter, 2006).

Government Initiatives

279. The Government has been addressing youth unemployment through a variety of programmes. The Barbados Youth Service (BYS) encourages youth (16-22 years) to adopt a positive attitude towards life-long learning, work and their environment; creates an environment which enables young people to understand and assume their roles and responsibilities as young people; and prepares those who are trained and skilled to access and initiate employment opportunities. In addition to some academic training, participants can receive training in first aid and water safety. There are also public-private attachment programmes for participants seeking work experience. The Youth Development Programme (YDP) provides HIV/ AIDS sensitization programmes and initiatives in communities.
280. Project Oasis, offered through the Division of Youth Affairs, provides vocational and technical training for "at risk youth" (youth who are out of school, but not in the workforce who may be at risk for involvement in crime – including drug-related offences and drug use). Students in the programme can pursue a variety of courses including, film, mechanics, computer maintenance, electronics, aesthetics, organic farming, small business and cookery. The project has been successful at providing youth with productive pursuits.
281. The Youth Entrepreneurial Scheme (YES) supports those aged 18 to 30 years with a variety of resources and networking opportunities to make their business ideas flourish (i.e. technical assistance, mentorship, financial assistance, accounting and marketing services).
282. The Ministry of Labour has also been integrating principles of decent work into their policies and programmes.

Issues in Youth Unemployment

Youth and Poverty

283. Barbados' unemployment over the last decade has mostly been of the structural nature with youth, women and urban dwellers being particularly affected. These instances of structural unemployment are related to labour market distortions, which are themselves vulnerable to external threats. The poor are generally the most affected by structural unemployment due to lack of skills or low educational levels or a range of other factors that limit their labour market conditions.
284. According to the 2004 Report of the National Commission on Law and Order, there is a common view that young people are particularly disenfranchised in the labour force. The perception voiced to the Commission during its public fora was that young people from poorer socio-economic backgrounds were being discriminated against when job-seeking. There was a sense of disaffection among the young

people who suggested it was their right to be employed and it was the responsibility of Government and the private sector to guarantee that right.

285. According to the Barbados Economic and Social Report 2005, the Poverty Alleviation Bureau found that 472 of the 726 people who applied to it for assistance were eligible for the 546 services requested. Of those interviewed and assessed, 70 were within the 16 to 30 age range.

Seasonal Employment and Informal Sector

286. Policies to combat these conditions must take into account the significant number of Barbadians who are employed in seasonal industries such as sugar and tourism, as well as those who are employed to do informal work in and around houses or construction sites; vending; and even motor vehicle repair.

Underemployment

287. Underemployment of persons aged 15 to 24 years of age will be a challenge to the Government if tertiary-level students continue to graduate at a pace which is not proportionate to the level of job creation and skills-demand in the marketplace.

Challenges

- Evidence-based policies and programming for youth development
- Improvement, expansion and maintenance of current programmes
- Recording official statistics that provide an accurate reflection of these factors (i.e. informal sector) is often problematic. This in turn hinders efforts to procure assistance from the relevant international organisations
- Underemployment of tertiary-level graduates

8.6 ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE ESSENTIAL DRUGS

288. The Barbados National Drug Service (BDS) provides free drugs to children under 16 years and senior citizens over 65 years. It also provides free drugs for the treatment of HIV/ AIDS, cancer, diabetes and hypertension. The service continues to be a model for the distribution of affordable pharmaceuticals in developing countries. In 2005, the BDS was involved in providing technical assistance to other regional countries in the areas of: formulary review and development; drug inspection; and, drug supply management. The country purchases pharmaceuticals regionally.

Text Box 14: Multilateral funding for HIV/AIDS treatment in Barbados

In 2001, the World Bank funded a multi-sectoral HIV/ AIDS Prevention and Control Project that included the scaling-up of antiretroviral (ARV) drug therapy for HIV/ AIDS patients. This project produced positive results and provides some 'best-practices' for middle-income and developing countries in securing international funding for essential projects.

Although Barbados graduated from receiving funding from the World Bank in 1993, the Board of Directors approved Barbados for funding in the larger regional Adaptable Loan Programme (ALP), based on the following (Marquez, 2003):

- Strong leadership role in the region
- Regional centre for technical expertise and health infrastructure
- Transferable development lessons
- Provided a valued public good

Barbados' access, on a national basis, to global funding mechanisms (i.e. the Global Fund) for the supply of ARVs is prohibited because of its designation as a middle-income country. However, the Government is encouraged to learn that Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines (also classified as middle-income countries) have recently been granted access to the Global Fund. Barbados will continue to advocate for access to international funding for ARVs for middle-income developing countries.

8.7 AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY TO ICT

289. The Government recognizes that the incorporation of science and technology in its development strategy will help social and economic advancement and poverty alleviation. Barbados' NSP acknowledges that there is a general under-utilisation of science and technology in Barbados, which has hampered this country's ability to develop new products, create value-added and exploit opportunities in the private or public sector.

Government Initiatives

290. There are currently 57,133 households with computers. Government has set a target of 100 percent access to computers and information and communications technology in its bid to establish an "information economy". The Government has made a commitment to promote and strengthen the application and utilisation of scientific and technological capabilities in all major sectors of the economy through:

- Increased training and development
- Building of institutional capacity
- Popularisation and promotion of science and technology
- Increased access to science education for youth

291. The liberalization of the telecommunications sector in the early 2000s stimulated the growth of the number of competitors and consumers in the marketplace. Barbados has seen its telecommunications market develop from only one provider at the opening of the century to two other mobile license holders and one other licensed domestic carrier.

