

STATUS OF WOMEN
AND MEN REPORT
PRODUCTIVE
EMPLOYMENT AND
DECENT WORK
FOR ALL



A Gender Analysis of Labour Force Data and Policy Frameworks in Six
CARICOM Member States

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Authors: Deborah Budlender and Isiuwa Iyehen
Content Editor: Margaret Griffiths
Copy Editor: Sharon Carter-Burke
Layout Editor: Jerome Agostini

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	IV
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	VI
LIST OF ACRONYMS	VIII
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF CARICOM CONTEXT	7
1.1. Introduction: Women and men at work in CARICOM	8
1.2. Employment creation	9
1.3. Social protection	10
1.4. Rights at work	12
1.5. Social dialogue	13
2. POLICY ANALYSIS	15
3. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS	19
3.1. Methodology	20
3.2. Key characteristics of the six countries	21
4. FINDINGS	23
4.1. Demographics	24
4.2. Work status	29
4.3. Status in employment	37
4.4. Hours of work	39
4.5. Education	40
4.6. Occupation	42
4.7. Industry	46
4.8. Earnings	46
4.9. Employment by government	49
4.10. Trade union membership	49
5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING	51
6. CONCLUSION	57
REFERENCES	59
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS USED TO DETERMINE EMPLOYMENT BY FOCUS COUNTRIES	62

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figures

Figure 1.	Gender composition of firm ownership in the Caribbean, by country	10
Figure 2.	Population aged 15 years and above, and female proportion, 2017	25
Figure 3.	Proportions of working-age population aged 65 years and above, and population aged under 15 years by sex, 2017	26
Figure 4.	Lone adult aged 18 years and above with children under 18 years in the household by sex, 2017	27
Figure 5.	Adult aged 18 years and above with children aged under 5 years in household by sex, 2017	27
Figure 6.	Marital status of population 20 years and above by sex, 2017	28
Figure 7.	Employment rate by sex, 2017	30
Figure 8.	Employment rate by age group and sex, 2017	31
Figure 9.	Employment rate of adults with children under 5 years in the household by sex, 2017	32
Figure 10.	Employment rate of adults with children under 5 years in the household by ethnicity and sex, 2017	33
Figure 11.	Employment rate by marital status and sex, 2017	33
Figure 12.	Employment rate by ethnicity and sex, Trinidad and Tobago, 2017	34
Figure 13.	Employment rate by ethnicity and sex, Guyana, 2017	35
Figure 14.	Strict and relaxed unemployment rate by sex, 2017	36
Figure 15.	Strict and relaxed labour force participation rate by sex, 2017	37
Figure 16.	Status in employment by sex, 2017	38
Figure 17.	Mean usual weekly hours of work by age group and sex, 2017	39
Figure 18.	Mean usual hours of work by presence of children under 5 years in the household and sex, 2017	39
Figure 19.	Highest education level by sex, population aged 15 years and above, 2017	40
Figure 20.	Highest education level by sex and ethnicity, population aged 15 years and above, 2017	41
Figure 21.	Employment rate by level of education and sex, 2017	42
Figure 22.	Women as a share of total employed in occupation, 2017	43
Figure 23.	Percentage of managers in one-person establishments by sex, 2017	44
Figure 24.	Female share of all employees in managerial positions	45
Figure 25.	Education by skill level	45
Figure 26.	Distribution by industry and sex, 2017	46

Figure 27.	Mean and median of female hourly pay as percentage of male pay, 2017	47
Figure 28.	Hourly pay by level of education and sex, Jamaica, 2017	48
Figure 29.	Government employment by sex, 2017	49
Figure 30.	Alignment between global gender equality norms, national gender equality policies and national development plans	53
Figure 31.	Achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment in the world of work in CARICOM: key recommendations	55

Tables

Table 1.	Mean weights for population aged 15 years and above	20
Table 2.	Key indicators of the six focus countries	21
Table 3.	Ages at which children can legally leave school and can be employed	24
Table 4.	Percentage of non-natives among population aged 15 years and above by sex, 2017	29

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BERT	Barbados Economic Recovery and Transformation Programme	LFS	Labour Force Survey
CARICOM	Caribbean Community	NEA	Not Economically Active
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank	NPGE	National Policy for Gender Equality (Jamaica)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Violence Against Women	PATH	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
GEPAP	Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (Grenada)	SALISES	Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies
HDI	Human Development Index	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank	SIDS	Small Island Developing States
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians	SNA	System of National Accounts
ILO	International Labour Organization	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
IMF	International Monetary Fund	TIP	Trafficking in Persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations	UN ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ISIC	International Standard Industry Classification	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
JIS	Jamaica Information Service	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report explores women’s and men’s position in the labour force in six Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Member States (Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago) and provides insight into progress made with regard to achieving gender equality in the world of work. The findings of a policy and statistical analysis reveal that structural barriers remain to women experiencing equality in this sphere, despite notable progress in educational attainment.

To illustrate, women tend to experience poverty and unemployment at higher rates than men (CDB, 2016) and are less likely to be economically active. (ibid.).

Stagnating economic growth has resulted in unsustainably high debt-to-gross domestic product ratios and difficulties in sustaining government expenditures on social services. Compounding this challenging situation has been the negative impact of the global economic crisis of 2007 onwards and natural disasters. Starting in the 1990s, several countries have adopted structural adjustment programmes to address these challenges. Some countries have had to lay off public sector workers in an effort to reduce expenditures as one of several measures to attain macroeconomic stability (Caribbean News Service, 2018). While a rigorous gender analysis of the impact of these programmes has not been undertaken, it is expected that women employed in the public sector will be significantly affected, although this has to be substantiated with facts. Data from five of the six countries (Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica and St. Lucia) under analysis in this report reveal that women are more likely than men to be employed by the government.

Data on the gender wage gap, while not available for all countries, confirm that men continue to earn more than women, particularly when controlling for education. Further, a troubling pattern of underemployment among women workers may be emerging. To illustrate, 50.3% of women in the tourism sector are working in low-wage and low-status jobs despite the majority (66.2%) having completed tertiary-level education. This hints at underemployment and limited opportunities for women in the labour market (UN ECLAC and IOM, 2017: 18).

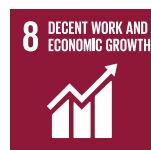
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the centrality of gender equality to

1 <https://caricom.org/about-caricom/who-we-are/our-governance/members-and-associate-members/>

development and a prerequisite for progress across all its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Four SDGs in particular are relevant for achieving gender equality in the world of work and are outlined below.



SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.



SDG 8 on promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



SDG 4 on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.



SDG 10 on reducing inequality with and among countries.

While progress has been made, an analysis of available data and information confirms that women in CARICOM are not experiencing their right to decent work to the same extent as men. Women are more likely than men to work in low-wage jobs, and without social protection, despite shouldering a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work as they attempt to balance the demands of their reproductive and productive roles.

These structural challenges that remain can be addressed in large measure through policies to enable women’s equitable participation in the labour force. Measures that will decrease unpaid care work, such as subsidized childcare, parental leave and flexibility in work arrangements, remain elusive in CARICOM. Despite legislation on equal pay for equal work, gender wage differentials persist in favour of men. Women have entered middle management in many countries but lead and own markedly fewer enterprises than men. The lack of sexual harassment legislation also renders women more vulnerable to exploitation in the workplace.

A review of national development plans and national gender equality plans (where they exist) reveals stronger alignment on areas related to gender equality in the world of work in a few countries but weak alignment in others. The non-existence of national gender equality policies and plans is itself a major finding. While various laws exist that provide *de jure* rights in respect of aspects of the gender dimensions of the Decent Work Agenda (such as wage equality and, in a few countries, sexual harassment), actual policies and programmes to ensure and monitor compliance are either weak or non-existent in the majority of the countries. In a few countries, gender policies and national development plans express robust commitment to gender equality in the world of work but legal frameworks are outdated. The misalignment between laws, national development plans and national gender policies is evident.

Analysis of data from each country's labour force data confirms a regional and global pattern of structural barriers to the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment in the world of work.

The statistics in this report are derived from analysis of the raw data from each country's Labour Force Survey (LFS) or equivalent survey. All the data relate to 2017. The report presents analysis and discussion – from a gender perspective – of the more common labour force indicators, alongside analysis and discussion of some additional indicators. Rather than including a list of definitions at the start of the document, the relevant definition and gender issues related to the measures and concepts are presented in the relevant part of the report. In presenting in this way, we hope the report will be understandable and interesting for non-statisticians at the same time as alerting statisticians to some aspects that they may have overlooked to date.

A review of existing literature on gender in the world of work in CARICOM covers a range of different statistical measures. Unfortunately, however, there is no standardization in terms of either the countries included in the estimates or the year to which the statistics refer. This report attempts to address these weaknesses through presenting findings from analysis of the 2017 LFS datasets of six countries. Both the measures used and the countries covered are thus standardized unless the variable for a particular measure is not included in a specific country's dataset.

Most official reports based on analysis of LFS data disaggregate most of the tables by sex. However, the gender differences are not always discussed. Further, the standard official reports do not include some of the indicators that are interesting from a gender perspective.

The LFS focus on “economic” work – that is, work for pay, profit or gain. Unfortunately, they do not ask explicitly about unpaid care work. However, the report attempts to find ways in which to highlight the impact of unpaid care work on women's and men's “economic” work. The report also utilizes age groups that are likely to reflect changing productive and reproductive roles.

All of the six focus countries are classified as having upper-middle to high development. Only Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have populations of more than a million people.

For the four countries for which the calculation can be done, women are many times more likely than men to be the only adult in a household that includes at least one child. In the absence of other adults, these women will usually bear the responsibility both for caring physically and emotionally for the children and for providing for them financially. However, their unpaid care burden is likely to constrain the time they can devote to paid work.

The proportion of the male working-age population that is employed ranges from 57% in Grenada to 67% in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago; for women, the range is from 35% in Guyana to 55% in Barbados. In all countries, the employment rate is lower for women than for men. The gender gap is especially large in Guyana and smallest in Barbados.

Employment patterns vary in different ways across country with changes in marital status. In contrast, across all countries for which this analysis is possible, men are noticeably more likely than women to be employed if there are children under five years in their household. Trinidad and Tobago is, however, the only one in which women in households with young children are more likely than their peers in other households to be employed. Even in Trinidad and Tobago the pattern is much less marked for women than for men.

Regardless of which definition of unemployment is used, the rate for women is higher than the rate for men across all focus countries. Conversely, men are noticeably more likely than women to be part of the

labour force across all the countries. This is expected, given women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work as well as their greater longevity.

Across all six focus countries, more than half of all employed women and men are employees. In all countries except Guyana, women are more likely than men to be employees. Guyana is also unusual in the large proportion of both women and men who are unpaid family workers in a range of different industries.

Guyana is also exceptional in being the only country in which women are more likely than men to be employers. However, because far fewer women than men work in Guyana, in absolute terms there are more male than female employers.

In all six focus countries, women are more likely than men to have tertiary education, although the gender difference is very small in Guyana. The patterns shown further below in respect of earnings and education suggest that one of the reasons for this gendered pattern is that women need to have higher educational levels than men if they want earnings at the same level as those of men. Students who stay longer in the education system are likely to begin doing economic work later but – once employed – one would expect them to have better jobs with higher earnings. Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have relatively lower levels of education among the working-age population, whereas St. Lucia has small proportions of the working-age population at primary level and relatively large proportions at tertiary level.

In all cases, the rate of employment increases with increasing education. The employment rate is lower for women than men at each of the three levels of education but the gender difference tends to be smaller for those with tertiary education than for those with only primary education.

There are strong similarities in the gendered occupational profile across countries. In all six countries, women are most strongly over-represented in the clerical category. Women also account for well over half of all jobs in the professional and services and sales work categories. The two occupations in which women are least well represented are craft and related trade workers and plant and machine operators. These patterns reflect a situation in which men are more likely to work with physical machines, tools and

objects, whereas women are more likely to work with and for people.

Women account for a relatively high proportion of managers in some of the six countries – in St. Lucia for more than half. However, in St. Lucia, Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago, women managers are much more likely than men managers to be working in one-person establishments. If these managers – both women and men – were reclassified, the female percentage of managers would be lower.

As expected, in all countries, the majority (half or more) of workers in skilled jobs have tertiary education; very few have only primary education. However, in all countries there are some workers with tertiary education who are in elementary jobs.

Men are more likely than women to be employed in agriculture. However, the relative size of this industry varies markedly. In contrast with agriculture, trade accounts for a noticeably larger share of employed women than employed men. Women are also far more likely than men to work in accommodation and food services.

Analysis of earnings is complicated by the fact that working hours differ. If women are found to earn less, on average, than men in respect of total earnings, at least some of women's disadvantage may be explained by the smaller number of hours worked. To control for this bias, the analysis focuses on earnings per hour.

The hourly rates for men might be inflated if some of the hours worked by men are paid at an overtime rate. However, for all countries except Guyana, the difference in hours worked by men and women is small, and the average number of hours worked is below the rate at which overtime pay can be expected. Any potential inflation on account of overtime rates is thus likely to be small, especially where – as is often the case – the earnings data are not exact (e.g. expressed in terms of brackets rather than a specific amount).

Despite women generally being more educated than men, the overall mean female hourly rate is less than the male mean in all focus countries except Jamaica, prompting further analysis into this situation for this country. When analysis is carried out by educational level for Jamaica, women earn less than men at each level. Thus, women in Jamaica suffer a similar pay

disadvantage to that suffered by women in the other five focus countries.

The findings in this report confirm that structural barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment persist in CARICOM. Policy considerations to address these challenges require interventions in the reproductive and productive spheres. Policies and programmes to redistribute unpaid care and domestic responsibilities between men and women would reduce women's time poverty and facilitate their increased participation in the labour market. Extending parental leave to fathers, for example, would signal a policy commitment to childcare as the responsibility of both parents, and not only mothers. The development or revision of laws and policies on equal pay for equal work and sexual harassment; addressing the root causes of occupational segregation; and introducing special measures to encourage women's leadership in senior management and ownership of enterprises are examples of reforms required. These priorities should be substantively integrated in national gender equality policies and plans and national development plans.

1. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF CARICOM CONTEXT

The future of the CARICOM is in its people. Investments in education, health and other areas believed to contribute to individual and national progress have been driven by a widely held understanding that a healthy, educated and skilled population will drive economic growth, development and poverty reduction.

For women and men to benefit equitably from economic growth, there must be recognition of their respective vulnerabilities and disparities and robust evidence-based policies to reduce and eradicate inequalities. This report contributes to these efforts by providing a gender analysis of the labour force in six CARICOM Member States (Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago) and insight into progress made with regard to achieving gender equality in the world of work. These countries broadly represent the demographic and socioeconomic profile of CARICOM.²

1.1. Introduction: Women and men at work in CARICOM

There is a contentious debate ongoing within CARICOM on the extent to which men are disadvantaged because of girls out-performing boys in secondary school, and on the larger number of women than men attending the University of the West Indies. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the education sector as a whole is experiencing significant challenges, one of which is systemic underperformance of both male and female students. To illustrate, in several Caribbean small island developing states (SIDS), less than 50% of the population aged 25 years or older have received at least secondary education certification. In a context where global economies are transforming, albeit at different paces, towards automation and an increasing demand for skillsets in science and technology, the percentage of persons aged 25 years or older with a Bachelor's degree in 2013 was less than 5% in some CARICOM countries and not more than 11% in the three best performing countries (Bourne, 2015). Further, many of those with a Bachelor's degree do not have them in science and technology fields, the sectors driving global economic competitiveness and productivity.

One might expect female students' perseverance in education, demonstrable through their outperformance of boys in secondary school and (for those few who go further) markedly higher attendance in tertiary

education, to translate into higher employment rates and wages. This report confirms that in all six countries women are more likely than men to have tertiary education. However, a majority (ranging from approximately 51% in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago to 83% in Jamaica) of the total labour force does not possess tertiary education, but rather secondary education. The data in this report confirm a wider and unfortunate trend of employment rates that are lower for women than for men in the six countries, and unemployment rates for women that are higher than for men. For both indicators, these trends are evident at every level of education, including tertiary level. For those women who are employed there is a small to negligible difference in hourly pay between men and women in the six countries. What is evident in all the countries is that, despite being more educated than men, women are employed at lower rates and are earning either similar or lower wages than men.

Gender-based stereotyping and, in some cases, overt gender-based discrimination have resulted in occupational segregation, with women more likely than men to work in the care economy (paid and unpaid) and service-oriented and clerical positions. Women comprise 42.9% of workers in the tourism sector and 67.3% of clerical workers, according to the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2017: 18). Men are more likely to work in the industrial and agriculture sectors. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2016), non-standard employment (such as contract labour), which is often associated with greater job insecurity, is on the rise. In the Caribbean this trend is found in particular in the hotel and food industries, which employ significant numbers of women.

Globally, men tend to work longer hours than women in paid employment. However, when taking into account unpaid care and domestic work, the reverse is true. A lack of time use data in CARICOM prevents a detailed analysis of combined hours spent on paid work and unpaid care work but the patterns are unlikely to deviate from global patterns. Women's domestic responsibilities usually influence their decision-making about paid employment. Women's participation in part-time work and non-standard work tends to be higher than men's.

² CARICOM consists of 20 countries: 15 Members and 5 Associate Members. Haiti is also a Member State.

Declining fertility rates and ageing of the population come with significant gender-related implications. As mortality rates are higher for men than for women, women comprise the majority of the elderly in CARICOM. Given women's lower labour force participation and employment rates, investments in social safety nets such as contributory pensions are likely to be inadequate for older women, as they would not have been contributing at levels necessary to provide them with income security when they are no longer able to support themselves (ILO and SALISES, 2017: 2).

Migration from the Caribbean has resulted in labour shortages in some countries. In 2013, an estimated 48% of Caribbean migrants were women, with the United States as the main receiving country (UN ECLAC and IOM, 2017: 14). There are several reasons for this migration, including lack of job opportunities for graduates from tertiary education institutions. Poverty is also a "push factor" for many Caribbean migrants, particularly those with dependants. A study on the Canadian Seasonal Agriculture Work Programme revealed that many of the workers, including those from Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, were single mothers with extended family dependants, and the main breadwinners for their families (Priebisch and Grez, 2010).

Within CARICOM, women account for over 50% of migrants in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. In Barbados, the percentage is as high as 60% (IOM, 2013). A "regional care economy" has emerged, mimicking global care economy patterns, as many of these women are migrating to work in nursing, for example. According to the World Bank, over 1,800 nurses left the Caribbean for higher-paying jobs in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States between 2002 and 2006 (World Bank, 2010a), resulting in a labour shortage in several countries. To address these shortages in sending countries within CARICOM, nurses migrated from St. Vincent and the Grenadines to Barbados (IOM, 2013).

While many men migrate to higher-income CARICOM countries to work in construction and agriculture, many women migrate to work as nurses, domestics and factory workers. Characteristics of a gendered labour market segregation pattern thus occur regionally for lower-skilled workers. Lower-skilled women migrants are especially vulnerable to trafficking and sexual exploitation. The 2016 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report placed Belize, Haiti and Suriname in the Tier 3 category (countries whose government does not meet

minimum standards of the United States Trafficking Victims Protection Act); Antigua and Barbuda, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago on the Tier 2 Watch List; Barbados, Curacao, Guyana and Jamaica in Tier 2; and Bahamas as the lone CARICOM country in Tier 1 and thus in full compliance with the Act (United States Department of State, 2016).

