POLITICS, POWER ✚ GENDER JUSTICE IN THE ANGLOPHONE CARIBBEAN

Women's Understandings of Politics, Experiences of Political Contestation and the Possibilities for Gender Transformation

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National Gender Policies in the English Speaking Caribbean

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ASPIRE	Advocates for Safe Parenthood
CAISO	Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation
CGDS	Centre for Gender and Development Studies
CIWIL	Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DACAMAN	Dominican Association of Catholic Men
DNCW	Dominica National Council for Women
F&GP	Finance and General Purppose Committee
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GORRT –	Government of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago
IGDS	Institute for Gender and Development Studies
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
MoGCYD	Ministry of Gender Youth and Child Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NGP	National Gender Policy
NWM	National Women's Machinery
OAS/CIM	Organization of American States/Inter-American Commission for Women
SALISES	Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies
IGDS/SAU	Institute for Gender and Development Studies St Augustine Unit
T&T	Trinidad & Tobago
UWI	The University of the West Indies
UNDP –	United Nations Development Programme
UNECLAC –	The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAW/G	Violence Against Women and Girls

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Preface

  This chapter is one of several outputs of a research project undertaken between 2011 and 2014 by the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) at the University of West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine campus. Titled *Politics, Power and Gender Justice in the Anglophone Caribbean: Women's Understandings of Politics, Experiences of Political Contestation and the Possibilities for Gender Transformation,* the project was spearheaded by IGDS in partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and led by Principal Investigator, Gabrielle Jamela Hosein, with the support of Lead Researcher, Jane Parpart.

  Additional technical feedback was provided by Project Advisory Team members including Rawwida Baksh, Eudine Barriteau, Cynthia Barrow-Giles, Patricia Mohammed, and Linnette Vassell. Feedback and support from Francisco Con-Montiel, from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), also contributed to the project outputs. Support from the staff at IGDS, St. Augustine, and especially Tisha Nickenig for project coordination and management, and Kathryn Chan for graphic design and layout, deserve particular recognition.

  The project examined four strategies to promote democratic governance, women's rights and gender equality in the Anglophone Caribbean. First, women's political leadership was explored for the extent to which it creates greater governmental will and capacity to more actively and effectively transforms gender relations both within and outside of the state. Second, quota systems were assessed for their impact on effective women's participation and leadership in representative government. Third, the usefulness of national gender policy documents for promoting gender equality was evaluated. Finally, the impact of feminist movement building on women's capacity to be effective transformational leaders within democratic political life was investigated.

  Each of these strategies has expanded the spaces for realizing women's rights and gender equality, created greater capacity (among women and men) to achieve transformed gender relations, and shifted the gender ideologies that present resistances to women's effective political participation and leadership. Together, they reflect a core set of historical struggles waged across the Anglophone Caribbean. This project therefore sought to document the history of struggle in five Caribbean nations. It focused on specific countries where these struggles appear to have been won. Trinidad and Tobago provided an appropriate case study for examining the impact of women's contemporary political leadership, Guyana for exploring the impact of quota systems, Dominica and Jamaica for exploring the formulation and impact of

national gender policies, and the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWiL) for evaluating the impact of feminist advocacy on women's rights, effectiveness and representation in democratic governance in St. Lucia. These cases thus investigate four global strategies for advancing democratic governance, women's rights and gender equality. They offer insights into transnational, regional and national alliances between states, international organizations, NGOs and feminist movements, and demonstrate the relevance of national case studies for understanding regional and global experiences. Indeed, the project's comparative, historical and case study approach shows that both regional and national case studies are essential if we are to understand how democracy, the state and politics offer opportunities for and resistances to renegotiating gender relations in different twenty-first century contexts. For a more comprehensive summary of the project's conceptual framework, methodologies and findings please refer to the Introduction by Gabrielle Jamela Hosein and Jane Parpart, available at IDRC and IGDS, UWI, St. Augustine. The following is a list of related chapters produced by the project:

- "Women's Political Leadership in Trinidad and Tobago, Understandings, Experiences and Negotiations" by Aleah N. Ranjitsingh
- "Getting to One-Third? Creating Legislative Access for Women to Political Space in Guyana" by Natalie Persadie
- "Feminist/Womanist Advocacy Toward Transformational Leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean: The Interplay of Individual and Collective Agency" by Shirley Campbell;
- "The Patriarchal State and the Development of Gender Policy in Jamaica" by Maziki Thame and Dhanaraj Thakur
- "Crossing over the Barriers: A Historical Journey of Women's Political Leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean" by Beverly Shirley;
- "Advancing Gender Justice?" The Opportunities, Negotiations and Limitations of Guyana's Quota System" by Iman Khan
- "Enactments, Contestations, and Possibilities of Women's Transformational Leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean" by Denise Blackstock
- "Masculinities and the Practice of Dominica's National Gender Policy" by Ramona Biholar

Executive Summary

Post- Beijing World Conference on Women, a number of territories in the Anglophone Caribbean committed themselves to the development of National Gender Policies (NGP). These National Gender Policies are multi-sectoral plans located squarely in the technical language of the state and public policy, positioned to provide for the state a plan for the pursuit of gender equity and equality throughout these respective territoties. The experience regionally was not a uniform one. As differerent states sort to develop these national plans, the results and the processes became as diverse and as complex as the Caribbean. The narratrive of the NGP's development, sources of resistances and the outcomes provide a nuanced lens into the ways in which regional territories interface with, understand, create and articulate meanings around the issues of women, gender and development.

This chapter explores the wider challenges and discourses that emerge with gender policy making in the development of the National Gender Policies in the Anglophone Caribbean. The regional context of these small island developing state and the NGP making process is a critical lens into regional interactions with the international, transnational and the regional towards it assumption of an international identity in the area of women, gender and development. Additionally, the NGP provides a lens through which segments of the national population and actors within the state become visible in how they view and advocate for or against issues shaping women gender and development. In situating this understanding the chapter uses a case study approach to provide the detailed experience of the Commonwealth of Dominca and Trinidad & Tobago's NGP experiences. These case studies are documented against the backdrop of a regional overview ofthose territories who have embarked upon the process. The NGP experience is an emerging one around the work of gender and development regionally. However, as the politics of global gender equity regimes shift and reposition actors it is an initiative that will be increasingly be used as a means of assessing states ability to negotitateglobal commitments while concurrently mediating national interests.

Introduction

A national gender policy2 (NGP) is a meta-plan for the integration of gender equality and equity concerns across and within sectors of any state machinery. This plan takes into consideration the place of governmental and non-governmental actors in its operationalization. It provides a blue print to governments' policies for achieving gender justice, with an underlying commitment to respecting the dignity, freedoms, social, political, economic and cultural rights of all citizens (Barriteau 2007). Ideally, the NGP locates the process of achieving gender equality within all government structures, institutions, policies, procedures, practices and programs, and within government's work with civil society and the private sector (Women 2000). It is time bound, representing a national government's commitments or priority areas for interventions over a specified period. The NGP is also an emerging phenomenon in the work of gender3 and development globally. Its importance in shaping culturally specific, evidence-based national strategies for integrating gender as a crosscutting tool of analysis in national development makes it a central pillar of work on gender and development. As a relatively new area of public policy, the NGP provides an innovative research focus, where national development planning, in its traditional gender-neutral pursuit of creating progressive, modern, industrialized states (Rai 2008) interfaces with national, regional and international re-articulations of feminist-informed equity policies, (Subrahmanian 2007; Keddie 2009; Prugl 2010; Barriteau 1998) over a protracted period.

Public policy making is inherently difficult. Successful public policy creation demands intricate multi-level analysis of, at times, contradictory processes that do not function within the context of the commonly held notion of a singular purpose and open and effective planning (Howlett 2010; Weaver-Hightower 2008). The NGP compounds the difficulty of conventional public policy design, because it is steeped in the politics of gender and gender analysis. This policy tool provides important insights into the ways gender and gender analysis, rooted in feminist politics (Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead 2007), brings peculiar challenges to traditional policy frameworks. It is the product of an uneasy collaboration among development practitioners, feminist scholars, feminist activists, political activists, and national government officals. These actors all stand on different bases and advance different, sometimes competing, interpretations and goals of gender equity and equality (Ely and Meyerson 2000).

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2 National gender policies also need to be understood within the larger context of public policy, which includes, but is not limited to laws, judicial decisions and administrative changes (Ackelsberg 1992).

3 Gender is a complex system of personal and social relations of power through which women and men are socially created and maintained. Through these relations, people gain access to, or are allocated status, power and material resources within a society. Gender relations encode and sometimes mask unequal power relations between women and men, and between women and the state (Barriteau 2003).

Within the context of the English-speaking Caribbean4, this myriad of competing agendas and stakeholders, as well as the centrality of the state in the development of an NGP, places the document in an unstable, very masculinist policy domain. In his paper "Envisioning a Politics of Change within Caribbean Gender Relations," Liden Lewis describes the Caribbean state as inherently masculinist5 (Lewis 2003). This sentiment is echoed by Patricia Mohammed in her paper "Gender Politics and Global Democracy: Insights from the Caribbean," where she describes these modern democracies, centered on the nation state, as invariably patriarchal (Mohammed 2010). Taking on the development and management of a national gender policy to promote gender equality and equity, the Caribbean state clearly places itself in opposition to its masculinist operational and structural nature. This tension is a key issue for understanding, promoting and creating knowledge about the regional work of integrating gender into the development process6.

The inequality based on sex of the masculinist Caribbean state is not an official stance, but a byproduct of states' development paths although there are articulated commitments to end legal discrimination. Such commitments involve expressed initiatives to legally address issues such as marital rape, domestic violence and equitable access to inheritance. However states' mechanisms to maintain legal equality have not translated into public policy paths informed by a sustained examination of the gendered implications of development, social and economic policy. Therefore, while regional states publicly voice and legally practice willingness to act in the interest of all citizens7, conventional public policy reproduces systems of inequity, which, in the Caribbean, are largely unjust to women (Barriteau 1998).

In spite of the disjuncture between the gendered culture of the English-speaking Caribbean state and the goals of national gender policies, states continue to commit themselves to function beyond their nature, by adopting NGPs. Internal pressures and the desire to fit into the larger regional and international gender and development scripts have led six Caribben states to engage in the process of developing a national policy on gender. These countries include Cayman Islands, Trinidad & Tobago, Dominica, British Virgin Islands, Jamaica,

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4 The Caribbean within the context of this paper refers to the English-speaking Caribbean. These countries are former, and in some cases still British colonies. They share similar state and political infrastructure and practice Westminster-style politics (Barriteau 1998). These countries also share a recent political history of maintaining a British-style parliamentary democracy and by extension, share similarly styled state machineries.

5 Men gain access to power and privilege not by virtue of their anatomy, but through their cultural association with masculinity because masculine qualities are closely associated with power. Masculinism, by extension, implies the privileging of masculinity. Patriarchy is used to describe the historic and current oppression of women (Hooper 2001).

6 This observation of the Caribbean state is also compounded by the fact that feminists' contributions to organizational studies have consistently critiqued bureaucracy---the administrative arm of the state---as being a space where inequality and masculine privilege is institutionalized (Morgen 1994).

7 The central instrument for the protection of rights (Mollyneux & Razavi 2003) is the state and the Caribbean post-colonial state is advanced in its legal protection of the rights of women (Barriteau 1998).

Bahamas and Belize8. The experiences, significance and outcomes of each territory's NGP process are distinct, critical expressions of Caribbean difference9. Each territorial NGP experience facilitates mapping the state's interface with the material and ideological dimensions of gender (Barriteau 2002), and the politics of articulating this interface through the state machinery, sometimes in collaboration with, or outside the work of feminist activism, to the population.

Framing the Inquiry

The chapter addresses the political process around gender policy making within a broader gendered institutional and societal gendered analysis. This facilitates the application of a feminist critical perspective that questions dominant intellectual traditions that explain policy making (Ackelsberg 1992). This approach is premised on the belief that the broader policy narrative involved in policy making is an essential determinant in NGP creation and outcomes. This approach diverts from framing analysis surrounding the success of policy science, policy-making, bureaucracy and public management (Hood and Martin 2004; Lodge and Hood 2003; Howlett 2009). The intent is to facilitate a rethinking of the relationship between policy implementation, policy design and the politics of both processes (Parpart 2013) within a broader gendered institutional and societal context that is unique to the NGP. This chapter draws on the work of authors in the fields of gender and development, anthropology and policy development to shape its inquiry into the content and the process of producing NGPs in the Anglophone Caribbean.