292. There are a total of 257,596 cellular accounts in use on this island. There are a total of 134,261 fixed lines in Barbados – 92,846 residential accounts and 41,151 business accounts.

Text Box 15: Community-based access to ICT: The Community Technology Programme (CTP)

In its bid to bridge the “digital divide” for Barbadians, the Ministry of Social Transformation has committed ICT resources and facilities to communities across the island. The Government recognizes that the key to creating a competitive society is to provide access for all of Barbadians regardless of age or ability to use ICT.

The Community Technology Programme (CTP) is one aspect of the national strategy to produce a technologically literate human resource base. The primary goal of the CTP was to “provide effective access to technology and the Internet by economically disadvantaged community members”. The CTP was introduced in 2002 and is administered by the Community Development Department (CDD).

The programme is administered in 14 Community Resource Centres and schools in seven parishes. The following free services are provided:

- Basic software and computer literacy training (including GCF Global Learning)
- Internet access and research

The latest available figures (February 2005) show that 5,364 persons (aged 7 to 75 years) have graduated from the programme.

Challenges:

- Sustainability of the programme
- Shortage of human resources to operate the programme
- Geographical spread (not all parishes are served)

Policy Direction

The Government is committed to:

- Establishing a national research and development and innovation centre equipped with modern state of the art facilities and technology by 2010.
- At least one computer per household and at every office desk across the public/ private sector within the next 20 years
- Developing a comprehensive national information and communications policy and establishing the legislative, fiscal and training framework to stimulate the development of information industries

Challenges

293. In view of the growth of the market for ICT since liberalization and the development of the sector, there are still some issues that need to be addressed:

294. Sustainable access to targeted computer training for the elderly, disabled and low-income communities

- Access to affordable high-speed and dial-up connections
- Safe disposal of devices which contain hazardous waste
- Establishment of a comprehensive e-government system

8.8 REDUCTION OF CRIME AND TERRORISM

295. Barbados has a low crime rate relative to the other territories in the region. However, regional aspects of crime, particularly involving drug trafficking and firearms, continue to be threats to national economy. The recently released joint report by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Bank entitled, *Crime, Violence and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean* outlines the serious crime situation in the region.

296. Crime and violence are clearly a development issue – the high rates of crime and violence in the region have direct effects on human welfare in the short term and have effects on economic growth and social development in the long term. Estimates suggest that if Jamaica and Haiti were to reduce their homicide rates to the level of Costa Rica, they would both see an increase of their growth rate of 5.4 percent annually.

297. The document states the strongest explanation for the relatively high rates of crime and violence in the region and their apparent rise in recent years is drug trafficking. The drug trade drives crime through violence tied to trafficking, normalising illegal behaviour, diverting criminal justice resources from other activities, provoking property crime related to addiction, contributing to the widespread availability of firearms, undermining and corrupting societal institutions.

298. To a lesser degree, there is also the creeping phenomenon of what has been branded as "hate crime" in the Caribbean with the growth of violent attacks targeted at the homosexual community. Barbados saw the first documented prosecutions of such a case last year; while in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago over the last six months there have been several incidences of mob attacks on suspected homosexual men. This not only strikes at the heart of social justice, but also poses a challenge in the fight against HIV/AIDS and poverty eradication as some homosexuals could withdraw from gainful employment due to the fear of stigma and victimisation.

Terrorism

299. Barbados understands the role it must play in the international fight against terrorism, particularly considering the impact the 911 terrorism plot had on the country's tourism-based economy. Disruption to the air travel industry had an immediate effect on the economy and it continued to slow for some months after September 11th. Barbadian authorities have been willing to cooperate in the investigation of terror suspects and the global financing of terror. International travel from Barbados to other jurisdictions adheres to international security standards. However, the international community should be mindful that with a small economy, the Government is not in a position to finance large-scale upgrades of security technology or procedures without assistance, especially if those resources would be better directed to regional crime prevention.

Challenges

- Continued active presence of regional and international coordinating agencies
- Intelligence-sharing
- Promote local understanding of regional and international crime as development issues, including drug and human trafficking

