

**EDUCATION FOR ALL IN THE CARIBBEAN: ASSESSMENT 2000
MONOGRAPH SERIES 27**

Series Editor: Lynda Quamina-Aiyejina

Adult Education in the Caribbean at the Turn of the Century

**Patricia Ellis and Angela Ramsay
with Samuel Small**

This monograph is collaboratively sponsored by the Caribbean Regional Council for Adult Education (CARCAE) and the UNESCO Kingston Office. The initial impetus came from the CARCAE Regional Assembly “Adult Education for Sustainable Development” held in Barbados in 1998.

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FOREWORD

Education for All in the Caribbean: Assessment 2000 is a remarkable output, which is the culmination of intensive collaborative efforts between the countries of the Caribbean sub-region, the Regional Advisory Technical Group and the EFA Forum Secretariat, and relevant agencies and institutions.

The Country Reports, Monograph Series, and Case Studies highlight and pinpoint, in an extremely effective manner, some of the issues and concerns that drive education policy and action in the Caribbean. At the same time, the documentation presents a balanced and informed overview of the rich and varied educational and cultural experience of the sub-region; a knowledge which is critical to the understanding of the unfolding social and economic developments.

UNESCO is pleased to have been associated with this endeavour, particularly through our regional office in Kingston, Jamaica which, as co-ordinator of the Regional Advisory Group for the Caribbean Sub-region, was integrally involved in every aspect of the exercise. We look forward to continued collaboration with the Caribbean on activities of a mutually rewarding nature as the consequences and implications of the EFA Assessment become manifest.

Colin Power
Deputy Director-General for Education
UNESCO

SERIES INTRODUCTION

At Jomtien in 1990, member states of the United Nations adopted the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs* and created the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (EFA Forum). One decade later, the EFA Forum embarked on an assessment of this initiative, intended to assist member states in examining their education provisions to inform the formulation of policy. Once the Caribbean EFA Regional Advisory Group had embarked seriously on the assessment, it was quickly realised that it would be difficult to capture, in any one place, an assessment of all that had transpired in education in the Caribbean during the period 1990-1999. Moreover, the technical guidelines constrained assessors to specifics within quantitative and qualitative frames. However, because it was felt that education in the Caribbean is too dynamic to be circumscribed, the idea of a more wide-ranging monograph series was conceived.

Researchers, education practitioners, and other stakeholders in education were invited to contribute to the series. Our expectations were that the response would be quite moderate, given the short time-frame within which we had to work. Instead, we were overwhelmed by the response, both in terms of the number of enthusiastic contributors and the range of topics represented.

Caribbean governments and peoples have invested in the *hardware* for education--buildings, furniture, equipment; in the *software*, in terms of parent support and counselling services; and they have attended to *inputs* like books and other teaching/learning resources. They have wrestled with ways to evaluate, having gone through rounds of different national examinations, and modifications of ways to assess both primary and secondary education.

But, as the efforts to complete the country reports show, it has been more difficult to assess the impacts, if we take the eventual aim of education as improving the quality of life--we have had mixed successes. That the sub-region has maintained relative peace despite its violent past and contemporary upheavals may be cited as a measure of success; that the environment is threatened in several ways may be one of the indicators of how chequered the success has been.

Writers in the monograph/case study series have been able to document, in descriptive and analytic modes, some of the attempts, and to capture several of the impacts. That this series of monographs on Education for All in the Caribbean has been written, edited, and published in nine months (from first call for papers to issue of the published titles) is itself an indication of the impact of education, in terms of human capability and capacity.

It reflects, too, the interest in education of a number of stakeholders without whom the series would not have been possible. Firstly, the work of the writers is acknowledged. All worked willingly, hard, well, and, in most cases, without material reward. The sterling contribution of the editor, who identified writers and stayed with them to the end of the process, is also recognised, as is the work of the printer, who came through on time despite the severe time constraints. The financial contribution of the following agencies also made the EFA assessment process and the publication of the monograph/case study series possible: Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Department for International Development (DFID), International Labour Organization (ILO), Sub-Regional Headquarters for the Caribbean of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill; the World Bank, and the UN country teams based in Barbados, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.

We invite you to peruse individual titles or the entire series as, together, we assess Caribbean progress in education to date, and determine strategies to correct imbalances and sustain positive impacts, as we move towards and through the first decade of the new millennium.

