

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CARIBBEAN FORUM ON POPULATION, YOUTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

The purpose of these recommendations is to enhance youth participation and attention to the concerns of Caribbean youth in sustainable development planning and policymaking and, incorporating those concerns, to identify actions to further the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development.

Georgetown, Guyana, 24-26 July 2018

*We, the participants of the Caribbean Forum on Population, Youth and Development,*

*Recalling* the adoption, twenty years ago, of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes (1998) in which governments committed to develop national policies and programmes for youth, and to the participation of youth in policymaking,

*Concerned* at the damaging impact on Caribbean youth of poverty, discrimination, violence, unemployment, unintended pregnancies and HIV among other risks,

*Convinced* that supporting young people through their adolescence and youth and facilitating their transition to the roles and responsibilities of adulthood is crucial to their personal development and their long term health, wellbeing and productivity,

*Convinced therefore* that addressing the rights, needs, responsibilities and requirements of youth has a crucially important role to play in putting the Caribbean on the path to sustainable growth and development,

*Reaffirming* that the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development (2013) provides a regional framework for public policymaking on population and development issues that States continue to adopt, that complements the work of other mechanisms at the regional and international levels and reinforces the Cairo Programme of Action (1994) and its follow-up,

*Recognising* how the youth perspective is crucial to addressing population issues such as non-communicable diseases, sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, recognition of the rights of minority groups, and management of international and internal migration,

*Bearing in mind* that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development serves as an overarching framework for inclusive sustainable development that leaves no one behind and will contribute to the realisation of human rights for all,

*Taking note* of the documents ‘Caribbean Synthesis Report on the Implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes’ and ‘Implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development in the Caribbean: a Review of the Period 2013 – 2018’ prepared by the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean,

*Bearing in mind* the Report of the Youth Dialogues and the recommendations contained therein,

*Make the following recommendations:*

### **Youth policies and programmes, youth participation and attention to the concerns of youth in policymaking**

1. Support the development of a comprehensive youth-friendly mechanism, including a web platform, to foster collaboration, coordination and synergies among youth organisations, governments, civil society organisations, the private sector, international and regional organisations and academic institutions.

2. Promote an evidence-based approach to youth policy development, including access to up-to-date, systematic and regular disaggregated data that will inform the design, implementation and review of youth policies, programmes and initiatives, supported by inter-agency collaboration at the regional and international levels; and the inclusion of youth within research teams and statistics units, in particular young female researchers and statisticians, who continue to be underrepresented in research and statistics fields.
3. Monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of national youth policies and promote youth mainstreaming with monitoring and follow-up across sectors using appropriate indicators.
4. Promote inclusiveness and a participatory approach in all phases of the development and implementation of youth policies and programmes while emphasizing the importance of adopting a gender perspective, and including the following sub-groups: teenage mothers; youth belonging to ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities; indigenous youth; young migrants regardless of their migratory status; young refugees, asylum-seekers or stateless persons; those with disabilities; LGBT young persons; youth in conflict with the law; those deprived of their liberty; those in institutionalised care; those living in orphanages; young persons living with HIV/AIDS; those living on the street; the urban poor and those living in remote and rural areas.
5. Improve coordination and identify synergies among the different youth organisations and networks in order to have increased impact at both government and community levels and avoid competing for the same limited government resources, in particular between the Caribbean Regional Youth Council, CARICOM Youth Ambassadors Corps, UWI STAT, SDG Youth Ambassadors, youth-led businesses, Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs-Caribbean and Canada (CAYE-C&C), University of the West Indies Guild of Undergraduates, Commonwealth Students Association and other Caribbean and Commonwealth youth networks, youth-led grassroots and faith-based organisations.
6. Use live streaming and dynamic, relevant and interactive digital media and ICT in public policy consultation in order to facilitate youth engagement.
7. Promote non-traditional education and training programmes, including personal development skills, entrepreneurial training, vocational training and career guidance.
8. Increase youth employment opportunities by developing youth employment strategies and policies designed to address the skills gaps in the private sector and anticipate twenty-first century labour market needs, with particular focus on the green and blue economics and creative industries, entrepreneurship training and ensuring the relevance of the high school and university curriculum.
9. Encourage or facilitate as appropriate the appointment or election of young persons on key government boards and committees at all levels and in all sectors, with particular focus on areas such as gender affairs, crime and violence, environment and ICT.
10. Ensure effective implementation of up-to-date, culturally relevant and rights-based comprehensive sexuality education, facilitating access to sexual and reproductive health and family planning services delivered by appropriately trained staff.
11. Explore measures to expand psycho-social support for young victims of crime, violence, and abuse, as well as those impacted by disaster and emergency situations.
12. Explore measures to promote mutual trust and respect-based relationships between young and older persons; expand the involvement of young people in the care of older persons, especially those in institutionalised care and in need of home care services; include healthy ageing in curricula at all levels and in nursing and caregivers training programmes, while encouraging young males to consider careers in the caring professions; and raise awareness of the benefits of intergenerational relations.