C. ATTAINING THE MDGS: BARBADOS AND THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN REGION

300. Barbados is the highest ranking Latin American and Caribbean country in the 2006 Human Development Index (HDI) and is ranked 31 out of 177 countries. Although Barbados' achievements have been laudable, the country is not representative of the region's overall status of progress with the MDGs. Haiti, for example, is ranked 154, and is the lowest ranked country in Latin America and the Caribbean.
301. Barbados shares similar social and economic obstacles that hinder its development with its neighbours in the English-speaking Caribbean. Barbados' attainment of many of the MDG targets must be placed within a regional context in order to locate the achievements and challenges of Caribbean SIDS as well as to help identify strategies to overcome inherent vulnerabilities.
302. Barbados is advocating similar treatment for all countries in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region. The LAC region is a grouping of countries with diverse languages and cultures as well as varying economic and social models and political traditions. More recently, significant efforts have been undertaken to strengthen collaboration and South-South cooperation within the LAC region and in so doing bolster, enable and strengthen development initiatives and sharing of best practices and lessons learnt amongst regional governments.
303. As Barbados' prosperity grows and the Caribbean moves towards greater economic integration, the country is increasingly becoming an appealing destination for regional migrants. Unskilled/ semi-skilled workers and professionals are attracted to the island's higher wages, good governance and social services. The movement of labour presents some challenges for the Government in terms of the sustainability of resources and service provision; multiculturalism and social inclusion; and, law and order. In addition to the growth in undocumented migrants, the island is also a popular re-settlement destination for non-national retirees and other expatriates. Increasing numbers of inhabitants can encumber the island's limited resources and have already begun strain the country's limited land resources.
304. Regional threats to the productive sector include high youth unemployment/ underemployment, HIV / AIDS and other life threatening diseases. With limited economic options, many regional economies rely on their human resource base to contribute to the service-based industries, which fuel economic growth. However, with the productive sector increasingly being affected by high rates of youth unemployment and HIV/AIDS, there are likely to be negative affects on economic growth.

Economic Growth: Barbados and the Region

305. In 2006, the global economy grew at 5.4 percent driven by strong growth in emerging markets and developing countries in Asia. While maintaining buoyancy, IMF expectations are for global growth to moderate to just below 5 percent in 2007

(IMF Regional Economic Outlook – Western Hemisphere, April 2007). Barbados' economic performance remains on par with what is expected for economic growth by the countries of the Western Hemisphere. Annual economic growth for Barbados' major trading partner, the United States, is forecast to slow from its 3.3 percent growth rate in 2006 to 2.25 percent for 2007. Canada, the source of the majority of Barbados' international business community, also experienced an economic slowdown on the back of weaker US activity but is expected to pick up to 2.5 percent over 2007.

306. Latin America and the Caribbean collectively exhibited real output growth of 5.5 percent over 2006, but this is expected to ease to just under 5 percent over 2007 as a result of the continued slowdown in the US economy and some declines in commodity prices. In the Caribbean specifically, growth was supported by the strong performance of construction and tourism. Trinidad and Tobago remained the fastest growing economy in the region as high world energy prices boosted that oil rich economy's growth to around 7 percent in 2006. Economic activity in the region was fuelled by private and public construction expansion over the last two years as it prepared to host the ICC CWC 2007.

Widening Economic Gap

307. While the economies of the Caribbean continue to grow, the purchasing power parity of our regional economies as compared to those of the developing world remains low. According to the IMF, in 2005 Barbados ranked 40th out of 179 IMF members for its purchasing power parity per capita, which stood at US\$18,857. Trinidad and Tobago, this sub-region's fastest growing economy, ranked 46th. In contrast, the United States, this hemisphere's largest economy, ranked 4th with US\$43,444 purchasing power parity per capita.
308. The UNDP's HDR in 2000, showed a widening economic gap between the billion people in the 29 OECD countries and the 582 million individuals in the 43 least-developed countries of the world. The per capita production of goods and services each year in the OECD countries is US\$21,000. In this hemisphere, the annual production of goods and services per capita in Canada and the US is around US\$28,000, while in the 34 Latin American and the Caribbean countries it is about US\$3,830. This widening economic gap and the resultant economic inequality increases social tensions and could pose a challenge to this region's realisation of its development goals, especially eradication of poverty.

<p style="text-align: center;">Millennium Development Goal 1: Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger</p>
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309. Although there have been improvements in the social sector, poverty has not decreased in many LAC countries. In the case of Barbados where extreme poverty and hunger do not exist, issues of social exclusion and inequality are the main concerns. Specifically this relates to social policy and programmes which enable those who can often be left behind or who have specific needs not covered by

general policy frameworks including Persons with Disabilities, the Elderly, Persons Living with HIV and AIDS. The Inter-American Development Bank in its 2005 report suggest that social exclusion and inequality could be the root reasons why many remain in poverty (IADB, 2005: 20).

310. Among the poorest Caribbean countries, such as Haiti, Guyana Jamaica and Suriname, segments of the population still remain in extreme poverty. In an increasingly regionalized political environment for the Caribbean in which all of the above are members of CARICOM, Barbados must be concerned not only with its progress but must also support and strengthen efforts in other countries to ensure that equality and inclusion is achieved throughout the region.
311. Poverty is a characteristic of many Caribbean countries, including Barbados, and continues to be the focus of regional eradication efforts. The current economic environment of trade liberalization has had an adverse impact on smaller island economies, particularly in the OECS. Increased unemployment and slowed economic growth could exacerbate poverty if internationally-supported interventions are not considered (Downes and Downes, 2003: 5).
312. The UNDP-led SPARC initiative will provide an integrated approach to regional governments seeking to strengthen evidence-based policies and programming, given region-wide challenges with data collection and analysis. The programme will help Caribbean governments to understand and respond to the needs of segments of the population who remain in poverty and enable them to be pro-active to within the social sector.

<p style="text-align: center;">Millennium Development Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education</p>
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313. The LAC region has done well to ensure that children have access to universal primary education, and even secondary education is some territories. In the LAC in 2002, for example, the net enrolment ratio for children was 93 percent (ECLAC, 2005b: 82). In the Caribbean region, universal access has been almost fully achieved. However, education systems throughout the region are in need of organisational reform and funding to develop students who will be prepared for the 21st century marketplace. Securing funding for improvements in teacher training, physical infrastructure and technology continues to be a major barrier to delivering quality education to the region's students (IADB, 2005: 6).
314. More governments should also be looking to expand accessibility to secondary and tertiary education in order to develop the skills and expertise required for economic growth and global competitiveness in small developing states. Additionally, international partnerships to open opportunities for access to tertiary education will help to build on the successes of improved access to basic education.