As women in CARICOM enter the labour force, they experience some structural challenges that their global counterparts face, and others are that are specific to the region. Their entitlements to **decent work (the pillars of the Decent Work Agenda include employment creation, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue)** should be enshrined in policies and laws with national mechanisms established to monitor compliance to enhance accountability.

1.2. Employment creation

The majority of people in the active labour force work for other people. Consequently, self-employment cannot be expected to be the main source of employment and income security for the majority of the population. With this in mind, it is particularly concerning that the capacity of CARICOM economies to produce jobs has weakened over time. Poverty in the region has been increasing as economies have experienced stagnating growth. Limited economies of scale, weak diversification, vulnerability to trade shocks and frequent natural disasters, combined with a limited pool of skills, have resulted in weak economic growth and job creation prospects.

The result is limited private sector competitiveness and weak capacity in the sector to produce jobs. A 2017 report by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) describes Caribbean enterprises as "smaller (three quarters had less than 20 full time employees), older (more than 20 years in operation), and less involved in foreign trade than their other small economy counterparts... [and] concentrated in the tourism and retail sectors" (Donhert et al., 2017: 4).

Women who manage or own businesses have limited access to financing and are under-represented in the most senior positions in the private sector. Despite Jamaica and St. Lucia having a higher share of women than men managers in businesses, women managers are concentrated in middle management positions and are under-represented in the most senior positions. Findings from research in 13 CARICOM countries,

outlined in the abovementioned IADB report, reveal that men own 54.4% of firms in these countries but fully manage only 22.7%. Joint ownership (i.e. the business owned equally) by men and women was found to be low in these countries, ranging from less than 1% of firms to approximately 26% in Belize.

Interestingly, two of the three CARICOM countries ranking high on a global ranking of women managers have a markedly low number of businesses that are fully, equally or predominantly owned by women (ILO, 2015: 13).

In St. Lucia, which ranks third on the list of countries with the highest number of female managers, women own only about 10% of businesses, with 1% or less predominantly or equally owned by women and men or predominantly owned by women. In the Bahamas, which ranks ninth on the list of countries with the highest number of female managers, men fully own the majority of businesses (approximately 55%), with about 6% owned equally by both sexes and 10% or less predominantly or equally owned by women and men or predominantly owned by women (Moore et al., 2017: 86–91). While women have been able to assume positions as managers, they have often not been able to translate these gains into ownership of enterprises, although significant progress has been made.

While in most countries the public sector is the major employer, it understandably cannot carry the responsibility for reaching the development objective of full, productive and decent employment for all.

1.3. Social protection

The need for universal access to social protection becomes even more apparent when taking into account the vulnerabilities of CARICOM economies. ILO recommends that National Social Protection Floors comprise at least the following four social security guarantees, as defined at the national level:

- 1 Access to essential health care, including maternity care;
- 2 Basic income security for children, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services;
- 3 Basic income security for persons in active age who are unable to earn sufficient income, in particular in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability;
- 4 Basic income security for older persons.

FIGURE 1.

Gender composition of firm ownership in the Caribbean, by country



Source: PROTEqIN in Moore et al. (2017)

Social assistance programmes that provide cash transfers as income support to poor households exist across the Caribbean. Single mothers with children represent a significant number of beneficiaries. However, these programmes do not actually serve the majority of persons eligible for support, for various reasons, including resource (financial and human) constraints. To illustrate, a gender assessment of St. Lucia's Public Assistance Programme revealed that the average waiting time to receive assistance was one year and two months, with single mothers comprising the highest number of persons requesting assistance (Xavier, 2016). This demonstrates high unmet need as well as constraints, which, in this case, include budgetary shortfalls that prevent the granting of assistance to a new applicant until assistance to another is terminated. To provide another example, based on the results of an assessment it conducted of Jamaica's Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) declared the programme "wholly inadequate", as only 58% of those living under the poverty line in the country were receiving assistance (Campbell, 2016). There are gender biases (subtle or overt) in the operations of these programmes that result in bottlenecks to equitable service delivery, thereby preventing access by poor women and their families to support (Xavier, 2016). Limited data on eligibility, time constraints and physical limitations to accessing social protection experienced by beneficiaries prevent more robust gender and vulnerability analysis across the countries.

Although disparities within and between countries exist, access to healthcare, particularly primary healthcare is considered affordable and almost universal in most CARICOM countries. Maternal mortality rates are, by global standards, low. A major concern is lack of access by young people to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services. The provision of comprehensive sexuality education has been haphazard in CARICOM, as Health and Family Life Education is not an examinable subject. Access by young women and men below the age of 18 to contraceptives and reproductive health services is hindered by laws in many countries that require parental consent for minors seeking services from health centres. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2017, 20% of live births each year are to adolescent mothers in the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. There are clear links between adolescent pregnancy and decreased

opportunities for education completion and employment and, ultimately, entrapment in poverty. A gender analysis of data from Country Poverty Assessments conducted in select Eastern Caribbean countries showed that the poorest households were those that were larger, with higher female unemployment, lesser quality housing and higher rates of teenage pregnancy (Babb and Bishop, 2012: 35).

As women reach reproductive age, access to childcare becomes vital. Like their global counterparts, women in CARICOM generally pay a "motherhood penalty" as they try to balance their domestic responsibilities with workplace demands. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a 2007 regional survey on day care services (the majority provided by the private sector) revealed that there were 682 institutions providing services to children between birth and 3 years old in 13 countries in CARICOM. However, the survey also revealed serious concerns with the quality of supervision of children in the care of the providers, many of whom were not licensed.

Most of the services are located in urban centres, making them hard to reach for rural women. Women receiving public assistance, and/or who are unemployed, may receive support from a Roving Caregivers Programme, which is based on a model developed in Jamaica. This programme, which aims to reach children from birth to three years old, supports visits by care-givers to provide early stimulation. Unfortunately, the Roving Caregivers Programme has experienced resource constraints in Jamaica and elsewhere that have prevented its expansion and institutionalization across CARICOM. Also, the programme does not address a key need for day care services – that is, a service that would place the child in care while the mother goes to work or explores opportunities for employment. Affordable and accessible day care services are limited, particularly for working mothers who are on low income and who reside in rural or hard-to-reach areas. The only exceptions to this are in Barbados, Grenada and St. Kitts and Nevis, where the government is significantly involved in the delivery of these services, which are subsidized (Charles and Williams, 2006). In July 2018, the Government of Jamaica announced that it would be establishing 126 "Brain Builders Centres" for children age zero to three across the country (so 2 in each political constituency) (Shell, 2018; JIS News, 2018). The programme aims to provide funding for day care and high-quality stimulation and is exploring ways to

support low-income parents who normally would not be able to afford the service.

Although men comprise the majority of those who are self-employed, women are also opting to run their own businesses. Many are forced into entrepreneurship as a result of poverty. It should be noted that the self-employed consist of two very different categories: employers and own-account or sole operators. A significant number of the latter are women. While women who are employees have protections guaranteed under the law, such as maternity leave, sickness benefits and pension benefits, among others, those who are self-employed face a number of challenges, including saving for their old-age pension.

A review of National Insurance/Social Security Schemes across CARICOM shows there are some incentives in place for self-employed persons to contribute. In most countries, once contributions are made, persons are entitled to all social security benefits, including maternity leave and sickness. Self-employed persons are required to register their businesses and contribute to social security in the some countries, with penalties for non-compliance varying across the region. In the Bahamas, the penalty is a minimum of six months in jail or a fine equivalent to US\$1,000, to a maximum of 12 months in jail or a fine equivalent to US\$2,500. The concern is whether current income levels provide low-income women, particularly those with childcare and family responsibilities, with the means to contribute. Some countries (e.g. Antigua and Barbuda) provide an exemption for persons whose income falls below the minimum rate. A lack of accessible data prevents a robust analysis of the sector, including a gender analysis.

1.4. Rights at work

All CARICOM Constitutions guarantee no discrimination on the basis of sex. However, this recognition in principle has not translated into substantive equality. Achieving substantive equality would require treating people differently to achieve equality. It would therefore take into account the impacts of past discrimination, and recognize that not everyone equally enjoys rights, entitlements, opportunities and access to services. Adjustments in policies, procedures and practices to address and prevent systemic discrimination are necessary to meet the needs of specific and historically marginalized groups.

In assessing women's actual rights at work, it is important to gauge the extent to which rights are distributed equitably and without prejudice in CARICOM. Are women and men paid based on the principle of equal pay for work of equal value? Are there measures in place (e.g. subsidized day care services) to ensure unpaid care and domestic work does not result in a penalty for women in the workplace when compared with men? Are there policies and programmes in place to promote an equitable redistribution of work within the home between men and women? Is the prevalence of non-standard and precarious jobs declining or increasing, and which sex is disproportionately performing these jobs? Are there robust policies on parental leave (not only maternity leave)? Do there exist policies on sexual harassment that hold perpetrators and employers to account? These are just a few of a plethora of questions to which the responses will reveal CARICOM's progress in achieving gender equality in the world of work.

The Bahamas is the only CARICOM Member State with provisions for paternity leave (seven unpaid days) (ILO, 2014: 55). The absence of such provisions in other countries reflects rigid sociocultural beliefs that childcare lies within the domain of women. Women in CARICOM have the right to maternity leave, the exception being Suriname, where only female public sector workers are entitled to maternity leave. The government is reviewing draft legislation to extend this entitlement to all women employees.

A review of legislation across CARICOM also confirms specific provisions for domestic, hotel, restaurant and shop workers (women comprise a significant number if not the majority of workers in these sectors) and the self-employed. The various Shop Acts set out hours of employment, prohibition of employment of shop workers after closing hours and rates of pay, among other provisions. Minimum wage protection either exists through legislation or is administratively established for a few categories of workers such as shop workers. Some countries have specific legislation for domestic workers but most have not ratified ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. Within CARICOM, Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana and Jamaica are the only countries that have ratified the Convention.

With respect to pay equity, all CARICOM countries have ratified ILO Convention 100 (Equal Remuneration Convention) and ILO Convention 111 (Discrimination

in Respect of Employment and Occupation). Some countries have pay equity laws, with those in Guyana, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago considered more progressive than others. The CARICOM Model Legislation with Regard to Equal Pay addresses a gap in the majority of these laws – the need to enact equal opportunity statutes that guarantee substantive equality and prohibit both direct and indirect forms of discrimination (UN ECLAC, 2001: 40). The laws in Guyana, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago do the same. In Guyana and St. Lucia, the obligations for equal remuneration extend to ensuring equality in pay to both sexes performing work of equal value. There is ambiguity in the laws of the other countries as to the interpretation of “work of equal value”. In Guyana and St. Lucia, the legislation addresses any ambiguity by adopting the following definition:

... work equal in value in terms of the demands it makes in relation to such matters as skill levels, duties, physical and mental effort, responsibility and conditions of work.

In several countries, legislation focuses on criminal remedies for contravening the law. However, in Trinidad and Tobago, the legislation provides a civil remedy through the creation of an Equal Opportunity Commission and an Equal Opportunity Tribunal, with the burden of proof clearly resting with the employer. The Commission comprises five commissioners with expertise in law, sociology, industrial relations and administration and includes the following functions:

- Review the working of the Act;
- Receive, investigate and as far as is possible conciliate allegations of discrimination;
- Develop conduct or foster research and educational programmes promoting equality of opportunity; and
- Prepare guidelines for the avoidance of discrimination.

The law gives the Tribunal the same jurisdiction and powers as a high court and a judge equal in status to a high court judge and two lay assessors. It can order a host of remedies including damages, declarations and injunctions. The right to appeal to the Court of Appeal is provided for within the legislation. The Tribunal has the following functions:

- Hear and determine complaints referred to it by the Commission;

- Require attendance of persons for the purpose of giving evidence and producing documents; and
- Make such declarations and orders and awards of compensation as it thinks fit.

There are few laws in CARICOM on sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence in the workplace. Barbados and Belize have stand-alone laws on sexual harassment. In Guyana, the Prevention of Discrimination Act 1997, which also covers pay equity, has a section explicitly prohibiting sexual harassment by an employer, managerial employee or co-employee. In St. Lucia, similar to Guyana, sexual harassment is prohibited within the same law that protects the right to pay equity – that is, the Equality of Opportunity and Treatment and Occupation Act 2000. In Guyana and St. Lucia, sexual harassment is a criminal offence under these respective Acts. However, in St. Lucia there is a lack of clarity with respect to employer liability for acts committed by employees.

1.5. Social dialogue

ILO defines social dialogue in relation to advancing the Decent Work Agenda as follows:

... to include all types of negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among, representatives of government, worker and employers, on issues of common interest relating to economic and social policy. Social dialogue takes many different forms. It may exist as a tripartite process, with the government as an official party to the dialogue, or it may consist of bipartite relations between the representatives of labour and management at company level (or trade unions and employers’ organizations at higher levels). Social dialogue may be informal or institutionalized, and often involves both. It may take place at the national, regional, international, cross-border or local levels. It may involve the social partners in different economic sectors, within a single sector or in a single company or group of companies (ILO, nd).

The women’s movement has supported collective social mobilization to promote women’s rights to decent work. Formal mechanisms for negotiation with government and employers would require engagement with the traditional labour unions. CARICOM has a history of

a strong labour union movement. However, gender equality has not been central to the agendas of the unions, for various reasons. Patriarchal values continue to persist within the leadership and membership of many of the unions, which may account for the paucity of women in union leadership in the region (Marsh et al., 2014: 47). Another reason may be that initial trade union activism would have concentrated in areas that traditionally provided employment mainly for men – that is, agriculture, manufacturing and mining. This is changing somewhat as economies transition towards tourism and service-based industries. This transition, while providing more opportunities for employment for women, has raised concerns about the increase in informal, seasonal and vulnerable employment and in sectors with minimal union representation that attract lower wages and status, such as sales and domestic work. Trade unions for domestic workers have been established in two countries only – Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Following the introduction of structural adjustment programmes, the women’s movement in some countries sought to place gender equality on the agenda of formal social dialogue mechanisms instituted to provide a platform for open discussion and negotiation with government on the impact on workers, the private sector and other stakeholders. In Grenada, non-governmental organizations are represented in the Social Partners forum, which was established after the country entered into an Extended Credit Facility Arrangement with the IMF in 2010. Members of the Social Partners agreed to the Grenada Social Compact, which outlines key principles to mitigate the impact of the structural adjustment programme on vulnerable populations including poor and marginalized women.³

Barbados, which in 2018 embarked on a home-grown but IMF-endorsed structural adjustment programme, has a well-established Social Partnership mechanism, which has provided a platform for dialogue between government, labour unions, the private sector and other key stakeholders. The National Organisation of Women is exploring membership in the Social Partnership based on a concern that layoffs of public workers would have a disproportionate impact on single-parent households, in the majority of which the parent is a woman (Brathwaite, 2018).

The next section provides an analysis of national gender policies and strategic action plans, and national development plans, where they exist, with a view to ascertaining the current policy apparatus on gender equality and decent work for the countries included in this review.

3 https://www.gov.gd/egov/pdf/Social_Compact.pdf

2. POLICY ANALYSIS

As signatories to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Violence Against Women (CEDAW), CARICOM countries have committed to a legally binding human rights framework to achieve gender equality. Periodic and timely reporting on CEDAW has been ad hoc in CARICOM but has improved significantly in recent years.

CARICOM has also signed other intergovernmental agreements on gender equality and women's empowerment, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their Agenda 2030, which recognizes the centrality of gender equality to development. The application of gender mainstreaming (as a tool to achieve the SDGs and the implementation of CEDAW, Beijing and other intergovernmental agreements on gender equality) to meet these commitments requires a policy framework and institutional capacities.

The existence of costed national gender equality policies represents a country's commitment to ensuring women and men and girls and boys are equitably benefiting from the development process. Of the six countries under review in this report, only two have such policies. In fact, few active gender policies exist in CARICOM. The mere existence of a national gender policy alone is insufficient to address the myriad challenges faced. Gender equality priorities outlined in such policies should actually provide short-, medium- and long-term actions for the realization of rights. Additionally, these policies and their implementation plans should operationalize in practice the implementation of CEDAW, Beijing and the SDGs, be aligned with sector policies and plans and facilitate multi-sectoral gender mainstreaming. Importantly, gender equality should be a guiding principle in national development plans and aligned with national gender equality policies.

It is important to recognize that, across CARICOM, weak institutional capacity of national gender machineries hampers efforts for policy coordination on gender equality. A CARICOM/UN Women report "Institutional Strengthening of National Gender Machineries" (Mondesire, 2014) revealed structural and institutional challenges. Low technical capacity and inadequate funding are systemic.

Given the focus of this report, the review of the national gender policies was undertaken with a view to assessing alignment with the main guiding policy

and planning document on labour, employment and the world of work, which in the CARICOM context is the national development plan.

Jamaica's National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE) recommends significant legislative reforms to ensure women's economic empowerment. Several of these reforms, if undertaken, are intended to enhance women's position in the labour force. The NPGE lists the following as key targets/objectives on labour and economic empowerment and also, specifically, on the empowerment of vulnerable women:

- Elimination of gender disparity in wages and labour laws;
- Improvement in conditions of work of women and men in low-paying sectors in keeping with the ILO Decent Work Agenda;
- Development and enforcement of sexual harassment workplace policies in the private and public sectors;
- Addressing structural barriers that create and reinforce sex segregation of the labour market;
- Increasing employment opportunities for women in the formal sector;
- Instituting measures to ensure social protection, mainly for women engaged in social, reproductive and the unpaid care economy. The NPGE calls for research on the measurement of unpaid care work and evidence-based special measures to determine ascendant benefits under national social security schemes;
- Provision of support services to women in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises;
- Development and implementation of strategies to alleviate poverty and other vulnerabilities among rural women.

The NPGE also recommends amendments to the following laws:

- Employment (Equal Pay for Men and Women) Act;
- Fundamental Rights (Additional Provisions) (Interim) Act;
- Housing Act;
- Human Employment and Resource Training Act;
- Jamaica Social Welfare Commission Act;
- Labour Relations and Industrial Disputes Act;

- Land Development and Utilization Act;
- Maintenance Act;
- Marriage Act;
- Married Women’s Property Act;
- Maternity Leave Act;
- Matrimonial Causes Act;
- Pensions Act;
- Poor Relief Act;
- Representation of the People Act;
- Registration (of Births and Deaths) Act;
- Status of Children Act;
- Women (Employment of) Act.

The recommendations of the NPGE call for a reduction in women’s unpaid care work – a key barrier to women’s equitable participation in the formal economy; an intent to create an enabling environment for women in the workplace through the promotion of anti-discriminatory laws and policies; and special measures to address gender biases that prevent women from owning and successfully operating their own businesses.

Evidence that the abovementioned recommended reforms are national development priorities is found in a review of the National Development Plan for Jamaica, the Vision 2030. The Vision 2030 is aligned with the NPGE and has a Gender Sector Plan that includes priority actions to address sex segregation in the labour market. There are specific output indicators to support the development of sexual harassment policies and to monitor its decline in the workplace, for example. Notably, the Gender Sector Plan includes the outcome “Women’s Unpaid Labour Is Valued and Rewarded”, with specific actions to be taken to measure and account for women’s unpaid work in the national economy and to provide social protection benefits accordingly. The conduct of time use surveys to measure unpaid care work is also included as an output to be delivered and to contribute to evidence-based policy and programme development and reform.

