

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Regional Caribbean Conference on Keeping Boys Out of Risk



Montego Bay, Jamaica
May 5 to 7, 2009



BACKGROUND

The high-level ***Regional Caribbean Conference on Keeping Boys Out of Risk***, held in Montego Bay Jamaica in May 2009, is part of the joint World Bank – Commonwealth Secretariat's ***Regional Caribbean Initiative on Keeping Boys Out of Risk***.

There is a clear gender dimension to the problems of at-risk youth, since young boys and young girls tend to engage differently in different kinds of risky behaviors. Boys and girls also tend to engage differently with schools, communities, and the labor market. This implies that programs and policies need to be designed and implemented with slightly different approaches and tools to effectively reach and benefit both girls and boys. For example, in the Caribbean region there is a rapidly growing gap between boys' and girls' participation and performance levels in education that affects boys negatively. Also, more young males than females are not only perpetrators, but also victims of violent crime.

If actions are not taken to tackle the factors that lead youth to engage in behaviors that are harmful to themselves and their societies, these challenges will have negative implications for young people themselves and for the economic and social development of our countries. Further analysis and a broader exchange of experiences are crucial to understand the effects of boys' underachievement in education, and risky behavior in general, on society as a whole and to identify adequate policies and instruments to address the problems.

It is in this context that the ***Regional Caribbean Initiative on Keeping Boys Out of Risk*** seeks to address the cross-cutting problem of boys at risk in Latin America and the Caribbean as a gender issue related to development challenges such as alienation of boys from education and drop-out from schools, crime and violence, alleged male marginalization, access to the labor market, and poverty alleviation. This initiative includes a contest to identify and promote initiatives to keep boys out of risk, a high level conference, a best-practices fair, adoption of a common platform for action and the development of dissemination materials.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOME

The ***Regional Caribbean Conference on Keeping Boys Out of Risk*** had the general objective to enable the sharing and analysis of experiences that focus on boys' underachievement in education, skills development and response to labor market challenges within a wider youth at risk framework. The conference aimed to broaden and deepen the debate by including a variety of stakeholders (policy makers, technical experts and practitioners) and to examine the issue at a technical level to identify tangible steps to tackle this challenge.

The key outcome of the Conference was the *Common Platform for Action to Keep Boys Out of Risk*. This Platform for Action includes the identification of individual priorities for keeping boys out of risk in the region, country level priorities, actions and committed first steps developed by each individual country delegation, as well as opportunities for further cooperation and synergies recognized by the international cooperation.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were mainly policy makers, technical experts, practitioners and civil society organizations representing the education, youth and/or labor sector from 15 World Bank / Commonwealth Caribbean member countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize,

Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago.

The conference was jointly organized and funded by the World Bank and the Commonwealth Secretariat, and experts and practitioners from other development cooperation institutions were invited to participate. Institutions represented in the conference included CIDA, CARICOM, Caribbean Development Bank, Caribbean Examinations Council, Commonwealth Education Trust, Commonwealth Games of Canada, Inter American Development Bank, International Youth Foundation, OECS, UNICEF, University of Cambridge and University of West Indies.

See annex A for the complete list of participants.

CONFERENCE DEVELOPMENT AND RESULTS

The conference was developed based on an integrated and constructive approach to youth at risk through a gender lens. The risks faced by the young girls and boys in our region can be identified on different levels: the societal, the community level, the household level and the individual level. In order to effectively address these risks, we need to design policies and implement programs that deal with them on all levels and across sectors. Involving the wider civil society, and drawing upon existing networks and good practices can provide an added value to these interventions.

In this context the conference addressed different types of risks that boys face related to the following three core areas:

- *Schooling*: dropout, low return rate, low performance, victims of inadequate teaching or school management.
- *School to Work Transition*: lack of required job skills and training structures, lack of support for entrepreneurial activities.
- *Community Involvement*: lack of sense of community and role models, lack of after-school activities, victims and/or perpetrators of violence and crime.

The conference had several elements to it, and various factors contributed to making it a successful event. High level participation and media coverage reinforced the relevance and attention to the issue, and a strong well-structured agenda content-wise fostered a constructive and valuable discussion. The conference also provided the foundations for moving towards a common platform for action as a practical and concrete outcome.

Annex B presents the detailed agenda.

Introduction and Opening

A welcoming dinner on the night of May 5 provided the setting for the ceremonial introduction to the conference by Ransford Smith, Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, and Yvonne Tsikata, World Bank Country Director for the Caribbean. Minister Andrew Holness, Ministry of Education, Jamaica delivered a key note address that stressed the urgency of working with youth, especially boys, at risk not only within the formal education system but in a multi-sectoral and holistic manner. Minister Holness emphasized the importance of ensuring that the skills developed in youth are relevant and in tune with the ever evolving and changing needs of society in



Minister Andrew Holness.

general and the labor market in particular, developing and applying new methods and approaches such as Conditional Cash Transfers that specifically targets and/or privileges boys.



Prime Minister Bruce Golding.

On May 6, Jamaica's Prime Minister Bruce Golding officially opened the conference, after welcoming remarks by Pamela Cox, World Bank Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean region. In his speech the Prime Minister addressed the fact that at-risk youth is a social challenge related to boys' underperformance, cultural and social patterns, and choices that are available. He made the point that it is crucial to develop policies and programs that deal with the issues taking into account the macro level changes in society. Prime Minister Golding concluded by encouraging the conference discussions as a means to draw upon the vast experience and

knowledge of the persons and institutions represented to provide an important and relevant input to find solutions to the issues at hand.

The introductory framework address on Youth at Risk by Wendy Cunningham, Coordinator Children and Youth, made the point that since boys and girls have different risk behavior, policies and programs need to differ. Conclusions of her presentation include the following:

- Families, communities, and governments play a significant role in keeping boys out of risk;
- Multiple actors must work together to develop a *program* to prevent at-risk behavior and provide new opportunities to at-risk youth;
- Safe, supportive schools – from ECD to secondary – are the most effective intervention to keep boys out of risk;
- The evidence is rich enough to begin evidence-based policymaking, but small enough that new learning is a priority;
- Caribbean is at the forefront of knowledge creation & learning: learn now, to act later;
- The current crisis may be an opportunity to build human resources for the post-crisis world.

Thematic Sessions

Two thematic sessions provided the core for the discussions of the conference: "*Keeping Schools from Failing Youth, and Youth from Failing School*" on schooling and education, and "*Developing Relevant Labor Market Skills in Youth*" on school to work transition and skills development.

The general objectives of the sessions were to:

- Highlight the real issues that underscore boys' risky behavior from a schooling and education / school to work transition and skills development program perspective, and point to the gaps in existing knowledge bases;
- Identify the factors that hinder / reinforce and those that help / improve;
- Identify the ways in which schooling and education / school to work transition and skills development programs can help in addressing the issue;
- Identify the school-community linkages that are critical for addressing the issue; and,
- Identify the implications for policy/ institutional development / human resource development in labor sector.