**Millennium Development Goal 3:
Promote Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women**

315. Gender equality and the empowerment of women are being achieved as more women seek and realize opportunities in education and the workplace. Many territories have established bureaux of gender affairs to advocate for and monitor the progress of women and gender mainstreaming.
316. Regionally, women have continued to advance in political participation and representation. The LAC has the highest percentage of women participating in national parliaments in the developing world. However, women should also be represented in top managerial positions, particularly in the private sector (Downes and Downes, 2003: 6).
317. Gender-based violence is a region-wide problem that will require a multisectoral approach to solve (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank, 2007: xiv, 12). Several meaningful changes in society and the law would help to address the high rates of rape and domestic violence in the region.

**Millennium Development Goal 4:
Reduce Child Mortality**

318. Child health in the LAC region has improved steadily over the decades. Immunization rates have also increased as part of regional initiatives to achieve almost 100 percent coverage for certain preventable communicable diseases. Most Caribbean countries including Barbados are well within the global standards. Immunization rates exceed 90 percent for the majority of Caribbean countries and other countries are on their way to reaching 90 percent coverage.
319. Three countries, Guyana, the Dominican Republic and Haiti have the highest under-five mortality rates in the Caribbean. While many Caribbean states are beginning to see disorders related to over-nutrition, the poorest Caribbean nations still have significant rates of malnutrition. Malnutrition in children is also exacerbated by parasitic infection.
320. Access to health care services is a major concern in many countries, but especially in rural areas in larger countries such as Guyana and Suriname, which have higher rates of child mortality. Health care systems across the region suffer similar shortfalls in funding; governments are overstretched by other costly commitments, such as education. However, investments in health care provision will protect the gains made in reducing childhood disease and death (Downes and Downes, 2003: 7).
321. Health systems now face newer threats to child health, such as poor nutrition and obesity. Respiratory illness and some cancers also challenge the existing health

care response. Programmes should focus on promoting healthy lifestyles and food choices for children.

**Millennium Development Goal 5:
Improvement in Maternal Health**

322. The LAC region has a lower maternal mortality rate than Africa, Asia and Oceania, but it is higher than North America and Europe at 190 deaths per 100 000. Since maternal mortality rates did not decrease in the 1990s, Latin America will have to work hard to reduce the rate reach the target of reducing the maternal mortality rate by three quarters between 1990 and 2015. The LAC has one of the highest rates of coverage of births by skilled personnel, but a greater effort is needed to provide quality sexual and reproductive health services (IADB, 2005: 9).
323. Haiti has the lowest percentage of births assisted by specialized personnel in the region at 24 percent, while 100 percent of births in Barbados and Cuba are attended by specialized personnel (IADB, 2006: 12).
324. Collection of maternal health and death data continues to be a challenge for the region (IADB, 2006: 124-125). Provision of quality health services before, during and after childbirth would help to reduce the incidence of maternal mortality (IADB, 2006: 127). Access to sexual and reproductive health information would also help men and women to be knowledgeable about their choices (IADB, 2005: 131).

**Millennium Development Goal 6:
Combat HIV/ AIDS and Other Diseases**

325. The LAC region has one of the most diverse HIV/ AIDS epidemics in the world. Transmission routes and prevalence rates vary regionally. In 2005, approximately 1.7 million people were infected with HIV/ AIDS in the region. Twenty-six percent of those cases were in the Caribbean (IADB, 2005: p. 10). The Caribbean region is second to Sub-Saharan Africa in the incidence of HIV/ AIDS. Four CARICOM countries have prevalence rates over 4 percent, and the highest rates are in countries with tourism-based economies.
326. The epidemic is threatening development gains achieved in the region. Increased health care costs and decreased economic competitiveness will place additional burdens on governments.
327. Region-wide complications to combating the prevalence of HIV/ AIDS in the Caribbean include:
- Limited access to testing and counselling facilities
 - Limited knowledge of behaviour change
 - Stigma and discrimination

- Poor data collection systems
- Decentralized service provision

328. Barbados can serve as a model for the provision of health services and treatment for PLHIV, but maintaining good data collection systems and implementing an effective Monitoring and Evaluation strategy is hindering progress in the development of a comprehensive NAP.
329. Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean malaria mortality rates have fallen, but there are worrying new cases of the disease in some Caribbean territories. Regional efforts to prevent and control malaria would help to prevent cross-territory outbreaks.

Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

330. According to ECLAC, countries in the LAC region face challenges in “promoting innovative solutions and integrated policies that simultaneously generate economic and social well-being, foster productive development and guarantee environmental sustainability”. Moreover, progress in this area has been slow due to the inadequacy of technology transfer; international and national coordination; and, mechanisms for measurement (ECLAC, 2005b: 172).
331. Increasing population growth rates in the LAC region are placing significant pressure on resources. Climate change, land degradation, deforestation and habitat loss are major threats to the region. Access to clean drinking water and sanitation is also a concern in some territories (IADB, 2005: 11-12).
332. Several Caribbean countries have taken measures to ensure environmental sustainability and protect biodiversity. Rapid and widespread regional tourism development has clearly made an impact on the environment. Recreational activities, such as diving and sailing have taken a toll on fragile coral reef ecosystems and nesting behaviour of local species.
333. The Inter-American Development Bank reports an alarming trend in the distribution of ODA for environmental sustainability in several Caribbean countries, particularly in SIDS. In 2002, total ODA resources as a share of GDP were greater than 10 percent in Dominica, Guyana and St. Kitts and Nevis, whereas Trinidad and Tobago represented negative flows (IADB, 2005: 16). Greater emphasis must be placed on securing funding for environmental projects given the region's vulnerability to natural disaster and the potential effects of climate change.
334. Several Caribbean states have accessed funding for environmental sustainability projects under the GEF. Development assistance could be directed to land distribution for the poor; planning of infrastructural development; and implementing an effective natural disaster plan (Downes and Downes, 2003: 9).

**Millennium Development Goal 8:
Global Partnership for Development**

335. In addition to a decline in ODA to the region, there are disparities in regional aid flows. In 2002, 32 percent of the all of the aid to the region was directed to the poorest countries in the region (Bolivia, Honduras, and Nicaragua). However, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Peru are home to 73 percent of the region's poor, but they only receive 28 percent of external aid. Designated as middle-income countries, they do not receive an equitable share of external aid based on per capita allocations. The IDB report recommended that donors fund matching grants to assist those countries in addressing the needs of the poor population. Caribbean middle-income countries share similar problems in accessing external funding (IADB, 2005: 15).
336. The region is also a donor of development assistance. Brazil has initiated South-South partnerships to help finance investments in the social sector, including health, education, and sanitation. It has also provided debt relief to HIPC countries (IADB, 2005: 16). There are ongoing discussions regarding building on Brazil's success with alternative fuels such as ethanol. Equally Venezuela has been in negotiations with CARICOM countries to provide access to oil at cheaper rates than that of the global market.
337. Access to markets still remains a constraint in the liberalized trade environment, especially given the removal of preferential trade agreements between LAC developing countries and the developed world (IADB, 2005: 17). For Caribbean SIDS the impact of this dynamic trade environment is more severely felt.
338. Youth unemployment continues to pose a challenge to regional governments. High unemployment rates do not tell the story of the number of young workers engaged in the informal sector. Moreover, young women (especially among the poorest groups), experience higher unemployment than young men – sometimes twice that of young men. In addition to unemployment in all sectors, graduates from the Caribbean's secondary and tertiary institutions are underemployed – forced to work in jobs they are not compatible with or in part-time employment.
339. According to the IDB, the LAC region is still having difficulty accessing affordable drugs. In 1999, the WHO placed seven LAC countries on its list of at risk nations (where less than 50 percent of the population had access to affordable drugs) (IADB, 2005: 18). Continuing to strengthen South-South cooperation in the provision of affordable drugs, particularly ARVs, would go a long way to helping to bridge the gap in the accessibility to affordable drugs between developing countries and developed countries. Moreover, regional purchasing initiatives have proven successful. Up to 15 Caribbean countries have negotiated to purchase ARVs as a group to take advantage of discounts offered by pharmaceutical companies.
340. Access to ICT has been steadily increasing in the region, especially given the increased competition resulting from the liberalization of the telecommunications

sector. However, unequal distribution of access to ICT within and between countries continues to hinder development in ICT.

II. Way Forward: Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development

Introduction

341. Barbados acknowledges fully that much of the progress the country is making towards the fulfilment of the MDGs and other IADGs could not have been achieved, and will not continue to be sustained without the support of the global community, including all actors and agencies working locally, regionally and internationally. Barbados recognizes that it cannot work on its own and that decisions made globally have an impact locally and regionally. The focus of the Millennium Declaration is primarily on the eradication of poverty and hunger through the removal of inequalities that widen the poverty gaps between the rich and poor, and strengthening global partnerships remains a critical part of this strategy.

Building Resilience

342. Barbados recognises the need to build economic, social and cultural resilience to the vulnerabilities posed by the changing global environment. A major strategy in this attempt to build resilience is the island's need to attract more ODA in the form of technical co-operation, capacity building and direct budgetary assistance. Barbados is challenged in this regard by its status as a middle-income developing country. Barbados is playing a strategic role in strengthening CARICOM and the CSME as its first core of resilience in a globalizing environment. It can leverage its historical connections with Europe and more recent political connections with Africa as well as rapidly growing emerging economies such as China and Brazil to broker greater development assistance through South-South co-operation.

Strengthening Policies and Programmes

343. Barbados is undertaking a number of policy initiatives and programmes to directly and indirectly eradicate poverty and hunger on the island. While Barbados does not have extreme poverty or hunger issues and its success has been in addressing non-income poverty, the challenge remains in sustaining new and existing policies and programmes.

344. In terms of poverty eradication, the Government will be undertaking a poverty assessment to strengthen evidence-based policies and programming. The Government will also continue to address issues surrounding vulnerable groups, such as women, children, the aged and Persons with Disabilities, including formulating comprehensive national policies on these groups.

345. The Government is continuing its reform of the education system, including human resource development, and further work towards the provision of universal ECE and more spaces at the tertiary level, with the over-arching aim of building a competitive society ready for the information age.