In Grenada, the 2014–2024 Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP) includes a Policy Area and Commitments on Gender, Labour and Employment, which include actions to:

- Address gender-based violations of the Employment Act and Minimum Wages Order with regard to equal pay for equal work of equal value. Short-term actions include introducing a mechanism for enforcing standards and sanctions for violations; and ongoing monitoring of labour violations;
- Review legislation related to the rights of unorganized categories of workers such as domestic and agricultural workers, and others who are most vulnerable to non-payment of social security contributions and employment abuses;
- Review and amend the National Insurance Scheme to ensure gender-equitable provisions determined by contributions from both wages and self-employed workers in the productive sector but also in the care economy. Short-term actions include a review of Scheme benefits of men and women and the conduct of a time use survey to measure women’s unpaid labour;
- Undertake public awareness campaigns on widely held gender role stereotypes that promote result in sex segregation in the labour market.

Similar to Jamaica’s NPGE, the Grenada GEPAP recommends policy and legal reforms to reduce inequalities in both the reproductive and the productive spheres.

At the time of writing of this report, Grenada’s National Development Plan (the Strategic Development Plan 2030) is in draft form and not yet publicly available. However, the GEPAP, a Cabinet-approved policy document, demonstrates at least *de jure* commitment to gender-responsive decent work.

Initiatives to address sex stereotyping and gender-biased social expectations that result in and reinforce occupational segregation (i.e. women tending to be balkanized in service-oriented and clerical positions) are included in Jamaica’s NPGE and Vision 2030 and Grenada’s GEPAP.

Trinidad and Tobago’s Vision 2030, the country’s national development strategy, mentions gender mainstreaming as an important principle, along with fulfilling the Decent Work Agenda. Female unemployment is acknowledged as being higher than that of males. The strategy does not propose specific actions to address this disparity. However, the stated commitment to the Decent Work Agenda, which itself enshrines gender equality as a guiding

principle, may imply commitment to addressing female unemployment. It is notable that the strategy is critical of “make work” or active labour market programmes introduced by government historically to provide temporary employment. This approach, according to the Vision 2030, has created a “dependency syndrome”, although it is acknowledged as necessary for social cohesion. According to ILO, Active Labour Market Programmes have proven valuable for women to gain skills and experience and for young women and mothers whose employment may have been interrupted as a result of pregnancy or child-rearing and who are seeking to re-enter the labour force (ILO, 2017: 17). However, such programmes tend to be more prevalent in middle- to high-income countries, and are difficult to implement in fiscally constrained contexts and contexts with weak public employment services, limited labour market information systems and challenges with reaching rural and other hard-to-reach areas.

In Trinidad and Tobago’s Vision 2030, the development of Guidelines for Incomes Policy is mentioned as a pathway to introducing a flexible labour market regime, through:

- Training and skills development;
- Use of work-sharing agreements to prevent job losses;
- Establishment of a variable wage component to spur public sector performance, with wages linked less to seniority and more to productivity and performance;
- Fulfilment of the Decent Work Agenda.

The Vision 2030 emphasizes creating an enabling environment for competitive business as a more effective approach to reaching the goal of full employment. However, specifics on actions to address existing gender-based disparities in this sector (such as the fact that men own over 60% of firms in the country) are not included, although there may be an implication that women should benefit equitably from any proposed interventions.

A Draft National Policy on Gender Equality and Development has been prepared in Trinidad and Tobago but not yet approved.

Guyana’s Green State Development Strategy, which is currently in development, will be the guiding framework for the country’s economic and social

development. “Human Development and Well-being” is one of the seven proposed themes. While gender equality is not one of the proposed themes, women are identified as a vulnerable group. Efforts are underway to develop a national gender policy for the country.

The Barbados Economic Recovery and Transformation Programme (BERT) was developed in response to the ongoing debt and economic challenges facing the country. Reduction of the public wage bill and public sector reform are a main focus. Barbados does not have a national gender policy.

In St. Lucia, a national development planning process has commenced as of the writing of this report, with support from the United Nations on Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support for the 2030 Agenda. The intent of this process is to facilitate SDG achievement, including on gender equality.

What is clear from the analysis above is that national gender policies are not always being viewed as a vehicle for articulating and monitoring commitments to gender equality in the world of work and women’s economic empowerment, with exceptions being Jamaica’s NPGE, the Gender Sector Plan of the Jamaica Vision 2030 and Grenada’s GEPAP. Additionally, national development plans, as the primary guiding document for economic growth and development, require more substantive inclusion of gender equality, with measurable and evidence-based interventions to achieve women’s economic empowerment.

3. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

3.1. Methodology

The statistics in this report are derived from analysis of the raw data from each country's labour force survey (LFS) or equivalent survey. The relevant datasets were made available by the national statistics agencies after they had been appropriately anonymized. All the data relate to 2017. Some countries conduct quarterly surveys. For Guyana and Jamaica, the analysis is based on data from the fourth quarter of 2017 only; for Trinidad and Tobago, it is based on data from the third quarter. For St. Lucia, the data are from all four quarters.

Wherever possible, the situation in all six countries is shown. In some cases, however, the data for one or more countries are not available for a particular type of analysis. Typically, this is because the LFS questionnaire does not contain the relevant question/s, or the relevant variables were not included in the dataset made available by the national statistics agency.

Differences in the questionnaires of the six countries include whether particular questions are included, how they are phrased, the response options offered and for which categories of people they are asked. To facilitate comparison, the data were harmonized across countries as far as possible, for example by creating similar response categories. Where this was not possible – for example where a particular question was asked only of a specific category – the report highlights this and comparative results must be treated with caution.

Differences in response options for the questions on earnings and hours of work created a special challenge as it is not possible to calculate means and medians when the response options are in bracketed categories rather than a specific amount. In these cases, a specific value was imputed, namely the mid-value of the bracketed category chosen. The findings in respect of earnings and hours of work must therefore also be treated with caution.

All the statistics agencies provide weights with the dataset. These weights adjust each observation in the survey sample upwards by the number of people it represents in the full population. This produces tables

(and figures) that reflect the size of the population as a whole.⁴

The size of the weight for a particular observation varies on the basis of the sampling design and approach as well as the response rate among different population groups. Table 1 shows the mean value of the weights, ranging from 19.1 in Barbados to 157.7 in Trinidad and Tobago. This implies that each observation in Barbados represents about 20 people in the population whereas each observation in Trinidad and Tobago represents about 160 people. The mean weight will generally increase with the size of the population as, statistically, a smaller proportion of the population will need to be sampled to achieve the same level of statistical accuracy. Nevertheless, the fact that the data represent a sample and are weighted means that caution must be exercised when presenting disaggregated results.

TABLE 1.
Mean weights for population aged 15 years and above

Country	Weight
Barbados	19.1
Grenada	28.8
Guyana	54.3
Jamaica	122.5
St. Lucia	21.5
Trinidad and Tobago	157.7

Source: Own calculations using datasets

4 The weights provided for Jamaica are calculated for the population 14 years and above, whereas this report is based on analysis of the population 15 years and above. This could introduce a small bias in the estimates for Jamaica. The difference in age group will also result in small differences between estimates in this report and those reported by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica.

Sample size affects the reliability of estimates

The statistics bulletin issued on the Barbados LFS carries a clear warning about the limitations of disaggregating analysis too finely, especially when some of the analytical categories are small.

“These estimates are all liable to sampling error. Their absolute sampling error increases with their magnitude, while the relative error decreases the greater the size of the estimate. Generally, the smaller the Relative Standard Error (or Coefficient of Variation) the more reliable is the estimate. Because of this, comparisons of the larger estimates may be used with confidence but small estimates must be regarded with caution. In particular, small differences from one period to another may be due solely to sampling error. This is an unavoidable limitation of data obtained by the sampling technique, and consequently, restricts the detailed cross-classification that can be presented.”

The report applies rounding when showing results. For the most part, results are not shown with any decimal places. This approach is adopted because decimals can suggest a greater degree of accuracy than is merited. Decimals also make it more difficult to see the overall patterns. Rounding sometimes results in individual results shown in a column or row not adding up exactly to the total for that column or row.

The LFS focus on “economic” work – that is, work for pay, profit or gain. They do not ask about work such as cooking, cleaning and other housework, or caring on an unpaid basis for members of one’s household and community. These types of work, which are often

referred to as **unpaid care work**, provide important services that contribute to the well-being of the population and also ensure workers are available and able to work well in the economy. Across all countries, women perform more than their fair share of this work. Unpaid care work is thus a gender issue. Because unpaid work leaves fewer of the 24 hours in a day available, and because there is limited flexibility in the time at which some unpaid care tasks – especially those related to care of children – must be done, responsibility for unpaid care work is likely to place constraints on how women engage in “economic” work. The report therefore attempts to find ways in which to highlight the impact of unpaid care work on women’s and men’s “economic” work.

3.2. Key characteristics of the six countries

Table 2 shows key economic and development indicators for the six focus countries as published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2018. All of the countries are classified as having high development. Two – Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago – are classified in the “very high” category; one – Guyana – in the “medium high” category; and the remaining three simply in the “high” category.

The Human Development Index (HDI) rank of the countries ranges from 58 for Barbados to 125 for Guyana. The HDI formula includes gross domestic product (GDP). Trinidad and Tobago has the highest GDP per capita but ranks lower than Barbados on the HDI and the Gender Inequality Index. Guyana ranks lowest on all measures except population. On population, it is the third largest but still has less than a third of Jamaica’s population. Only Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have populations of more than a million.

TABLE 2.
Key indicators of the six focus countries

Indicator	Barbados	Grenada	Guyana	Jamaica	St. Lucia	Trinidad and Tobago
Development category	Very high	High	Medium high	High	High	Very high
Population, 2017 (million)	0.3	0.1	0.8	2.7	0.2	1.4
HDI rank	58	75	125	97	90	69
Gender inequality index	0.284	-	0.504	0.412	0.333	0.324
GDP per capita (PPP \$ million)	16,978	13,594	7,435	8,194	12,952	28,763

Note: The population estimate for Jamaica was provided by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica.
Source: UNDP (2018)

4. FINDINGS

TABLE 3.

Ages at which children can legally leave school and can be employed

	End of compulsory schooling	Minimum age for employment	Statutory pensionable age	
			Men	Women
Barbados	16	16	66.5	66.5
Grenada	16	16	60	60
Guyana	15	15	60	60
Jamaica	17	13	65	60
St. Lucia	15	16	62	62
Trinidad and Tobago	16	16	60	60

Note: In Jamaica, the Child Care and Protection Act (2004): Section 34 stipulates that a child under 15 years of age may be employed only in prescribed occupations (appropriate light work).

Sources: Education Acts; Labour Laws/Codes; Melchiorre (2004); World Bank (2010b); supplemented by information provided by national statistical agencies.

4.1. Demographics

4.1.1. The shape of the population

Labour force statistics are usually collected and reported for the age group 15 and above. This is sometimes referred to as the “working-age population”. The lower cut-off mirrors the age below which many countries make schooling compulsory for children, and also the age from which children can be legally employed.

Table 3 shows the age at which compulsory schooling ends in each country, as well as the minimum age for legal employment. It also shows the age at which those who have contributed to social security will usually draw the statutory pension. (Some countries also allow for early withdrawal of the pension.) The pension age ranges between 60 and 65.5 years. In the case of Jamaica, the age for women is 60 while that for men is 65. Similar differentials exist in other countries, although some have equalized the retirement age over recent years. Debate continues as to whether differential ages for retirement are justified (Axelrad and Mahoney, 2017).

Some countries also have an upper cut-off age for reporting on the working-age population and/or labour force. The cut-off differs across countries, and may be seen as the notional “retirement” age beyond which people are not expected to work. There is a

range of reasons why retirement may not happen, including increasing longevity, being forced to work on account of poverty and enjoyment of work. Because women tend to live longer than men, more are likely to be excluded from the calculations if an upper cut-off is used. However, the fact that the proportion of older people is likely to be higher among women, combined with lower labour force engagement among older people, results in standard labour force indicator being biased downwards for women if there is no cut-off. This report for the most part does not use an upper cut-off.

4.1.2. Age

In this report we utilize age groups that are likely to reflect changing productive and reproductive roles.

- The first age group – 15–19 years – represents an age which many will still be in education, although some may have left education and/or started work and/or started families. Unfortunately, the populations of several of the focus countries are too small for this group to provide reliable statistics. However, we show it as a separate group so that the patterns of young people of this age do not skew the indicators for the next age group.
- The second age group – 20–49 years – represents both the peak reproductive age, at which people are most likely to have children in the sense of producing, providing and caring for them, and

also the peak economic productive age in terms of gainful employment.

- In the third age group – 50–64 – people are less likely to be playing heavy reproductive roles. While employment rates are likely to remain high, some will leave employment voluntarily during this period.
- The fourth age group – 65 and above – is the age at which most people will not be working economically, or not full time. They are also unlikely at this age to be caring for their own children.

Together, the four groups cover the population 15 years and above.

The bars in Figure 2 show enormous differences in the relative size of the population aged 15 years and above across the six countries. Jamaica’s working-age population is almost double that of Trinidad and Tobago, which in turn is just under double that of Guyana. Barbados has a working-age population about half of that of Guyana, with the other two countries having working-age populations less than half of that of Barbados. Combining all these proportions, Grenada has a working-age population less than a twentieth of that of Jamaica.

Despite the differences in absolute size, the female proportion of the working-age population is similar

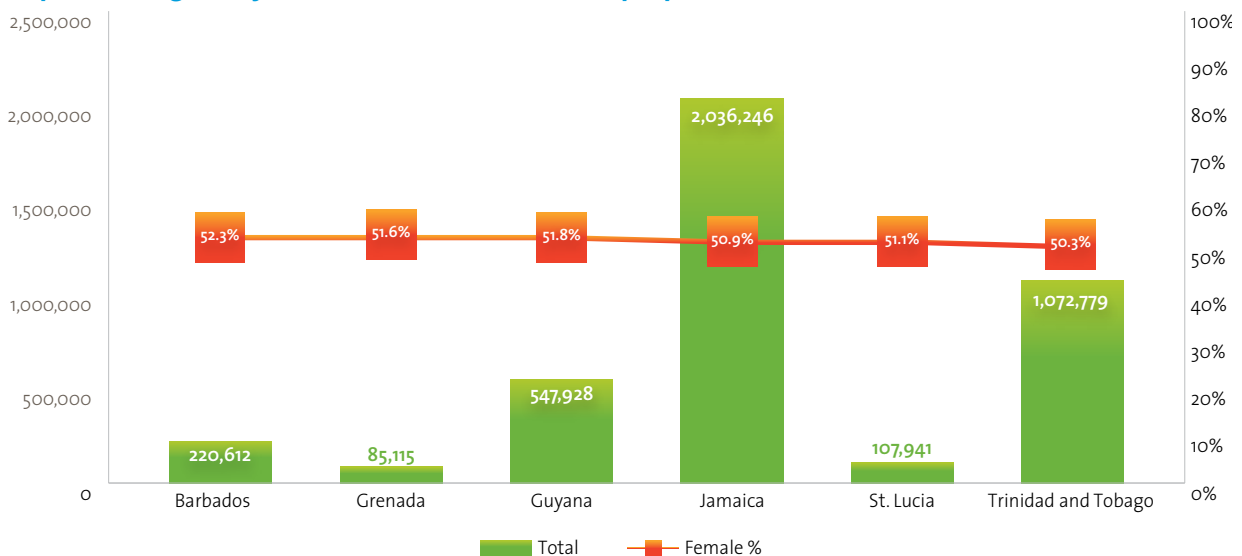
across countries. In all countries, women account for a little over half of the population, with the proportion ranging from 50.3% in Trinidad to 52.3% in Barbados. The two largest countries have slightly lower female proportions than the other countries.

Globally, men are more likely than women to migrate – especially if the migration involves longer distances and longer periods away from home. This pattern can be at least partly explained by women’s greater family responsibilities. Meanwhile, the lower female proportions in the larger countries could reflect the availability of more opportunities and thus less incentive for men to migrate. Unfortunately, the available data do not allow this possibility to be explored.

Figure 3 shows that the proportion of the working-age population that is 65 years and above varies between 10% for men in Guyana and 27% for women in Barbados. Generally, wealthier countries can be expected to have a larger share of older people, as longevity tends to increase with wealth while fertility tends to decrease.

In all countries except Grenada the pattern is as expected, with women more likely than men to be in this oldest age group. The relative gap is largest for Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago. The shares of older people affect labour statistics as a high share tends to reduce overall labour force participation and employment.

FIGURE 2.
Population aged 15 years and above, and female proportion, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Unfortunately, the Barbados dataset does not include people under 15 years of age. Among the other countries, the share of the population that is in this young age group varies from 16% for the female population in St. Lucia to 27% in Guyana for the same category.

The two percentages reflected in the figure are to some extent a mirror image of each other as a higher proportion of older people results in a lower proportion of younger people if there is little change in the middle group.

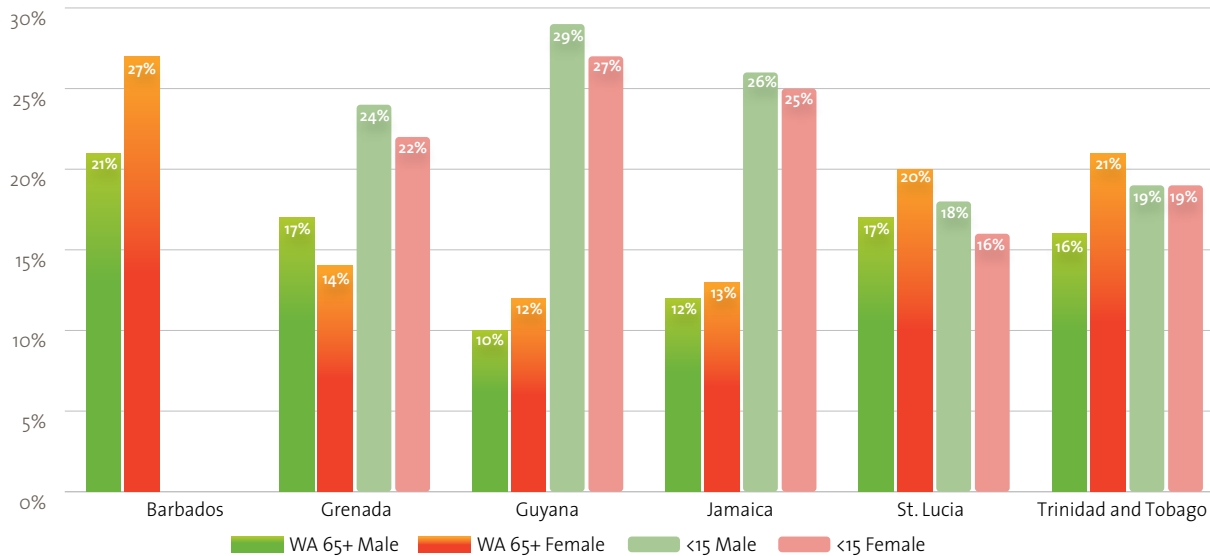
The proportions are nevertheless important from a gender perspective. A higher proportion of children is likely to place a heavier unpaid care work burden on the working-age population, and on women in particular. While older people may also need care, the need is generally less intensive than in respect of children.