Keeping Schools from Failing Youth, and Youth from Failing School

The schooling and education session was chaired by Caroline Pontefract, Director of the Social Transformation Division in the Commonwealth Secretariat, and was initiated by two expert presenters: Jyotsna Jha from the Commonwealth Secretariat and Barbara Bailey from the University of the West Indies. The panel also included Mike Younger and Molly Warrington from the University of Cambridge, Rayah Bhattacharji from the Projekta foundation (Suriname) and O'Neil Ankle, Principal of the Green Park Primary and Junior High School (Jamaica).



Jyotsna Jha, Barbara Bailey, Rayah Bhattacharji, Caroline Pontefract, Molly Warrington, O'Neil Ankle and Mike Younger discuss schooling and education.

In her presentation "*Boys' Underachievement: Beyond Myths and Misconceptions*", Jyotsna Jha discussed underachievement through a gender lens, and identified three common myths:

1) It is a boys versus girls issue.

Misconception: Both boys' and girls' performance need to be judged against objective criteria; girls are not benefitting from the trend; gender socialisation lens can be a helpful tool.

2) Focus on girls' education and women's empowerment impact boys education negatively.

Misconception: Boys' underachievement not a result of secondary position of men or gender under-privileging; boys do not face formal discrimination as girls do in most societies.

3) More female teachers mean no role model for boys.

Misconception: Absence of appropriate role models an issue, not the absence of male role models; female teachers have succeeded in changing the situation with appropriate support and preparation.

Jyotsna Jha stressed the importance of understanding trends outside the 'war of the sexes' box, and use gender socialisation as a useful frame. She called for a consistent policy and approach

across sectors in addition to making school more responsive and active, and also claimed that it is important to develop a well-thought out approach rather than looking for quick-fixes.

Barbara Bailey talked about boys underachievement in education as a multifaceted and complex problem in the presentation: "*Needed! A Paradigm Shift in Addressing Boys' Underachievement in Education*". She made the case to show it as a problem that interlaces gender, class, race and patriarchal ideology, promoting a paradigm shift in research and policy formulation away from a focus on negative outcomes related to single univariate issues and interventions that treat symptoms to taking into account the broader social, institutional and structural context of youth development and inter-related risk antecedents operating in these spheres.

For the discussions following the presentations, the panelists and the audience were invited to present their initial reactions to the presentations; policies, programs and activities that do work (and key enabling factors); replicability and value adding aspects; existing knowledge gaps on the issue that should be addressed to make better informed decisions; potential benefits and input for public policy and programs; and, the role of community involvement.

Some of the discussion items and conclusions included:

- Structural core issues such as class, ethnicity, gender difficult to address in a way that produces short term results, which is desirable for policy makers. Therefore important to in parallel deal with certain areas that can produce quick wins, such as the learning environment and incentive structures to stay in school. While schools should capitalize on music and sports, they cannot be seen as an alternative to education.
- Need to identify which boys we want to target and why, and we need to look for the intersecting characteristics of boys and girls. Question is critical for both sexes.
- Early Childhood Development (ECD) is important: children exposed to ECD show a lot of developments. But there is a need to change the entire approach to schooling at all levels. Problems are too severe: we cannot only start on ECD, we need to work at all levels. Maybe we are giving education system too much value but not providing enough incentives?
- Opportunities are also important, the sense of achievement that leads to a difference in your self-esteem. Key to also work outside education, on all the needs and opportunities that exist.
- Develop the capacities of teachers, including cultural re-sensitizing and exposure to conceptual understanding of gender.
- Mentoring seems to be a feature that is working. Where the formal education system does not have the capacity (financial, human, etc.) to offer counseling and mentoring in middle and high schools in poor neighborhoods, community structure (home, church, environment) and community level organizations can provide a value added and have an impact both on performance and individuals' personal development and focus.
- Need to be cautious about peer programs, since communities may be "fatigued" with that kind of interventions and they may lose effectiveness, and also need to be careful in the selection of role models (not everybody is well suited for the role).

Chingboon Lee, Education Sector Manager at the World Bank, wrapped up the session with some remarks on the presentations and discussion. She pointed out that the boys' and schools' failures are related to schools not being effective in teaching relevant skills for life, out-dated training programs, lack of well-trained, motivated and inspirational teachers, and many outside distractions and incentives for young males. Schools and boys failure also relates with larger factors. Society and economic market have changed, and so have the job opportunities. There is a need for well trained boys and girls with skills that respond to the labor market needs in order to not perpetuate intergenerational transmission of poverty. Creative solutions are required to integrate schooling with the world of work, and to increase academic and soft skills that better engage boys. Critical investments in education must go on in spite of the current economic crisis: education cannot be only pro-cyclical but also counter-cyclical spending.

Developing Relevant Labor Market Skills in Youth

Henry Charles, Regional Director of the Commonwealth Youth Program in Guyana, chaired the thematic session on school to work transition and skills development. The expert presenters for this session were Hugo Ñopo from the IADB and Myrna Bernard from CARICOM. Panelists were Kate Raftery from the International Youth Foundation, Stephen King from the youth run NGO RISE (Saint Lucia), David Mayo representing the Peace Corps (Dominican Republic), and Elizabeth Ward from the Violence Prevention Alliance (Jamaica).



Myrna Bernard, Stephen King, Kate Raftery, Henry Charles, Elizabeth Ward and Hugo Ñopo on youth at risk and labor market issues.

The presentation “*Youth Training Programs in Young Nations: Results from Impact Evaluations*” by Hugo Ñopo focused on three key messages: 1) The fraction of unattached youngsters (no work, no study) is excessively large and action is needed; 2) The young training programs have been playing an interesting role, but their impact and capabilities of effective scaling up are limited; and, 3) With the school-to-work research agenda IDB aims at proposing alternative multidimensional interventions. He calls for the design of alternative interventions and policy recommendations to bridge the gap, aiming at the education system but with conceptual clarity of the labor markets demands.

Myrna Bernard talked about “*Towards Policies and Programs for School to Work Transition*”, including changing economic and labor market environment, societal realities, participation in education, and transition to work through the development of labor competencies in the education system. She stressed the need to reform the technical and vocational training and to promote a qualifications framework which covers the entire education and training system. Her recommendations included to explore new occupational areas linked to technology and creative industries; to partner with private sector, labor and other civil society actors; to address gender directly within the curriculum; and to address youth at risk in all sectors at all levels, home, school, community, national, regional.

The discussion with the panelists and the audience after the presentations brought up the following items and conclusions:

- Employability is more relevant than employment, due to high turnover rates of youth.
- Demand-driven training will not necessarily secure employment, trained qualified people also need to be placed in the formal economy.
- There is a need for better labor market information within the region, including improved quality statistics on work, education, training and opportunities.
- Important to engage private sector and institutionalize their involvement in development of capacity building programs, training, program implementation and financing.
- Entrepreneurship and informal sector: to avoid having to resort to the informal sector and also to develop the labor market in a country, it would be useful to try to forecast what the emerging industries are and look into developing new industries that encompass seed funds for youth.
- Community led initiatives to train youth have proven successful when they build on existing institutions, including schools and prisons, and also when there are clear and formal partnerships with the private sector (which can improve the likelihood of employment).
- Accreditation is important to ensure the quality of educational provision in the region. It can facilitate the mobility of individuals that have the skill and further integrate them into the labor market and contribute to leveling the playing field for migrant workers.
- Social empowerment of marginalized societies is important to facilitate strategies to change status-quo and find alternative solutions: a more democratic approach and engagement should include a new relationship state-civil society. Creating youth corps could be one alternative as youth service programs that make young people and others understand the need of volunteering and connectivity.

