

FOUNDATIONS PROGRAMME

STRENGTHENING PREVENTION APPROACHES TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN

WHAT IS THE FOUNDATIONS PROGRAMME?

Designed for young people aged 13 to 24, *The Foundations Programme* is a programme aimed at the prevention of Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

Foundations is based on the premise that violence is intentional, and that abusive behaviours are chosen methods for gaining control over persons and situations. People who perpetrate violence are solely responsible for their actions and victims of violence should never share blame or responsibility for the actions of others.

Gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence are fuelled by gender hierarchies and by an imbalance in gender power relations.

The specific objectives of *The Foundations Programme* are to:

- 1 Empower young people to understand GBV and its genesis in gender inequalities and gender-based discrimination.
- 2 Promote an understanding of the consequences of GBV to partner(s), children, communities and societies in general.
- 3 Endow young people with knowledge, skills and attitudes for addressing conflict and responding to stress and stressors that arise in relationships.
- 4 Establish and model an atmosphere of respect within group relations among and between young people.
- 5 Promote self-sufficiency among young people in taking steps towards improving their relationships and their lives.
- 6 Create a network of young people who will advocate for non-violent relationships.

COMPONENTS OF *THE FOUNDATIONS PROGRAMME*



- I **THE CURRICULUM:** A gender equality curriculum specifically designed for young people in the region.



- II **THE TRAINING OF FACILITATOR'S MANUAL:** A curriculum to train gender advocates to facilitate GBV prevention education among young people.



- III **THE OPERATIONAL MANUAL AND PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES:** A guide for implementing *The Foundations Programme*.



- IV **THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK:** A guide for monitoring and measuring programme outputs and evaluating outcomes of *The Foundations Programme*.

WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

Violence against women and girls remains the most pervasive and severe form of Gender-Based Violence and gender-based discrimination in the region.

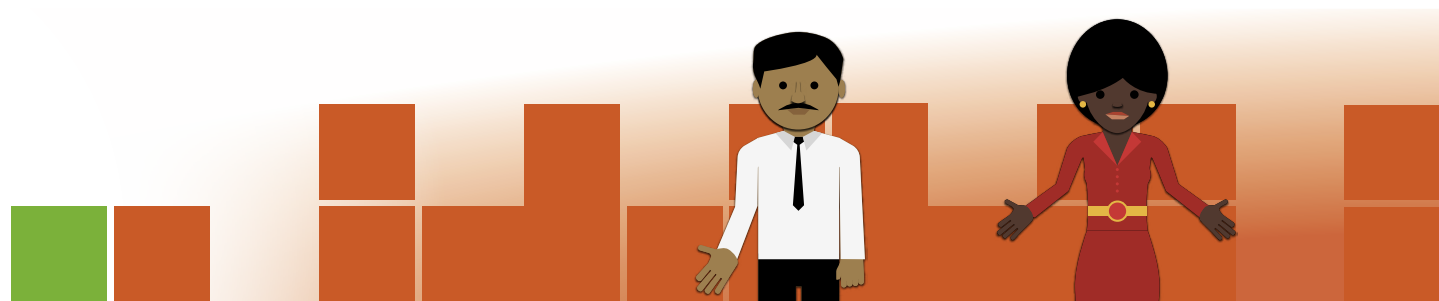
In 2018 UN Women MCO Caribbean in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank launched National Women's Health Surveys which present the first nationally representative estimates of the prevalence of intimate partner violence and non-partner violence against Women in Trinidad and Tobago and in Jamaica. These findings are in line with global estimates - on average, one in three women in the Caribbean will experience domestic/intimate partner violence in their lifetime. Available national studies suggest that 47.6% of girls and 31.9% of boys have reported that their first intercourse was forced or coerced by family members or family acquaintances (WHO; 2000).