4.1.3. Households with and without children

Figure 4 shows what proportion of adult women and men – those aged 18 years and above – live in households that contain no other adults but do contain at least one child under 18 years. (The child may not be the biological child of the adult.) For the four countries for which the calculation can be carried out, **women are many times more likely than men to be in this position.**

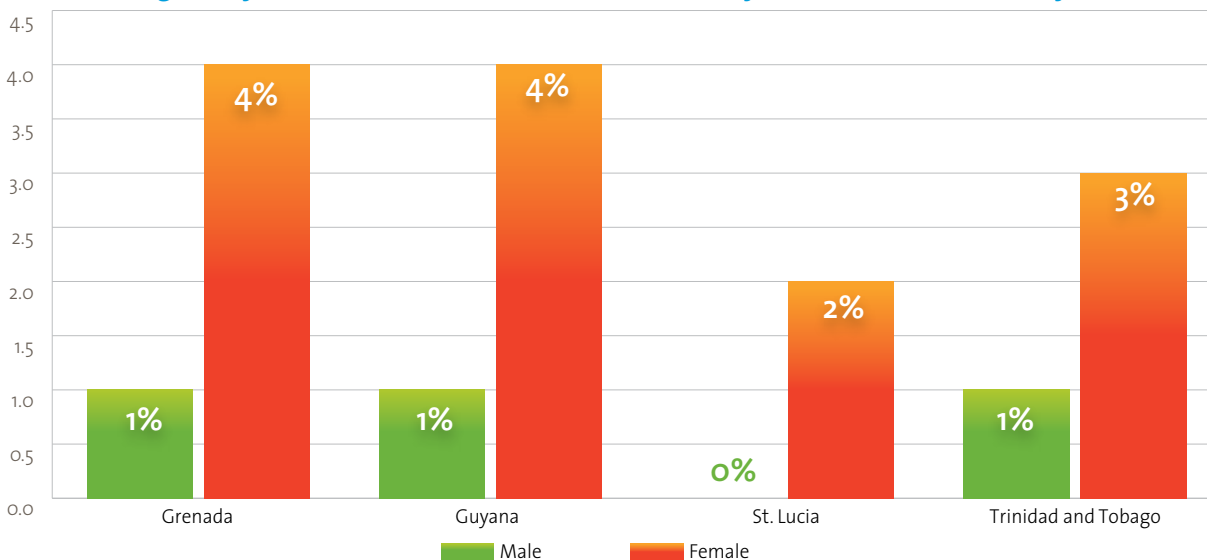
The proportions in such households are small – under 4.5% – even for women across the four countries. Nevertheless, the pattern is an indication of the extent to which women are more likely than men to bear responsibility for children. In particular, in the absence of other adults, the **women shown in this figure will usually bear the responsibility both for caring physically and emotionally for the children and for providing for them financially.**

FIGURE 3.
Proportions of working-age population aged 65 years and above, and population aged under 15 years by sex, 2017



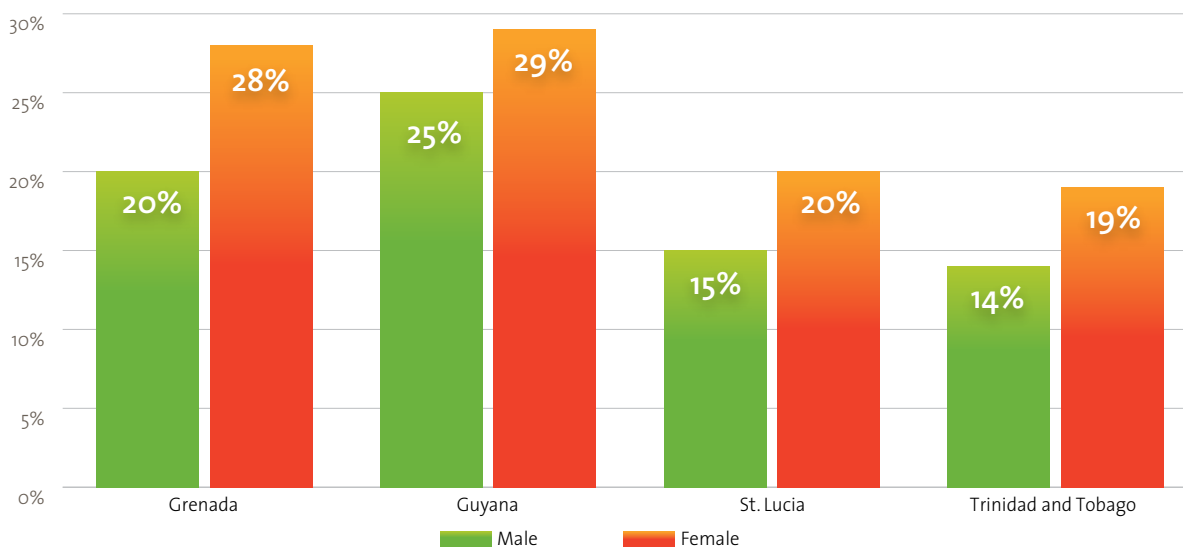
Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 4
Lone adult aged 18 years and above with children under 18 years in the household by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 5.
Adult aged 18 years and above with children aged under 5 years in household by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 5 shows the percentage of women and men aged 18 years and above living in a household that contains at least one child under 5 years of age. This is of interest because at this age children are less

likely than older children to be in school or care during the day, and more likely to need intensive care. Those providing the care are therefore likely to be constrained in terms of the paid work they can take on.

Comparison of this figure with Figure 3 above shows that countries in which children under 15 years constitute a larger proportion of the population are also those in which women and men are more likely to live in a household with a very young child.

As before, women are noticeably more likely than men to be in such households. The relative gender difference is greater in Grenada than the other countries. However, unlike in the previous figure, the working-age population shown in this figure will often be living together with other adults as well as the young children. They may not, therefore, bear the full responsibility – or even any responsibility – for caring and/or providing for the young children. However, the fact that women are more likely than men to be in such households is a pointer to the greater likelihood that they will bear these responsibilities.

4.1.4. Marital status

There will generally be some sort of relationship between marriage and child-bearing. However, the relationship is far from exact. In particular, many women bear, rear and care for children outside of a formal marriage relationship, or even outside an ongoing relationship.

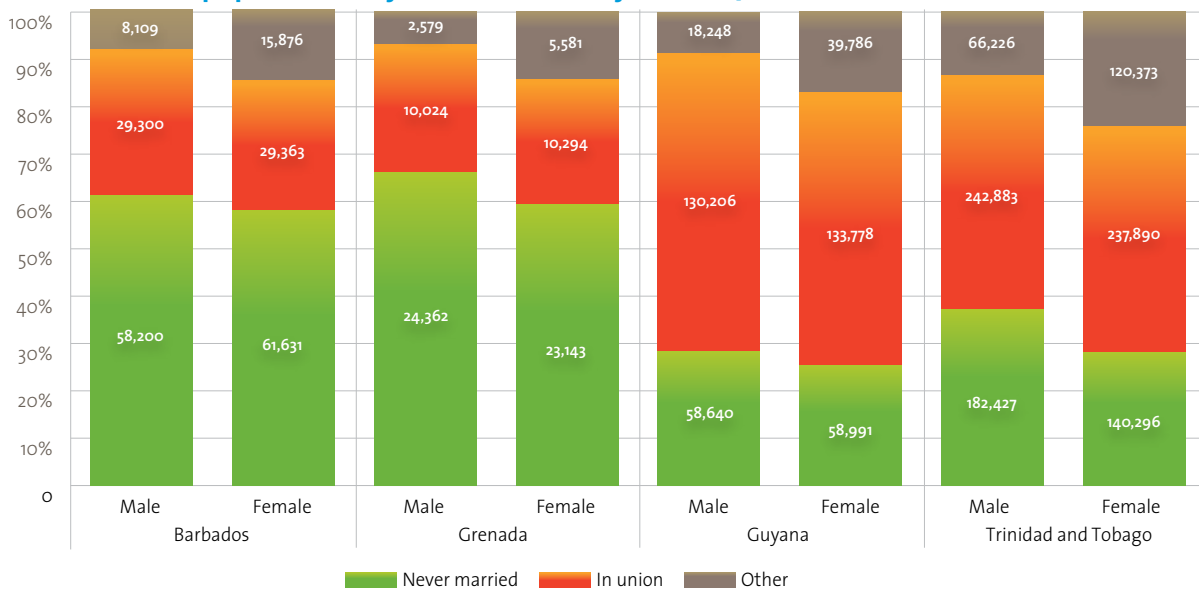
Marital status could affect engagement in the labour force through several routes. Beyond childcare needs,

there may be social expectations placed on women and men in a formal relationship as to their expected roles.

Figure 6 shows that, across the four countries for which information is available, a larger proportion of men than women have never been married (and are not currently in a union in cases where this option is included). This pattern is expected both because men tend to marry later than women and because women are more likely to outlive their partners and thus, as widows, be in the “other” category. The figure excludes teenagers as the majority of the younger age group are likely to be never married.

The number of men and women who are married is fairly similar within each country. This is expected in a situation of limited or no polygamy unless there is differential out-migration for women and men in union. Guyana records the highest proportion of women and men in union. This is explained in large part by the fact that Guyana explicitly provides for a “living together” option, and these women and men account for a substantial proportion of those in union in the country. Trinidad and Tobago also has a relatively large proportion in this category, in this case accounted for by a category of “common law” union. However, this category accounts for a smaller share of those in union in Trinidad and Tobago than in Guyana.

FIGURE 6.
Marital status of population 20 years and above by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

TABLE 4.

Percentage of non-natives among population aged 15 years and above by sex, 2017

	Barbados	Grenada	Guyana	St. Lucia	Trinidad and Tobago
Male	7%	6%	1%	3%	12%
Female	9%	7%	1%	4%	4%

Source: Own calculations using datasets

The “other” category includes people who are widowed, divorced and separated. As expected, given greater longevity, women are more likely than men to be in this category. The pattern may also reflect a greater tendency for men than women to remarry after being widowed or divorced. Unfortunately, the data do not allow us to explore this possibility.

4.1.5. Nationality

Caribbean countries are generally known for having high levels of migration. Unfortunately, the LFS capture information only on those who are living in the country at the time of the survey. They therefore do not capture out-migration. As a result, they provide statistical information only on people coming to the country concerned, and not those leaving it – that is, the people “lost”, even if temporarily, to the country’s labour force.

Many of the countries do, however, include questions on the nationality of individuals surveyed. In most cases, this is asked in terms of the country or region in which they were born. Table 4 suggests that less than 10% of the working-age population consists of non-natives except in the case of the male population in Trinidad and Tobago. These percentages are too small to allow for reliable analysis of the labour force situation of non-natives compared with natives. The estimates in the table suggest the non-native proportion of the population may be slightly higher for women than for men. This pattern, if reliable, may reflect greater out-migration among native men compared with native women rather than greater in-migration of non-native women compared with non-native men.

4.2. Work status

Globally, national statistics agencies generally use the ILO⁵ approach in categorizing individuals aged 15 years and above into three broad labour force categories.

- **Employed:** These are people who did at least one hour of work in the seven-day reference period, or were temporarily absent from work but had a job to return to.
- **Unemployed:** These are people who are not employed in terms of the above definition but would have liked to do work and were available to do it.
- **Not economically active (NEA):** These are people aged 15 and above who do not meet the criteria for either employment or unemployment. The category includes full-time students, full-time home-makers and those too old to work or with disabilities that prevent their working.

The first two categories – employed and unemployed – together make up the economically active population, or “labour force”. The NEA are not part of the labour force.

4.2.1. Employment

All three of the above categories are defined in terms of the notion of “work” and “production” reflected in the System of National Accounts (SNA)⁶ that all countries are expected to use to calculate their GDP. The third person rule states that any activity that you can hire someone else to do for you constitutes work and production. However, the SNA specifies that only

5 www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/statistics-overview-and-topics/WCMS_470304/lang--en/index.htm

6 The origins of the SNA lie in the 1947 Report of the Subcommittee on National Income Statistics of the League of Nations Committee of Statistical Experts: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/hsna.asp>

types of work considered economic should be included when calculating GDP.

All production of goods is considered economic work under the SNA. However, production of services is not considered to be economic work if it is done on an unpaid basis for one’s family or community. This means that unpaid subsistence work on the household’s plot is considered to be economic work, whereas housework and care of children and other members of one’s household – which are often referred to as “unpaid care work” – are not.

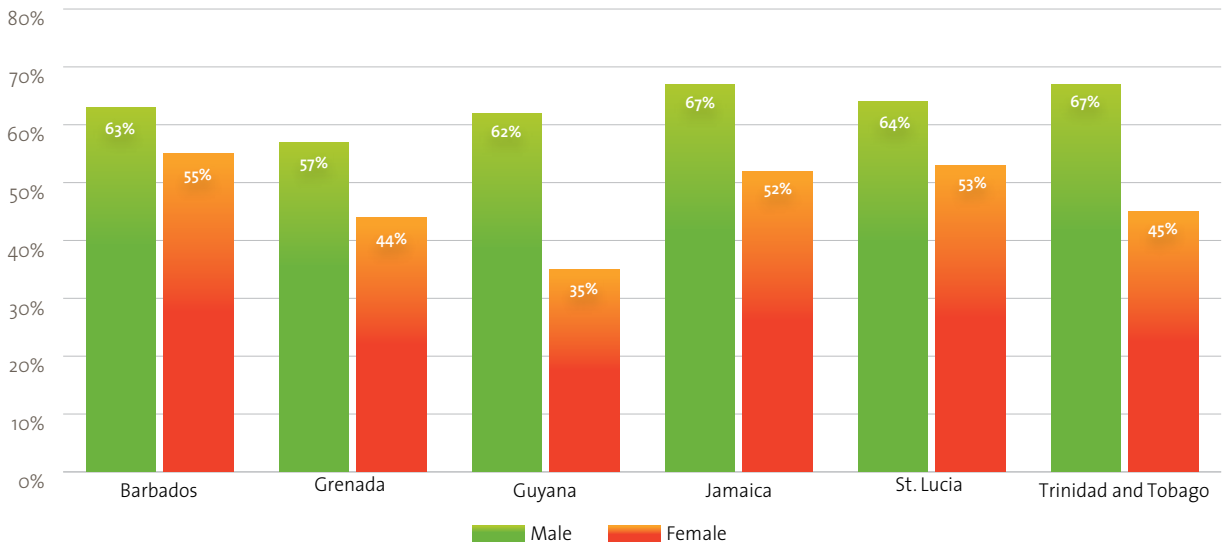
Because employment is defined only in terms of economic work there is a clear gender bias and blindness

in a situation where women bear the main responsibility for the unpaid services for their own household.

Figure 7 shows the proportion of the male and female working-age population that is employed in each country. For men, the proportion ranges from 57% in Grenada to 67% in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. For women, the range is from 35% in Guyana to 55% in Barbados.

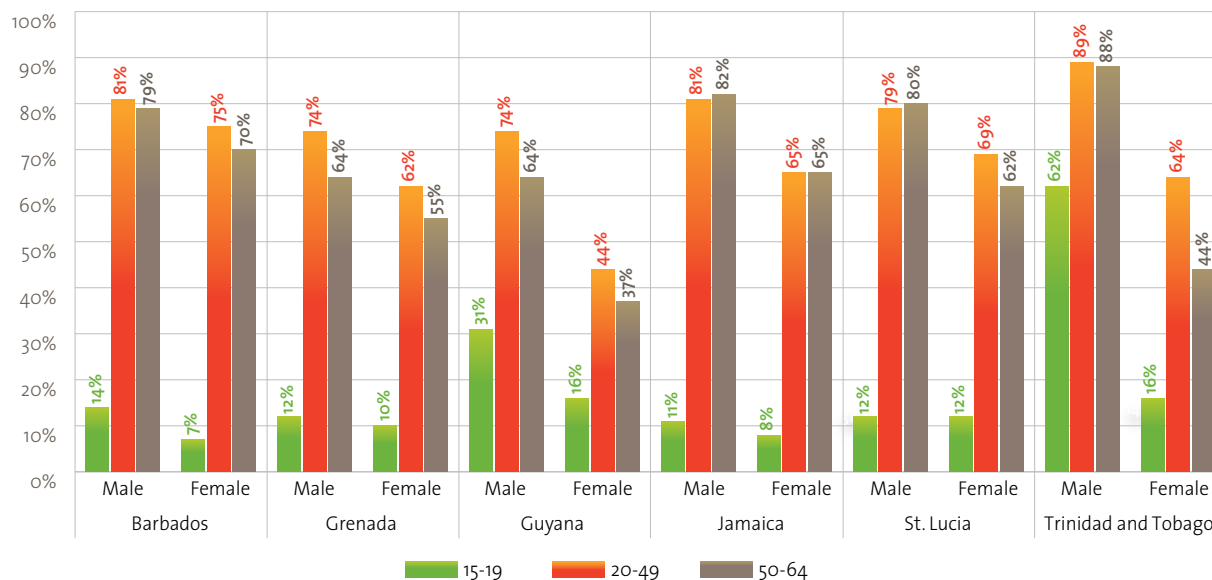
In all countries, the employment rate is lower for women than for men. The gap is especially large in Guyana, followed by Trinidad and Tobago. The gap is smallest in Barbados.

FIGURE 7.
Employment rate by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 8.
Employment rate by age group and sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 8 shows the employment rate by broad age group. The oldest age group – 65 years and above – is excluded as the patterns will be biased by differential longevity among women and men.

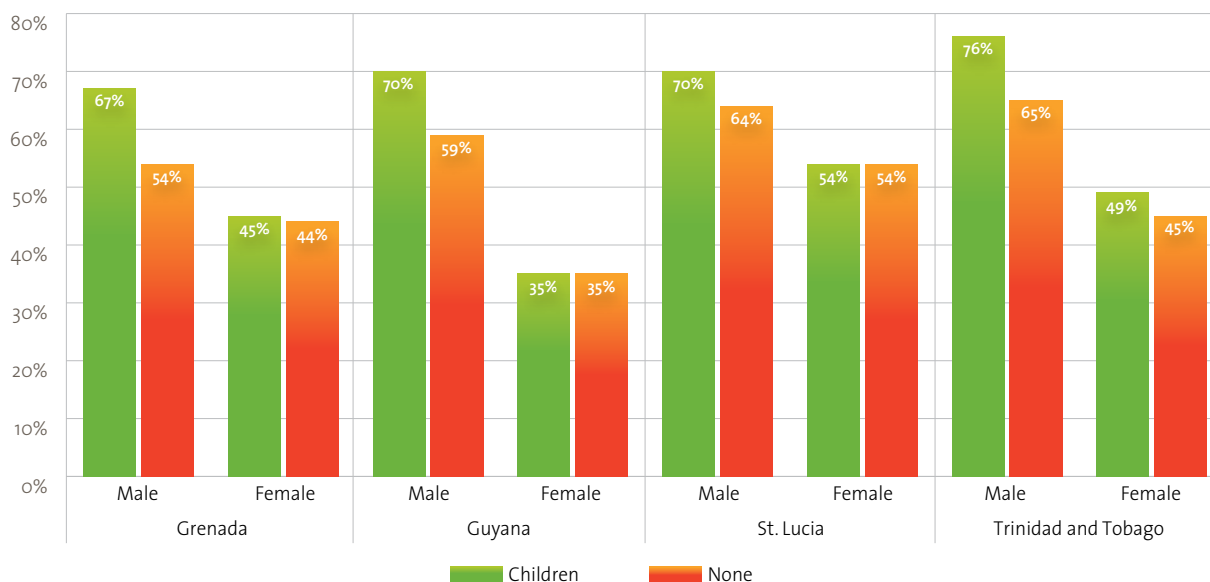
The employment rate is higher for men than women in all of the other three age groups except in St. Lucia, where there is no gender difference among teenagers. In the other two age groups, the gender difference is smallest for Barbados and largest for Guyana.