The session summary was provided by Maria Beatriz Orlando, Senior Economist and Gender Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean region in the World Bank. She stressed that occupational segregation by gender, class, ethnicity, etc. is a barrier to the rapid incorporation of technologies and increased labor market mobility. Maria Beatriz Orlando reinforced that training programs need to have a strong link to labor demands, and that private sector should provide co-financing of training programs. Challenges of new technologies and skills linked to new industries such as the creative ones require speed and responsiveness in terms of: schooling that is relevant for changing needs of skills; seed money for business incubation and risk taking; fast and experimental public policy with monitoring and evaluation frameworks; consideration of synergies and trade-offs. Regarding the need for improved information, she pointed out that there is room of improvement for labor observatories, monitoring and labor intermediation.

Award Ceremony and Best Practices Fair

The *Caribbean Contest: Keeping Boys Out of Risk* served to identify and promote existing best practices that target youth-at-risk, highlight the importance of human development and focus on empowerment of youth. Submissions from 11 Caribbean countries showed a remarkable diversity in approaches and activities focusing on youth at risk in the region.

As part of the conference agenda the results of the contest were presented and the seven finalist programs were awarded recognition for their commitment and innovation to work on keeping boys out of risk in their countries. Finalists represented Dominica, the Dominican Republic/Haiti, Jamaica and Suriname. Table 1 below presents the list of initiatives, and in Annex C there is a brief description of each initiative and the key enabling factors for success.

TABLE 1.
List of Finalist Initiatives Identified through the Caribbean Contest: Keeping Boys Out of Risk

INITIATIVE	ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY
From Offending to Achieving (FOTA): A Program for Delinquent Juveniles	The Social Centre	Dominica
Build Your Dreams: Youth Business Plan Competition	Peace Corps Dominican Republic & Plan International	Dominican Republic & Haiti
Male Awareness Now (MAN) Project	Children First Agency (CF)	Jamaica
Alternative Dispute Resolution Services and Training for At-Risk Youth	Dispute Resolution Foundation	Jamaica
Engaging Young Males from Inner City Communities in Jamaica	People's Action for Community Transformation (PACT)	Jamaica
A Golden Future: A training and mentoring program for at-risk students	Stichting Projekta	Suriname
Car Mechanics: Teaching Boys to Become Car Mechanics	Stichting TANA	Suriname

The World Bank Gender Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, Maria Beatriz Orlando, presented a summary of the submissions focusing on the policy lessons of the successful programs. Multifaceted approaches that combine for example life skills and workplace skills development or violence prevention and working with young delinquents are winning. Common denominators of all initiatives include effective targeting; knowing the target population and their risk factors; focus on all levels (community, household and school); matching access to opportunities to access to markets; and, cost efficiency.

Several enabling factors facilitate the effectiveness and success of the finalist programs, for example: involving former at-risk youth as role models and trainers; active involvement of program participants in design and implementation; right incentives (stipend, internships, etc.); and mentoring that boosts self-esteem. However, there are numerous challenges including keeping the programs relevant in a changing labor market; financial sustainability; limited potential for scaling up and replication; and lack of well developed monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks.

Finally, the initiatives teach us several lessons regarding the policy environment that is required to capitalize on the good experiences that have been identified:

- Multi-sector framework;
- Interventions always consider communities, schools, and households;
- Fosters partnerships: school-training, school-community, training centers-businesses;
- Incentives for good practices;
- Incentives for knowledge creation;
- Evidence based replication and scaling-up.



Maria Beatriz Orlando, Badrul Haque, Sheila Nicholson, Rayah Bhattacharji, Batoelanniesa Jimidar, Ransford Smith, Pamela Cox, Leon Dundas, Maria McLaughlin, Claudette Richardson-Pious, Abraham Browne and David Mayo.

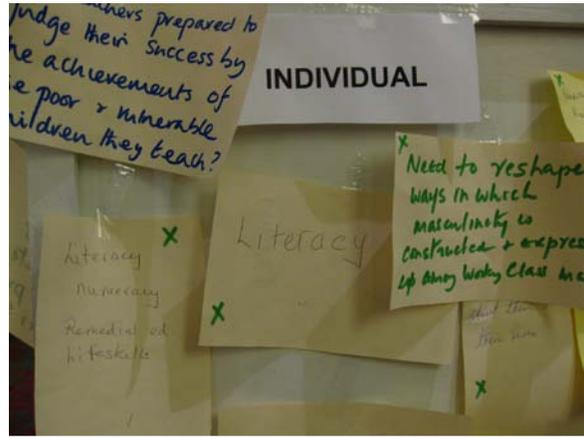
The Award Ceremony was chaired by the World Bank's Special Representative in Jamaica, Badrul Haque, and each of the seven finalists were presented with a diploma by the World Bank Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean, Pamela Cox.

Parallel to the Conference, a *Best Practices Fair* was held to show case the finalist initiatives identified through the Regional Contest. The Fair served to highlight and promote successful replicable activities that prevent youth from engaging in risky behavior with the objective to provide an opportunity to share innovative experiences and ideas from and among a range of stakeholders. A Scavenger Hunt was organized to encourage the participants to learn more about these initiatives.

Common Platform for Action

The second day of the conference was devoted to the development of a Common Platform for Action. The first step was for the participants to identify the general priority issues to deal with keeping boys out of risk in the region the two thematic blocks: Schooling & Education; and, School to Work Transition & Skills Development.

The issues were identified based on the discussions of the previous day as well as the individual participants' own knowledge and expertise. Table 2 below presents a detailed of the issues brought up.



Conference participants share the priorities they have identified for keeping boys out of risk in the region, taking into account the different contexts: individual, family/household, community, local institutions and national institutions.