Tania Li (2007) and David Mosse (2004) provide grounding in the development of policy, as distinct from its implementation, and the legitimacy of situating an inquiry in one area of policy development independent of the other. Boswell et al (2011) give life to the power of the policy narrative as a means of understanding how policy works. Both approaches are relevant to the post-colonial Caribbean modern states that grapple with applying universal gendered analytical models to development discourse affecting its population (Barriteau 1998). Inter- and intra-Caribbean differences form an important aspect of the development discourse informing the NGP process. The NGP facilitates insights into the diverse positioning of populations,

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[8] Belize is the only country that has presented two national gender policies before its cabinet. In 2011 it requested an update of the 2002 policy for the consideration of its cabinet.
[9] Postmodern thinking situates difference as central to the study of any social phenomenon. The Caribbean, as a unique post-colonial space, created a discourse specific to the region, celebrated as 'Caribbean difference' (Mohammed 1998). Regional feminist authors have also explored 'Caribbean difference' in terms of the ways in which race, ethnicity and the history of feminists' organizing shaped internal differences within the activism of the region (Baksh-Soodeen 1998; Cuales 1998). Further exploration of Caribbean differences in activism, and expressions of feminist organizing, and their capacity to influence women in development, and gender and development frameworks is needed. Additionally, it is important to understand how these varied framework applications create a diverse relationship between Caribbean states and populations, facilitating understanding around how public policy constructs, maintains and revisits the notions of masculinity and femininity.

activists and the state's responses to organizational and personal gender systems that converge and overlap in the NGP, creating possibilities for numerous policy outcomes and experiences.

Tania Li's "The Will to Improve" sees policy making and implementation, not as the product of a singular intention or will, but as distinct processes deeply affected by social, political and economic forces (Li 2007). In this work she argues that separating policy-making and implementation, and their very disparate influencing factors, allows for a more nuanced investigation of the contemporary era's improvement programs, and how they shape the larger development project. The separation also expands the possibilities for thinking critically about what is, and what might be, policy making (Ibid). Building on Li, this chapter analyzes the NGP experience in the English-speaking Caribbean, a policy development phase shared by all the states in the study. This common policy development space allows for engaging fundamental questions about the nature of inequality as identified by feminist activism and theorizing (Rai 2008), and the difficulties of attempting to mainstream gender into an expansive meta-plan, packaged as a technical answer to such inequality. The approach is not invested in efforts to improve policy outcomes by applying systematic evaluative rationality to public outcomes and concerns (Howlett 2009). It does not treat policy development and design as a coherent whole, or implementation as a necessary outcome of design.

Focusing on policy narratives does, however, reveal rival values and interests that also invoke knowledge claims about causes, dynamics and impacts within the policy process (Boswell, Geddes and Schollen 2011). It also provides an understanding of the positioning of competing and complimentary voices and interests in the gender policy process. Engaging with policy narrative requires appreciation of its content, its participants, power relations between and among such individuals and institutions, and the capacity of gender advocates within the state to effectively filter how a society understands the gender policy process. Policy narratives express how policy and public debates, and policy making develop, codify, revise and diffuse public policy. They explore policy making and the language of policy beyond the policy maker--- a complex task in the area of gender and development. Using David Mosse's work (Mosse 2006; Mosse 2004) on policy development and implementation, this chapter aims to examine NGPs beyond the binary of good and bad policy, evaluated mainly by the gap between policy implementation and policy design. It allows for more intense scrutiny of those markers within the policy development phase, and the differences in policy narratives that emerge within different phases. This approach also facilitates a more nuanced analysis that explores the relationship between policy and practice, the politics of partnership, and the co-existence of

different agendas and interests within the policy-making process (Mosse 2004). By exploring the politics of policy making, this chapter provides a basis for comparison with future studies on NGP implementation as a separate, value-laden and politically charged activity.

Eudine Barriteau provides the basis for interrogating the overarching post-colonial English-speaking Caribbean state during the making of policy, and its relationship with gender. Fundamental to the state's operation is its resolute pursuit of modernity and development, underpinned by a liberal10 outlook that render women and gender invisible and irrelevant to the advancement of society (Barriteau 1998). The result is an inevitable disconnect between the state's meta-plan design to establish gender justice in the economic and political relations of women and men, the state, capital, and contemporary state institutions, and the practices involved in the liberal project (Ibid.). Feminist theory began by trying to extend and reinterpret the categories of various theoretical discourses, so that women's activities become analytically visible within the traditions of intellectual discourse (Harding 1989). The NGP brings with it a similar, but expanded responsibility to public policy making. It focuses on a constituency that is larger than women as a homogenous category, and is founded on a need to address gender inequity and inequality. Gender policy, as a product of the state, is the source of many contestations, which constantly shift with the policy phases. Additionally the Caribbean state is challenged by the policy dilemmas of making practical the shift from women to gender11 in the post-Beijing period, within institutions originally established to address the issues of women in development (Barriteau 2003).

In order to effectively structure such an integrated frame for the study, this chapter first provides an overview of the regional national gender policies as tools of gender equity and equality in the English-speaking Caribbean. First, it focuses on a broad historical overview of the regional NGP experience in various territories. It highlights the process of regional gender policy making---the ways that governmental and nongovernmental advocates for the NGP owned and negotiated phases of the process. This analysis assists in identifying critical factors that allow gender policies to assist women and men working within the state and civil society to

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[10] Liberalism as a discourse coming out of the Enlightenment possesses the following fundamental features:

⟨ The belief that rationality is the only means by which individuals achieve autonomy;
⟨ The notion that an individual and citizen is a male household head;
⟨ The separation of society into the private and the public: the world of dependence, the family and the world of freedom, the state and work;
⟨ The gendering of that differentiation so that women are posed in opposition to civil society and to civilization (Flax 1987; Barriteau 1998).

[11] The shift in name from women to gender for most of the region's governments, brought with it a required programming and analytical reorientation for gender machineries. The use of gender, instead of women as an analytical framework for the region's gender and development work of the region produced some conceptual confusion, contentions and fragmentation in the shaping of policy around issues of women and gender (Barriteau 2003).

advance women's rights and gender equality. Secondly, the chapter examines the ways in which feminist thought, advocacy strategies and political organizing around national gender policy development impeded or advanced the work of gender transformative change, and how the state, civil society and wider society understood these strategies.

This broad understanding will be augmented by two case studies: the development of the NGPs in Trinidad and Tobago, and Dominica. The case studies allow for a necessary shift from the overview of the regional, to the details of the local. They provide insight into the interactive and transformative phenomena observed when state and non-state actors, networks, and individuals at different levels converge (Shaw 2013) to influence the policy narrative. As the case studies unfold, the details of the respective advocacy spaces, perspectives of policy advocates and policy makers, and the symbolism of the policy documents for regional advocates of gender equity and equality, all provide the basis of a more detailed inquiry of policy making. The case studies also offer a lens for investigating the ways in which the politics of policy development, implementation and at times termination advanced or compromised the national agenda on women/gender and development. Fundamental to the inquiry is the understanding that the NGP is a goal and a political engagement (Prugl 2010), and that the gendered power relations within different societies create diverse political outcomes.

Findings
Overview of the Status of Caribbean National Gender Policies Through July 2011

Overview and Critical Junctures
In the Anglophone Caribbean, The Cayman Islands, Trinidad & Tobago, Dominica, British Virgin Islands, Jamaica, Bahamas and Belize all committed to drafting at least one national gender policy. Belize is the only territory that embarked upon two policy cycles. In some territories, national gender policies prove particularly vulnerable to policy termination at any given stage of development or implementation, while in other territories, they move easily from drafting to implementation in a more positive policy space.12 The critical juncture from a gender bureau accepting a consultant's NGP report to approving the document for implementation is a pivotal point in the process where the possibility of termination or the likelihood of passage becomes increasingly apparent. This juncture also involves shifts in the policy audience and the introduction of new voices and interests in the policy process. Policy narratives surface and are negotiated. Some actors produce policy narratives that delay and

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[12] See Table 1 for differences in regional experiences around NGPs.

hinder the NGP process. Others produce narratives that secure the advancement of the process.

The objective of this regional overview is to provide a summary of the regional NGP experience. While it provides some background to the policy-making experiences of non-case study territories, it is not meant to be an exhaustive account of each country's NGP undertaking. Instead, it offers a broader context, providing timelines and glimpses into the larger regional policy narratives within which the case studies fit. The NGP output is a government-owned document outlining the ways in which governments intend to address issues of gender and development, within and across sectors over a specified period. For this chapter, primary data sources and people's lived experiences of the policy process provide information on the politics of policymaking, the broader policy narratives and constituent knowledge claims. The NGP[13] document does not include its own development story. While the author also used secondary data to support the research findings, much of the secondary data available focuses on public policy development, theorizing gender and development, other national plans and gender mainstreaming as distinct processes (Government of Namibia 2010; Government of the Republic of Rwanda 2010; Barriteau 1998; Williams 2003; Birkland 2011; Considine 2012; Garner 2012). Thus heavy reliance on secondary material would produce an overwhelmingly government-led recount[14] of the respective NGP experiences. To augment official accounts, we also conducted telephone and Skype interviews, and analyzed newspaper and other grey material.

The summary of the regional NGP process is best represented graphically by a combined analysis of diagram 1 and table 1 below. Table 1 builds on the work represented in diagram 1 by providing a territorial context of the movement of NGPs regionally. Diagram 1 highlights the sequence of the NGP formulation activities, from the preliminary stakeholder and community consultations to the establishment of priority areas for policy interventions. Priority areas ultimately shaped the drafting of the document. Additionally, the diagram provides a view of the wide consultative process involved with making NGPs, which is the most common defining action involved with NGP making throughout the region.

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[13] The NGP is a multi-sectoral plan located squarely in the technical language of policy. Although its Plan of Action (POA) outlines the partners (both governmental and non-governmental) involved in implementation of the process, it fails to outline possible resistances, neither do the details of the development speak to the wider challenges and norms of various constituencies during in the NGP development process.

[14] The use of secondary data to inform the overview created a reliance on the written history of the NGPs, which are mainly produced by the government. Access to individuals willing to undertake phone and skype interviews were limited in the non-case study territories. Particularly in the case of earlier policies, the passage of time reduced the availability of persons external to the government who were able to speak to the experience of NGP designing.

Throughout the English-speaking Caribbean, common critical junctures15 that guide the NGP drafting process include:

consultants' documents accepted (the document is a product of the consultative and research phase of policy development. Actors mainly include government gender and development personnel, the gender and development expert contracted to guide the development of the document, NGO and CBO partners and some government ministry stakeholders);

cabinet's approval (at this point national politicians become part of the process. The main actors become the executive arm of the government with all ministers having access to the document)

implementation approved (for implementation to become a reality, the implementation plan of action should be deliberated upon and funds assigned to the policy process. The actors at this stage include gender ministry representatives and the political hierarchy);

implementation responsibility allocated (at implementation technocrats within and external to the gender bureau, in consultation with NGO partners are assigned implementation responsibility for the NGP).

These critical junctures are important markers situating the progress of NGPs over time and across different territories. They are pivotal for locating the NGP movement and how it interfaces with national politics, the state and a society's prevailing gender norms. Table 1 uses these junctures to provide a synopsis of the NGP progress in the English-speaking Caribbean through July 2012. The countries listed in Table 1 represent those that have committed to developing a NGP.16

Common markers are not limited to critical junctures, but also include common governmental institutional arrangements, and the 2003 CARICOM commitment to use Trinidad and Tobago's draft NGP as the regional model for NGPs.17 Additionally, NGPs fall into two categories: those designed by the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS), the University of the West Indies St Augustine (SAU), led by Professor Patricia Mohammed, and those that were not undertaken by the IGDS SAU18. In total, Professor Mohammed led four of the six policies produced before July 2012, including those from the Cayman Islands, Trinidad &

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[15]These critical junctures emerge as important landmarks in the policy process only in retrospect. At the onset of the process the public consultations, identification of priority areas for policy intervention and producing a draft policy are pivotal junctures. It is only in reviewing the entire regional NGP experience from 2000 to 2011, the importance of these junctures become increasingly apparent. They are the points at which the policy narratives are more likely to take unforeseen shifts and turns, thereby creating significant moments and a common frame, for exploring and understanding the NGP experience.

[16] In 2006 Guyana's Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security completed its National Policy on Women in Guyana, and in 2009 St Kitts Nevis launched its Women's Manifesto. These documents are pivotal in advancing the concerns of women in development in both territories. However, they are both distinct from national gender policies and are not further addressed in the paper.

[17] Here the similarities speak to the structure and approach to policy design and development. The peculiar national-based perspectives on development priorities determine the actual policy priorities and areas for action.

[18] It must be noted that Professor Mohammed started the Cayman Island process when she was Head of the then Centre for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies, Mona campus.

Tobago, Dominica and the British Virgin Islands. The National Commission on Women[19], in consultation with a consultant, developed the Belize National Gender Policy (2002). The revised 2011 document followed a similar process. The Bureau of Women's Affairs and the Gender Advisory Committee[20] led the process in Jamaica.