Throughout the past 10 years, UN Women Multi-Country Office - Caribbean has supported the development of initiatives that seek to promote gender equality and to address Gender-Based Violence. *The Foundations Programme* was developed by UN Women MCO – Caribbean, with the support of the *Maria Holder Memorial Trust* in response to the increasing calls for the development and scaling up of gender-responsive violence prevention programmes for young people.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) encompasses all forms of violence directed at an individual, deemed justifiable because of her or his gender, including, but not limited to, domestic violence, rape and sexual assault, community violence, gender-based bullying and emotional or psychological abuse.

The culture of a society is a very powerful source of influence in shaping gender norms. Culture is shaped by traditional values and religious beliefs. All people in a given community contribute to the production of gender meanings. The Programme is based on teaching concepts and techniques that help to challenge harmful and hierarchical gender norms, values and attitudes and encourage the adoption of social and cultural norms and values which emulate gender equality, respect, justice, fairness, open communication and healthy relationships.

The overarching goal of *The Foundations Programme* is to accelerate action towards preventing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the fields of prevention education and to support youth development in the Caribbean.



HOW IS THE PROGRAMME ROLLED OUT?

The Foundations Programme is a flexible 12-module programme, designed for young women and men aged 13 to 24.

The Programme is participant-centred and invites young people to engage in ‘thinking through’ concepts such as gender, gender socialisation, gender hierarchies and constructions of masculinity, femininity, sexuality and their impact on relationships with themselves and others.

The Foundations Programme recognises that young people have expert knowledge about the realities of the social conditions they face in their everyday lives. Potential participants for this programme are therefore seen as competent, knowing persons who are in the best position to speak about how they live and experience gender constructions.

The Curriculum was designed for use by experienced facilitators who are trained by professional social workers, psychologists or youth workers to work with same-sex and mixed sex groups of young people in school and community settings. Community-based settings may include a variety of naturally occurring clusters such as schools, faith-based groups and other social or recreational clubs. *The Training of Facilitator’s Manual* gives more detailed information about facilitators’ competencies to implement *The Curriculum*. *The Operational Manual and Procedural Guidelines* should also be consulted for details on how to go about organising and administering this programme.

ITS IMPLEMENTATION IS GROUNDED IN THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

1. HUMAN RIGHTS ARE YOUR BIRTH RIGHTS

All individuals, regardless of age, biological sex or gender identity are “rights holders”. Young people have the right to enjoy equal treatment and universal human rights. We all have equal value regardless of our sex. Young people are taught to ascribe to a belief in equality and dignity of all human beings and justice for all.

2. EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL SAFETY TO TALK GENDER

Young people are facilitated with an emotionally safe and structured space in which gender concepts can be interrogated in same sex and mixed sex groups in both school and community settings. Participants explore how early gender socialisation affects development and contributes to gender inequality.

3. GENDER EDUCATION STARTS WITH GENDER AWARENESS

Young people are encouraged to recognize the negative ways in which gender stereotypes and the gender inequalities that result, affect the lives of females and males. They are motivated to envision genuine civic equality where women and men live in relationships built on cooperation and mutual respect.

SAYING NO TO GENDER STEREOTYPES AND RIGID GENDER EXPECTATIONS

Throughout the workshop, young people are continuously challenged to confront stereotypes and rigid gender expectations about masculinity and femininity that obstruct the realization of their full potential. They are taught that patriarchy, not men, is the ‘problem’. They are encouraged to understand the concept of patriarchy, its roots in unequal relations of power which are based on ideas about gendered roles, responsibilities and abilities and its implications for GBV.

THE WHOLE OF SCHOOL APPROACH

School administrators are encouraged to combine *The Foundations Programme* with a “Whole of School Approach” to addressing Gender-Based Violence and school related Gender-Based Violence in particular. UN Women in partnership with UNESCO have developed **Global Guidance on Addressing School-Related Gender-Based Violence** which can be accessed at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/12/global-guidance-on-addressing-school-related-gender-based-violence#view>

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