TABLE 2.
Summary of Individual Priorities Identified for Keeping Boys Out of Risk in the Caribbean Region

Thematic Issue	SCHOOLING & EDUCATION	SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION / SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
Context		
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of literacy and numeracy skills Need for life skills Poor health and nutrition Need for certification Need to tackle peer pressure Drug abuse Need to reshape ways in which masculinity is constructed and expressed especially among working class males 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentorship and career development Early childhood development Early and continuous exposure to life skills training Support youth with behavioral disorders or learning disabilities to successfully complete secondary
Family / Household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absentee fathers Lack of support services to parents Lack of opportunities for engaging with school No orientation on 'parenting' Lack of resources Lack of positive role models Socio-economic instability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parenting style and child development interventions Support parents on how to raise boys National support to build strong schools and parents National parental support groups to assist parents to manage at risk-youth
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor school community relationship No/inadequate/inappropriate programme for community engagement in children's development activities Absence of effective community role models Lack of recreational facilities in areas to provide useful leisure time for young people Lack of facilities to develop literacy and numeracy skills for the entire community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth wages Institutionalize participation of the private sector in building employability Focus on pre-adolescence rather than teenagers Forums for youth voice to be heard and young people to engage in activities that impact their lives
Local Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irrelevant and not creative curriculum Hidden curriculum / gender stereotyping in schools Teachers' negative attitude: lack of love and caring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop skills for life but also labor markets Developing capacity for school administration to manage at risk youth Developing youth to youth programs Encourage peer- peer leadership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers lack preparedness / need for retraining of principals and teachers • Outdated materials • Need for developing early childhood education and support • No counselling support for boys • Ineffective pedagogy • Need to start right interventions at primary level 	
National Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of multi-sectoral approach / strategy • Low status of teachers • Lack of gender units in teacher training institutions • Inadequate teacher training facilities • Convincing MOE officials for the need for a new paradigm in education • Lack of interventions for addressing structural issues of school functioning • Lack of innovative programming • Lack of media policy to influence boys and youth • Lack of conceptual understanding of gender at all levels (including policy planning level) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth participation in program design • Entrepreneur and apprenticeship programs as part of youth education • Match curriculum to labor market needs and include IT • Flexibility school system and early warning systems to ensure relevance to labor markets. • Improve information flows! • Training for teachers • Rehabilitative focus for correctional programs for youth at risk • Ensure programs for marginalized males • Certification of youth skills and competencies

The country delegations then worked in smaller groups, with the result that each one of the 15 countries participating presented their key priority issues to work more in-depth on. The table below shows the priority issue that each country identified.

TABLE 3.
Country Priorities Identified for Keeping Boys Out of Risk in the Caribbean Region

COUNTRY	PRIORITY ISSUE
Antigua & Barbuda	Early intervention: offer appropriate remediation to weak students in grade 4.
Bahamas	Teacher's negative attitude and lack of love and caring.
Barbados	Need to ensure greater certification of youth skills and competencies.
Belize	Reduce primary school dropout.
Dominica	Lack of a comprehensive approach and structure to facilitate delivery of technical vocational program at all levels of the system.
Dominican Republic	Children are not in school for sufficient time. Activities and actions need to be taken for the productive use of idle time.
Grenada	Inadequate support services to parents.
Guyana	Determine level and make underachievement/participation in the educational sector (specifically targeted data collection and analysis).
Haiti	Better alignment between school curriculum and economy.
Jamaica	Engaging unattached youth and building bridges to formal systems.
Saint Lucia	Restricted health family life education exposure within the education system as the program limited to secondary schools and needs rationalization for effective implementation.
Saint Kitts & Nevis	Lack of skills among school leavers-boys.
Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	To develop a policy framework to address youth at risk particularly boys.
Suriname	Match curriculum to labor market needs and include it.
Trinidad & Tobago	Enhancing life skills of students (through appropriate teacher preparation strategies).

Based on the priority identified, each country also outlined actions and committed to specific first steps to deal with the issue of boys at risk in their countries (see Annex D for details).

Parallel to the country delegations' group sessions, the persons representing the development cooperation convened to identify synergies by discussing the following questions: i) What is each donor doing in the region on the priority issues that have been identified?; ii) What is the institutional position on these issues?; iii) What are the strategic and comparative advantages of each donor?; and, iv) What can be committed to separately and together?

The following institutions were represented: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), CARICOM, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Caribbean Examinations Council, Commonwealth Education Trust, Commonwealth Games of Canada, Commonwealth Secretariat, Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), International Youth Foundation (IYF), Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), UNICEF, University of Cambridge, University of West Indies (UWI), and the World Bank.

The debate was broad and included the existing CARICOM framework and its role; the diversity of programs (governments and NGOs); the youth at risk concept and its linkage to underachievement in education; the need for an M&E framework and baselines; the importance of teachers status and preparation; the focus on prevention of boys' risky behavior and the role of education (in particular the transition from primary to secondary, and community links); the value added of sharing lessons learned; the need for political will and identification of knowledge gaps (and the subsequent data collection).

There was a general consensus that the CARICOM framework to working with youth at risk should be expanded and focus on a multi-sectoral approach and labor markets, gender mainstreaming in education, mechanisms to target disadvantaged students more effectively, and moving to a regional platform to support national priorities.



Caroline Pontefract summarizes the discussions of the development cooperation session.

Several opportunities for collaboration were recognized:

- Development partners coordination on the issue facilitated by different agencies, using existing fora;
- Support civil society participation and coordination with governments and development partners (Commonwealth Foundation, Development Marketplace);
- Support to schooling: teacher education module and include gender, peer to peer support, etc.;
- Technical assistance to curriculum review to include TVET and life skills;
- Support scaling up of specific programs that work well;
- Assist government management of information systems for risk factors /youth (observatories and using existing methodologies);
- Programmatic work with governments in the area of sports and arts in schools (get away from piece meal approach).

Annex D presents the Common Platform for Action that includes the general priority issues identified, the summary of country level priorities, actions and committed first steps identified by each individual country delegation, as well as the summary of the development cooperation discussions.

NEXT STEPS

The country delegations committed to share the results of the conference with their ministries and other relevant stakeholder at the national level in order to promote the use of the Common Platform for Action as an input for policy and program design and implementation. Also, each delegation committed to implement the first steps they identified as crucial to deal with their priority issue and actions.

Immediate follow up actions that the World Bank and the Commonwealth Secretariat committed to include:

- Maintain contact with all participants as a network / working group and share results with participants and other interested parties;
- Systematize the actions and first steps identified by the 15 countries in the common platform for action to use as an input for the identification of concrete follow up activities;
- Summarize the results of the conference and make information available on the World Bank website: www.worldbank.org/lacgender;
- Foster innovation in finding solutions to the issue of boys at risk in the region, for example by promoting impact evaluations of existing promising initiatives and approaches;
- Assist in the matching of donor programs to identified country priorities;
- Encourage existing projects and activities in the region to include components that respond to the priorities and needs identified by the countries through the Platform for Action; and,
- Analyze the possibility of partnering with the University of the West Indies to coordinate a joint follow-up half day seminar for academia, civil society and policy makers at University of the West Indies (UWI) in late September – early October for Jamaican stake holders.



ANNEX A.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS



PARTICIPANT LIST

REGIONAL CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE ON KEEPING BOYS OUT OF RISK

Montego Bay, Jamaica, May 5-7 2009.



COUNTRY DELEGATIONS (Alphabetical order according to country represented)					
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ANNEX B.