346. The Government is developing a comprehensive policy on gender rights and issues aimed at continuing to mainstream gender across all sectors. Moreover, the Government is developing a comprehensive policy on reproductive health in addition to a framework for prenatal and post partum care as well as guidelines for PMTCT treatment for HIV-infected mothers.
347. In addressing the increasing incidence of obesity and substance abuse, the Government will be monitoring over and under-nutrition in children under 5 years; developing and promoting physical fitness and healthy lifestyles; and implementing a national strategy to combat drug abuse.
348. In its aim to understand the nuances of the HIV/ AIDS epidemic on the productive sectors the Government will be conducting research on HIV/ AIDS in vulnerable populations as well as looking at HIV/ AIDS and other life-threatening diseases in the workplace, including legislation to register and investigate reports against PLWHA. It will also be continuing its participation in the PANCAP mechanism for access to low-cost ARVs.
349. Understanding the vulnerability of Barbados as a Caribbean SIDS, the Government is taking its commitment to ensuring environmental sustainability seriously. It has already outlined land usage in the National Development Plan to balance the competing needs of residents, agriculture, tourism and environmental conservation and protection. It will continue to make sustainable development principles central to the country's development strategy. Moreover, the Government is trying to decrease its dependency on fuel imports by diversifying energy sources and pursuing both renewable and non-renewable energy exploration locally. Barbados has been actively building up its resilience to climate change. A Comprehensive Multi-hazard Disaster Plan has been formulated, providing a framework for enhancing disaster preparedness and responses to emergencies.
350. As security of tenure and access to affordable housing continue to be major issues for low-income Barbadians, the Government will be continuing successful programmes and will use innovative schemes to ensure Barbadians have access to adequate shelter. It will also start enforcing minimum standards for disaster preparedness as set forth by the Building Standards Authority.
351. Although attention is being paid to formulating evidence-based comprehensive policy frameworks in several social sectors, the challenge will be in operationalizing policies and strategies and ensuring the efficient, cost-effective delivery of programmes. The sustainability of programmes continues to be a major challenge for Government given its conviction to decrease borrowing and controlling spending. Moreover, the effects of unpredictable external shocks on the country's economy and society remain of great concern.

Strengthening Partnerships

352. With technical assistance and financial support from the UNDP's SPARC initiative and the CDB, the Government is now embarking on collecting and analysing the

necessary data, which will inform policy-making and programming for those segments of the population who remain in poverty. Several key ministries, including the Ministry of Social Transformation, have maintained good working relationships with the UNDP and related agencies. Recognizing that it is not in a position to meet and advocate for the needs of all vulnerable groups, the Government also continues to support the important work of NGOs, such as the Barbados Council for the Disabled and the Salvation Army. In collaboration with other multilateral agencies, some innovative community-based poverty alleviation projects have also met the needs of at-risk communities.

353. UNIFEM and the Centre for Gender and Development at Cave Hill Campus, UWI have been collaborating with the Bureau of Gender Affairs to create a comprehensive national policy framework for gender. UNIFEM has also been an active supporter of initiatives to bring awareness to gender-based violence.
354. The Government will continue to build on the social partnership framework, which involves civil society and private sector in policy-making and commits the two sectors to making progress on several human development issues, including poverty, health in the workplace, ICT development and the environment.
355. Direct budgetary support from funding agencies has helped to alleviate the burden of delivery in the health sector. For example, the EU has made available to the Government a total EUR\$17.5 million under the National Indicative Programmes of the 6th, 7th and 8th EDF. Specifically, Barbados was allocated EUR\$6.5 million in sector budget support under the 9th EDF (2003-2007) for health. Unspent funds from previous EDFs were added to the 9th EDF to bring the total allocation to EU\$10.5 million to the Barbados Health Programme. Budgetary support to this sector helps to sustain continued access to quality health care for all Barbadians.
356. A range of successful partnerships have been fostered in the health sector. As the central coordination authority of sectors and partners responsible for HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and treatment, the National HIV/ AIDS Commission include representatives from the private sector, media, youth groups, PLWHA, faith-based organisations, unions, NGO, employers and medical experts. Other community-based and faith-based groups provide services for PLWHA.
357. The Government has been working at several levels to develop global partnerships with the private sector, civil society as well as bilateral and multilateral agencies. Regional advocacy and negotiation processes have been particularly successful at articulating the needs of Caribbean SIDS in international fora, especially in the area of trade; development financing; accessibility to affordable drugs; and the environment.
358. More work must be done to develop multilevel working partnerships in all sectors and to build on the successes of existing relationships. Ultimately, Barbados must find ways to build and strengthen its global partnerships at the international level towards pursuit of the MDG plus mandate and management of the local challenges that threaten the country's sustainable development. Moreover, developing South-

South partnerships is another way for Barbados to participate in knowledge-sharing and the expansion of trade.

359. At the local level, priority should be given to the provision of models of social partnerships, by collaborative efforts between civil society, the Government, and the private sector. Greater international support would be particularly useful in providing civil society with new avenues to convey their views and proposals, in a way that could effectively inform the Government in the policy-making process. This would include proposals on the National Strategic Plan, the Physical Development Plan and other pivotal programs.