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[19] The National Women's Commission is a body of individual women and men appointed by the government of Belize. The Commission functions as a strategic guidance and oversight mechanism for the achievement of gender equality, equity and women's empowerment in Belize. It is an advisory body to the minister responsible for women and gender issues and serves as an advocate for the fulfillment of the standards, principles and goals embodied within the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW), the national gender policy and all other relevant policies.

[20] The Gender Advisory Committee was established as a stakeholder monitoring body. Its main objective is to oversee the implementation of the National Gender Policy for Gender Equity. Membership of the committee is broad-based and is drawn from the public and private sector, academia, the legal profession and non-governmental organizations (Government of Jamaica 2010: 34).

Diagram 1: The process of consultation, formulation and presentation of policy21

initial community/stakeholder consultations; report preparation for international/regional agencies; situational analysis of gender; and concept paper/national gender assessment/ paper on women

regional, international and government buy in with public and private sector support

contracting of consultant to the process

community and interest group meetings with consultant and women's bureau, and identification of possible technical partners

VISITS OF CONSULTANT AND MEETINGS WITH MINISTER, PERMANENT SECRETARIES.

Selection of relevant policy criteria

gender training and policy formulation workshop with technical support committee and capacity building work

draft document submitted to executing agency for review and return to consultant

national consultation process + desk research + consultants technical input to produce a draft document

gender, governance and political decision-making

family, sexuality and gender-based violence

economic activity, employment and labor practices

health and medicine

education

gender ideologies: religion, media and culture

implementation and policy action plan

legislation

21 Mohammed and Mc Fee 2005

Table1: Overview of the Status of Caribbean National Gender Policies to July 2012
BWA- Bureau of Women's Affairs

Country	Consultant Document Accepted	Cabinet Approval Secured	Implementation Approved and on The way	Implementation Responsibility	Year Initiated	Year Imple - mented	
Cayman Islands	✓	✓	✓		2000	2004	
Trinidad & Tobago					2002		
Dominica	✓	✓	✓	BWA	2004	2006	
Belize 2002	✓	✓	✓	BWA & NWC		2002	
Belize 2010						2010	
Jamaica	✓	✓	✓	BWA & GAC	2004	2010	
BVI	✓			BWA & TCG	2010	2012	
Bahamas							

NWC- National Women's Commission
GAC- Gender Advisory Committee
TCG- Technical Committee on Gender

Overview of National Gender Policies in the English Speaking Caribbean National Experiences
Cayman Islands

As the pioneering NGP territory, the Cayman Islands experience builds on the regional fervor of the post-Beijing Women's Conference Caribbean expectations. It is the first policy that attempts to address the shift from women to gender and development. Additionally, it became a focal point for the necessary shifts in language, meanings and strategies consistent with the women/gender and development paradigm. As the first regional NGP, the Cayman Island22 2004 draft policy document has the most detailed documentation of its story of policy making. This NGP process was structured along the lines indicated in diagram 1. Its formulation took five years.

The NGP's situational analysis and local and regional framework sections identify the stakeholders23 and partners in the Cayman NGP process. The document provides an expansive historical account of the challenges involved in making Cayman women a visible constituency in development, and the ultimate emergence of gender and development. As the first post-Beijing NGP, the language of gender mainstreaming that came out of the Beijing conference, and the commonwealth-designed gender management systems24 approach is very clear in the document. The policy, for instance, mentions men as needing to be partners in addressing gender-based violence and sexual reproductive health. It also contains a detailed understanding of the need to integrate the gender perspective in all government programs and projects (Ingram and Mohammed 2004). Concurrently, the NGP discusses the need to weigh women as the referent constituency. It also highlights some of the early disconnects and policy confusion that shaped the shift from women to gender. In an interview for this chapter, Professor Patricia Mohammed discussed this issue:

> Well I think the Nairobi document, the Millennium document, the ones that speak to a
> focus on women and development, particularly in the early days, I think they were located
> in the fact that we were still making women visible and these were women's conferences

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[22] The Cayman Islands are a British overseas territory with an 18-seat legislative assembly, elected by the people every four years to handle domestic affairs. Of the elected members of the legislative assembly (MLAs), five are chosen to serve as government ministers in a cabinet headed by the governor. The governor appoints the premier. The queen of the United Kingdom appoints the governor on the advice of the British government to represent the monarch. Governors can exercise complete legislative and executive authority if they wish through blanket powers reserved to them in the constitution.

[23] Stakeholders in the Cayman Islands recorded by the Cayman government included the following: the ministry with responsibility for women's affairs, the Women's Resource Centre, government entities, civil society (individuals, NGO's, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations).

[24] The gender mainstreaming language and the gender management approach view the integration of gender into development across and within sectors as an unproblematic, seamless movement with no points of resistance.

anyway. It was still about centering women. Remember out of that, there came the need
to have national gender policies because before that nobody had national gender
policies...(Mohammed, interview).

In the development of the Cayman policy process, the NGO/government consultative process was broad. The Women Resource Centre25 (WRC) at the time worked closely with the government, but was not part of the government machinery (Ebanks,Interview). This relationship represented one of the more visible NGO presences in the drafting of any regional NGP. At the time of the policy making, the WRC provided services to Cayman Island women, such as domestic violence counseling and related services that were not available from the Cayman government at that time. Other non-governmental groups that made up the bulk of the Cayman stakeholder interface, were community based, and youth and church-based groups. These groups provided much of the primary data that served as the basis for the policy's situational analysis, priority areas, and policy recommendations.

The actual development of the policy took place from 2000-2003 led by consultants Ms Audre Ingram–Roberts and Dr. Patricia Mohammed. In July 2004, the country's cabinet approved the Cayman Island National Policy on Gender Equity and Equality for implementation (Ebanks26 interview). When hurricane Ivan struck the Cayman Islands in September 2004, however, the implementation of the NGP was aborted. The official position was that the national reconstruction initiative had to be the government's priority and the NGP was not part of that process.

Although the government mainly documented the Cayman NGP experience, there are silences and disconnects in the NGP that make the Cayman policy-making experience rich in terms of content and process. Cayman stood at the post-Beijing cross-roads. The country still wanted to center women in the document, while simultaneously embracing the concept of gender and development. In an attempt to grapple with the concept of gender, the policy discusses the importance of partnering with men, particularly in the areas of gender-based violence, sexual reproductive health and other priority areas (Ingram-Roberts and Mohammed 2004). These were not entirely new policy initiatives, but in the shift from women to gender the language of such initiatives became increasingly central to the state's engagement with

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[25] WRC, established in 1997, was an interim measure to undertake some of the Office of Women Affairs responsibilities. Work was completed through collaboration between a liaison officer from the Office of Women Affairs who had responsibility for women/gender issues and the WRC (Government of the Cayman Islands, 2004). . In 2009 the WRC) joined the Young Parents Programme (YPP) and the National Parenting Programme (NPP) to become the Family Resource Centre(http://news.caribseek.com/index.php/caribbean-islands-news/cayman-islands-news/item/3156-head-of-family-resource-centre-confirmed)

[26] Ms Tammy Ebanks is now senior policy advisor for gender affairs. Formerly she was a member of staff at the Women's Resource Centre.

women/gender and development.

Many policy narratives are apparent in the Cayman state at the time of formulating the NGP that shape its movement through critical junctures. The commitment to a NGP, as evidenced by employing consultants, is clear. This speaks to the level of interest of people involved in the work of gender equity and equality, a territory cognizant of shifts consistent with the wider, post-Beijing gender discourse, and the regional fervor around gender and development at that time. Interestingly, in the midst of this fervor, the policy narrative shaping the state's post-Ivan reconstructive initiative did not embrace gender as a cross cutting issue in the reconstructive agenda. Cayman's NGP formulation process would benefit from a more detailed inquiry, one that would interrogate more closely the people shaping and grappling with the NGP almost a decade after its termination. As the first territory to undertake the challenge of an NGP regionally, the Cayman policy will always be a good point of reference to study when researching all regional NGPs.

Belize

Belize occupies a novel space in the region's NGP development process. It remains the only country whose cabinet approved one policy, completed that policy cycle, and is currently awaiting approval of its second NGP. This territory, very quietly sits as an expert on the politics involved in the passage and the non-passage of an NGP. The Belizean cabinet passed the first policy, the National Policy for Gender Equity and Equality 2002-2007, in 2002. In 2010, Belize completed another NGP and submitted it cabinet in 2011. At the end of the data collection for this chapter in 2012, approval had not been secured.

The 2002 document, which is the basis for the 2011 NGP, was based on CEDAW provisions, the UN CEDAW Committee's recommendations from 1999, and a national situation analysis on gender issues in Belize (NWA Belize 2009). In 1999, Belize undertook its initial and second periodic reporting responsibility to the UN CEDAW Committee's 21st Session. One of its recommendations to the government of Belize was to develop a national gender policy. The women's affairs director described the 2002 document's main purpose "to provide policy direction on gender issues and monitor Belize's progress in complying with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)."

The five thematic priorities for the 2002 NGP include health; wealth and employment creation; violence producing conditions; education and skills training; and women in decision-making positions (Ibid, 7).

While Belize's cabinet passed and approved the 2002 NGP, when Belize returned to the CEDAW Committee in 2007 for its combined third and fourth periodic report to the UN

Committee, the committee assessed that the country was inadequately implementing and enforcing laws specific to the NGP. It also observed a lack of measurability and vagueness regarding process and impact over time. Based on this these observations the committee recommended that Belize:

• develop and implement a comprehensive data collection system in all areas covered by the convention to assess the actual situation of women and to track trends over time;

• monitor, through measurable indicators, the impact of measures taken and progress achieved towards the realization of women's de facto equality;

• strengthen enforcement of laws;

• elaborate a comprehensive operational plan for the effective implementation of the convention and its policies and programs for the advancement of women;

• intensify its efforts to raise awareness about the convention and related laws, policies and programs; and

• establish concrete goals, such as quotas and timetables, for each convention area (UN CEDAW 2007).

Based on the CEDAW recommendations, the National Women's Commission[27], a body appointed by the Prime Minister, the Belize Bureau of Women's Affairs, and their non-governmental partners began developing the country's second NGP. This has been described as a highly consultative document going much further than the previous one[28]. The experience of Belize's second document is noteworthy because it tests the efficacy of a politically appointed organization working in collaboration with the arm of a government bureaucracy with a similar goal. It also brings to the fore the ways in which building on the work of a previously passed and implemented policy is a completely different experience, compared to the drafting of a first policy.

In Belize the National Women's Commission[29], appointed by the prime minister, is the executing agency for the NGP. The agency also reports to the prime minister. The existence of such a Commission is to some extent, supposed to bring some political weight to the work of gender and development. Its purpose is to advance the work beyond integrationist

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[27] The primary mandate of gender bureaus in the Anglophone Caribbean is to act as advocacy units to influence planning across sectors….but their typical placement in social welfare and similar social sector ministries, which are far from planning ministries, limits their effectiveness (CGEF, 2005). Creating a National Commission on Women is supposed to more strategically broaden the voice of women, gender and development by locating an advocate with a direct relationship to the upper echelons of political power.

[28] The actual demands and concerns articulated in the policy was not available to the public at the time of data collection for this chapter.

[29] The National Women's Commission was the body responsible for the passage of the Belize Gender Policy and the drafting of the National Gender Policy. The National Women's Commission is an advisory body, separate from the Women's Affairs Bureau, These two agencies work in collaboration on issues of gender and development in Belize.

mainstreaming that is synonymous with the work of government bureaucracies, towards agenda setting and transformative initiatives (Mukhupadhyay 2009 that require strong political support. The experience of the second Belize NGP provides a space for analyzing the efficacy of such commissions and the ways in which they facilitate, advance or hinder the work of integrating gender into the development process.

The impasse of Belize's second policy is additionally valuable to the analysis of the accumulation of gains in gender and development over time. The fact that this document has not passed, may speak to a context-specific response[30] to the passage of one gender policy, the possible reworking of boundaries, and revisiting of traditional societal gender norms inherent in pursuing a second policy. The fact that a second policy builds on the work of a first policy, positions the second beyond the technical efficiency of mainstreaming gender into development (Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead 2007). The nature of the second policy deepens the work of the first, demands broadened understandings of gender justice and feminists political concerns, shifting conceptually from welfare, poverty and efficiency into the nebulous territory of power and social injustice (Mukhupadhyay 2009; Keddie 2009). This translates into a repositioning of theorizing and practice from embracing the goals of equity and equality, to interrogating difference as a policy space, not just limited to a disaggregation of the lived experience of the monolithic categories of men and women. It is in this widening of notions of gender justice and integrating expanded feminists' concerns, some gender policies run the risk of coming in direct opposition to carefully guarded traditional and cultural gender norms. At this time in Belize's history, it is unknown why the second NGP is stalled in cabinet. The place of a second gender policy and its capacity to push the boundaries of the first NGP, however, forms a critical point of inquiry for future research.