CONFERENCE AGENDA



AGENDA

Regional Caribbean Conference on Keeping Boys Out of Risk

Jamaica, May 5-7, 2009



Tuesday May 5, 2009	
Time	Activity
7:00 PM	<p>Welcoming Dinner</p> <p>Welcoming Remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yvonne Tsikata, Country Director, World Bank • Ransford Smith, Deputy Secretary General, Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec) <p>Introduction to the Conference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honourable Andrew Holness, Minister of Education, Jamaica <p>Video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Realizing Our Dreams"
Wednesday May 6, 2009	
Time	Activity
8:00	Registration
8:30	Welcoming Remarks: Pamela Cox, Vice President, World Bank
9:00 to 9:30	Opening Address: Honourable Bruce Golding, Prime Minister, Jamaica
9:30 to 10:00	Introduction: "Youth at Risk Framework for Action" Wendy Cunningham, Coordinator Children&Youth, World Bank
10:00 to 12:30	<p>Thematic Session 1: Keeping Schools from Failing Youth, and Youth from Failing School</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Caroline Pontefract, Director Social Transformation Division, ComSec</p> <p><u>Presentations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Boys' Underachievement in Education: Beyond Myths and Misconceptions". Jyotsna Jha, Gender & Education Advisor, ComSec • "Needed! A Paradigm Shift in Addressing Boys' Underachievement in Education" Barbara Bailey, Director, Center for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies <p><u>Q&A and Panel Discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Younger, Raising Boys' Achievement Project, University of Cambridge • O'Neil Ankle, Green Park Primary and Junior High School, Jamaica • Rayah Bhattacharji, Stichting Projekta, Suriname <p><u>Session Summary and Closing Remarks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chingboon Lee, Education Sector Manager, World Bank
12:30 to 1:00	<p>Award Ceremony and Results from Caribbean Contest: Keeping Boys Out of Risk</p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Badrul Haque, Special Representative, World Bank</p> <p><u>Presentation:</u> "What are the Approaches that Might Work?" Maria Beatriz Orlando, Regional Gender Coordinator, World Bank</p> <p><u>Award Presenter:</u> Pamela Cox, Vice President, World Bank</p>
1:00 to 2:30	Lunch

2:30 to 5:30	<p><i>Thematic Session 2: Developing Relevant Labor Market Skills in Youth</i></p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Henry Charles, Regional Director of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, Guyana</p> <p><u>Presentations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>Youth Training Programs In Young Nations: Results from Impact Evaluations</i>” Hugo Ñopo, Researcher, Inter-American Development Bank • “<i>Towards Policies and Programs for School to Work Transition</i>” Myrna Bernard, Director Council for Human and Social Development, CARICOM <p><u>Q&A and Panel Discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate Raftery, International Youth Foundation • Stephen King, RISE, St Lucia • David Mayo, Peace Corps, Dominican Republic • Elizabeth Ward, Violence Prevention Alliance, Jamaica <p><u>Session Summary and Closing Remarks:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Beatriz Orlando, Sr. Economist, World Bank 	
Thursday May 7, 2009		
<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>	
8:00	Registration	
8:30 to 10:00	<p><i>Platform for Action Session 1: Defining Priority Issues to Keep Boys Out of Risk in the Caribbean</i></p> <p><u>Chair:</u> Didacus Jules, Registrar, Caribbean Examinations Council</p> <p><u>Panelists:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marcellus Albertin, Director, OECS Education Reform Unit • Cynthia Hobbs, Senior Education Specialist, World Bank • Jyotsna Jha, Gender & Education Advisor, ComSec 	
10:00 to 12:30	<p><i>Platform for Action Session 2: Establishing National Priorities and Activities</i></p> <p><i>Group Activity by Country</i></p> <p><u>Facilitating Chair:</u> Wendy Cunningham, World Bank</p>	<p><i>Parallel Session: Cooperation to Keep Boys Out of Risk</i></p> <p><u>Facilitating Chair:</u> Caroline Pontefract, ComSec</p>
12:30 to 2:00	Lunch	
2:00 to 4:00	<p><i>Platform for Action Session 3: Finalizing the Work Plan and Reactions</i></p> <p><u>Facilitating Chair:</u> Wendy Cunningham, World Bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of national priorities and activities • Revisit the common framework of addressing boys at risk in the Caribbean region identified in the first session of the day 	
4:00 to 4:30	<p><i>Conference Evaluation and Moving Forward</i></p> <p><u>Closing Remarks:</u> Jacintha Pringle, Chief Education Officer, Antigua&Barbuda Ransford Smith, ComSec</p>	

ANNEX C.

**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF FINALIST INITIATIVES OF THE
CARIBBEAN CONTEST: KEEPING BOYS OUT OF RISK**



From Offending to Achieving: Skills and Personal Development for Juveniles

The Social Centre, Dominica

The Social Centre, a Dominican Non-Governmental Organization, initiated the program ***From Offending To Achieving (FOTA)*** in July 2008 to attend to male juveniles who are screened by the local magistrate and sent to register at FOTA. The FOTA program has been designed to accommodate participants learning a self-selected skill. Objectives include:

- Improving participants' academic and social skills;
- Participants learning basic life skills;
- Improving participants' academic performance;
- Participants establishing positive connections with other FOTA members and the community at large.

Key Enabling Factors for Success

- The program exposes the young men to an environment and options which differ from those in prison, and since the structure does not have the stigma of institutionalization there is a different sense of pride in attending and participating.
- Participants' flexibility to choose a skill they wish to learn increases the relevance and the interest in the program.
- Visiting participants' homes and maintaining regular contact with parents highly beneficial.
- Tutors and facilitators who are committed to the cause facilitate maximum success.
- Design and implementation draws upon successful experiences of the Social Centre's fifty years involvement in social development, as well as existing know-how in other countries.



Abraham Browne is presented with a diploma from Pamela Cox.

Build Your Dreams: Youth Business Plan Competition

Peace Corps and Plan International, Dominican Republic and Haiti



The program “**Build Your Dreams**” is run by the Peace Corps and Plan International in the Dominican Republic and border communities in Haiti. The program has trained and supported over 500 youths from 30 rural, semi-urban, and urban communities to initiate and sustain local microenterprises. The objectives of the program are to:

- Promote income generation among young adults between 15 and 24 years of age.
- Teach youth basic business concepts.
- Carry out a national youth business plan competition and educational conference with the course participants.

Build Your Dreams was represented by David Mayo from the Peace Corps at the Regional Caribbean Conference on Keeping Boys Out of Risk and its adjacent Best Practices Fair.

Key Enabling Factors for Success

- The Youth Business Plan Competition in which participants present their plans and compete to win money for their initial capital investment provides a clear incentive.
- The incorporation of Quantum Learning techniques and a non formal educational approach has been effective in maintaining participation in the course and simplifying complex ideas.
- The course can be implemented by individuals with minimum teaching and business skills, using a well-designed facilitator's guide.
- Continuous follow-up and mentorship to the entrepreneur groups is provided by Peace Corps volunteers and Plan International promoters who work, live and are integrated in the communities where the course is taught.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Services and Training For At-Risk Youth

The Dispute Resolution Foundation, Jamaica

The Civil Society Organisation **Dispute Resolution Foundation** is working to enhance existing youth appropriate services and continue to mitigate the impact of violence through the provision of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services and training targeted to at-risk adolescents. Participants are equipped with knowledge and skills to choose and use alternative, positive methods of conflict resolution and mediation to deal with violence in their homes, schools and communities; and given a 'safe space' to discuss and develop life choice options such as career paths and access to school / skills based training.