13. Promote the inclusion of youth in decision-making and the creation and implementation of programmes aimed at combating climate change; and in disaster risk assessments, preparedness, prevention, response and reconstruction in order to foster resilience.
14. Encourage the involvement of youth in alternative energy, sustainable agriculture, and eco-friendly initiatives, through training programmes and awareness-raising campaigns.
15. Promote the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals with a youth perspective, including in schools and university curricula, as well as through the creation of youth-friendly communication that will make the SDGs more accessible to young persons.
16. Explore measures to facilitate the participation of young persons in subregional, regional and international forums, including in mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council; the reviews by the High-level Political Forum and the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and other platforms, such as the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Conference on Population and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

#### **Further implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development**

17. Explore measures to build capacity for the production of age-disaggregated statistics and assessments of poverty and inequality.
18. Continue taking decisive action on population and development issues in the context of sustainable development planning and build capacity for evidence-based policymaking in key institutions to more deeply integrate population concerns into the development of sectoral policies, including those to reduce poverty and inequality.
19. Promote measures to strengthen social protection for families with children, including cash and in-kind benefits and services, subsidized health care and other measures to enhance the wellbeing of children, such as investment in pre-school education.
20. Advocate the strengthening of legal and regulatory frameworks and enforcement mechanisms to protect children from sexual, physical and emotional abuse, and other forms of violence, and reinforce public awareness, programmes for at risk children and support for victims.
21. Encourage the consideration of legislation to prohibit corporal punishment against boys, girls and adolescents.
22. Advocate for respect of the rights, needs, responsibilities and requirements of LGBT youth, starting in schools, including through the repeal of discriminatory laws; introducing laws to deal with homophobic and transphobic abuse and violence; training for police, educators and health service providers; and measures to address societal prejudices.
23. Develop long-term plans for the reform and development of pension systems (including digital pension systems), health and social care services, in the interest of creating universal, rights-based social protection systems which reinforce inter-generational solidarity.
24. Implement measures to recognise and support older persons in the contribution they make to the family, community, work place, civic and cultural life, maximising the benefits of intergenerational relations.

25. Consider signing and ratifying, as appropriate, the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons and other relevant international and regional agreements that apply to older persons.
26. Adopt, review, or enforce where they exist, legal and policy frameworks to prevent, investigate and punish all forms of abuse, neglect and violence against older persons, including cyber-based, financial and psychological abuse, as well as practices that infantilise older persons or that jeopardize their safety and integrity.
27. Promote an enabling regulatory and policy environment to ensure safety in the management of pregnancies of women, respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the human rights of women and achieving positive health outcomes for women, including through providing good quality contraceptive and family planning information and services, pre-natal care, providing for safe termination where necessary or appropriate, and meeting the particular needs of poor women, adolescents, rape survivors and women living with HIV.
28. Address the underlying health conditions which can lead to maternal mortality; improve emergency obstetric and new-born care; strengthen vital statistics systems for better monitoring of maternal mortality and morbidity; and work towards the provision of universal access to primary health care.
29. Design policies and programmes to eradicate all forms of discrimination, including those based on race, sexual orientation, gender identity and persons with disabilities.
30. Strengthen national HIV programmes, efforts to promote HIV testing, and treatment for all HIV positive persons in order to meet the 90–90–90 targets and end the AIDS epidemic.
31. Promote the implementation of measures to protect the rights of HIV positive persons with particular attention to LGBT persons, youth and other key populations enabling them to live their lives free from stigma, discrimination and violence.
32. Encourage the consideration of measures to promote the introduction of gender parity systems for political appointments to address women’s underrepresentation in the political sphere.
33. Promote measures to achieve gender equality regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men at all levels of society.
34. Develop and review legislation and policies to comprehensively tackle gender-based violence, with the establishment of mechanisms for victims to access adequate protection, justice, redress and reparations, and to provide psycho-social support and counselling for perpetrators and other affected persons.
35. Encourage the development of legislation that protects the rights of refugees and asylum seekers and programmes of support.
36. Consider the situation of children of undocumented migrants and their access to education, health and other social services.
37. Develop policies to maximise the benefits of migration for economic development by promoting the free movement of skilled persons and wider engagement with the diaspora by means of trade, entrepreneurship, skills exchange, financing, remittances, and return migration.
38. Address territorial inequalities through the formulation of policies for enhancing mobility, resilient human settlements and for promoting adaptation to the impact of climate change and disasters.

39. Introduce, where appropriate, programmes enhancing indigenous peoples' access to education, health, employment and ICT with a view to eliminating the social inequalities by which they are systematically disadvantaged.
40. Protect, where appropriate, the territorial rights of indigenous peoples, with special attention to the challenges presented by extractive industries and with respect for the principle of free, prior, and informed consent.
41. Resolve to make all efforts to participate in future review cycles of the Montevideo Consensus, using national reviews and reporting as tools to guide implementation, and taking advantage of the way in which indicators for regional follow-up are integrated with those for the Regional Gender Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and other platforms, thereby making the monitoring and reporting process more efficient.