Regional Social Development Framework for advancing the social and sustainable development of Caribbean SIDS

360. The Government of Barbados as well as other regional Governments have been working through regional framework mechanisms to promote their development agenda and address the unique challenges of Caribbean SIDS. For example, PAHO and CARICOM formed the Caribbean Commission on Health and Development in 2003 to increase investment in health programmes, especially targeted to address the HIV/ AIDS and NCD epidemic as well as injuries and violence. The Commission has presented significant findings that have prompted action by policy-makers. However, all of these social development initiatives can be subsumed under the Regional Social Development Framework for advancing the social and sustainable development of Caribbean SIDS.

361. Following two high-level dialogues (the High Level Ministerial Dialogue on Social Security and Sustainable Social Development in the Caribbean, 14-15 June 2006 and the High Level Follow-up Meeting to the United Nations General Assembly 60th Session 2005 World Summit: Strengthening Social Development – the Way Forward for Caribbean SIDS, 13 October 2005), Caribbean Ministers with Responsibility for Social Development, representatives of Governments and Development Partners in attendance at both meetings, contributed to the development of this Social Development Framework.

362. The Framework is to act as a strategic guide to comprehensive actions necessary in the medium to short term which would advance the achievement of the MDGs and the sustainable development of Caribbean SIDS. The Framework has been informed by the "Brief for CARICOM Delegations attending the World Summit" and by previous deliberations such as those convened by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) on Social Protection, held in Barbados in 2004.

363. The Framework acknowledges that though similar, each country in the sub-region faces diverse challenges and therefore the policies to address these challenges are of necessity going to be different.

364. Despite these differences there are however, enough similarities for a sub-regional approach. At the High-Level Follow-up Meeting a call was made for a sub-

regional framework for implementation of the MDGs, since there was recognition that each country, by itself, would not be able to achieve the goals of the MDGs.

365. The Framework is mindful that developing countries require a certain “policy space” in order to achieve the MDGs. It therefore positions its areas of concern, within the context of member states striving to strengthen their macro-economic management in order to achieve the requisite growth with equity. Such growth with equity is essential to achieving and sustaining development goals. The Framework is also mindful of the need to strengthen partnerships for development.
366. The Framework sets out five priority areas for consideration by policy makers in the social sector (see Annex 1 Social Development Framework for Advancing the Social and Sustainable Development of Caribbean SIDS, page i-ii). Consideration was also given to the adoption by countries of the CSM and the impact which the consolidation of the CSME will have for all CARICOM member states and Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) member and associate member states.
367. The Framework recommends approaches for each of the broad areas for consideration, and also indicates existing strategic partnerships with regional and international agencies (especially within the UN system) , which addresses aspects of the approaches. However, there are areas that require more attention from both regional Governments and regional and international partners.

What can the global community do?

368. There is a need for sustained and effective international cooperation to undertake a programme for global development which will bring about sustainable and equitable improvement in the human condition in all countries. There can no longer be a deficit in the world's development performance. The state of the global society requires new means by which economic development and social progress can be attained. It must be emphasized that the MDGs will only be achieved if the eighth goal of a global partnership for development is fully addressed. The international community must therefore forge genuine partnerships for development in which both developed and developing countries accept responsibility for fulfilling their commitments. Such partnerships are the international community's only means of achieving a more secure world.
369. In addition, Barbados is concerned with the ‘implementation gap’ which exists with respect to the achievement of the full range of Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs). The MDGs, while being of critical importance, do not represent the world's complete development agenda. Barbados is concerned that in the international community's focused pursuit of the MDGs some of the dimensions of the larger global development agenda are not receiving sufficient attention.
370. Barbados therefore calls on the international community to form effective global partnerships to address the following issues, amongst others:

- The inadequacy of international cooperation, external resources and technology to implement the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States Programme. To date, SIDS have taken on the major burden of implementing the 1994 Barbados Programme of Action. The Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action clearly identifies the key areas that need to be addressed to help SIDS respond to sustainable development challenges, including their increasing vulnerability with regard to climate change, sea level rise, climate variability and other associated phenomena such as the frequency and intensity of natural disasters.
- The lack of development assistance made available to middle-income SIDS like Barbados where vulnerabilities, including pockets of poverty, persist. The increase and improvement of official development assistance to such countries would facilitate further progress in achieving the MDGs, including the eradication of poverty and hunger. In addition, capacity can be built and enhanced through targeted technical assistance, the transfer of technology etc. It must be recognised that ODA is a crucial stepping stone to sustainable development.
- The need to ensure that trade be a significant factor in achieving sustainable development. The Doha Development Round offers an opportunity to align multilateral trade rules with a commitment to development. It is therefore necessary that the development dimension of the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations be revived and realised in an effective, substantive and comprehensive manner, which *inter alia* specifically addresses the needs and priorities of the small, vulnerable economies regarding their integration into the multilateral trading system. Any future outcome of the Doha negotiations will only be of relevance to countries like Barbados if the concept of special and differential treatment is made to mean more than just 'flexibility within reciprocity'. Effective and operational S&D must mean the formulation of trade measures that are relevant to countries' vulnerabilities, their volatility, their capacity to adjust and their scope for sustainable development.
- The need to enhance the voice and participation of developing countries in international dialogue and decision-making, which is a fundamental prerequisite for improving global economic governance. A radically reformed system of global economic and financial governance that promotes equitable development is required. Basic equity and effective long-term implementation require that the concerns and interests of all stakeholders should be taken into consideration in the development of standards. The setting of international standards, codes and norms should therefore be guided by the following principles: (i) All countries must have the right and not the privilege to participate; (ii) all countries that participate must be treated equally; (iii) the monitoring of international standards must be conducted through a process of mutual evaluation or peer review.