Pamela Cox hand over a diploma to Leon Dundas and Maria McLaughlin.

Key Enabling Factors for Success

- Training young people as Youth Peace Facilitators has proven to be an effective way to share non-violence messages and services to youth at risk.
- By addressing basic needs like home work assistance and mentoring, participants are more likely to choose peaceful solutions rather than conflict, and are also more likely to improve school attendance.
- Involved families and communities key to success and sustainability, therefore interventions also target Parents/Caregivers and teachers by providing training in how to detect, manage and mitigate conflict.
- Peace and Justice Centres located within communities offer safe, neutral places for adolescents in volatile communities, and allow direct interaction between the Centres and the community.

Male Awareness Now (MAN) Project

Children First Agency, Jamaica



Claudette Richardson-Pious representing the Children First Agency at the Best Practices Fair.

The **Male Awareness Now (MAN) Project** is managed by the Non-Governmental Organization Children First Agency in Jamaica. The main objective of the project is to address the impact of culture and the need for re-socialization of young men's behavior and attitudes.

The project provides young males from communities where poverty is high and there are many social problems with vocational skills training and life skills education. Out-of-school youngsters are provided with training and guidance to enter into formal schools and/or training programmes or employment opportunities based on their expertise in the chosen vocational skill areas.

Key Enabling Factors for Success

- Active participation in the design has led to a sense of ownership of the project by the young males, and provided them with the opportunity to identify key issues for discussions; to share the project model and their experience with adults; and to monitor and evaluate the project implementation.
- Ongoing involvement of the parents in the project provides space for dialogue and bonding amongst the children and the parent(s).
- Community "buy-in" fosters community spirit and interest in the project. Also, community activities such as career expositions offer both adults and young people to explore employment and educational opportunities.
- The skills component of the project is important since it instills a sense of pride and accomplishment in participants.

Engaging Young Men From Inner City Communities

People's Action for Community Transformation (PACT), Jamaica

The objective of the Jamaican Non-Governmental Organization People's Action for Community Transformation (PACT) is to facilitate full participation and involvement of unattached youth within inner-cities. The aim was to contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty for unemployed 15 to 25 year old males who were not attending school nor engaged in any meaningful activity, but vulnerable to risky behavior, by equipping them with the appropriate livelihood skills and the opportunity to develop positive attitudes required for the world of work, family and community life. Program components included mentoring, remedial education, swimming instruction, micro-business training, music instruction, training in job seeking skills, field trips, and motivational speakers.



Key Enabling Factors for Success

- Integrated approach that combined educational development with skills training and business development, personal development and community involvement.
- Continuous exposure to positive male role models from private and public life through motivational sessions, one-to-one mentoring, workshops, etc.
- Making apprenticeships and part-time employment accessible, combined with opportunities for tertiary education in their respective fields.
- Neutral environment where the young men could feel comfortable and share their feelings without the danger of being criticized fostered by one-to-one relationship between the PACT team and the participants.

Sheila Nicholson, Director of PACT, with her diploma.

A Golden Future: Training and Mentoring Program for At-Risk Students

Stichting Projekta, Suriname

The training and mentoring program **A Golden Future** implemented by the Projekta Foundation (Stichting Projekta) from October 2006 to September 2007, benefitted a total of 231 students from low-income backgrounds and with a history of learning and/or behavioral problems. *A Golden Future* aimed to shape, motivate and counsel middle and high school students in personal and professional development through training and mentoring. The project objective was to improve the skills and capacities of the participants related to:

- Effective and efficient learning for school
- Sound decision making with regard to life goals and priorities
- Optimal participation in teams



Rayah Bhattacharji receives a diploma from Pamela Cox.

Key Enabling Factors for Success

- Students' interest and enthusiasm for the different program components.
- Involvement of school management supported the monitoring of attendance and better results.
- Engaging highly qualified and committed mentors led to improved relationships between students and their friends and parents, and better ability to deal with boy-girl relationships.
- The development of a standard but flexible package of interesting and fun materials that encouraged self-exploration and self-learning, and that could be adapted to the individual needs of each group or individual student.

Training Young Men to Become Car Mechanics

Stichting TANA, Suriname

The initiative to train young men to become ***Car Mechanics*** is implemented by the foundation “Towards a New Alternative” (Stichting TANA). Annually, the program provides 25 unemployed young males who have dropped out of school with the opportunity to be trained as electricians or car mechanics. The nine-month car mechanics course is divided into pre-vocational, vocational and practical phases, which includes a mentorship program as well as apprenticeships at private sector companies to obtain relevant work experience.

Key Enabling Factors for Success

- Close collaboration from private sector companies for apprenticeships and to provide employment a great incentive.
- Combined approach that includes vocational training and basic life skills development key to learn how to cope with difficult issues they are confronted with in their daily realities and how to use abilities.
- Providing each student with a mentor ensures support for the student in both academic and personal matters. Also, a close working relationship between teacher and student helps get maximum results from each student.
- Personalized approach important to achieve a good level of communication from each participant since students have different cultural backgrounds, life experiences and current situations.



Batoelanniesa Jimidar in front of the stand representing Stichting TANA's initiative to train young men to become car mechanics.

ANNEX D.

COMMON PLATFORM FOR ACTION





Common Platform for Action

Regional Caribbean Conference on Keeping Boys Out of Risk

Montego Bay, Jamaica

May 5 to 7, 2009



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Schooling and Education

Summary of Individual Priorities
Identified for Keeping Boys Out of
Risk in the Caribbean Region



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Individual

- Lack of Literacy skills
- Lack of Numeracy skills
- Need for life skills
- Poor health and nutrition
- Need for certification
- Need to tackle peer pressure
- Drug Use
- Need to reshape ways in which masculinity is constructed and expressed especially among working class males



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Family / Household

- Absentee fathers
- Lack of support services to parents
- Lack of opportunities for engaging with school
- No orientation on 'parenting'
- Lack of resources
- Lack of positive role models
- Socio-economic instability



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Community

- Poor school community relationship
- No/inadequate/inappropriate programme for community engagement in children's development activities
- Absence of effective community role models
- Lack of recreational facilities in areas to provide useful leisure time for young people
- Lack of facilities to develop Literacy and numeracy skills for the entire community



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Local Institution

- Irrelevant curriculum
- Hidden curriculum / gender stereotyping in schools
- Curriculum not creative
- Teachers' negative attitude: lack of love and caring
- Teachers lack preparedness / need for retraining of principals and teachers
- Outdated materials
- Need for developing early childhood education & support
- No counselling support for boys
- Ineffective pedagogy
- Need to start right interventions at primary level



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National Institution

- Lack of multi-sectoral approach / strategy
- Low status of teachers
- Lack of gender units in teacher training institutions
- Inadequate teacher training facilities
- Convincing MOE officials for the need for a new paradigm in education
- Lack of interventions for addressing structural issues of school functioning
- Lack of innovative programming
- Lack of media policy to influence boys and youth
- Lack of conceptual understanding of gender at all levels (including policy planning level)



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School to Work Transition / Skills Development