In the youngest age group, the rate is below 20% in all cases except among young men in Guyana, where the rate is 31%. In this country, young men are nearly twice as likely as young women to be employed. All countries except St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago have a marked difference in employment rates for young women and young men. The exploration of education levels below suggests the pattern for this group may – at least in part – be explained by young women persevering longer in education.

In most cases, women and men aged 20–49 years are more likely than those aged 50–64 years to be employed. This is not the case, however, for Jamaican women and men and for men in St. Lucia.

FIGURE 9.

Employment rate of adults with children under 5 years in the household by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 9 shows that men are noticeably more likely than women to be employed if there are children under five years in their household. This is, however, generally not the case for women. Of the four countries for which this analysis is possible, Trinidad and Tobago is the only one in which women in households with young children are more likely than their peers in other households to be employed. However, even in Trinidad and Tobago the pattern is much less marked for women than for men.

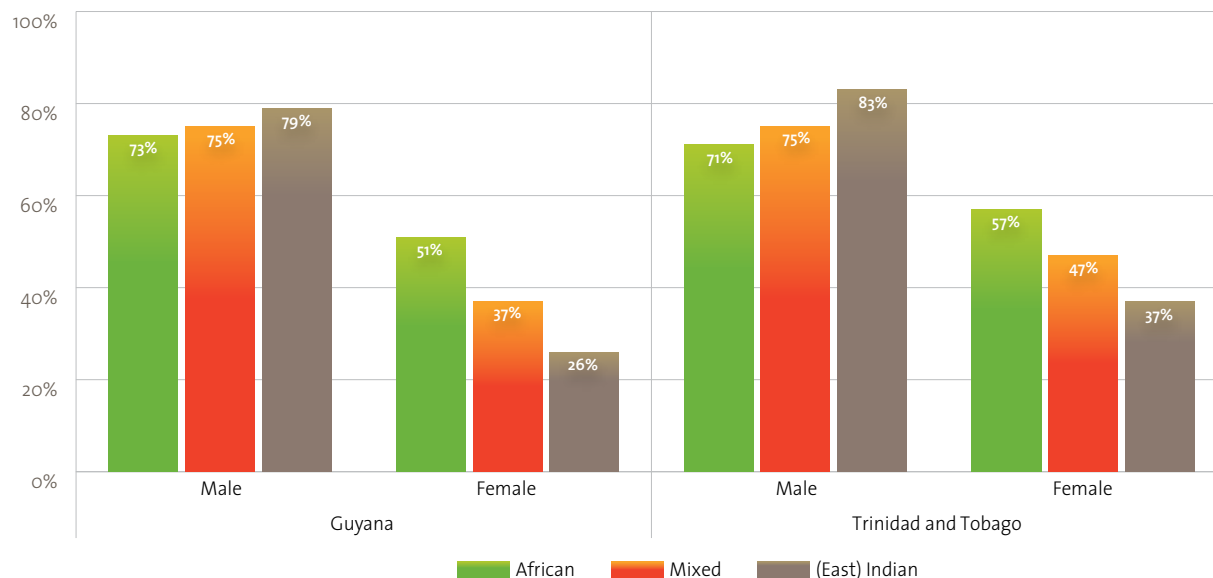
The pattern for men could reflect the fact that those of the peak productive and reproductive age, who are the most likely to be employed, are also those most likely to be fathering children and thus living with young children. The same logic does not apply so readily to women. Although women in this age group are most likely to bear and have young children living in the household, their disproportionate responsibility for caring for the young children will limit the extent

to which they can engage in economic work (i.e. be employed), especially given the intensive full-time care needed for the youngest children.

Figure 10 shows the patterns in respect of the three main ethnic groups for Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, the two countries with the greatest ethnic diversity in their population.⁷ The figure shows very similar gender patterns for the two countries. Among the men in both countries, African men have the lowest employment rates, whereas Indian men have the highest. The order is completely reversed among women. The differences in the employment rates across ethnic groups are also larger for women than for men, especially in Guyana. These patterns suggest traditional gender roles may be most pronounced in the Indian group.

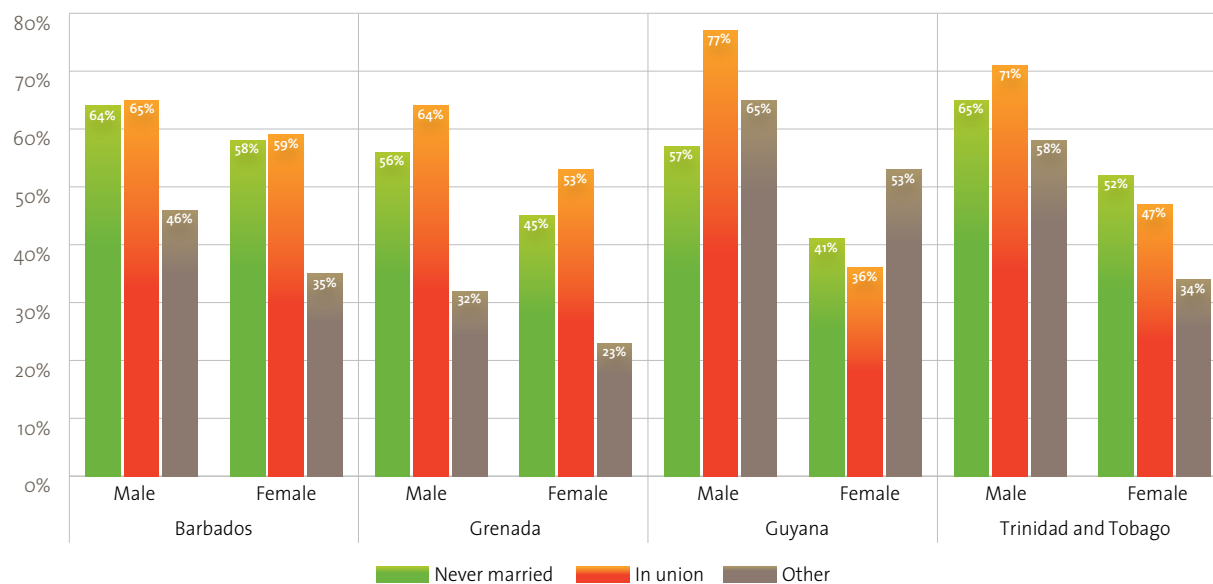
⁷ The names of the ethnic groups have been standardized across the two countries.

FIGURE 10.
Employment rate of adults with children under 5 years in the household by ethnicity and sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 11.
Employment rate by marital status and sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 11 shows diverse patterns across and within countries in respect of the relationship between employment and marital status. The only constant is that, as expected, women and men in the “other” category – which is dominated by those who are

widowed but includes those who are divorced or separated – record a lower employment rate than those who are never married or in a union across all four countries.

In Barbados, the employment rates for women and men are very similar for those who are never married and those in union. In Grenada, the employment rate is higher for people in union than for those who are not. In Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago – where the questionnaires explicitly provide a living together option – the employment rate for men is higher for men in union than for those who have never married, whereas the opposite pattern is found for women. This pattern suggests a traditional division of labour in couples where men are seen as bread-winners, whereas women bear the main responsibility for unpaid care work.

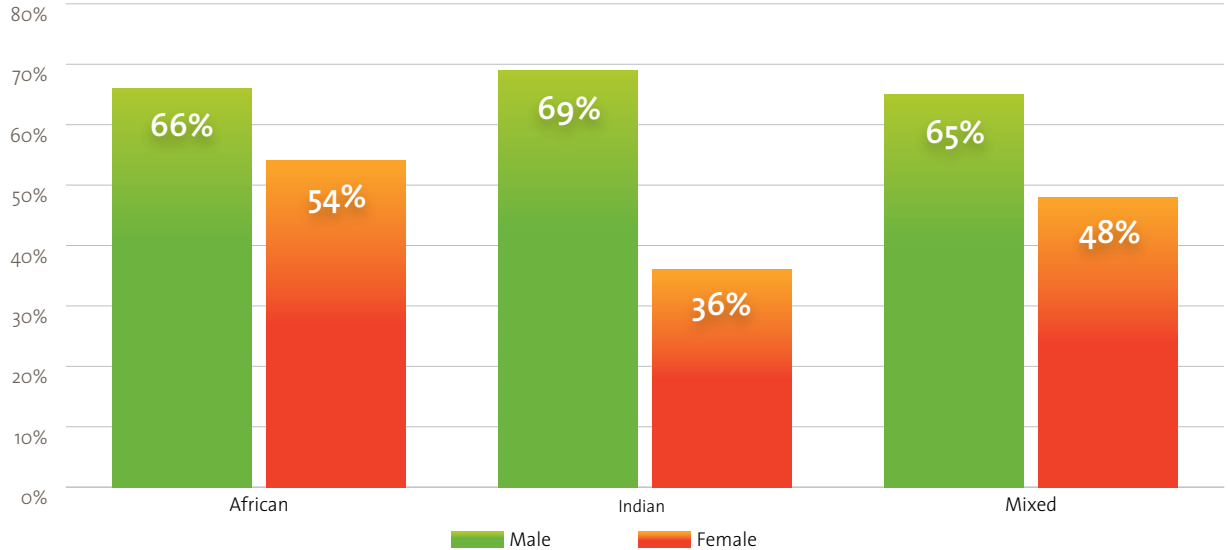
In Guyana, the pattern is even clearer if we restrict analysis to married people. When this is done, the employment rates for married men and women are 80% and 35%, respectively. However, in Trinidad and

Tobago the employment rates are lower for both women and men among those who are married when compared with those who are living together.

A range of factors other than gender influence labour force participation. In some countries, ethnicity is an important factor. Trinidad and Tobago is an interesting example in that its population has three large ethnic groups, which, together, account for about 99% of the population. The sample size is also large enough to merit analysis.

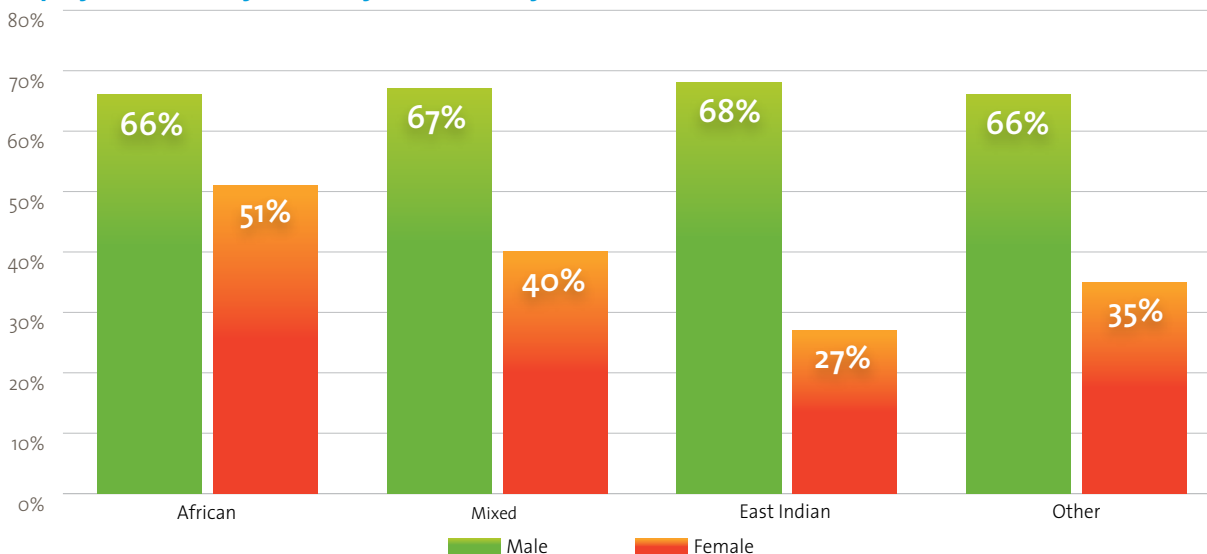
Figure 12 shows the Indian groups having the highest employment rate for men but the lowest employment rate for women. The African and mixed groups have very similar employment rates for men. However, African women are noticeably more likely than mixed-race women to be employed.

FIGURE 12.
Employment rate by ethnicity and sex, Trinidad and Tobago, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 13.
Employment rate by ethnicity and sex, Guyana, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 13 presents similar analysis for Guyana, where the population is less evenly divided into three larger groups. (Amerindians account for the majority of the “other” group that accounts for less than a tenth of the population, rendering this group too small to allow for reliable analysis.) As with Trinidad and Tobago, the difference between the groups is small for men but very noticeable for women. Only just over a quarter of East Indian women are employed compared with more than half of African women.

4.2.2. Unemployment

The six countries under study use two different ways of defining unemployment. The strict definition is the original standard specified by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) and requires that the person took active steps to find employment during a specified recent period. The ICLS subsequently agreed that countries could use the alternative “relaxed” definition in which the requirement of work-seeking is dropped if the situation in the country concerned warrants it.

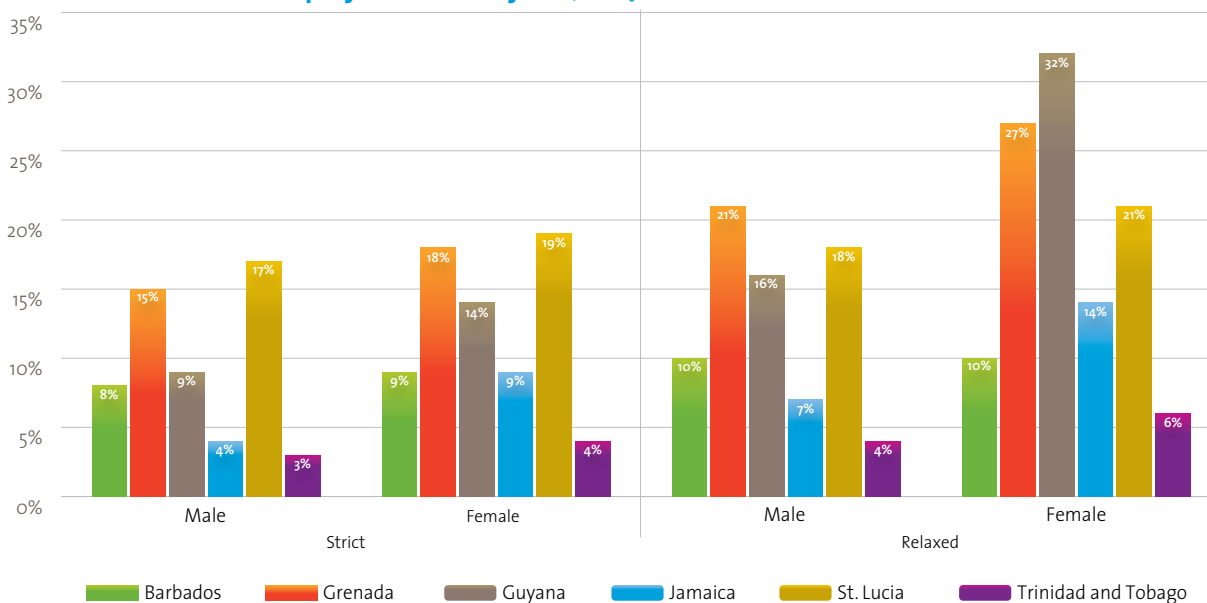
The alternative was introduced in acknowledgement that in some countries the job market is not sufficiently developed and organized to allow for the expectation that everyone who wants a job will look for one. In particular, people may have given up looking for work

because of the apparent absence of opportunities for people with their characteristics/experience and/or because the cost and effort associated with looking is not merited given the unlikelihood of success. These individuals are sometimes referred to as “discouraged” work-seekers.

Use of the strict definition produces a lower unemployment rate than use of the relaxed definition.

The 19th ICLS held in 2013 recommended that the term “unemployment” be used to refer only to the original strict definition. The ICLS recognized the gender issues associated with the different approaches noted above. In place of the relaxed definition, it proposed the introduction of two new concepts – the “potential labour force” (consisting of both available and unavailable job-seekers) and “discouraged” work-seekers, in line with what is described above. However, in 2017, three of our six focus countries were still using the relaxed definition, and none had introduced the concept of the potential labour force. We therefore examine the difference between the two measures that preceded the 19th ICLS.

FIGURE 14.
Strict and relaxed unemployment rate by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

The unemployment rate is calculated as the number of unemployed people as a proportion of the labour force (i.e. employed and unemployed combined). Figure 14 confirms that, regardless of which definition of unemployment is used, the rate for women is higher than the rate for men. The difference between the male and female rates is largest in Guyana, where the relaxed rate for women is 32% – that is, almost a third of women who would like to work do not have work.

Guyana also has the largest difference between the strict and the relaxed rates. For Guyana women, the relaxed rate is more than double the strict rate. Grenada is the only other country with a large difference between the strict and the relaxed rates. However, as with employment, the differences between the countries may in part reflect differences in the questions asked rather than differences “on the ground”.

The relaxed definition tends to be more gender-sensitive than the strict definition because in many countries women are more likely than men to be discouraged workers. The reasons for this could include the fact the women are more likely to have other responsibilities – such as housework and childcare – that increase the opportunity cost of looking for work. In this situation, the strict definition would undercount the extent to which women would like to do paid

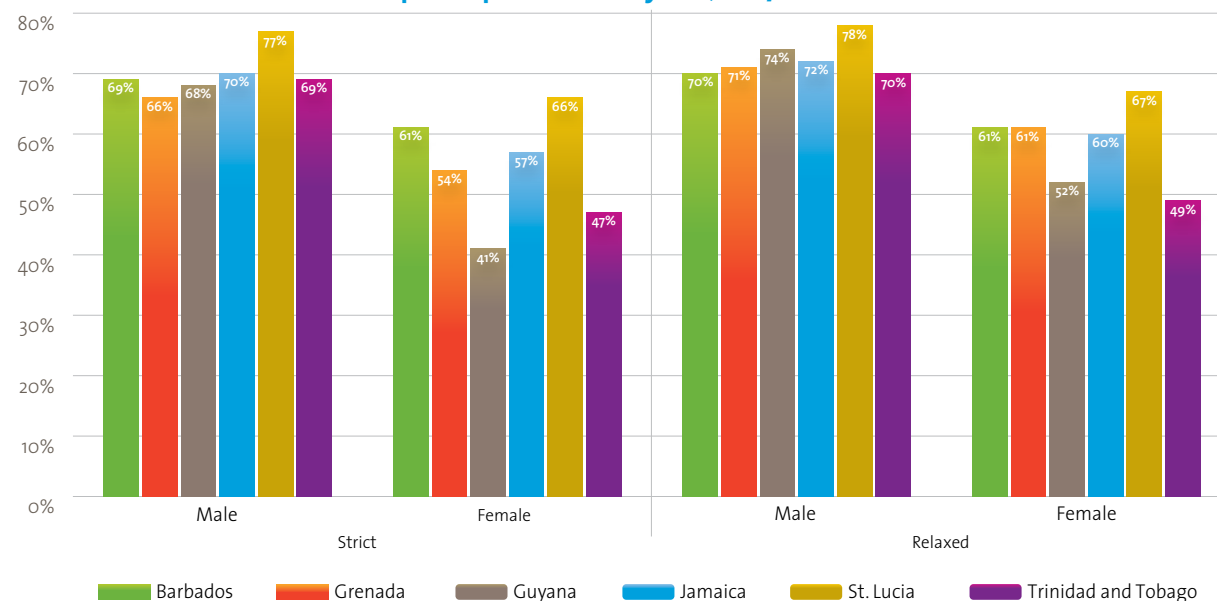
work but cannot find it. For the six focus countries, all but Barbados and Jamaica have a larger relative gap between the two rates for women than for men.

Among the six focus countries, Barbados, Guyana and St. Lucia generally use the strict definition, whereas Grenada, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago use the relaxed definition.

The analysis that follows utilizes the relaxed definition so as to facilitate comparison across countries. This choice does not affect analysis that focuses only on the employed, as the definition of employment is the same across the strict and relaxed approaches.

FIGURE 15.

Strict and relaxed labour force participation rate by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

The labour force is made up of all those who are either employed or unemployed. It represents those available to do economic work, whether or not they have such work. The labour force participation rate represents the proportion of the working-age population that is either employed or unemployed.

Figure 15 confirms that men are noticeably more likely than women to be part of the labour force across all the countries. This is expected given women’s disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work. Women’s greater longevity also contributes to the pattern, but the pattern remains if analysis is restricted to the population aged 15–64 years. The figure also shows far more variance across countries in the participation level for women than for men.

Comparison of the two sets of bars shows the participation rate varying very little between the strict and relaxed definitions for many of the countries. Guyana and Grenada have the largest variances. In both cases, the difference between the two rates is larger for women than for men.

St. Lucia records the highest participation rate for both women and men. However, the country with the lowest rate differs for women and men as well as across the strict and relaxed definitions. Grenada

has the lowest rate for men on the strict definition and Guyana the lowest rate for women. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago have the lowest rate for men on the relaxed definition, whereas Trinidad and Tobago occupies this position for women. As before, the cross-country comparisons may be biased by the differences in questions asked across the countries.

4.3. Status in employment

The term “worker” is often understood to refer to employees – that is, those who earn a wage or salary paid by an employer or company. However, there are many people who do economic work in a contractual situation other than that of employee.

Status in employment refers to the type of contractual arrangements under which a person works. These in turn have an influence on the level and type of power the person exercises in the workplace as well as the level of risk in terms of variable earnings. The main categories are:

- Employees, who get a basic remuneration that is not directly dependent on the revenue of the employer;

- Employers, who employ themselves as well as others on a regular basis and whose remuneration depends directly on profits;
- Own-account workers, who employ themselves and do not regularly employ others and whose remuneration depends directly on profits.

Employers and own-account workers together make up the combined category of the self-employed.

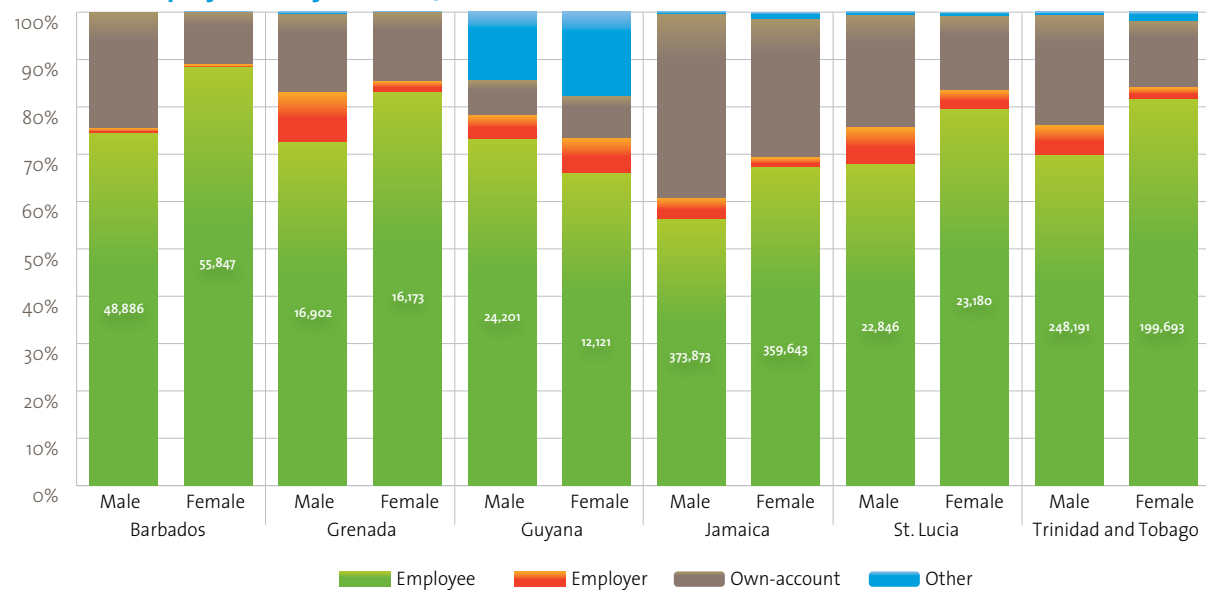
Figure 16 reveals that, across all six focus countries, more than half of all employed women and men are employees. In all countries except Guyana, women are more likely than men to be employees. Guyana is also an exception in having a much larger proportion of both women and men who are not employees,

employers or own-account workers. This category consists primarily of unpaid family workers in a range of different industries.

Guyana is also exceptional in being the only country in which women are more likely than men to be employers. However, because far fewer women than men in Guyana work, in absolute terms there are more male than female employers.

Jamaica has the smallest share of employees among men, but by far the largest proportion of own-account workers. Almost half of the male own-account workers in Jamaica are in agriculture whereas the female own-account workers are more likely to be traders.

FIGURE 16.
Status in employment by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

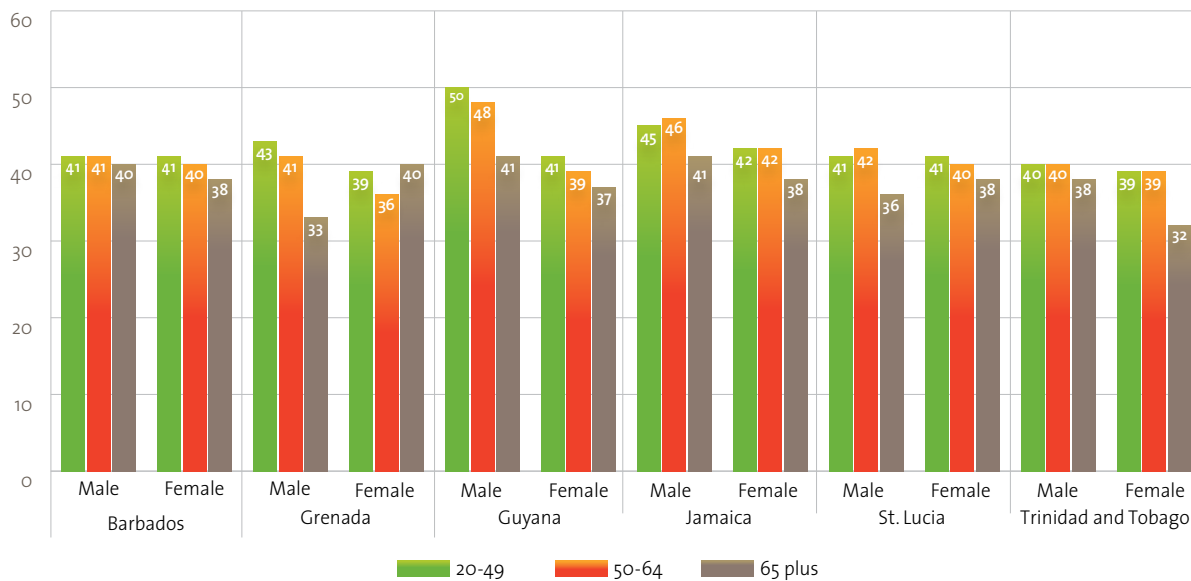
4.4. Hours of work

In addition to whether a person engages in economic work or not is the question of how much they engage. In particular, hours worked per day or week can differ substantially between workers in a single economy.

Figure 17 shows the mean (average) usual hours of work by age group. The youngest age group is omitted as the sample size for the smaller countries will produce unreliable estimates given the low employment rates for this age group.

FIGURE 17.

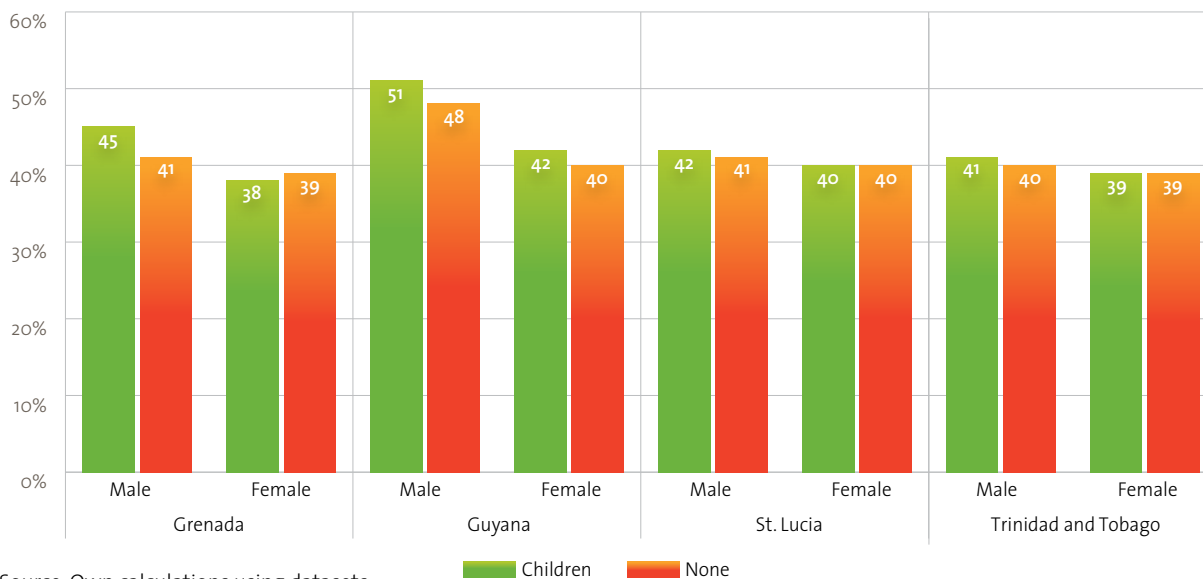
Mean usual weekly hours of work by age group and sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 18.

Mean usual hours of work by presence of children under 5 years in the household and sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

In all cases except women in Grenada, the hours of work for older people are less than those for the other two age groups. Given the small size of Grenada's population and the low female employment rate in this country, this exceptional estimate may not be reliable. In the other age groups, Guyana has the largest gender gap; in Barbados, there is very little difference in the mean actual hours of women and men.

Among women, the hours of work are always lower for the 50–64 years age group than for those aged 20–49 years. However, the difference is minimal in the case of Trinidad and Tobago. This pattern is found even though women in the latter group are likely also to spend more hours on unpaid care work. For men, the patterns for the two age groups differ across countries.

Figure 18 suggests that men in households that include one or more children under five years of age tend to work longer hours than men in households without young children. The pattern is clearer for Grenada and Guyana than for the other two countries for which this analysis is possible. For women, the pattern is less clear. The difference in hours between those in households with and without children is always small, and the pattern in respect of the two types of household differs across countries.

4.5. Education

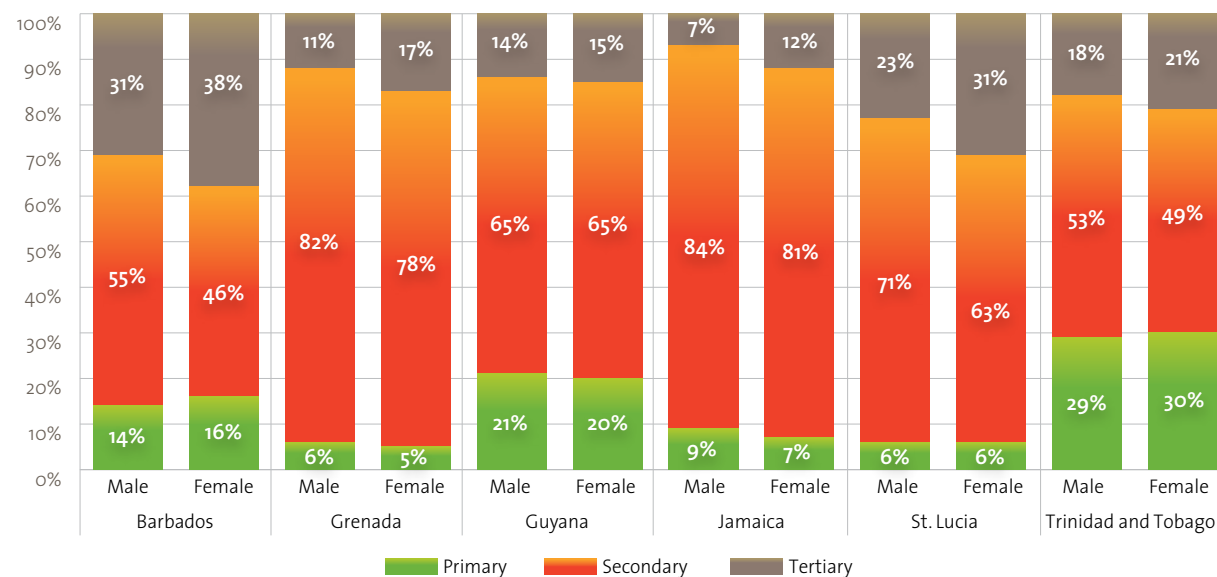
Figure 19 shows that, in all six focus countries, women are more likely than men to have tertiary education. The gender difference is very small in Guyana but more noticeable in the other countries. Those who stay longer in the education system are likely to begin doing economic work later, but – once employed – one would expect them to have better jobs with higher earnings.

Comparisons across countries must be carried out cautiously, given differences in the schooling system, differences in the response options (especially in respect of post-school options, which are classified as “tertiary” in this analysis) and differences as to how the question is phrased. On the last aspect, there is a difference between reaching a certain educational level and completing it.

The figure suggests Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have relatively low levels of education among the working-age population, followed by Guyana. St. Lucia appears to perform well, with small proportions of the working-age population at primary level and relatively large proportions at tertiary level.

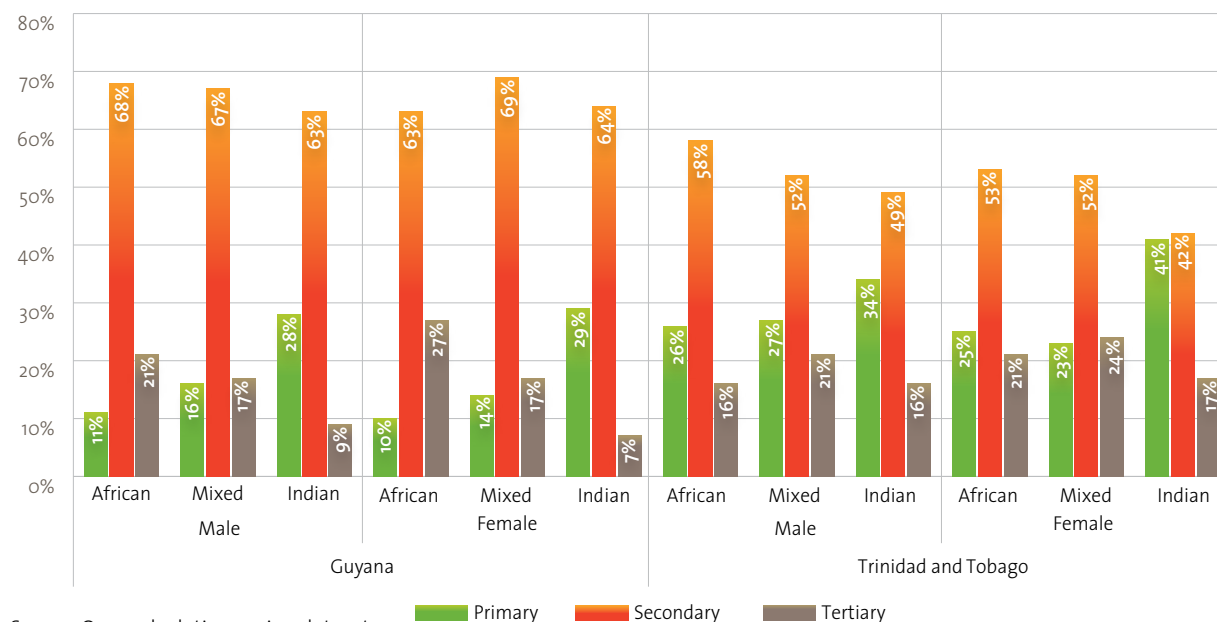
Both the overall and the gender patterns in respect of education may be biased by differential rates of migration among lower- and higher-educated women and men.

FIGURE 19.
Highest education level by sex, population aged 15 years and above, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

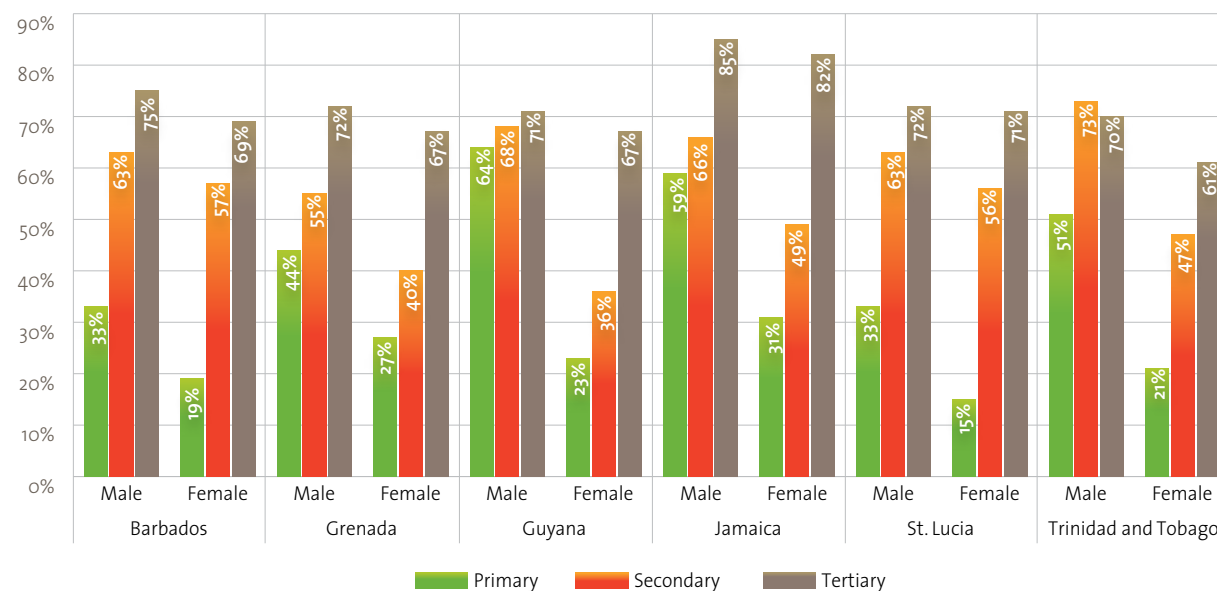
FIGURE 20.
Highest education level by sex and ethnicity, population aged 15 years and above, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 20 depicts the situation in respect of ethnicity for the two countries with the most ethnically diverse populations. In both countries, a larger proportion of Indian women than men have only primary education and similar proportions of Indian women and men have tertiary education. For the other two countries, women in the other two groups are less likely than men to have only primary education. However, the pattern in respect of tertiary education is more complicated, with tertiary education equally likely for mixed-race women and men in Guyana but more common for mixed-race women than men in Trinidad and Tobago.