Claudia Harvey

UNESCO Representative and Coordinator, Regional Technical Advisory Group (RTAG)
EFA in the Caribbean: Assessment 2000

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABAEA	Antigua and Barbuda Adult Education Association
ACEO	Assistant Chief Education Officer
ACS	Association of Caribbean States
AEA	Adult Education Association (Guyana)
AEAB	Adult Education Association of the Bahamas
AECB	Adult Education Council of Belize
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALTA	Adult Literacy Tutors Association
ATM	Automated Teller Machine
AWOJA	Association of Women's Organizations in Jamaica
BAEA	Barbados Adult Education Association
BIDC	Barbados Investment and Development Corporation
BIMAP	Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity
BISC	Barbados Information Services Conference
BPWC	Business and Professional Women's Club
BWIA	British West Indian Airways
BWU	Barbados Workers' Union
CAETT	Congress of Adult Education of Trinidad and Tobago
CAFRA	Caribbean Association of Feminist Research and Action
CALLS	Centre Where Adolescents Learn to Love
CANARI	Caribbean National Resource Institute
CARCAE	Caribbean Regional Council for Adult Education
CARE	Centre for Adolescent Rehabilitation
CAREC	Caribbean Epidemiology Centre
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CAWSIG	Council for the Affairs and Status of Women
CBO	Community-Based Organizations
CBR	Community-Based Rehabilitation
CCA	Caribbean Conservation Association
CCL	Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEO	Chief Education Officer
CET	Centre for Employment Training
CFTC	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
CORE	Communities Organizing for Self-Reliance
CTO	Caribbean Tourism Organization
CTUSAB	Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
DCEO	Deputy Chief Education Officer
DECADE	Democratic Communication for Adult Education

DOMCAE	Dominica Council for Adult Education
DVV	German Adult Education Association
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigations
FIDEA	The Inter-American Federation of Adult Educators
GARDC	Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMS	Gender Management Systems
GNCAE	The Grenada National Council for Adult Education
GRPA	Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association
HEART	Human Employment and Resource Training
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
IACE	Institute of Adult and Continuing Education
ICAE	International Council of Adult Education
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDCE	Institute of Distance and Continuing Education
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILY	International Literacy Year
IT	Information Technology
JACAE	Jamaica Council for Adult Education
JAMAL	Jamaica Movement for the Advancement of Literacy
JCSEF	Jamaica Computer Society Education Foundation
JEF	Jamaica Employers' Federation
MAVAW	Men Against Violence Against Women
MIC	Metal Industries Company
MIND	Management Institute for National Development
MOE	Ministry of Education
MSVU	Mount St. Vincent University
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NAME	National Association of Mass Education
NCRPS	Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society
NEWLO	New Life Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRCA	Natural Resources Conservation Authority
NTA	National Training Agency
NUPW	National Union of Public Workers
NVQs	National Vocational Qualification
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PAREDOS	Parent Education for Development
PATH	Parents as Teachers at Home
REdO	Regional Education Officer
ROYTEC	Royal Bank Institute of Business and Technology
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme

SCME	Standing Committee of Ministers Responsible for Education
SCS	School of Continuing Studies
SERVOL	Service Volunteered for All
SLACE	St. Lucia Association of Adult Education
SPMG	Senior Policy-Making Group
STD	Sexually-Transmitted Disease
TCI	Turks and Caicos Islands
UG	University of Guyana
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UTECH	University of Technology
UWI	The University of the West Indies
UWIDEC	The University of the West Indies Distance Education Centre
WAND	Women and Development Unit
WCDC	Women's Community Development Committee
WFDC	Work Force Development Consortium
WHO	World Health Organizations
WOP	Women's Outreach Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization
YTEPP	Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

About the Authors

Patricia Ellis is a former member of the Executive Committee of the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE), and former Executive Secretary and Programme Director of CARCAE. She has worked with governments, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based organizations (CBOs) throughout the Caribbean, and has developed, designed, and conducted a large number of adult education and training programmes for groups at all levels of society. She has written extensively on the subject of adult education in the Caribbean. Her current focus is on organizational change and development, and she is working with individuals and organizations to increase their awareness of the importance of continuous learning in their processes.

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Samuel Small is currently the Director of the Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE), University of Guyana (UG), which he launched in January 1976. In 1992, under his guidance and with the generous assistance of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), the Institute launched the first distance education programme from UG and, in 1996, the mandate of the Institute was widened to assist the University in becoming a dual-mode institution. He has worked in both primary and teacher education, and was a founding member of the Caribbean Regional Council for Adult Education (CARCAE). In 1978, together with four other Caribbean educators, he pioneered the Certificate Programme for the Teaching of Adults in the Caribbean, offered by the Extra Mural Studies Centre, St. Augustine, U.W.I. in collaboration with the Department of Extra Mural Studies, UG. He is the recipient of the Golden Arrow of Achievement (A.A.), the national award for outstanding contribution in the field of education.

ABSTRACT

This monograph examines how adult education has responded, and is responding, to the challenges of preparing and equipping Caribbean people to be able to function effectively and contribute meaningfully to national and regional development as they enter the twenty first century. It does this by exploring the five major themes that gained prominence in the last two decades of the twentieth century: Work, Information and communication technology and communications, Gender, Health and the environment, and Literacy. Through brief case studies, it examines how the following selected countries have addressed and treated these themes through adult education: Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and Trinidad and Tobago. The general review generates some of the important issues and challenges which should set the agenda for adult education in the Caribbean in the new millennium.