Summary of Individual Priorities
Identified for Keeping Boys Out of
Risk in the Caribbean Region



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Individual

- Mentorship and career development
- Early childhood development
- Early and continuous exposure to life skills training
- Support youth with behavioral disorders or learning disabilities to successfully complete secondary



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Family / Household

- Parenting style and child development interventions
- Support parents on how to raise boys
- National support to build strong schools and parents
- National parental support groups to assist parents to manage at risk-youth



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Community

- Youth wages
- Institutionalize participation of the private sector in building employability
- Focus on pre-adolescence rather than teenagers
- Forums for youth voice to be heard and young people to engage in activities that impact their lives



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Local Institution

- Develop skills for life but also labor markets
- Developing capacity for school administration to manage at risk youth
- Developing youth to youth programs
- Encourage peer- peer leadership



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National Institution

- Youth participation in program design
- Entrepreneur and apprenticeship programs as part of youth education
- Match curriculum to labor market needs and include IT
- Flexibility school system and early warning systems to ensure relevance to labor mkts.
- Improve information flows!
- Training for teachers
- Rehabilitative focus for correctional programs
- Rehabilitation of youth at risk
- Ensure programs for marginalized males
- Certification of youth skills and competencies



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National Priorities and Actions to Keep Boys Out of Risk

Summary of Country Level Priorities, Actions and Committed First Steps Identified by Each Individual Country Delegation



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THE COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT

Country: **ANTIGUA & BARBUDA**

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- **Underachievement in boys**
- 2.- **Teacher attitude and commitment**
- 3.- **Parenting**

Actions:

1. **Specialists (literacy and numeracy) to be recruited**
2. **Upgrade in teacher competencies**
3. **Parental involvement increased**

First Steps:

- **Get a proposal written up (proposal must have the appropriate data, showing the number of students who fail CEE each year over a 5 year period)**
- **Meet the ministers: Presentation made to Cabinet**
- **Consultations with stakeholders (union of teachers, principals, teachers, media, public, etc.), and implementation**



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Country: **BAHAMAS**

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- **Teachers Negative Attitude- Lack of Love and Caring**

Actions:

- **Collaboration with governmental entities would be the first step in addressing the above mentioned issue, namely, The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and Social Development.**
- **A second collaboration with Administrators, Teachers, Guidance Counselor's and parents would also be an appropriate action taken.**
- **Collected statistical data would need to be revised as it relates to Student's attendance and punctuality; Student's in the instructional program;**
 - **Students ability to manage conflict; Students dropout rate; Student behavioural infractions.**

Next Steps

- **Utilizing pre collected data from research based work, both local and international would be appropriate. Additionally, assessing the child from Pre School to college.**
- **This program would be piloted and instituted in school districts within the capital city of New Providence.**



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SECRETARIAT



Country: **BARBADOS**

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- **Broaden the certification of youth skills and competencies**
- 2.- **Better match between the curriculum and labor market needs**
- 3.- **Need for a Gender Unit at the Teacher's Training College and expanding the training and retraining of teachers and principals in gender specific approaches to the teaching of boys and girls**

Actions:

Review of existing curriculum and assessment methods to facilitate curriculum mapping to industry standards

1. **Conduct facilities audits in pilot schools (9)**
2. **Train teachers/assessors in competency based methods in 9 pilot schools**
3. **Develop new competency based curriculum/ assessment aligned with established standards relevant to TVET/CVQ program.**

First Steps:

Set up meeting with MOE/MOL to examine current situation and develop a strategy for the way forward

- **Facilitate internal (MOE) meeting to 'firm-up' the proposal to sign on to the CXC/CVQ program**
- **Scale up existing training of assessors and preparation of facilities to facilitate implementation of program**



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Country: **BELIZE**

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- **Reduce primary school drop-out rate**
- 2.- **Introduce labor market training in the secondary school system**
- 3.- **Increase support services for children experiencing difficulty in school**

Actions:

1. **Establish a system for early identification of potential drop-outers**
2. **Increase school capacity to deal with children experiencing difficulties**
3. **Provide support to family and students**

First Steps:

1. **Provide the Ministry of Education & Human Development with the framework developed here today**
2. **Advocate & sensitize on the state of boys in the Caribbean region and implications of boys at risk among colleagues and stakeholders**
3. **Convene a meeting with stakeholders and inform them on the situation of boys in Belize**
4. **Pray and fast... for them to listen**



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Country: DOMINICA

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- **Lack of comprehensive approach and structure to facilitate delivery of technical and vocational education**
- 2.- **Lack of recognition and certification of the ongoing skills development programmes**
- 3.- **Rigid secondary schooling programme (Lack of flexibility in choices and options)**

Actions:

1. **To establish a Technical and Vocational Education Council**
2. **To review existing needs (labour market as well individuals) and programmes for technical and vocational education**
3. **Rationalise programmes to existing needs (including the aspects of life skills, attitude and behaviour)**
4. **Validate the recommendations through consultation process**

First Steps:

1. **Identifying individuals and institutions according to the guidelines as per the Education Act to constitute the Council**
2. **Submit recommendations for approval by Cabinet for constitution of the Council**
3. **Identify providers and programmes being delivered (Government, private and NGO)**
4. **Engage a consultant to review existing programmes and identify gaps and make recommendations**



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Country: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- **Children are not in school for a sufficient amount of time**
- 2.- **Early childhood programs for rural and poor families**
- 3.- **Teenage pregnancy which make girls and boys drop out of school**

Actions:

1. **Make teachers comply with the 5 hours required of school time.**
2. **Introduce a pilot of alternative programs**
3. **Scale the pilot to the national level**

First Steps:

1. **Talk to the Ministry of education to raise awareness on the issue and plan next steps of the intervention.**
2. **Stocktaking of actual alternative education programs by different stakeholders**
3. **Develop a project implementation plan for these alternative programs to present and discuss with the Ministry of Education.**



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Country: GRENADA

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- Inadequate support services to parents
- 2.- lack of media policy to positively influence boys and youth

Actions:

- 1.Establishment of post-school resource centres with support of PTAs and Faith-based organisations
- 2.Provision for professional counseling service for parents
- 3.Establishment of psycho-social Support Groups for parents (peer)
- 4.Developing Parenting Education programmes

First Steps:

- 1.Consultation with various stakeholders (MOE, Ministry of Social Development, Faith-based organisations, PTAs.....) for identified actions
- 2.Training a group of parenting educators (trainers exist)
- 3.Identify and allocate necessary resources for implementation of identified actions



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Country: GUYANA

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- Determine the level of male underachievement / participation in the educational sector-specifically targeted data collection and analysis.
- 2.- Mismatch of skills needs and skills training programs.
- 3.- Access to education and challenges for all children to obtain and complete secondary education

Actions:

1. Survey available data
2. Convene national stakeholders forum and specific community outreach dialogue on the issue
3. Sensitize and develop short, medium and long terms interventions
4. Assess available data and create directory of available programmes

First Steps:

- Design methodology for surveys
- Commence collection and conclude analysis of data
- Convene meeting with national stakeholders