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS (BVI)

The British Virgin Islands'[31] process of creating a NGP, like Dominica, took two years from inception to approval. The BVI NGP was undertaken by its gender affairs division in collaboration with a technical support committee, which convened for the duration of the NGP exercise. Although a part of the process was to ensure non-governmental voices were engaged in the NGP drafting, and consultations set out to secure that voice, conventional constructions of a women's movement was interestingly absent from the process. Therefore ownership and control was entrusted to the technical staff of the ministries who held responsibility for the NGP

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[30] Understanding that the context specific response in the area of policy is intrinsically influenced by the mindset and ideologies of political leaders and the interplay between their personal gendered ideologies and the decisions made at the institutional level.
[31] The British Virgin Islands are now referred to as the Virgin Islands since the election of a new government in 2012.

and the technical support committee32. During the NGP process, various groups received gender sensitivity and awareness training including public servants, the media, health workers, social workers, and nationality representative groups. These trainings were a critical component of the NGP formulation and its ultimate passage.

Professor Patricia Mohammed and her team from the IGDS St Augustine also led the BVI NGP process. This particular process required considerable advocacy across the public sectors. The main support for the NGP came from within the public service, consequently the advocacy had to be addressed across sectors. Much of Professor Mohammed's work involved making the concept of gender relevant and accessible across sectors, and ensuring the Gender Affairs Bureau could effectively continue the advocacy to support the work of the technical support committee. The committee was entrusted with the responsibility of undertaking community consultations and reviewing the draft NGP prior to ministerial review. By contrast, the Bureau of Women's Affairs, the Dominica Council for Women, and a technical support committee comprised of a number of senior public servants, NGO representatives and civil society representatives largely led the Dominica NGP formulation.

The Virgin Islands built on the experience of all other regional policies, which went before. The NGP drafting also came at the end of a number of other related sensitization initiatives, including work on the domestic violence legislation and protocol. The public engagement of the BVI was described as follows:

The Government of the Virgin Islands (VI) cognizant of the changing face of policy making embarked on a public policy process, which was based on participation as its central pillar. Within the context of this evolving face of policy making the basic assumptions underlying public participation include:

public participation is designed to promote the values of good governance and human rights; public participation acknowledges a fundamental right of all people to participate in the governance system;

public participation requires recognizing the intrinsic value of all Virgin Islanders, investing in their ability to contribute to governance processes;

people can participate as individuals, interest groups or communities more generally (Mohammed, McFee, Parpart, and Pargass 2011).

The BVI process is particularly valuable to understanding the place of the bureaucracy and its ownership of the NGP process. It is the only territory where a policy was accepted and approved by the government of the day, although it was initially embarked upon by another

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32 These included and were not limited to the Ministries of Education and Legal Affairs, Agriculture

regime while the approving regime was in opposition.

JAMAICA

Jamaica officially began developing its 2010 NGP in 2004 when the Bureau of Women's Affairs33 (BWA), in collaboration with the Gender Advisory Committee34(GAC), conducted a number of consultations nationally to define the parameters of the National Policy for Gender Equality. Subsequent to this, the country engaged the expertise of its Gender Advisory Committee, and two consultants (Government of Jamaica 2010). One consultant undertook a desk review of the situation of men and women in Jamaica under the thematic areas established by the 2004 output document. The other consultant guided the consultative process and was responsible for writing the first draft of the NGP. The document was then delivered to the Gender Advisory Committee and the Bureau of Women's Affairs for finalization. In October 2010 the National Policy for Gender Equality for Jamaica was finished and the cabinet approved its implementation (Ibid).

Jamaica NGP distinguished itself from other policy documents by providing an overview of the historical context of the work completed on advancing gender equity and equality in the country, an understanding of the economic context of the country, and the norms and beliefs around gender and gender equality (Government of Jamaica 2010). This was followed by the regional and international context in which Jamaica locates its work around gender and development (Ibid: 12). The situational analysis requires particular attention, because it is the main body of research that shaped the consultative discussion and provided the basis for identifying the policy's thematic priority areas. The thematic areas determine the policy recommendations, and shape the plan of action for implementation and identification of partnerships, possible hindrances, and indicators of policy success and evaporation. In Belize and Jamaica, the thematic areas focused very broadly on how the state would administer its work around gender and development, thereby fostering a state ownership of the NGP document rather than a women's/gender affairs ministry's ownership.

This ownership and language of the state in relation to the NGP established a course of action that is very clear in the Jamaican national policy document. The actual policy document is

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[33] The Bureau of Women's Affairs (BWA) (subsequently renamed the Bureau of Gender Affairs (BGA) is the national machinery and agency for advocating for and supporting the implementation of the Jamaican National Policy for Gender Equality.

[34] The Gender Advisory Committee/Gender Advisory Council (GAC) is a multi-sectoral body charged with guiding the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the National Policy for Gender Equality in conjunction with the Bureau of Gender Affairs. The GAC is composed of various representatives of various national sectors appointed for a term no more than three years.

most expansive when it articulates the policy strategies and tools, followed by the targets and indicators (Government of Jamaica 2010). The document clarifies the sectors within which the government and some external partners will be involved in the implementation process. Similarly, the targets and indicators establish responsibility to the Office of the Prime Minister and the cabinet (Government of Jamaica 2010), thereby ensuring that the drivers of the policy process are in seats of power. The question of the policy implementation being dependent on the ability of the minister responsible for women/gender to advocate within the cabinet does not arise, because the executive and the Office of the Prime Minister own the implementation. Although this may be ideal in terms of implementation and minimizing policy evaporation, it raises the question of how to balance specifics of policy recommendations and the work of feminist organizing, which are at the heart of the Patricia Mohammed's models, and the need for a NGP to facilitate a bureaucratic-based discussion between sectors to advance gender and development regionally.

This tension is explored by Walby[35] when she questions whether the vision of gender equality evoked by these multi-sectoral gender mainstreaming plans rests on notions of sameness, difference or transformation (Walby 2005). People external to the state, including gender and development advocates and academics, as well as gender and development practitioners within the state, own[36] these policies. This multiple-actor ownership and the differing expectations that go with it need to be further understood. Inquiry into the NGP development also requires framing.

Multiple-actor ownership often produces a contradictory existence for the policy and the norms of delivery for outputs to its different constituencies. One aspect of this, in the case of Jamaica. is the fact that when advocates in the pre-Beijing national women's movement embarked on a call for a national policy, they meant for it to be a policy on women's equality and equity. In a post-Beijing Caribbean, however, this call was transformed into advocacy for the development of an NGP. Although advocates accommodated the shift, and have adopted the fight for NGPs as their own, these two documents are not the same. In terms of the regional women's movement establishing a policy interface, it is increasingly apparent that there is a critical need to explore the need of a policy paper on women as a distinct product from a NGP. The post-Beijing gender-mainstreaming language, furnished governments, donors and

[35] Exploring Judith Squires' work on gender mainstreaming (Squires 2005).
[36] Ownership of the policy process speaks to both a formal ownership and direction of the process by the state and its representatives in making it a national document. It also needs to include in the English-speaking Caribbean, the ways in which non-state actors and organizations are invested or seek to invest themselves in the process and outcomes of the NGP, and how they are able to access the gains or become victims of the negative fallout inherent in the process. This broad ownership is imperative because of the historic place of non-state actors in ensuring that the issues of gender and development become part of the national agenda in these territories.

academics with a language of performance-based budgeting, results-based management, generally more 'inclusive' articulations of old concerns (Parpart 2012; Goetz and Sandler 2007), and the ability to represent their buy-in to gender and development concerns as a part of a global process not only focused on women. At the heart of this buy-in to the multiple-actor ownership are the trade-offs involved and the impact of these negotiated spaces on the original objectives. The answers to such questions are always context-specific, highly political and laden with insight into the real and ferocious resistances (Ibid) consistent with seeking to build societies focused on securing gender justice, and advancing the rights of women. In the Caribbean it is only at the country level, this context can be used to capture this complex process.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW TO NATIONAL EXPERIENCES

In moving from the regional overview to the case study experiences of NGP development, there are some very relevant considerations that provide opportunity for enlarging our perspective of the place of the NGP in national public policy making around the region. The various national experiences that constitute the regional experience are moments in political, social and technocratic time, influenced by international and regional push factors, and very importantly the countervailing narratives that shape the relationships the NGP established with various national constituencies (Harding 1998). The power, content and location of the narratives, whether they are controlled by the state or structured to secure the support of the populace majority, indicate how public policy making is not immune to the social needs of a larger culture.

Case Studies of the Commonwealth of Dominica and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

These case studies provide insight into issues such as timing, stakeholders invited to the formulation process, the relationship between the state and feminists organizing, and the relationship between feminists organizing and the society all shape the policy process. Additionally, they make clear that the NGP is the product of the advocacy of feminist activists of one period, attempting to locate itself within the bureaucracy's pursuit of an internationally palatable language with which it can 'do gender' (Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead 2007). Ultimately, the language with which gender is being done by the state is filtered by feminist scholars and approved by governments. Governmental approval is a political process mediated through public opinion. Feminist activists, the bureaucracy, feminists scholars and the public all have their own expectations and investments in the NGP content and the possibilities for change vested in it. We choose to liken the NGP to a derailed relay race. As the race unfolds, each athlete finds herself with a different interpretation of the lanes earmarked for the race. Ultimately, the athlete who orients the race and the last runner have significantly opposing views of the finish line and the actual rules of the race. In spite of this they both express a commitment to the same race. Both prepare for it over a protracted period and both have an idea of what it means to finish and win. The case studies provide the details of the NGP relay experience in the Commonwealth of Dominica (Dominica) and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (Trinidad & Tobago). The ability of the runners to engage each other, influences the capacity of the NGP to negotiate its critical junctures. The ability of the runners to anticipate narratives of non-support coming from the stands is also fundamental to the success of the race.

Although NGPs are government documents, all the regional NGPs are products of an advocacy process embarked upon outside of government. The advocacy process, whether locally or internationally originated was instrumental in first identifying the need for the rights of mainly women to be comprehensively addressed in governments' macro-level planning. In a post-Beijing regional development moment, the language of integrating gender into macro-level planning became more easily translated for many Caribbean states. It was a time when the institutions of the state were handed a more efficient normative framework to fit populations into, mainly for labor and social relations (Mohammed 2002). At the heart of this framework is the fact that for many governments, women became gender, and doing gender became distinct from doing feminism (Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead 2007) or doing women. Dominica and

Trinidad & Tobago share the same international commitments, similar government structure and the same NGP lead consultant. Yet the results of the NGP process are very different. The Dominica process started in 2004 and ended in 2006. Trinidad & Tobago's process officially launched in 2002, and as of July 2012 cabinet has yet to approve a document.

In investigating the narratives involved in making these two policies, this section of the chapter seeks to map experiences across constituencies. Starting with an NGO perspective, it goes beyond identifying where the slippage or advancement occurs, to the details of the slippage and the strategies involved in securing advancement of the policy document. Of particular interest, are the mechanisms advocates used within these respective nations to position themselves to influence public policy. In understanding the repositioning of advocates within public policy making, the case studies allow for an interrogation of the politics of making gender and development more digestible to the national palette37. The positions traded off, narratives produced, narratives circumvented, alliances made and utilized become increasingly important to reconciling feminist activism with state efficiency, symbolized by the negotiated text of the NGP.

The Policy Process through NGO Eyes

Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago conducted participatory and consultative NGP drafting. Our inspection of the histories of these processes starts with a reflection on the NGO voice, as detailed in tables 2 and 3. The tables represent graphically the critical milestones during the NGP drafting from an NGO perspective in both territories. Interview data gathered for this chapter from leading NGOs in Dominica and Trinidad & Tobago inform the construction of both tables. The representatives of NGOs were invited to map the NGP process in their respective territories. Interviewees identified times, milestones, and junctures, starting with the Dominican experience.

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[37] Keith Nurse in defining gender in his paper "Masculinities in Transition" states that gender is not only happening at the institutional, it is also structuring ideologies, discourses, intimate desires, our sexuality and self-esteem (Nurse 2004). The process of making gender digestible to the national palette in much of the English-speaking Caribbean hinges on the ability of gender and development to remain a public concern of organizations and institutional arrangements without transcending the private or the personal.

Ms Rosie Brown <mark>PLEASE FORMAT TABLE TO FIT PAGES</mark> **and make fonts consistent**

- Director Bureau of Women's Affairs now Bureau of Gender Affairs. 1999- 2004 Outreach Programmes started on the development of a NGP in collaboration with the Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW). Rural Communities are important in Dominica, the DNCW has a long relationship of working with these communities. Based on this

CARICOM Meeting 2003

- In 2003 CARICOM Meeting regional Gender Affairs Ministers in Grenada identified the T&T then draft policy as the model for the

Consultant 2005

- 2005 was the Consultant's first visit. The research that was done during the 1991–2004 period formed part of the first section of background document she received. Mr. Eisenhower Douglas was the Permanent Secretary of the then Ministry of Community Development, Gender Affairs and Information.