FIGURE 21.
Employment rate by level of education and sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 21 shows the employment rates for women and men with different levels of education. In all cases, the rate of employment increases with increasing education. This pattern is least marked for men in Guyana, where there is only a 7 percentage point difference between the employment rates of those with primary and tertiary education. The differences are largest for women in St. Lucia and Barbados, where fewer than a fifth of women with primary education are employed as against approximately seven in every ten women with tertiary education.

Another constant pattern across countries is that the employment rate is lower for women than men at each of the three levels of education. The gender difference in this respect tends to be smaller for those with tertiary education than for those with only primary education.

Given that, as noted above, women tend to be more highly educated than men in these six countries, the lower employment rates for women suggest the economy is not taking full advantage of the available human resources. Conversely, many women are not reaping the full potential benefit of their education.

4.6. Occupation

Internationally, occupation has been found to underlie much of the gender inequality in labour markets and, in particular, inequalities in pay.⁸

A job is defined in the ILO International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) as “a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person, including for an employer or in self employment”.

The classification applies to the job rather than the person who does the job. Nevertheless, the characteristics of a person influence the type of occupations in which they are employed. More specifically, men and women generally cluster in different jobs. As a result, while there may not be explicit discrimination in the sense of women and men in the same job having different earnings, the level of remuneration may differ for the jobs in which women and men cluster. If this happens, it will result in implicit, or indirect, discrimination.

ISCO has as its organizing concept the level of education and skill likely to be associated with the entry level for a particular occupation. The classification is hierarchical,

⁸ Mata-Greenwood (2000) discusses this and other issues.

with 10 single-digit major categories at the highest level. Each of these categories can be further disaggregated, with each level of disaggregation providing further detail. For example, at the one-digit level, 2 denotes a professional; at the two-digit, level 23 is a teaching professional; with three digits, 234 is a primary school or early education teacher; and the four-digit code 2341 denotes a primary school teacher. Some countries code occupation only at the one-digit level; others do more detailed coding.

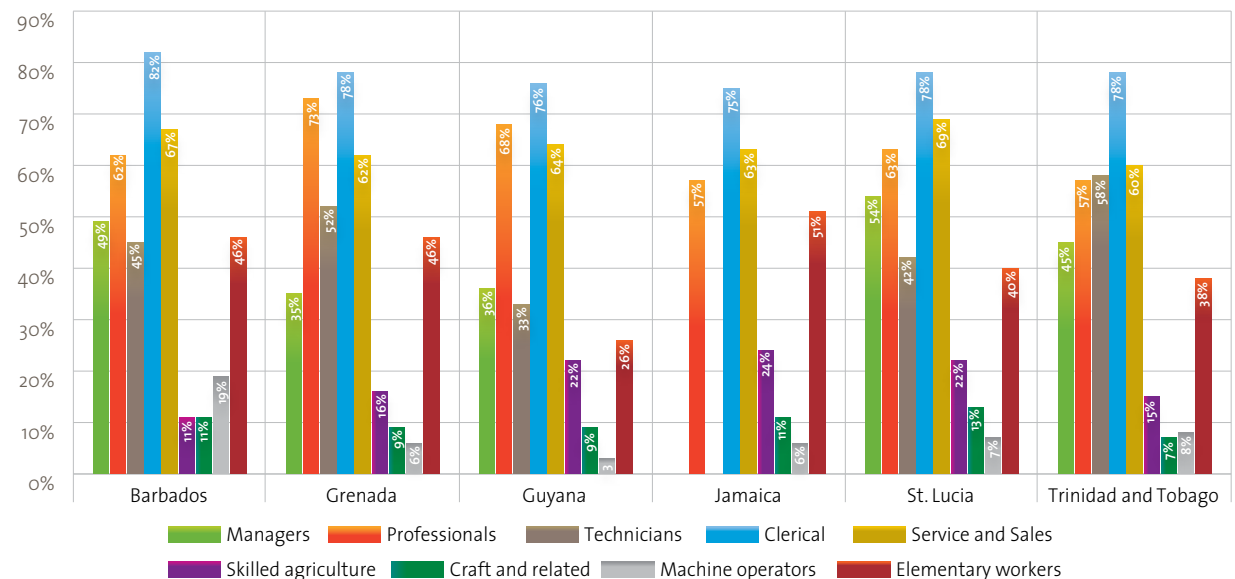
At the one-digit level all but the first category are organized in descending order of skill. The first category consists of managers, which is linked to authority rather than skill or education. Excluding this category, the topmost category consists of professionals and the last category is “elementary” workers – that is, those whose jobs are associated with very basic skill and education.

Figure 22 shows the clear gender differences that exist even at the one-digit level. The figure also shows strong similarities in the occupational profile across countries.

In all six focus countries, women are most strongly over-represented in the clerical category. Women also account for well over half of all jobs in the professional and services and sales work categories. Women reach these levels despite – as shown above – accounting for less than half of all workers. The two occupations in which women are least well represented are craft and related trade workers and plant and machine operators. All these patterns reflect a situation in which men are more likely to work with physical machines, tools and objects whereas women are more likely to work with and for people.

Not shown in this figure, across the six countries, sales and service workers constitute the single largest occupation. The three other large occupations are elementary workers, craft and related, and professionals. The ranking of these three occupations relative to each other differs across countries. However, in all six countries 55% or more of all employed people are in one of these four occupations.

FIGURE 22.
Women as a share of total employed in occupation, 2017

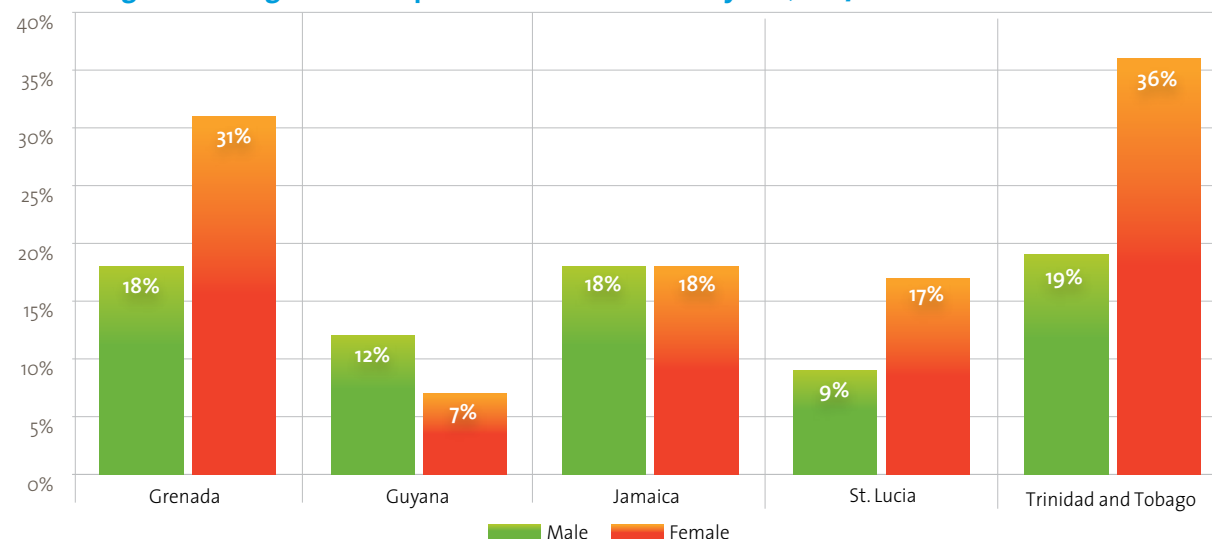


Note: Jamaica has fewer bars because it uses a non-standard classification.

Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 23.

Percentage of managers in one-person establishments by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

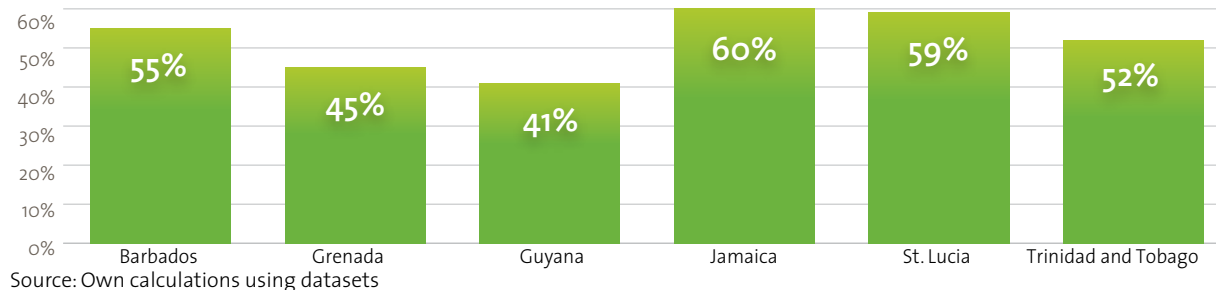
Figure 22 suggests that women account for a relatively high proportion of managers in some of the six countries. In St. Lucia they appear to account for more than half of all managers. Figure 23 shows what percentage of those categorized as managers are reported to be working in one-person establishments. This percentage is important as such managers are presumably not managing people and should perhaps not be classified as managers at all.

In Grenada, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, women managers are much more likely than men managers to be in this anomalous position. The opposite pattern holds for Guyana, one of the countries with the lowest reported levels of female managers. The phenomenon of one-person-establishment managers is equally likely for male and female managers in Jamaica.

If these managers – both women and men – were reclassified, the female percentage of managers would be lower than shown in Figure 22 for Grenada, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago.

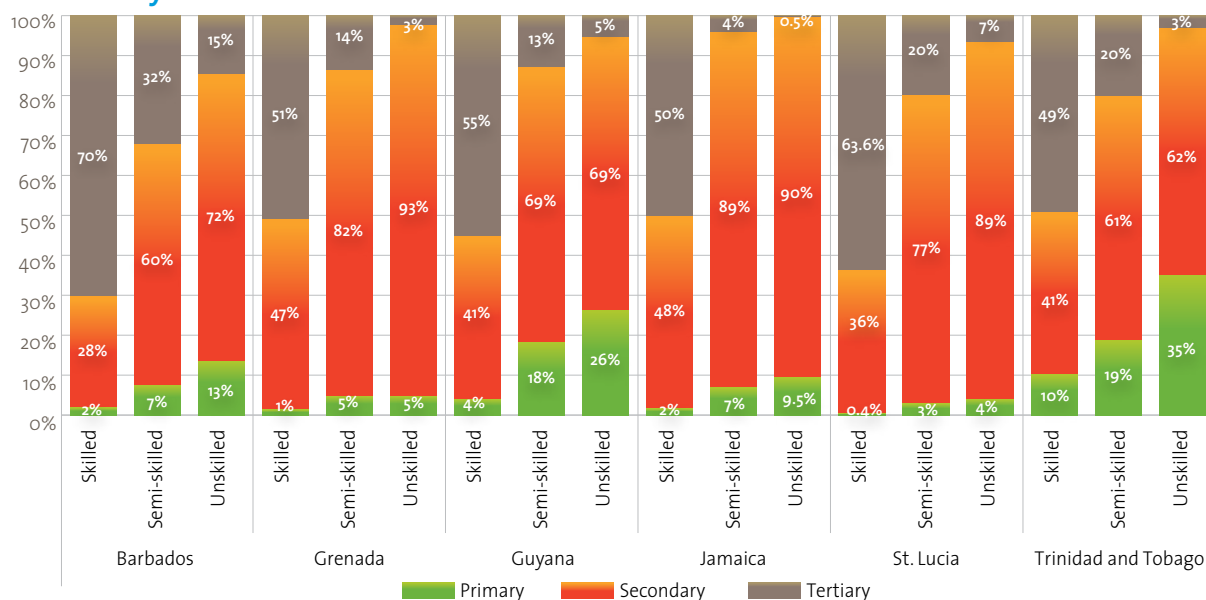
SDG indicator 5.5.2 relates to women in management positions. It measures the proportion of employees in management who are female.

FIGURE 24.
Female share of all employees in managerial positions



Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 25.
Education by skill level



Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 24 shows that, in four of the six countries, women account for more than half of all employees in managerial positions. It is only in Grenada and Guyana that women account for fewer than half. Overall, the six countries thus perform well on SDG 5.5.2. More in-depth research would be required to explore whether the women managers are adequately compensated in comparison with men managers.

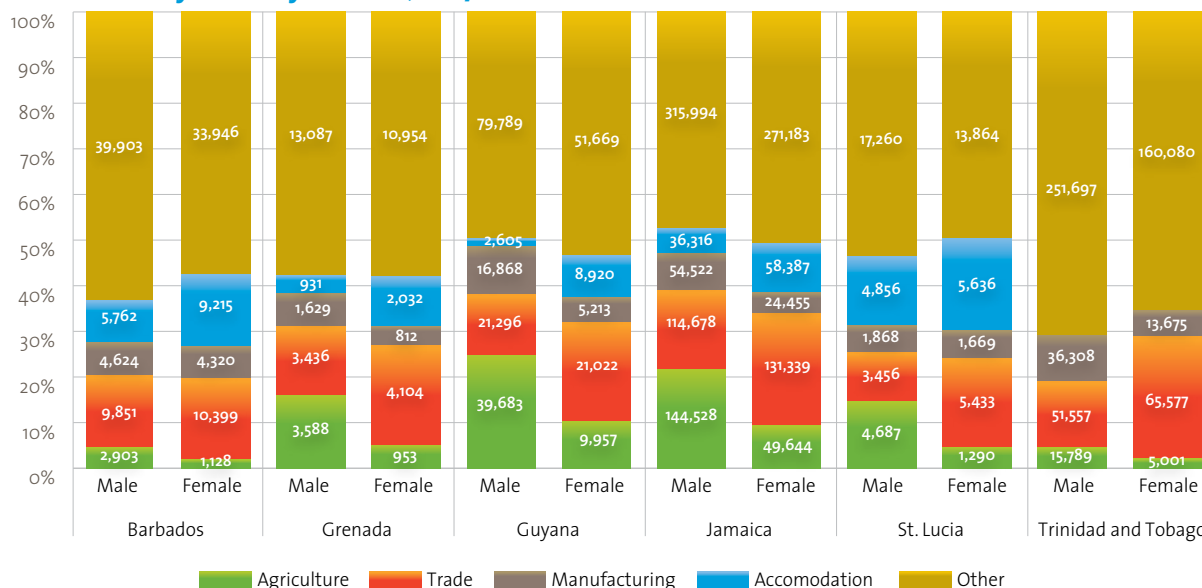
Figure 25 clearly illustrates the link between a worker's educational achievement and their occupation. To simplify the analysis, the occupations are grouped into three categories and are not disaggregated by sex. The top three categories – managers, professionals and associate professionals and technicians are clustered together in the skilled category; elementary workers

constitute the unskilled category; and the remaining five occupations are grouped as semi-skilled.

The figure confirms that, for all countries, the majority (half or more) of workers in skilled jobs have tertiary education. In all countries except Trinidad and Tobago, fewer than 5% of skilled workers have only primary education. At the other end of the spectrum, the unskilled category has the highest proportions of workers with primary education or less. Nevertheless, in all countries, there are some workers with tertiary education who are in elementary jobs. Barbados performs worst here, with about 15% of all unskilled workers having tertiary education.

FIGURE 26.

Distribution by industry and sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

4.7. Industry

While the occupational classification focuses on the job a person does, the industry classification is based on the goods and services produced by the establishment in which a person works. The United Nations International Standard Industry Classification (ISIC) has more than 20 categories, which complicates analysis across countries. Further, some countries use adapted and/or abbreviated versions of ISIC. For this report, we cluster all industries other than trade, manufacturing, agriculture and accommodation into the “other” category. We use the accommodation (and food) services industry as a proxy for tourism, as the standard classification does not separate out tourism. Unfortunately, however, the classification Trinidad and Tobago uses does not include a separate category even for accommodation and food services. The four chosen industries account for a little under 40% of all employed people in Barbados but over 50% in Guyana.

Figure 26 shows that men are more likely than women to be employed in agriculture. However, the relative size of this industry varies markedly, from a few percent in Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago to more than 40% in Guyana and Jamaica.

In contrast with agriculture, trade accounts for a visibly larger share of employed women than employed men. Nevertheless, in Guyana the absolute number of men employed in trade is slightly higher than the number of women. This apparent contradiction is explained by the relative numbers of women and men employed in that country. Women are also far more likely than men to work in accommodation and food services in all countries for which this category is available. For this industry, women outnumber men in all countries in both relative and absolute terms.

In absolute terms, there are more men than women in manufacturing across the six focus countries. However, manufacturing accounts for a marginally higher percentage of employed women than employed men.

4.8. Earnings

Earnings represent the compensation people receive for doing “economic” work. It encompasses wages, salaries, commission and other forms of payment for employees, and profits for employers and other self-employed. In at least some cases, surveys ask that reported earnings include the value of in-kind payments.

In most, but not all cases, questionnaires ask for gross earnings – that is, before deduction of tax or amounts

for pension and the like. The concept of gross earnings is simpler for employees who earn a wage or salary. It is more complicated for the self-employed as gross earnings in this case would include amounts that will be used for business expenses. Questionnaires sometimes specify that gross earnings for the self-employed should be reported net of business expenses, but this is not always the case. Analysis is thus likely to be more accurate for employees than for the self-employed.

Analysis across the six focus countries is complicated by the fact that their currencies differ. For this analysis, the focus is therefore on patterns within countries rather than absolute amounts earned.

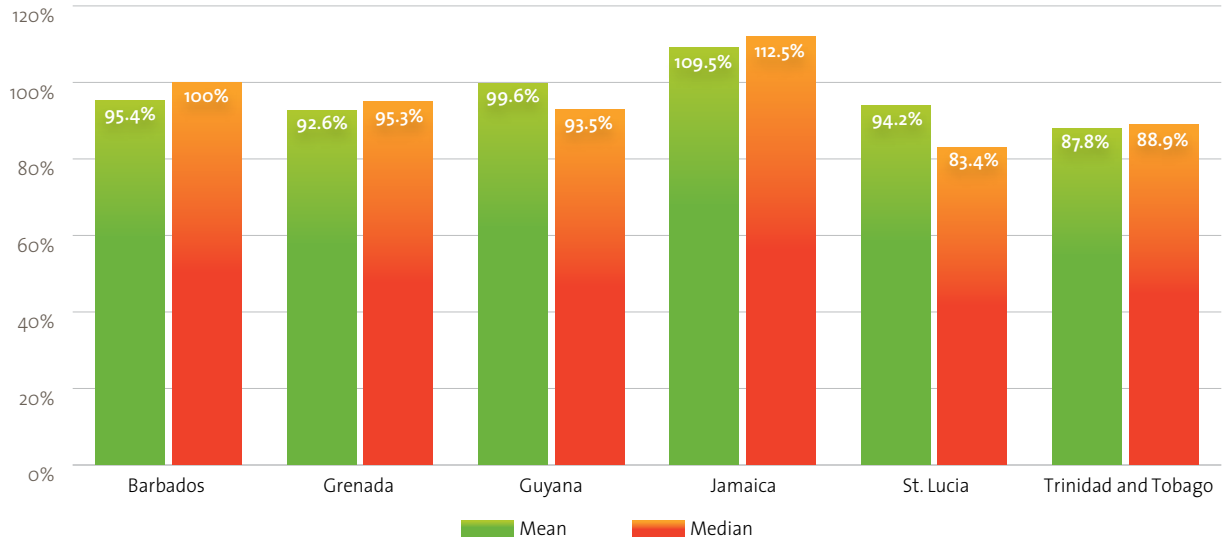
Analysis of earnings is complicated by the fact that working hours differ. If women are found to earn less, on average, than men in respect of total earnings, at least some of women’s disadvantage may be explained by the smaller number of hours worked. To control for this

bias, the analysis below focuses on earnings per hour. The extent to which hours of work make a difference for individual workers is larger than suggested by the figures showing mean hours above, as the mean does not show the range from smallest to largest number of hours.