371. Barbados' experience serves as a prime example that size matters and that small states are more easily hurt than others in the process of globalization. The need urgently exists for a more accommodating international economic environment which

recognizes the inherent vulnerabilities of small states and middle-income developing countries and takes this into account when considering these countries' development, financial and trade needs. As the international community continues efforts to enhance the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of development, the need for differentiated support and targeted assistance to vulnerable countries must be given full consideration in a manner to facilitate the adoption of effective, results-oriented measures to address these countries' problems.

III. Statistical Information

372. Realizing that there is a strong need for evidence-based policy and programming, particularly in the social sector, the Government recognizes the need for timely, accurate, comprehensive and internationally comparable economic and social statistics. The lack of proper statistical information has constrained participation in multilateral and bilateral economic or social sector negotiations. Over the next two years, the Government has committed to improving the quality of statistical information; ensuring that existing statistical databases adhere to international standards; and strengthening the collection and analysis of social statistics (i.e. poverty indicators, wage index tables, population projections, and income distribution tables).
373. As previously mentioned, the Ministry of Social Transformation will be conducting the country's first poverty assessment in over 10 years, which will inform the development of the country's first Human Development Report. Recognizing that the lack of social statistics is a region-wide constraint to assessing the needs of Caribbean states, the UNDP and the CDB have lent financial, coordination and technical support to Government-led CPAs (including Barbados) throughout the region, which is part of the broader SPARC initiative.
374. The multi-donor programme, SPARC, is a coordinated response designed to provide capacity building inputs to support the strengthening of poverty monitoring and social policy development systems in the CARICOM Region. It will build on existing statistical support programmes developed and supported by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, the Caribbean Development Bank, the UN system and other development partner agencies. The participating agencies will focus their support on inputs linked to the achievement of the MDGs and will also support the strengthening of national and regional capacities to systematically collect, analyze and disseminate social data to inform social policy formulation and in the establishing and monitoring of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). The overall outcome of this programme will result in a systematic and coherent flow of donor inputs to support a Caribbean wide system of social data capture, poverty monitoring and policy development. UNDP has led the SPARC process for the last 3 years of its development.
375. However, other areas of data collection also require attention, particularly in the measurement of environmental sustainability indicators, which should be tailored to Barbados' unique environment. Technical cooperation and technology transfer are some ways in which global partners can help to fulfil their commitments to SIDS.

[Insert excel document entitled "Barbados Social and Economic Indicators 1995-2006"]

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Annex 1: Social Development Framework for Advancing the Social and Sustainable Development of Caribbean SIDS

Broad Area for Consideration	Recommended approach	Supporting Regional partners
Sustaining Investment in Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Strengthen cohesion in poverty reduction programming ii. Enable the informal sector iii. Ensure quality education and skills training are available iv. Embark on public education programmes to communicate the social concerns of communicable and non-communicable diseases, particularly the impact on productivity and economic and social costs. 	CDB CARICOM OECS ILO DFID UNDP UWI ECLAC CFNI FAO PAHO
Redesigning Social Integration and Inclusion policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Address the causes and consequences of crime and violence; ii. Deepen the thrust for gender equity and equality; iii. Reduce inequality and promote social justice; iv. Reduce stigma to HIV/AIDS, increasing prevention, treatment and care; v. Ensure social provisioning for deportees; vi. Provide support for the Kingston Accord which supports the promotion of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities; vii. Address issues of youth development 	CARICOM OECS ECLAC UND UNIFEM UWI UNAIDS UNESCO UNICEF
Extending social protection and compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Seek to reduce the proportion of children living in poverty; ii. Reduce the risk to natural disasters ; iii. Extend coverage of social security to include the self employed and those in the informal sector; iv. Consider the use of mobile national insurance offices to increase coverage; v. Reform public health systems to increase quality, efficiency and availability. 	CARICOM OECS CDERA UNICEF UNECLAC UNDP PAHO/WHO CDB
Ensuring evidenced-base social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Collect household data on regular basis to assess how households 	CDB CARICOM

protection and provisioning	<p>address poverty, vulnerability and the effectiveness of social protection instruments;</p> <p>ii. Collect labour market data on a regular basis, including information on skills;</p> <p>iii. Engage in social impact assessments of poverty initiatives;</p> <p>iv. Develop strong, transparent and effective monitoring and evaluation tools for social protection initiatives;</p> <p>v. Support policy analysis and research.</p>	OECS ILO UNECLAC DFID UNDP
Strengthening the enabling environment	<p>i. Introduce Policy Analysis Units in Ministries with responsibility for social Development;</p> <p>ii. Strengthen the capacity of Ministries with responsibility for social development through examination of internal structures and functioning and ensure best use of personnel attached;</p> <p>iii. Share best practices of Management of Social Development Programming within and across the region;</p> <p>iv. Review legislation (with a view to regional harmonization) that address social protection, in light of the free movement of persons in the CSME</p>	CARICOM OECS UNECLAC UNDP CDB WB

Source: ECLAC 2007, "Social Development Framework for Advancing the Social and Sustainable Development of Caribbean SIDS", ELCAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean