



**Spotlight  
Initiative**  
*To eliminate violence  
against women and girls*

*An initiative of the United Nations funded by the European Union*



Remarks delivered by the UN Women MCO - Caribbean Representative, Ms.  
Tonni Brodber  
to the  
Regional Gender-Responsive Budgeting Capacity Building Workshop in Trinidad  
and Tobago

Protocol

- The Honorable Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Gender and Child Affairs, the Honourable Ayanna Webster-Roy
- Assistance Secretary General and Director of Human and Social Development CARICOM Secretariat, Ms. Alison Drayton
- Head of Delegation of the European Union to Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Peter Cavendish, Ambassador.
- Associate Development Corporate Coordination Officer for Partnerships and Development Finance - Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Mr. Mark Thomas.
- Permanent Secretaries, Deputy Permanent Secretaries,
- Representatives from the Bureau of Statistics.
- Technical Officers within key line Ministries
- Civil Society Representatives

- Members of the Media

Hello! I am sorry I am unable to be with you in person. However, I have switched places with the Honourable Minister, and I am now in the United States for the Commission on the Status of Women, and thank you so much, Honourable minister, for all that you have done, and continue to do to support gender equality and women's empowerment in Trinidad and Tobago.

Now it is always a pleasure to convene in spaces where we are able to examine and celebrate the progress we have made in our region as it relates to the achievement of gender equality and women and girls' empowerment. We have made significant gains and while we have more to go, that does not undermine how far we have come.

Today, the European Union- United Nations (EU-UN) partnership for the global Spotlight programme has made it possible for the Caribbean and other regions around the world to bolster efforts in a coordinated, strategic and evidence-based manner to end violence against women and girls. We start with the reduction, and hopefully we get soon towards the elimination. But it would not be possible without the significant contribution - both policy wise and resources-wise from the European Union.

The Caribbean Spotlight Initiative Regional programme complements the Spotlight Initiative programs that are in country in Guyana and Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, Grenada and the non-Spotlight Initiative direct implementing countries across the OECS and Suriname. What it does, is it contributes to scaling better practices, sustainability, bringing visibility to the issues, building on the lessons learned and replicating these across the region.

The Programme addresses specific regional challenges that inhibit progress on the prevention of and response to violence against women and girls and prioritizes working with regional bodies, prioritises regional advocacy and civil society networks, transferring these lessons learned and engaging in South-South and triangular cooperation.

We have a Haiti country programme, and this Regional Spotlight Initiative also supports our colleagues in Haiti and tries to ensure that we can engage Haitian civil society organisations in the work that we are doing.

Of the 6 pillars upon which the Global Spotlight Initiative is built, the Caribbean Regional Programme focuses on 4 of 6 pillars, i.e. **Pillar 2** working to ensure institutions are gender-responsive and ensuring their gender responsiveness; **Pillar 3** establishing comprehensive and evidence-based prevention programmes that are aimed at changing social norms and gender stereotypes; **Pillar 5** promoting the collection and use of quality, comparable data to inform public policy, advocacy, policy making, and delivery of complimentary services to improve prevention; and finally **Pillar 6**, Pillar 6 is the cornerstone, the head cornerstone, as Bob Marley would say, that is, supporting autonomous women's movements to influence, and monitor policy and to support collaboratively with government, - accountability.

Now for the past 2 decades, UN Women has provided support to gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) initiatives, in more than 40 countries. At the forefront of global advocacy for application of GRB, UN Women has built global partnerships to advance efforts at the country level, and demonstrate GRB's relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals, aid effectiveness, public sector reform and financing for development<sup>1</sup>.

In the Caribbean, extensive work has been done on gender-responsive budgeting. These include the development of policy briefs on how to integrate gender-responsive budgeting in the context of climate change and disaster risk reduction. This has been done under the EnGenDER project. The development of tools for enhancing parliamentary oversight and accountability. In 2021, we developed a manual for tracking and assessing budget allocations for addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG) and conducted a budget assessment on public expenditures for ending violence against women and girls for the Government of Grenada. This means that Grenada became the first country to undergo this assessment using this methodology and we have earmarked 3 additional countries for this to be completed – Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago for the next round of assessments in 2023.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/focus-areas/women-poverty-economics/gender-responsive-budgeting>

Now you will learn more about the use and application of the *Manual for Tracking and Assessing Budget Allocations for Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls*, in your respective sector agency's budgeting processes and an understanding that this manual is a tool that was developed collaboratively led by one of our Gender-responsive Budgeting Consultants, Ms. Margarita Ozanos Marcos. And thank you so much, Margaret, for all of your work.

It is our hope that the manual will serve as a guide to assess current policy commitments and budget allocations to any government institution, and intervention that addresses violence against women and girls on an annual basis in the current fiscal year.

The methodology presented in the manual is clearly aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicator 5.C.1. which speaks to the "Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment". And this is just one way in which you can see the Spotlight Initiative is not just a one-off investment. It is an investment in sustainability and long-term systemic change.

There are many misconceptions about what Gender-responsive budgeting is. It is not about separate budgets for women. It is not only about spending on women or women-only programmes. Rather what gender-responsive budgeting seeks to do, is to ensure that the collection and allocation of public resources is carried out in way that is effective and inclusive and contributes to advancing gender equality and sustainable development, while responding to the capacities, constraints and needs of women and men, girls and boys. And it calls for adjusting budget policies to benefit all people. The analysis, legislation, and other practical policy measures can address gender bias and discrimination. It has been proven to do so in other countries and in countries in our region. It helps us to assess the implications for people of any planned action whether via national legislation policies and programmes in all areas and at all levels, ensuring that women and men benefit equally, and that inequality is not the norm, and it is not perpetuated.

It allows us to, in a systematic way, promote equality throughout the budget cycle, systematic and tangible. We know that gender gaps still exist in spite of

our gains, and that is why we need tools that can be applied across the region systematically that deliver.

I trust that your time here will be well spent. I restate our commitment to partnership with the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and other key stakeholders, other Governments across the region, our regional institutions, and of course, our development partners, like the European Union, to ensure that this work towards sustainable development for all continues, to ensure we leave no one behind.

Thank you.