Figure 27 shows the female hourly rate constituting less than 100% of the male hourly rate in all cases except the median measure in Barbados (where the male and female rates are the same) and both the mean and median in Jamaica. In the latter case, women’s hourly earnings appear to be noticeably higher than men’s.

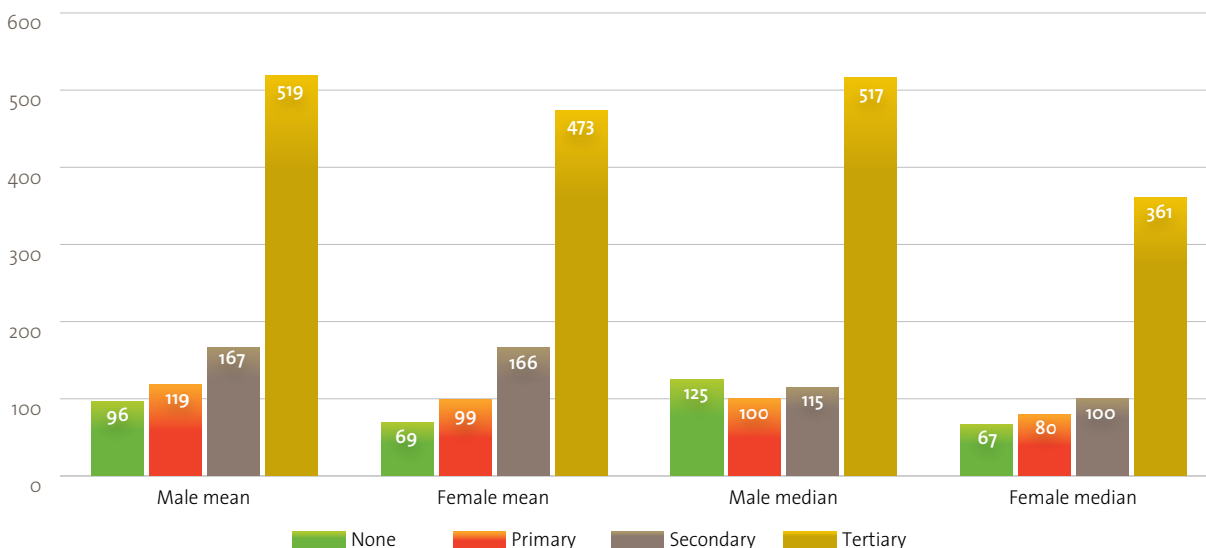
For the other countries, the pattern is disturbing given that – as seen above – women tend to be more educated than men, and more educated women are more likely to be employed. We would therefore expect women’s earnings, on average, to be higher than those of men.

FIGURE 27.
Mean and median of female hourly pay as percentage of male pay, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

FIGURE 28.
Hourly pay by level of education and sex, Jamaica, 2017

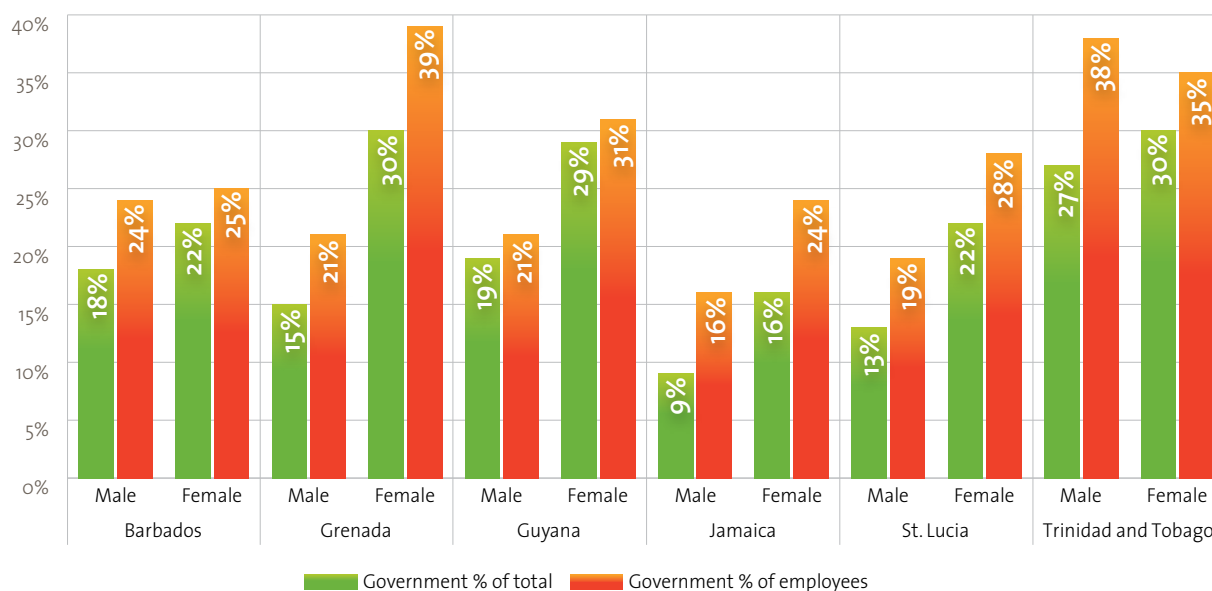


Source: Own calculations using datasets

Figure 28 shows that, despite the fact that overall women earn more than men, they earn less than men when the analysis is carried out for each level of education separately. Women’s relative disadvantage is evident for both the mean and the median measure. It is only in respect of the mean for those with secondary education that the hourly pay is similar.

This finding seems to contradict that shown in Figure 27, where women appear to earn more than men. The apparent contradiction is explained by the fact – shown in Figure 17 – that women tend to have more education than men and thus can be expected to have higher earnings. It is these higher earnings that increase the overall mean. However, the fact that women’s earnings, once disaggregated by educational level, are lower than those of men reveals that women do not receive the same reward for education that men do. This figure thus confirms that, once one takes education into account, women in Jamaica suffer a similar pay disadvantage to that suffered by women in the other five focus countries. Because women tend to be more educated than men, if women and men were paid similar hourly wages at each level of education, there would be an even larger gap between the overall mean and median for women and men because the mean would be pushed up by the larger number of higher (because more educated) women earners.

FIGURE 29.
Government employment by sex, 2017



Source: Own calculations using datasets

4.9. Employment by government

Government employment is generally likely to provide decent work – in the sense of adequate earnings, conditions of work and social protection. The percentage of employees working for government is therefore an important indicator of decent work. This indicator also gives an indication of the likely impact on women and men of changes in the size of the civil service during periods of austerity or expansion.

Figure 29 reveals that women are more likely than men to be employed by government across all countries except Trinidad and Tobago. The standard pattern is the expected one given that women account for the majority of teachers and nurses in most countries, and also constitute the majority of clerical workers. In Trinidad and Tobago, 38% of all male employees work for government as against 35% of women. However, when analysis is extended to all employed people, not only employees, the percentage of female workers who are in government is higher than the percentage of male workers in government. Further, the gender gap is smaller in Trinidad and Tobago than in other countries. The gap is smallest in Barbados, reflecting a more gender-balanced civil service.

Trinidad and Tobago has the highest overall (women and men combined) level of government employment. Jamaica has the lowest level.

4.10. Trade union membership

Only one country – Guyana – asks about membership of trade unions. In Guyana, 19% of women employees as against 14% of men employees are reported to be trade union members.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL POLICY AND PLANNING

This report has presented data and evidence to confirm that CARICOM is experiencing a challenge shared with many countries globally. Despite significant investments in education, structural barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment persist.

Women in CARICOM are more educated than men but are employed at lower rates:

Globally, similar patterns obtain. To illustrate, globally, 41.5% of adult women with a university degree are outside of the labour force or unemployed but only 17.2% of men are in this same situation (Beghini et al., 2019: 13). Obtaining a degree and persisting through education cannot address the gender-based disparities in employment. In CARICOM, as is the case globally, unemployment rates remain high for women. Occupational segregation persists, with women more likely than men to be employed in service and clerical positions, positions that tend to have lower pay. Women are many times more likely than men to be the only adult in a household that includes at least one child in the six countries under study. This confirms gender biases in social expectations that women should be responsible for childcare and is one of the reasons for their lower employment rates when compared with men. A recent ILO report confirmed that unpaid care work was the main reason women were outside of the labour force (Beghini et al., 2019: 13) But major data gaps pose a hindrance to estimating unpaid care work in CARICOM.

Gender pay gaps, although not as wide as in previous years, have proven resistant to equal pay legislation:

Globally, the gender wage gap is estimated to be about 20% (Beghini et al., 2019: 14) The gender gaps in hourly pay in all the countries featured in this report are narrower, suggesting a relatively favourable position in the region, although gaps still exist. However, given that women are more educated, the gap should be reversed, with women's pay exceeding that of men. A key factor in the assessing the reasons for the gender pay gaps may be the undervaluing of women's jobs, as they tend to be employed at higher rates than men in service and clerical positions. The occupations and industries that are dominated by women tend to have lower pay for equal levels of skill and education than those dominated by men. With increasing automation, concerns about the vulnerability of a significant number these jobs to being taken over or made redundant by technology are valid as women are less likely to have digital skills, globally. Studies have not been undertaken to see if this is the case in CARICOM.

However, such skills are required for the highest paid and most in-demand jobs in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. A further analysis of the STEM sector in CARICOM and women's readiness is warranted.

Violence and harassment in the workplace:

Data from National Prevalence Surveys on Gender-Based Violence in Jamaica (Watson Williams, 2016) have revealed that 24.1% of women have experienced sexual harassment during their lifetime. In the 12 months prior to the conduct of the survey, women experienced sexual harassment at a rate of 13.6%. In Trinidad and Tobago, where the survey was also fielded, 13% of women reported experiencing sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey (Pemberton and Joseph, 2018). In both countries, women who had experienced intimate partner violence reported high rates of ill health overall and problems with concentration while at work. Comparable data for the other countries are not available. Nevertheless, sexual harassment and violence hinder women's employment prospects and their productivity while at work.

Bearing the abovementioned in mind, the following broad recommendations for national policy and planning are put forward.

An overall recommendation is the need for national gender equality policies. Most CARICOM Member States do not have these policies in place. Where they exist, alignment between national gender equality policies and national development plans is recommended. Achievement of the SDGs, CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action requires robust and evidence-based policy and planning coordination on gender equality, which this recommended alignment can facilitate.

FIGURE 30.

Alignment between global gender equality norms, national gender equality policies and national development plans



Specific recommendations are outlined below.

1 Undertake research, data collection and analysis for evidence-based and gender-responsive policy and programme development:

- A concerning indicator of gender discrimination is the higher unemployment (and lower employment) rates of women compared with men. In some countries, there are also clear indications of gender differences on the basis of ethnicity. Further research into these differences is warranted.
- A major constraint to policy discourse on labour and employment policies and programmes is the lack of data on unpaid care and domestic work, which could provide useful on the constraints women face as they balance their reproductive and productive roles. Analysis undertaken by the UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean confirms that one of the largest gender data gaps in CARICOM is on SDG 5.4.1 on Unpaid Care and Domestic Work. A gender analysis of existing data on poverty and the labour force (such as the data presented in this report), in conjunction with time-use data, would provide a comprehensive picture of the extent to which disparities exist and, based on this evidence, the development or reform of the various, laws, policies

and programmes to promote gender equality in the world of work would be possible.

2 Establish formal mechanisms for inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral dialogue on gender equality and decent work:

National gender machineries, ministries and agencies responsible for labour and employment policies, national statistics offices, women’s organizations, union representatives and private sector representatives should consider engagement in evidence-based and constructive dialogues to promote/strengthen laws, policies and programmes to address the root causes of the issues presented. Formal mechanisms to facilitate these dialogues should be considered and could provide a platform for collective bargaining on key issues of concern. With regard to the private sector, there have been recent initiatives to encourage voluntary action by companies and promote gender equality. An example of one of these initiatives is the Women’s Empowerment Principles, a joint initiative of the UN Global Compact and UN Women.⁹ Signatories to these commit to advancing gender equality through their recruitment, retention and promotion policies; work-life balance measures, such as maternity and parental leave; and promotion of equal pay for work

9 <https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/wepps/about>

of equal value. They enforce zero tolerance policies for violence and sexual harassment at work; and introduce measures to ensure workplace health and safety.

3. Gender-responsive legal, policy and service delivery reform:

- Increasing and securing women’s employment in both the public and the private sector would require the adoption and/or review of laws and policies to reduce women’s unpaid care work and institute zero tolerance for sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence in the workplace. This includes a panorama of legal and policy frameworks including but not limited to:
 - *Parental leave:* There is a dire need for CARICOM to make a transition from maternity to parental leave with a view to encouraging male responsibility for childcare and reducing the disproportionate responsibility currently on women. The Bahamas is the only country that has a provision for paternity leave, albeit a limited one, of seven unpaid days.
 - *Legislation on sexual harassment and other forms of workplace violence:* There is a dearth of robust sexual harassment laws in CARICOM. The introduction of laws and measures to prevent, respond to and punish sexual harassment and other forms of workplace violence will create a safer and more secure working environment for women.
 - *Reviewing current legislation on wage equality to reflect equal pay for equal work of equal value:* Perhaps the most telling indicator of ongoing gender discrimination is that, in all countries examined, the hourly earnings of women tend to be lower than those of men with similar education. Stated differently, women do not receive the same reward for their labour as men do. This is the case despite any explicit legal and other provisions that the countries may have in respect of discrimination on the basis of sex and gender. Possible policies to address these persistent disparities include more systematic monitoring of pay equity in both the private and the public sectors from a perspective of equal pay for work of equal value rather than simply equal pay for equal work. This goes beyond comparing pay for the same work, given that women and men tend to cluster in different occupations and industries. Instead, it must involve comparisons of jobs that are different but of equal value. For example, it can be argued that domestic workers contribute just as much, if not more, to society and the economy than security guards.
- *Policies and programmes to deliver subsidized childcare services for children aged zero to three.*
- *Promoting and monitoring the implementation of policies of flexible work schedules for both women and men, while ensuring protection from discrimination.*
- *Addressing sex stereotyping and training in new skills* (including technology and occupations in the “green and blue economies”) in order to address occupational segregation. Women’s current disproportionate employment in clerical and service sectors renders them uniquely vulnerable, particularly given the rapid pace of automation and the risk of their jobs being replaced by technology.
- *Creating an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs,* including interventions such as access to lifelong learning and training, increasing access to markets, financing and productive resources. Data cited earlier in this report confirm that women’s actual ownership of enterprises is significantly lower than men’s. Removing the barriers to women’s firm ownership and growth of their businesses is encouraged.
- *Involvement of state and non-state bodies in addressing sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence in the workplace,* given the hesitancy among women to seek redress through the courts and widespread underreporting of cases. ILO recommends training and equipping labour inspectors to apply in practice the principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination. The involvement of trade unions, employers’ organization and civil society organizations is needed in work to promote gender equality in the world of work (Beghini et al., 2019: 69).
- Mainstreaming gender in poverty reduction and social assistance programmes:
 - *Ensure the development and implementation of poverty reduction programmes pay special attention to the different vulnerabilities of*

women and men throughout the lifecycle: The possible introduction of conditions for cash transfers should take into account the total work burden, including time and resources spent on childcare. For example, if women beneficiaries with children are expected to participate in skills training in order to receive the benefit, the costs and time spent on domestic responsibilities, including childcare, should be recognized and accounted for.

- *Target active labour market programmes to increase women's employment:* A gender analysis of current active labour market programmes is

recommended in order to assess if they are taking into account the specific needs of unemployed and underemployed women.

- *Address the specific needs of the most vulnerable women workers:* The adoption of Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers should be encouraged to support the most vulnerable of women workers, such as domestic workers, sex workers, rural women, temporary and night workers and those in the informal economy, should be reviewed to ensure they are correctly designed to address the needs of vulnerable workers.

FIGURE 31.

Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in the world of work in CARICOM: key recommendations



6. CONCLUSION

This report has confirmed that, despite significant investments in education, structural barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment persist in the labour market. The report shows the existence of multiple similar gender trends across the Caribbean. However, it has also highlighted differences across countries in the extent to which particular gender patterns are found, or even if they are found. Where the necessary data are available, the report also confirms that there can be differences in gender patterns and between women (and men) in a particular country on the basis of age, class, ethnicity and living situation in terms of the nature of their labour market engagement.

Nevertheless, the diversity in the patterns across and within the countries confirms that policies and other solutions to address this and other inequalities must be informed by an understanding of the particular patterns of gender inequalities in the labour market in each country, and come up with ways to address these. This is necessary both to achieve gender equality and equity and to enable the country to take full advantage of the available resources in its population.

What is most striking are the structural inequalities that persist. Access to education alone will not address the gender inequalities in employment, wages, sexual harassment and other forms of violence in the workplace. Policies and laws, without a requisite commitment to monitor and implement, will be insufficient. What is required is a shift in norms towards widespread acceptance that the structural barriers to women's empowerment must be eliminated, for both women and men to enjoy, *de facto*, the full range of their rights. In other words, when women remain disadvantaged, a society continues to undervalue the full potential of all of its people.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONS USED TO DETERMINE EMPLOYMENT BY FOCUS COUNTRIES

While all countries use the ILO approach in defining employment, the questionnaires differ in the questions they ask to determine whether or not someone did “economic” work in the past seven days.

In Barbados, the key question is simply: “Did you work for at least one hour last week?”

In Grenada, the question reads: “During the week 3rd-9th September 2017, did... engage in any activities such as...” When the question is asked, the interviewee is shown a flash card that represents different types of work other than domestic work such as cooking, cleaning, etc., for one’s own family.

- Guyana has the most detailed set of questions of all countries. The questions are as follows:
- In the LAST 7 DAYS, did you do any work for a wage, salary or tips EVEN IF ONLY FOR ONE HOUR?
- In the LAST 7 DAYS, did you run or do any kind of business or farming, alone or with others, to generate income EVEN IF ONLY FOR ONE HOUR? (e.g. growing or raising animals for sale, making things for sale, buying and reselling things, providing services for pay)
- In the LAST 7 DAYS did you do any of the following activities EVEN IF ONLY FOR ONE HOUR? [1. Cooking

for sale or other food processing activities for sale; 2. Making baskets, mats or other handicrafts for sale; None of the above]

- In the LAST 7 DAYS, did you help unpaid in a business or farm owned by a household member, EVEN IF ONLY FOR ONE HOUR?

Jamaica has a series of three questions, namely: “Did you do any work during week ending...?”, “Did you/... do anything like farming, buying & selling, odd jobs or hustling, during week ending...?” and “Did you/... do any form of work for others or in your/his/her/own business (including unpaid work in a family business but not work in and around the house) during the week ending...?” A positive response to any of these three questions results in the person being categorized as employed.

St. Lucia asks: “Did you/... work for pay, profit or family gain, during the week ending.../.../...?”

Trinidad and Tobago has the simple question: “Did (N) work or have a job last week?”



UN Women Multi-Country Office - Caribbean

UN House, Marine Gardens
Hastings Christ Church, Barbados.

Tel: +1 246 467 6000

Fax: +1 246 437 6596

<http://caribbean.unwomen.org>

<http://www.facebook.com/unwomencaribbean>