Policy on the way 2005 & onwards

- The DNCW, was part of the process. The DNCW participated in all the capacity building and subsequent training in Gender and Development that was part of the drafting process. Special focus was the community–based public education.

Resistance

- There were pockets of resistance to the policy at first. A few voices here and there but they were not influential. The fact is in Dominica 38 % of the households are single female–headed households.

Between submission of the Draft and acceptance

- The regular work of the organization continued. Also The Women's Affairs Bureau developed some pamphlets– National Gender Policy Made Simple which we used in our outreach within the communities

Margaret Hector

- Margaret Hector (January 1987-November 1987) attached to Ministry of Health Margaret attended an OAS CIM meeting in Washington and returned to Trinidad & Tobago with a one page National Gender

Dr Emmanuel Hosein

- Emmanuel Hosein was very helpful and started a dialogue with Women NGO representatives about the policy, how it should work and the way that he could help. Heralded as the best Minister of Women's

Gloria Henry

- Gloria Henry (1987-91)(did not believe in doing consultations for the policy. At this point, the women's NGOs began their own consultation process, which culminated in a national policy document on Gender

Joan Yuille Williams

- Joan Yuille Williams claimed the Women/Gender space as hers because no one else wanted it. (January 1992- October 1995) Hired Canadian Consultants to develop the policy. They produced an

Dr Daphne Phillips

- Dr Daphne Phillips (November 1995- December 2000) set the stage for CEDAW reporting process, which reiterated the need for the development of a National Gender Policy.

Joan Yuille Williams

- Joan Yuille Williams reclaimed her space (April 2002- November 2007) invited the CGDS to be the consultants, collaborated with women's organizations to develop the policy. A policy was produced out of

Marlene McDonald

- Marlene McDonald (November 2007- May 2010)converted the policy and situational analysis into a green paper and laid it before the Parliament. This was not well received by members of women's

Mary King

- Draft document was under review

Boewidra-nath Tiwarie

- Term of Office too short to assess a position on the National Gender Policy.

. Verna St Rose-Graeves

- Convened the 2011 Cabinet Appointed Review Committee and Technical Support Committee, with both Governmental and Non-Governmental representation. Clear position taken to support issues of gender inclusion and policy support for an expanded engagement of Sexual Reproductive Health Issues

Framing Non-Governmental History and Advocacy around the NGPs
The Dominican Context

Dominica is the third territory to embark on formulating a NGP in the Anglophone Caribbean. In framing an intimate understanding of any NGP process, a number of mechanisms need to be investigated. These include the institutional arrangements and history that gives life to the formal process, how gender and development is packaged for and understood by the general population, and the content and the location of the technical[38] and political[39] interpretation on the NGP policy areas. Ultimately these mechanisms and the resulting process are heavily influenced by the lead consultant's conceptualization of responsibility to undertake, and the alliances formed to expedite that process.

Based on Dominican secondary data[40] available, the national understanding, programming and projects about gender and development focused on women rather than gender in the late 1990s and early twenty-first century (CGEF 2005). Immediately prior to the policy, a thrust to include the masculine voice emerged. Emerging regional concerns around perceived male marginalization in Caribbean education, and the need for a policy related to HIV/AIDS that incorporated a gender perspective, influenced this shift (CIDA 2005). Moreover, by 2004 the challenges of advancing the Trinidad and Tobago NGP process were becoming apparent. This experience became particularly contentious around questions of defining gender, and translating the shift from women to gender into programming and policy work. The combined effect of these factors, including the fact that the same consultant led the Trinidadian and Dominican policy process, meant that the Dominican policy development became a place of capitalizing on lessons learnt.

The Dominican process relied on a number of strategic partnerships with NGO partners including the church. From its inception, a number of technocrats across state sectors formed a core group to guide research, priority areas and public engagement with the policy process. This group created a strong sense of ownership in the design phase of the NGP. In an interview for this chapter, the lead consultant (Mohammed, interview) described this ownership:

> Well I think Dominica is such a different society….people are involved in everything.
> People are interested in how the society is governed, who governs them, what happens
> in the ministries, what is delivered on all fronts….I think there's a lot more involvement in
> all sectors in governance. When you look at the way in which the Dominica policy was

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[38] The technical interpretation of the NGP mainly refers to the understanding of the content and place of the NGP by the practitioners within the given state bureaucracy.
[39] The political interpretation of the NGP refers to the politician's understanding of the process. The politician is encountered both at the head of the national machinery and as the individual who would ultimately convince fellow members of cabinet to approve or terminate the NGP.
[40] The secondary data included papers and reports from governmental and non-governmental organizations.

written, which is they created a technical support committee who met with us, they met in

consultations, they had meetings when we left. And they sent the material for us to write

the policy from. You know, we had done our research too; our situational analysis but the

actual decision and priority, that was selected were done by different groups. So the

unionized people, the unions came up with what they wanted to see in labour, then the

education people came up with what they wanted to see, then the church came up with

what they wanted to see. Health is a very strong one….I found that when I had interviews

with the permanent secretaries, every permanent secretary you spoke to would be able

to say 'ok look this is what I think needs to be done'…especially things like health and

areas that were more related to gender in that sense….But I remember going to talk to

the people…the people that carried out the poverty assessment, the statistics, all of

them, don't you find they were very involved?(Mohammed, interview).

NGO Partners in the Dominican NGP

The government's record of the Dominican NGP process documents the role of the

technical support committee well. Three pivotal NGO groups also informed the narrative and the

public perception of the NGP. They included:

⟨ The Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW[41]);

⟨ The Dominica Association of Catholic Men (DACAMAN[42]); and

⟨ The Catholic Arch diocese of Roseau.

These three groups provided important information on conceptions and consciousness of the

Dominica NGP to the wider public in the country. The DNCW was the only group able to provide

some critical historical information related to the NGP framing process pre-2005. The

organization positioned itself as a longtime partner of the then Women's Affairs Bureau,

particularly with regard to undertaking the preliminary community sensitization initiatives related

to the NGP, dating back to 1999. The pre-2005 work centered within communities with a two-

fold output. First, they sought to actively engage the work of the DNCW in empowering women

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[41] The Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW) came out of a Caribbean Women's Association (CARIWA) 1983 executive meeting, which mandated its creation by the then Dominica Social League (the largest women's group in Dominica at the time and originally the Social League of Catholic Women). In 1983-1984 the league called together representatives of the Anglican and Methodist communities to form part of the organization. In 1985 the core group expanded to include non-religious organizations and some professional women (Reddock, 1989). To some extent the DNCW was a critical voice in the formation of the Women's Affairs Bureau and much of the work which was undertaken by the DNCW prior to the establishment of a bureau became the core areas of bureau programming. While the DNCW currently has a close relationship with the Bureau of Gender Affairs in Dominica, they do not secure a subvention from them

[42] The Dominica Association of Catholic Men is the main organization of Catholic men in Dominica, and its objectives are to promote a better understanding among men of the role of the Catholic church as the body of Christ in the modern world, and to bring men of all ages into a personal relationship with the living Christ through service to the Catholic church. DACAMEN was established in the late 1990's under the mandate of the bishop of Roseau, and has branches throughout most of the Catholic church parishes in Dominica.

about their legal and economic rights, their health, and programming to stop violence against women and children. Second, the DNCW aimed to help develop a concept paper on the status of women in Dominica, which fed into the larger NGP process. During the pre-NGP attempt to sensitize the population to the policy, the DNCW representatives targeted churches to build awareness of women's rights and the NGP. In one such encounter, the DNCW representatives recalled:

> Generally, I would go to the church, make arrangement to have permission just to share at the end of the service with the congregation. One Sunday I went to this particular church and looking at the pastor I sensed he was not interested. I looked at him and decided to go anyway….There were pockets of resistance to the policy at first. A few voices here and there, but they were pockets, they were not influential. The fact is though, in Dominica, 38% of the households are single female-headed households. When men talking about 'who is the head?' That does not make any sense in Dominica. Their influence was weakened. The fact is since the 1990's we were working in outreach. The reality of the headship in Dominica is complicated (President and Vice President DNCW, Interview)…

During the NGP formulation process, the DNCW sought support from the public for the shift from women to gender by calling for the policy to include men. The DNCW representative indicated a popular cry from the population at that time was:

> We needed the men because people always asking if you're talking gender and it's only women, women, women. As a matter of fact, as far back as when we had WAND[43] in 1999, we had a very active welfare officer who was a man….All this work though has not changed men at the highest levels.

The need for non-governmental male voices led to the inclusion of DACAMEN (Dominica Association of Catholic Men) in the Dominican NGP formulation process. DACAMAN and the Dioceses of Roseau (the capital of Dominica) entered the NGP process at the level of the Bureau of Women's Affairs and not national politics. The Minister with responsibility for Women's Affairs is hardly ever mentioned in the collective history of the NGP policy process and the synergies formed throughout the committees that fuelled the policy formulation. Although the representative of the Diocese stated clearly that she was part of the

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[43] The Women and Development Unit (WAND) was established in August 1978 at the UWI in the context of the UN Decade for Women with its goal of Equality, Development and Peace. WAND's work was, therefore, in keeping with the Decade's focus to promote programmes which would help to ensure equality between the sexes and the "full integration of women into the process of development

committee phase to ensure that the policy did not come in direct conflict with the teachings of the church (Sis L. Rogier, interview), her understanding of the goals of the NGP did not place it in binary opposition to the work of the church in Dominica. Even where conflicts might have been anticipated, she believed the interest of the church would be better served by being a part of the process rather than external to it. Moreover there was a long history of good relationships with the Bureau of Women's Affairs in Dominica that encouraged advocacy strategies from non-governmental actors beyond a conventional adversarial approach. This approach is well represented a DACAMAN representative.

> I was walking one day in Rousseau and I was stopped. It was one of the women involved in the policy. Actually, I think it was this lady here (pointing to the acting director of gender affairs who was in the vicinity at the time)….She told me they were doing this thing and they wanted some representation. I asked her Ms Brown? She said yes, so I join them.
> Similarly the sentiment of the representative of the Diocese reflected a long-term relationship with the bureau, and the influence of the director.
> I was always active in the DNCW, before the Women's Bureau I was on the advisory committee to the bureau for a number of years, and I was asked to do things as a resource person. When they started with the policy Ms. Brown asked me if I wanted to be a part. I just said okay. Now you know I have to represent the church and its teachings on birth control etc, but I had a history of working with the DNCW and I decided to be a part of it. Other than those overarching issues there was gender-based violence, men's issues, for example men being marginalized…

Of particular importance to this group and other NGOs in Dominica during their interface with the state in the area of women/gender and development, was the personalizing[44] of the work from the director of gender affairs. This created a strong sense of the centrality and trust in the Women's Affairs Bureau,[45] and the director during the NGP process.

Within the NGO community, the director of gender affairs was described as the primary catalyst for their engagement with the NGP process. This brings a strong governmental presence to the experience, despite the importance of the non-governmental voice and the strongly perceived ownership of the project by the Bureau of Women's Affairs. The DNCW was the only strictly non-governmental voice with a larger vocal commitment to the issue of women

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[44] The personalizing of the State in this context is comparable to the appeal of a charismatic leader in a Weberian sense.
[45] The Bureau of Gender Affairs (BGA) is the government agency responsible for women's and gender affairs in Dominica. It was first established as a Women's Desk in 1979 and attained bureau status in 1982. The agency currently operates within the Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Gender Affairs and Information and has a staff of three women. According to the director, the official mandate is to promote the rights and concerns of the women in Dominica and to integrate gender into government policies (UNDP 2009: 11).

and gender. As a result, although led by a non-Dominican consultant, the NGP drafting process possessed a home-spun nature, and a language of trust and buy-in for the Women's Affairs Bureau. This resulted in a policy narrative where people brokered their vested interests in a manner that did not derail the process.

In exploring the norms of engagement in the development of the Dominican NGP, it is easy to conclude that the engagement was perpetually cordial, without tensions or contentious issues. We doubt this was the case. Many of the people from Dominica guiding the process had a history of working together, which was relevant, but not the only factor that enhanced a technically mediated development process of drafting the NGP in Dominica. This collegial advocacy was advanced by the facilitative and educational role taken by the consultants. Gender sensitization training and awareness building for policy makers, partners and stakeholders at the highest levels of decision-making, and at the community levels formed an integral part of the Dominican NGP process. Within the government's education arm there was also a very public concern for the underachievement of males in the school system. These factors combined, created palatable meanings of gender for the public and stakeholders.