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Country: HAITI

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- Better alignment between school curriculum and labor market demands**
- 2.- Promote labor market skills in school**
- 3.- Support children with difficulties at school**

Actions:

- 1. Identification of at-risk youth within school**
- 2. Improve primary and secondary education –from school building to teacher training**
- 3. Reinforce the capacities of families**

First Steps:

- 1. Provide governments with work tools**
- 2. Advocate and sensitize at all levels within the State of the implications of boys at-risk in Haiti**



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Country: JAMAICA

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- Engage unattached youth and build bridges to the formal system**
- 2.- Create opportunities for families and communities to engage with school and vice versa**
- 3.- Develop mechanisms to improve school retention**

Actions:

- 1.- Ensure that the revised youth policy includes appropriate gender focuses**
- 2.- Set up national database to coordinate types of interventions, based on youths' needs**
- 3.- Recognize specific successful interventions and scale up and support them**

First Steps:

- 1.- Report findings and recommendations of this conference to the Inter-ministerial Team on Youth and Cabinet's HRC sub-committee (chaired by Minister Holness) to increase awareness and seek resources in specific areas**
- 2.- Carry out workshop on development of monitoring and evaluation tools to measure impact of programs (existing and scaled up)**
- 3.- Establish criteria to measure success of existing programs and measure programs (Violence Prevention Alliance with MOE, PACT, NYCD/MOY, HEART)**



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Country: ST. KITTS & NEVIS

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- Inadequate mentoring and career development programme**
- 2.- Too many boys leaving school without certification**
- 3.- Lack of life skills among school leavers (Boys)**

Actions:

- **Establish National Committee**
- **Modify school hours**
- **Piloting in Schools**

First Steps:

- **Setup a National after school Coordinating Committee**
- **Prepare a list of available programmes and activities**
- **Meeting with piloting schools administrations to plan implementation**



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Country: SAINT LUCIA

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- Restricted HFLE exposure**
- 2.- Limited Student Social Services Support**
- 3.- Non-inclusion of parents /guardians in programme design and delivery.**

Actions:

- **Revision of existing lower secondary document / curriculum**
- **Development of Community and Media Campaign**
- **Introduction and implementation of primary school programmes.**

First Steps:

- **Stakeholder Consultations**
- **Preparation of draft document for revision by stakeholders**
- **Teacher training**



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Country: ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- Absence of a policy framework to address youth particularly boys (chosen to address)**
- 2.- Absence of ability and skills on the part of teachers and principals to address the challenges posed by today's youth**
- 3.- Absence of effective linkages and institutional mechanisms on the part of key stakeholders to address behaviours and actions associated with youth at risk**

Actions:

- 1. Discussions / consultations with key stakeholders / public at large**
- 2. Review of existing legislative / policy frameworks in other countries**
- 3. Drafting policy document and meetings to discuss and refine the draft**
- 4. Finalise the draft and take it through ratification process**

First Steps:

- 1. Form a team for managing the process of policy development**
- 2. Draft a Plan of Action for meetings and consultations**
- 3. Implement the Plan of Action (Organise meetings, discussions and whatever other means the Plan includes)**
- 4. Establish contacts with regional and international counterparts to gain access to policy and legislative frameworks that exist in other countries.**



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Country: SURINAME

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- Entrepreneur and apprenticeship programs as part of youth education**
- 2.- Match curriculum to labor market needs, and include IT**
- 3.- Certification of youth skills and competencies**

Actions:

- 1. Legislation of accreditation (process has been initiated)**
- 2. Labor market information and data base (in process of setting up)**
- 3. Institutional capacity strengthening of the training and vocational centers, in order to conform to regional and international standards and norms.**

First Steps:

- **Installment and meeting of the board for accreditation**
- **Research and development of a labor market data and information system**
- **Identify stakeholders, assess capacities and needs for capacity strengthening to adequately respond to the needs of the labor market**



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Country: **TRINIDAD & TOBAGO**

Top three priority issues:

- 1.- **Parental Involvement as stakeholders**
- 2.- **Teacher preparation for Health and Family Life Education (HFLE)**
- 3.- **New approaches to curriculum**

Actions:

1. **Analysis of what is needed and at what levels**
2. **Broad plan of action by three priorities**
3. **Monitoring and evaluation to facilitate continuous improvement of the programme, ie collect data after implementation, analyse and make adjustments to programme of HFLE delivery.**

First Steps:

- **Bring HFLE providers together UWI, University of Trinidad&Tobago and University of the Southern Caribbean.**



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International Cooperation

Summary of Discussion and Opportunities Identified by the International Cooperation



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Institutions Represented

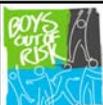
- Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- CARICOM
- Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
- Caribbean Examinations Council
- Commonwealth Education Trust
- Commonwealth Games of Canada
- Commonwealth Secretariat
- Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
- International Youth Foundation (IYF)
- Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
- UNICEF
- University of Cambridge
- University of West Indies (UWI)
- World Bank



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General Debate (1/2)

- Much has been done: Existing framework CARICOM and a diversity of programs (governments and NGOs)
- Role of CARICOM
- Unpackage what we mean by Youth at Risk
- Underachievement in education and boys at risk not necessarily the same thing
- Which boys are we focusing on?
- Need for an M&E framework and baselines
- Focusing on Prevention of Boys at Risk



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General Debate (2/2)

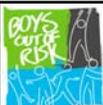
- Education as a common thread
- Teachers status /preparation
- School processes and community links
- Transition from primary to secondary
- Importance of political will
- Need for sharing lessons
- Knowledge Gaps : 10-14 age region
- Data collection



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Knowledge Gaps / Dissemination

- Assisting countries in M&E and baselines (EMIS)
- How to engage out of school youth?
- Data collection Subgroups by Age 9-10-14 group
- Why boys drop out between Grade 2 and Grade 6?
- Profiles of Schools that work well at keeping boys at risk
- Understanding the role of sports and arts in at risk prevention
- Knowledge sharing and learning from the region and beyond (keeping in mind context)



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Expanding CARICOM Framework for Youth at Risk

- Multi–sectoral approach and labor markets
- Gender mainstreaming in education
- Mechanisms to target disadvantaged students more effectively
- Moving to a regional platform to support national priorities



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Opportunities for Action and Collaboration (1/2)

- Development partners coordination facilitated by CARICOM – UNICEF :
 - Next ministerial meeting: during Youth Development Study launch have a meeting of donors
 - Continuing advocacy and developing understanding of boys at risk as well as policy options
 - Using our convening power to highlight messages and actions need (Fall Meetings, OECS, CHOGM, UNICEF, CARICOM)
- Supporting civil society participation and coordination with governments and development partners (Commonwealth Foundation, Development Marketplace)



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Opportunities for Actions and Collaboration (2/2)

- Support to schooling : teacher education module and include gender, peer to peer support, safety
- Technical assistance to curriculum review to include TVET and life skills
- Support scaling up of specific programs that work well
- Assist government management of information systems for risk factors /youth (observatories and using existing methodologies)



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Support

- Programmatic work with governments in the area of sports and arts in schools (get away from piece meal approach)
- Joint programming /multi-sectoral?



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