Mapping the development of the Dominican NGP in regard to advocacy and politics, our inquiry focused on the negotiation of different interests and their relationship with the NGP. In looking at the history of the Dominica experience, it became apparent that for many of the actors involved in the NGP, this policy was only part of a larger, older process, bringing these actors together around the work of gender and development in the territory.

The NGP, although an important milestone for all the actors involved in the Dominican experience, raises questions about the absence of obvious conflicts and differences within the politics of NGP policy making. Specific questions include:

⟨ Did the fact that the Bureau was small, heavily community-based and reliant on collaboration with diverse partner organizations facilitate the creation of a 'collaborative space' between non-governmental and governmental representation during the policy process?

⟨ To what extent did this collaborative space compromise the ability of the document to effectively advance gender equity and equality?

⟨ Did the absence of government funding for the NGP process make it a donor driven, technocrat owned one, but not necessarily a ministerial/politician owned document?

The resistances that occurred within the wider population created no political fallout of worth. Consequently the NGP remained a largely technical activity. Although the document had

to be owned by the minster responsible for taking it to the cabinet, the centrality of this individual to the process was not obvious. The technical efficiency over political ownership raises a question of whether the NGP formulation failed to influence large pockets of the Dominican 'mainstream', ensuring that male bias and gender inequity remained stubbornly intact (Woodford-Berger 2007). Questions also arise about the compatibility of approaches of a largely public service staffed, Technical Support Committee who guided the NGP drafting, and the goals of the feminist agenda to promote fairness and gender justice (Barriteau 2003). To what extent are the goals and means of these constituencies reconcilable? Such questions need to be explored, informed by an appreciation of the ways in which the staffing of the Women's Affairs Bureau, now the Gender Affairs Bureau, in Dominica is a critical factor that shapes how the organization positions itself within the wider national community, and forms partnerships to advance the NGP process. Historically the smallness of the technical staff was seen as a factor pushing the Dominican Women's Affairs Bureau to work closely with and through a number of partner organizations. As noted earlier, the bureau is a product of NGO advocacy, and sustains such partnerships. These partner organizations, mainly non-governmental bodies, were fundamental to the NGP process. The relationship forged with these groups over time thus squarely located the work of the Women's Affairs Bureau intimately within communities, constantly engaging with actors other than itself and those exclusive to the field of gender and development. It should be noted that this was not planned. It was a result of limited economic and human resources, and the history of women's organizing in Dominica. Clearly, advocates played a pivotal role in the politics of policy making in Dominica, particularly with regard to advancing the gender equity and equality work of the government. According to a representative of the bureau:

> Well the thing is, yes, we've had participation from other institutions that impact families
> (in the development of the policy). So for example there is a group NANGO (National
> Association of Non-Government Organizations), they were involved. We also have
> Dominica Planned Parenthood Association; we worked very closely with them. We had
> the Social Centre, the Social Centre is actually an offshoot of the Catholic Church where
> they started off with the Social League for Women…

The Technical Support Committee

Throughout the NGP drafting, the state related to its NGO partners primarily through the Technical Support Committee, which was an integral arm of the Dominican NGP's development team. This committee consisted of key specialists from within public sector and a few private

sector representatives. Overall, the public servants outnumbered the private sector representatives. The Ministries represented ranged from education, the Attorney General's Office, health, agriculture, the Chief Statistician's Office and the Financial Secretary's Office (Mohammed and McFee 2005). This facet of the Dominican process differs from the Trinidad and Tobago experience. Members of the Dominican Technical Support Committee acted as focal points[46] for the various sector-based research, which informed the drafting of the policy. Their presence in the preliminary phases also facilitated a broader ownership within the national bureaucracy, and to some limited extent with representatives of the private sector. As a result, the Dominican process was led by the Bureau of Women's Affairs, but the operation of the Technical Committee forced a wider ownership of the process beyond the Bureau of Women's Affairs (Ibid). That early process encouraged buy-in by ministries such as the Ministry of Education, which very early carved out its own interest in the research and drafting phases to focus on the perceived 'underperformance' of males in the school system (Dominica National Council for Women (DNCW)representative, interview). Early identification of such a vested interest was an important push for such ministries becoming part of the process. According to the DNCW representative:

…."Particularly the Ministry of Education[47], they were concerned about the boys in school. They wanted those issues to be included in the NGP."

Critically important to this chapter was the role of the bureaucratic voice defining the end product and shaping the public narrative on the NGP formulation. One influential factor was translating the NGP into the language of the population.

Translating the Policy

Translating the NGP policy speaks to the ability of all the players in the drafting process to produce a product that was palatable to a wide cross-section of the population, or on the other extreme, to ensure that the document was kept off the national radar to ensure that approval was secured before powerful resistance could be organized. In Dominica, a cursory exploration of the period post submission of the draft document suggests the first strategy was effective. However, a deeper investigation exposes to some extent a marrying of the two strategies.

The Office of the DNCW in Dominica found the pamphlets entitled 'The National Gender

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[46] These focal points were not focal points in the conventional sense of a group of public servants within their respective ministries with the responsibility of gender mainstreaming added to their portfolio. They were public officers selected for the policy formulation process. They supported the various sector studies and acted as the oversight and feedback center in collaboration with the nongovernmental bodies involved in the development of the policy.

[47]

Policy Made Simple' very useful. These pamphlets were compiled by the Women's Affairs Bureau and distributed with its partner organizations during the period the Minister of Women's Affairs accepted the consultant's draft document, but prior to final cabinet approval for implementation. They were in fact an accessible and easily understood version of the various sections of policy produced for the general public. Again partner governmental and nongovernmental organizations contributed to the distribution process.

One part of the policy, which could be deemed contentious, under the heading of Family, Sexuality and Gender Based Violence, was not immediately available in the "NGP Made Simple" series. The actual translation of the information and the printing of the pamphlets was funded and led by UNIFEM. However in trying to form a panoramic view of the Dominica NGP some persistent features emerged. A constant conversation about the policy continued beyond the governmental body, the consultant, the direct stakeholders and partners involved. By printing and distributing the "NGP Made Simple" series prior to securing Cabinet's approval, the policy stakeholders took the narrative beyond themselves and raised expectations within the community at large, around the passage of the policy. Ultimately, Dominica's NGP moved from formulation, to cabinet approval and implementation.

The reasons include the obvious and well understood factors such as the long standing partnerships that enabled the work of the bureau, the influential leadership of the director of Women's Affairs, Ms. Rosie Brown, as well as the historic and intimate relationships between non-governmental, governmental bodies and the population at large. Although these factors are important, the Dominican NGP also benefited from fortuitous timing. The process was undertaken immediately after the first NGP attempt in Trinidad and Tobago. Learning from the difficulties faced during the Trinidad and Tobago NGP formulation, the lead consultant was able to recognize possible outliers and 'de-railers' very early in the Dominca process. Bringing the right people into the process as stakeholders in negotiating the policy text reduced the possibility of them becoming 'de-railers' of the process later on. Dominica thus benefited from a previous policy process fraught with tensions and contradictions between and among stakeholders, outliers, planners and other constituents that were part of the process in Trinidad and Tobago. This broader buy-in was compounded by the ever-present concern for male underachievement in education as a policy concern, and provided a welcome language around masculinity for the wider public and some pockets of policy-makers.

Trinidad and Tobago

An overarching factor during the Trinidad and Tobago (T&T) policy drafting experience was that the political will to engage in a participatory and consultative policy process at the national level was necessary yet largely absent prior to 2002. Exploring the period 2002-2012, the Trinidad and Tobago process was fraught with many rewritten documents and policy pauses, which could be only understood as a result of politicians' influence in the process. In exploring the T&T process through NGO eyes, it becomes clear that, unlike Dominica, the case for or against an NGP was largely dependent on the minister whose purview was women's affairs (and since 1998 gender affairs). Unlike Dominica whose interviewees constructed a more immediate history, T&T's history is long, with definite intervals of acrimony and at best détente between the NGO community and the government. Yet there has been an underlying belief from the local NGO community, that with the right political will the country could have funded the development of its own NGP. Additionally, in terms of human resources, since the early to mid 1990's T&T had the most well staffed division of women's and later gender affairs throughout the region[48]. This contributed to the belief that, in terms of economic and human resources, T&T was equipped to undertake the formulation of an NGP.

Since June 2009, Trinidad & Tobago's policy has been a parliamentary green paper,[49] officially to be reviewed by the public indefinitely. Most recently in November 2011, the cabinet appointed a committee to review the document, and a technical committee to rewrite it where

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[48] On Jan 12, 1987 following the election of a new political administration---the National Alliance for Reconstruction---a Women's Bureau was established in the newly configured Ministry of Health, Social Welfare and the Status of Women. The Women's Bureau came under the portfolio of Margaret Hector, parliamentary secretary in the Ministry of Health, Social Welfare and the Status of Women. After a reshuffling of ministries the following year, the Women's Bureau was relocated to the Ministry of Community Development, Welfare and the Status of Women, with Gloria Henry as minister responsible for the bureau's affairs.

On December 3, 1993 the Government of Trinidad and Tobago signed a non-reimbursable technical cooperation agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for provision of consulting services, equipment and training for the Women's Affairs Division. The IDB provided a non-reimbursable grant of US$400,000, while the Government of Trinidad and Tobago contributed about US$ 75,000. The Women's Affairs Division was the coordinating agency for the project.

The specific objectives of the grant program were:
to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Women's Affairs Division to promote and assist in the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of gender sensitive policies, programs, projects and activities pertaining to gender in the ministry and in other government agencies; and
to improve coordination, collaboration and communication among nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), private sector organizations, unions, cooperatives, community groups, mass media and women's networks, and the Women's Affairs Division, in order to enhance women's participation in policy and development programs.

The Program had five main components:
1. improvement in program planning, coordination and management, including monitoring and evaluation;
2. establishment of a women in development Information management system;
    3. strengthening outreach and coordination with NGOs, public and private sectors, mass media and community groups;
4. training and sensitization in gender and development; and
5. provision of technological equipment (Gender Affairs Division T&T 2010)
[49] In December 2011, a cabinet-appointed committee and a technical committee were established to review and embark upon the development of a national gender policy for Trinidad & Tobago. This committee was entrusted with the responsibility of preparing a draft policy document for the minister of Gender, Child and Youth Development by July 2012.

necessary.

The history of the T&T National Gender Policy is a long one. It dates back to the 1988 Organization of American States Inter-American Commission for Women (OAS CIM) call for regional governments to compile a paper on the status of women (Browne, interview). One undeniable aspect of the history of drafting the T&T policy papers continues to be the hesitance of ministers of women's affairs, and later gender affairs, over the years to move forward with the NGP development. This also involves the costly political fallout experienced by some ministers who decided to encourage the formulation of a NGP. In 2002, the policy was officially launched. In July 2012, which marks the end of data collection for this chapter, the document had yet to be finalized or approved by cabinet, sent to the Finance and General Purpose Committee (F&GPC[50]), and approved for implementation.

Ways of Framing the Non-Governmental History and Advocacy around the NGP
Trinidad & Tobago

The focus on the development of a policy was a result of the shifts in feminists organizing in the wake of the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985). Influenced by the international momentum of the decade, compelled to express its own commitment to the advancement of policy development and expanding the work of the government on women beyond social welfare, the Government of Trinidad & Tobago committed itself to a number of initiatives around the advancement of women. This included a policy statement on women, the 1987 re-establishment of a Women's Bureau in the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Status of Women, and the setting up of an Inter-ministerial Committee on Women in the same year (GAD 2010).

Feminist advocates challenged the government's 1989 Policy Statement on Women, developed in 1988 and passed by cabinet in 1989. They felt that there needed to be a more thorough description of the current status of women in Trinidad and Tobago,and that women's contributions to the social and economic development of the country should be highlighted in the document's introduction. They also felt that greater detail was required in the treatment of policy provisions, and called for inclusion of specific issues including violence against women, communications, media, and culture and peace. They expressed concerns in the structure of the national machinery, including staffing (GAD 2010). The women's NGOs also felt the government's document was not consultative enough, therefore they embarked on the

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[50] The F&GPC is charged with the responsibility of identyfyinng and allocating funds for Cabinet approved initiatives.

development of a National Paper on the Status of Women based on consultations throughout Trinidad & Tobago. A convener of an umbrella organization for women's NGOs in T&T, Hazel Brown, commented on their response to the government's policy paper.

> *What we did when we left there[51] was to go back and say 'you know what? We have to take a different track to this business of this policy.' So we had our own consultation. What we did was a series of…go talk to people, what they should do…all the women's organizations that we knew about but mostly it was Network membership because by that time the Network had been formed….This is one of the original copies of it. (reading) 'Trinidad on the State of Women, Comments of Non-Governmental Organizations of Trinidad and Tobago…. It had an introduction, the issues that we identified strategies for Trinidad and Tobago and for each one the consultation had developed some statements on each of the issues…politics, enterprises, communication, culture, family welfare. In terms of implementation, the machinery that was required, the objectives of that, a National Plan of Action, the structure: a two part mechanism and an inter-ministerial committee on women, how the national commission would work, a budget, an establishment.' (Brown, interview).*

In exploring the T&T NGP formulation activity, what becomes obvious, is that the non-governmental and to some extent the international development agencies recognized that the possibility of drafting a policy was highly dependent on if the relevant minister was willing to take on the responsibility. Unlike Dominica, where the challenge was largely one of finding the requisite human and economic resources to advance the formulation of the NGP, in Trinidad the need for political buy-in has always been the integral question. Political buy-in at the ministerial level has been historically difficult to secure for a widespread consultative NGP policy document, but always seen as critical to the process. The introduction of the politician so early in the process brings with it a cost. The NGP shifts from being a technical document to being aligned with a particular party or politician within a party. Simple advocacy for the policy at times become skewed in the public narrative and politicized as support for a specific minister or political party.

The centrality of politicians to the Trinidad and Tobago process was highlighted at the end of the NGOs' position paper on women. Although the feminist activists developed their own consultative position paper on women by 1990, the capacity of this document to effectively

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[51] There refers to a meeting with the then minister of Women's Affairs, Ms. Gloria Henry, on the government's policy statement on women.

influence national policy was minimal. The fact that a policy would exist through state ownership became increasingly clear. Therefore, as time passed, the need to ally with a minister willing to take a chance on the policy became increasingly vital. Simultaneously, a number of international development practitioners and technical personnel within the government machinery also saw the need for an NGP. As detailed in table 2, by 2002 these constituencies found answers with the Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, Joan Yuille-Williams.

Advocates, Practitioners, Academics, the Public and Politicians: Converging, Diverging and Balancing in the Gender Policy Space
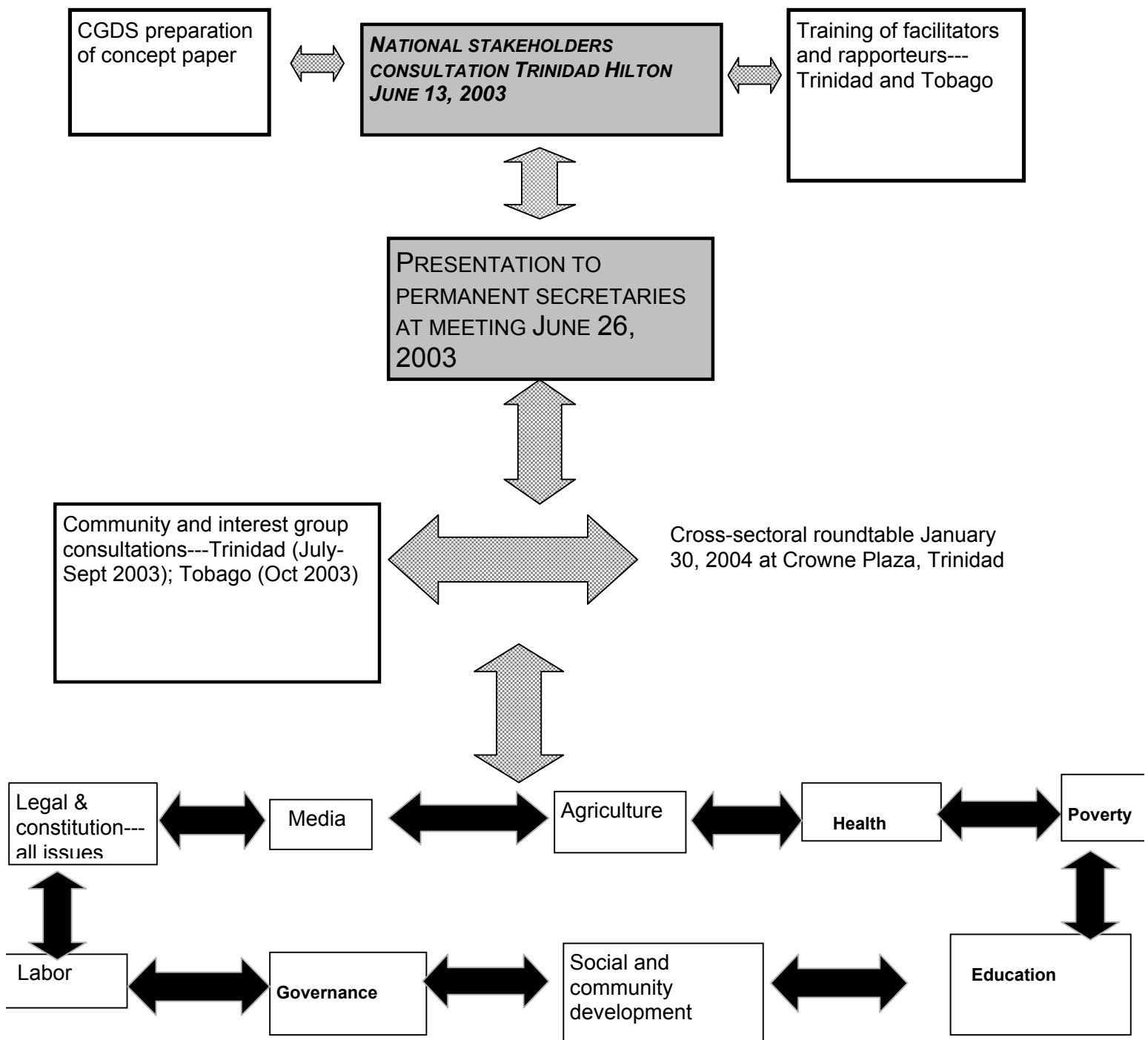
The Trinidad & Tobago process, like Dominica's, will never be understood in its entirety. However, the large number of actors and the factors which ultimately resulted in the 2002 NGP launch came from diverse quarters, influenced by people within and external to the government. When Joan Yuille-Williams was appointed minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs in 2002, she already experienced the failure of a foreign consultant attempting to write a policy document during her first stint as Gender Minister prior to Beijing. Additionally her previous term in office ended soon after her return from the UN 1995 Beijing Conference. The lead up to the Beijing Women's Conference was the culmination of a highly consultative and collaborative venture between government, Caribbean feminists and other nongovernmental actors nationally and regionally. This process placed the Caribbean in an enviable position regarding the negotiation of text of the final outcome document in Beijing (Rhoda Reddock, interview). An NGP was the expected follow-up to the Beijing preparatory document, which outlined the status of women in Trinidad and Tobago. The NGP never came to fruitation because an early election was called, the government changed, and a new minister was entrusted with the portfolio, which shifted the focus away from the immediate follow-up and commitments to Beijing. Although the state shifted its focus away from the post- Beijing follow-up, other voices articulated the need for a NGP. Most important feedback came from the CEDAW expert panel commenting on T&T's presentation of its first, second and third periodic report. This expert committee repeatedly called for the development of an NGP. UNDP's and CIDA's agreement to fund part of the NGP process, and the return of Joan Yuille-Williams, smoothed the path. Accoridng to NGO representative Ms. Hazel Brown:

> …*we were back to the PNM. Joan was back and everybody said well I mean (laughs) if we don't do it this time it won't happen. She got UNDP funds, she got government funds, she engaged Rhoda and they worked and they worked, and I have to say all through the process she was very supportive of it and even to the point where she knew people were objecting to (not audible), she*

was always willing to back up what was in there (Hazel Brown, interview).

The Trinidad & Tobago NGP process is best represented graphically in diagram 3. It was comprehensive and complete in the eyes of the drafters, and their stakeholders and partners. The policy document describes the formulation process as making every attempt to be inclusive, allowing for participation by all sectors of society, and approached as a series of interlinked phases, each phase building on the previous one. In addition to the consultative process, meetings were held with permanent secretaries, and sector studies undertaken by sector specialist researchers, which were used to further anchor the policy recommendations within the national reality of Trinidad and Tobago (CGDS 2004). Additionally a public education program and media sensitization campaign ensured the broader national public was engaged and informed about the process (see diagram 3).

Diagram 3: The Process of Consultation and Research

| CGDS preparation of concept paper | ⟷ | ***NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION TRINIDAD HILTON JUNE 13, 2003*** | ⟷ | Training of facilitators and rapporteurs---Trinidad and Tobago |

PRESENTATION TO PERMANENT SECRETARIES AT MEETING JUNE 26, 2003

Community and interest group consultations---Trinidad (July-Sept 2003); Tobago (Oct 2003)

Cross-sectoral roundtable January 30, 2004 at Crowne Plaza, Trinidad

| Legal & constitution---all issues | ⟷ | Media | ⟷ | Agriculture | ⟷ | **Health** | ⟷ | **Poverty** |

| Labor | ⟷ | **Governance** | ⟷ | Social and community development | ⟷ | **Education** |

The Outliers and the Unforeseen

Anyone looking at the Trinidad and Tobago policy formulation process must appreciate the lengths to which the gender affairs division, the consultants and partner organizations attempted to ensure that the voices of the widest cross section of the population were heard. For the first time, within the context of policy-making, the gender ministry was on the same page as most of its long-time NGO partners working in the field of women, gender and development. While some of these long-term partners agreed with the process, a number of outlier groups[52] took hold of the process after the tabling of the first draft document, which derailed the policy in a forceful manner. The source of contention was that recommendation 100 of the 2004 document called for a review of the laws as they pertained to abortion, and that the perception of the definition of the word gender in the glossary of terms in the document may be extended to mean sexual orientation (CGDS 2004). The most visible groups against the policy were the Lawyers for Jesus, the Emmanuel Community, and Divine Encounter Fellowship. There were other voices who engaged in advocacy against the policy behind the glare of the media, making it difficult to determine the policy narratives which were supported by silent but powerful voices influencing the process. Within the feminist and gender organizing fraternity actors such as Associates for Safe Parenthood (ASPIRE) and Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (CAISO), felt the language needed to go further. The bureaucracy, the policy drafters and the politician at the helm of the process had to devise a way through these competing interests. All of this happened at a time when marginalization[53] of the draft document was being pushed by powerful voices.

Negotiation through these competing interests was never forthcoming. Between 2004 and April 2012 the state, consultants, NGO's and feminists organizing were unable to restart the policy process and produce a policy document that could successfully navigate the critical junctures. This chapter seeks to add some understanding to this part of the process, primarily through interviews with drafters of the document, public servants, NGO representatives and stakeholders willing to talk about their experiences. Our intent is not to present a chronological history of the post-draft phase, but rather to present perspectives on the politics of policy making and the ways different groups positioned and understood themselves within the context of this policy construction process (refer to table 2 for the major highlights from 2005 onwards).

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[52] These outlier groups were never thought of as very pertinent to the policy process during the formulation stage. Many of them were religious groups and their concerns were thought to have been picked up in the consultations with the respective religious groups.

[53] This distancing, at its most extreme form, included the then Prime Minister Patrick Manning, taking time out of a cabinet meeting to make a statement to the nation that the then draft policy document was in no way a government document.

The Trinidad and Tobago NGP process is interesting in the way its drafters developed their own cognitive shortcuts for explaining gender and the nature of the policy process. There was a taken-for-granted belief that the consultative process was expansive and participatory enough to secure a critical mass of support around gender issues. The process was also seen as largely administrative. In the words of one feminist scholar:

> *...but when I saw we reached this point I said 'you know what? I think now the gender policy struggle in Trinidad is now a political struggle.' In other words I think that in the beginning when we were doing it, it was like an administrative exercise. We were doing this document, hopefully the government would implement it, but we were giving it our best shot. But when it was withdrawn once, when one minister gets fired over it, then the whole thing becomes a political issue ..*

In assessing the outcome of the tabling of the draft policy document in 2004, feminist activist Hazel Browne noted the following:

> *Now there are some very interesting episodes with this thing because she (Joan Yuille-Williams) took a very interesting and I think clever approach to dealing with the document, the 2004 document. Because even though we had a copy---and I still have a copy somewhere---that said it was the policy, she got up in the parliament one Friday afternoon and she says 'what was out there which had been wrongly circulated was not the policy, it was the report of the consultants who had done it so all those people who are out there saying it's the policy are wrong. It's not the policy. That is just the report.' And she was intending to start a process, to write the policy out of the report….And then she was gone and we got Ms. Marlene who wouldn't even talk. You see how all of the other ministers we would go and say 'Madame we come to talk to you about this thing'? She was not talking. She's not talking to nobody (laughs). So what you going to do with Ms Marlene?….what we call the light green version because it is not a real green paper. As far as I'm concerned that document is not acceptable. What we need is a process that goes back to the '04 document and use what is there to produce something that is acceptable. Because it is also significant that the two sentences in the whole 2004 document, which they are objecting, could've been dealt with very easily. Some people said all you had to do is take it out. Other people said 'no you cannot take it out; we have to find an acceptable presentation with it that would work.' Because all of the rest of the stuff was there and the two parts that I find in the new version, which is weakest, was the issues related to employment and a part that had to do with health. Health and employment were the two parts which were very well dealt with in 2004, and in my view is not as well dealt with in the green paper (Brown, interview).*

Stuck in the middle of the politicians, advocates and scholars involved in the Trinidad and Tobago NGP process, were the gender affairs machinery practitioners. They worked with the consultants on the NGP development, and much of their work remains defined by the NGP, yet they a bureaucracy that refused to engage with its passage also employed them. These idiosyncrasies involved with framing gender as a policy initiative were relayed as follows:

> *….that is very, very important because comparatively if you look at other public policies that are written…public documents that come out of ministries, that tell the public you know…what are the guidelines for this particular issue and most likely it's aligned to a ministry and there might be overlap in that there are stakeholders that would have*

informed it, but basically it's a public document. But ours, I think it crossed just being that
sentimental thing to so many people that it took on a different expectation and a different
shape to want a better word. Okay you have a policy on climate change, you have policy
on forest you know? But they're just basically public documents that say the ministry will
do XYZ, the government will do XYZ, but this thing about gender, the fact that you know
people want to see their rights, it took on something bigger (Interview).

In hindsight, we chose these three voices[54] to lend some kind of perspective to the Trinidad and Tobago NGP during its 2004 derailing. They all share a belief that the policy process allowed all voices to come forward, and all expected a rational process. This rationality included the assumption that dissenters to the process would articulate their concerns at the point of consultations and through the policy process. These actors did not the outlier factors that came to the fore at the submission of the draft document to the gender affairs division, and through a discourse with the public through the media. All of them assumed the consultative nature of the document meant the document was grounded in the voice of the people. The decision of the then prime minister to publicly break with his minister compounded an already embattled policy narrative. A technically appropriate response would have seen the prime minister construct his policy narrative in consultation with, and to some extent, through his minister of gender.

Expectations Outcomes and By-Products

When the 2004 consultant presented the draft NGP to the gender affairs ministry, the next step would have been for consultations to occur between the ministry, possibly some stakeholders and the consultant, and then presentation of the document to cabinet for approval. It was at this juncture, however, that the outcry became the loudest. The outcry from the Catholic and Evangelical churches, as well as other religions cannot be pinned to one factor, neither can it be totally attributed to what Professor Funso Aiyejina[55] refers to as the 'bacchanal aesthetic[56]' of Trinidad and Tobago working itself out in the policy arena, and shaping an

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[54] These three women spoke to us March-June 2012. They formed part of the policy process, had a vested interest in ensuring that the government approved the NGP, and had an intimate knowledge of the process. They saw the 2004 draft document, denied by the prime minister and the minister responsible for gender affairs, as being a government-approved document, followed by it being sent to the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the cabinet, to being then converted into an abridged version and finally a green paper to be commented on by the public. As of December 2011, it was being reviewed by a cabinet-appointed committee and a technical support committee.

[55] Funso Aiyejina is a Nigerian poet, short story writer, playwright, and dean of humanities and education, at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine.

[56] As process, bacchanal aesthetics is the aesthetics of the crossroads or the crucible of history and cultures. The greater the number of roads intersecting at a crossroads, the more vibrant (for those who understand the layout) or confusing (for strangers) it becomes. Bacchanal aesthetics is, therefore, the aesthetics of the crossroads as the

unanticipated policy narrative. In the words of one feminist scholar, the policy process was seen as largely administrative. The entrance and the power of the outlier voices clearly expressed that the process was always political. The NGP was a gender mainstreaming meta-plan from its inception as a development strategy. It is one of the pillars of gender mainstreaming and part of feminists' efforts to shift their activism from the margins of development practice into the center (Mukhopadhyay 2004). Gender mainstreaming promised to negotiate new spaces of gendered political and policy-making (Walby 2005), including an easier interface with the national policy agenda across diverse sectors. The efforts to shift such work from the margins, as exemplified by policy recommendation 100, and to alter conceptions of gender in the psyche of the public, raise questions about the readiness of some members of the national community to deal with feminists' agenda in its entirety or even with a conception of gender as socialized. Additionally, the readiness of the political gatekeepers to manage the political fallout consistent with such change is another question. The Trinidad experience demonstrates the difficulties that arise with passing a NGP when politicians in power deem political fallout too costly.

MY intent is not to represent the gender mainstreaming system[57] (GMS) as the answer to all challenges related to effectively integrating the issues of women/gender and development into regional development policy. In fact, we recognize this juncture as a particularly tumultuous one in the history of establishing gender equity and equality as a goal of regional development. As practitioners[58] in the field of gender and development at that time, we are also cognizant of the fact that GMS, as it was outlined in the commonwealth literature, was not an easy fit with regional bureaucratic spaces, and its implementation requires a more studied look to ascertain possibilities and limitations for its success. However, in spite of its indeterminate success and relevance to the regional bureaucracy, GMS as a system advanced a much-needed language and a visual for the process of integrating gender into the development process. It acted as a catalyst for highlighting the need for a more sectoral-based discussion of regional gender and development practice, that became increasingly important if gender equity and women's issues were to maintain some relevance internationally (Brown, interview). This became a critical tool to avoid the isolation and marginalization experienced by women-only programs consistent with the WID paradigm (Tinker 1990: 43).

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meeting point of possibilities: the old and the new; official and unofficial interpretations; the cardinal points of meanings and/or the world; the secular and the mundane…(Aiyejina 2009)

[57] GMS as a system also needs to be recognized beyond the structures it introduced. It provided a comprehensive set of resources and information packs to inform gender mainstreaming in all major government sectors throughout the commonwealth.

[58] More specifically, a practitioner operating out of a government bureaucracy committed to making the shift from women to gender.

Conclusion

This chapter explores the politics of NGP making. Although the inquiry is based on one phase of the process, it provides insight into the formulation of policy as a process of brokering interests and controlling narratives. In exploring the Anglophone Caribbean NGP experience, there is evidence of a complex interplay of belief systems, resistances, actors and silences that exists within public policy related women and gender. Although the lessons learned, timing and processes provide evidence of a pan-Caribbean feminist expectation that informs the NGP formulation, Caribbean difference is seen in how bureaucracies, politicians, feminists and academics establish relations with each other and the public. Additionally, it provides insights into the norms of policy narrative-building within and external to the state, as an important determinant of policy making and the resulting productive tensions that enrich theory building within the context of any attempt at mapping this experience. The NGP represents an attempt of public policy making to shift from the undifferentiated concept of women as a policy intervention category. In working through the experience of the Anglophone Caribbean, what becomes apparent is, as the undifferentiated category of women is deconstructed, simultaneously, the monolithic category of the state is also dissolved. As various territories seek to develop a relevant response to the framing and engagement of gender, women and development, differences emerge within the state machinery and among different states.

First, the difference between organizing around the NGP and activity focused on policy papers on women is an important but often overlooked tension. The NGP, as a tool of the Caribbean state, emerged out of a number of diverse pressures and constituencies, all weighing differently depending on the context of the territory being reviewed. One unifying factor in this NGP experience is the fact that the advocacy for an NGP as a tool never originated with the state, neither in its original form was it conceptualized as a policy on gender. Most originated as a call for a policy paper on women. In the shift from WID to GAD some of the NGPs seamlessly became answers to requests for policy papers on women. Thereby substituting one for the other, the efficacy of this substitution remains questionable. The feminist responsibility to extend and reinterpret categories, making the life and activities of women analytically visible and by extension requiring policy intervention, is not seamlessly reconciled with the objectives, constituency, process and politics of the NGP.

The NGP, as the ultimate tool of the deliberate and rational integration of a gender perspective into the development process, does not necessarily bring Caribbean women in the heterogeneity of their lived experiences into the development process. In this light it may be

possible for states to develop policy papers on women as precursors bor distinct policy positions to NGPs. The existence of these two documents may also be a possible embarking on a shift from politics of equality to the politics of difference. Regionally, buy-in exists specific to the pursuit of equality between the sexes as a policy goal. The assertion of multiple identities and differences and the negotiation of the various norms of gender within and across these expressions is a completely unchartered policy space. Successful negotiation of this unchartered policy space is the disengagement of gender from sex bodies, most popularly represented by the women/gender nexus.

As more states seek to take on the NGP as an expression of advacing development in the context.gender equity and equality the capacity of the state to mediate its enlightened development path and traditional notions around women and gender articulated in the policy narrative will become an increasingly important lens through which regional territories constructe gender and relations of gender internally.

The policy represents an attempt of public policy making to shift from the undifferentiated concept of women as a policy intervention category. In working through the experience of the Anglophone Caribbean, what becomes apparent is, as the undifferentiated category of women is being deconstructed, simultaneously, the monolithic category of the state is also being dissolved. As various territories seek to develop a relevant response to the framing and engagement of gender, women and development, differences emerge within the state machinery and among different states.

The NGP, as it exists in historical as well as social and technocratic time. The state as the arbitrator of the rights of citizens would always be a site for the mediating of interests inherent in public policy formation. At the inception of this research activity, the influence of various narratives around the respective NGPs were explored in terms their content. These preliminary conclusions have been augmented to recognize that the place of the narrative is of equal importance. The narratives of resistance occurring in the public gaze, that were perceived to be challenging to entrenched gender systems and social structures were more costly and more likely to be terminated at critical policy junctures. It is also important to recognize the ways in which resistance to the NGP process were captured as appeals to justice not solely as an expression of self or group interest, but voiced as a greater societal good gained currency, and became central in isolating the policy making fraternity. In this case is the narrative of the Trinidad & Tobago experience is particularly relevant. Here the policy makers were Trinidadian, but the politics of insider outsider worked in reverse. Their place as Trinidadians produced a taken as given approach to the possible narrative and little

precautionary deference to the potential power of the voices of resistance.

Above all else the NGP formulation tensions and political struggles engender a number of questions which would ultimately inform how the regional states and people would create an institutional response for the messiness and inequities produces by the convergence of the ideological and material dimensions of gender:

⟨ To what extent is the state willing to destabilize the public and private dichotomy through the expansion of public policy?

⟨ How do we theorize the gendered implications of components of the policy narrative undertaken in silence or outside of the public domain? Thereby exploring the need for the politics of public discourse to facilitate such an interrogation

⟨ NGP is not only gender mainstreaming. To what extent are regional advocates willing to recognize the challenges of the promised technical fix inherent in the packaging of mainstreaming?

⟨ In an evolving global retreat of the state how do advocates of gender equity and equality position themselves in a way that they compel states to engage in a politics of representation as a means of circumventing the politics of interest group claims on justice that are in fact expressions of self interest.

⟨ The masculine state as a homogenous monolithic unchanging post-colonial entity, is it a problematic construct?

⟨ The masculine identity of the Anglo Caribbean State may be a powerful form and ultimately central to policy making. Are all parts of the state leveraging this power equitably? Or experiencing this masculine identity equally over time and what are the implications of this for policy-making? What does the gender policy making experience tell us about this state identity shaping process over time?

Public policy making is an essentializing process. It is the systematic creation of a universal cap for all to wear as a means of protecting citizens and the state. Therefore the tension between the nuances of gender theorizing and its operation is inevitable. Although the tension

is inevitable it is productive, because the relevance of public policy lies in its ability to facilitate as many persons under its cap as possible. As the Caribbean organizes and understands itself as it relates to women gender and public policy, the core challenge remains the deconstruction of the destructive mythical character of essential universal woman, coupled with the essential universal man. This place of deconstruction is an evolving place, it is above all a creative space. It is rich in its ability to lay bare the nuanced complexities of our social reality and calls upon a response to alter, pause or abandon the policy process. The ways in which the state responds to and rearticulate these complexities through policy making can only be understood by engaging in the intimate experiences of specific territories. It is only in the specificity of these experiences can the questions around women, gender, construction of feminities and masculinities can be situated in relation to the state.

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List of Interviewees

Representative Women's Bureau, interview, March 2012.

Browne, Hazel, April 2012.

DACAMEN Representative, interview, June 2012.

David, Vanya, interview, June 2012.

Dominica, Acting Director Gender Affairs Division, interview, June 2012.

Dominica, Research Specialist Gender Affairs Division, interview, June 2012.

Dublin-Prince, Josephine, interview, June 2012.

Ebanks, Tammy, interview, April 2012.

Mohammed, Patricia, interview, June 2012.

Reddock, Rhoda, interview, August 2012.

Rogier, Lorraine Sis., interview, June 2012.

Trinidad & Tobago, Representative Gender Affairs Division Trinidad &, interview, July 2012.

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