Introduction

Any vision of education that is seen to be necessary and appropriate for equipping Caribbean Community citizens to survive and live meaningful lives in the Twenty-First Century, must be informed by an understanding of the important place of adult education in shaping the future of CARICOM. If adult education is to play its role alongside and not behind the education of children, serious attention must be given to its content and delivery, to how it is administered and managed, and to ensuring that it caters to adults at all levels of the Caribbean Community. (CARICOM, 1993, p. 52)

The Caribbean Region

The Caribbean region is comprised of countries stretching from off the tip of Florida in the north to the northern coast of South America in the south. The English-speaking countries, which all share a common legacy of slavery and colonial rule by England, include Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, The British Virgin Islands, The Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Anguilla, The British Virgin Islands, The Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands are still British dependencies, but all of the others, after a period of self-government, achieved independent status during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. All of the independent Commonwealth countries have retained and practise the Westminster system of government. In addition, they are all members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), an intergovernmental mechanism headquartered in Guyana. CARICOM provides a forum in which governments of all the countries meet to discuss matters of common concern, and to agree on policies and actions for achieving common goals.

These Commonwealth countries have all retained and adapted the British system of education. Although this system has been reformed to reflect Caribbean culture and to respond to Caribbean needs, it still retains characteristics of the British system. There is a continuing concern about the appropriateness of the curriculum being offered in educational institutions in the region, and about its relevance to the reality, life, and work of people in the region.

Caribbean governments and people place a high value on education and on the acquisition of academic qualifications, and a significant portion of national budgets is allocated to education. Education is compulsory in all countries and, in many cases, it is free up to and including the tertiary level. Universal primary education is the norm and school enrolment is high. When measured by school attendance, literacy rates appear high. In spite of this, throughout the region, there is recognition of and growing concern about the increase in the level of functional illiteracy. There is some concern that there may be numbers of young people who, having gone through the formal education system, may be unable to articulate their ideas or express themselves clearly in Standard English.

As Caribbean people stand poised at the beginning of the new millennium, they are very aware that there will be many far-reaching changes and challenges with which they will be faced. One of the questions in the minds of many individuals and governments alike is how to prepare people in the region, so that they are well equipped to cope with the changes and successfully face the challenges that lie ahead.

In order to be able to cope with and manage change, people must be equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills. This is especially important in an era in which knowledge-based industries are the fastest growing industries, and in which information technology (IT) has transformed, and will continue to transform, not only what people do and how they do it, but even how and what they think.

At the same time, reflection on the last quarter of the twentieth century reveals that new issues have emerged and are demanding the attention of governments and people alike. Among these are the changing nature of work and the workplace, information technology and communications, gender, health, and the environment. This situation presents challenges for adult education, and brings into focus the important role that it must play in preparing and equipping Caribbean people, so that they can look forward with enthusiasm to the new millennium and enter into the twenty first century with confidence.

This monograph examines how five countries have been treating with selected themes in adult education. It also identifies key issues and challenges in determining the adult education agenda for the first decade of the new millennium.

Overview of Adult Education in the English-Speaking Caribbean

Adult education in the Caribbean has a long history. Designed to meet the educational needs of a large number of individuals and a variety of groups, it covers a wide spectrum of topics and subjects including literacy, personal development, community development, health education, and computer applications. It involves a large number of individuals as teachers, tutors, instructors, and facilitators. However, it appears that a large number of the people who participate in adult education activities as learners and as facilitators are unaware that they are involved in the discipline of adult education. At the same time, while some governments have established Adult Education Units within Ministries of Education (MOEs), and others have supported adult education programmes, many seem not to fully understand the critical role that adult education can and must play in determining the process and outcome of national development. Consequently, it has been the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the region that have been in the forefront in providing opportunities for the mass of the adult population to participate in a wide range of adult and continuing education programmes.

Historical Overview

A 1977 conference in St. Lucia marked the beginning of a period of intensive effort to organize and coordinate adult education activities, and to expand its scope and coverage in all countries in the region. It was important for several reasons:

1. At the General Assembly of the International Council of Adult Education (ICAE) in the year preceding the conference, it was suggested that the Caribbean, because of its size, history, and culture, should be regarded as a separate sub-region within the region of Latin America and the Caribbean. This was agreed to by the ICAE Executive Meeting in 1977, and an interim Council of the Caribbean Regional Council for Adult Education (CARCAE) was established in 1978.
2. The sponsoring of the 1977 conference by the CARICOM Secretariat signalled that governments in the region had formally recognized and officially accepted that adult education was important, and that they were willing to support it.
3. The then Standing Committee of Ministers of Education of CARICOM, at its meeting in 1978, accepted the recommendation of the conference that a regional commission should be established to coordinate adult education activities in the region.
4. The interim Council was given the responsibility to promote the formation of national associations of adult education, organize and implement a programme of training of adult educators in the region, and draft a constitution for CARCAE.

The Caribbean Regional Council for Adult Education (CARCAE)

With the establishment of the interim Council in 1978, the foundation members immediately began the work of formalizing the Council. Among other things, the Council developed a certificate course for adult educators and began working on a draft constitution. In 1981, the CARICOM Secretariat, through a grant

from the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC), sourced the services of an adult education consultant/advisor from Ghana. The consultant's role was to advise the regional Council in its efforts to promote adult education. Based on his visits to several countries and discussions with adult educators, he recommended, *inter alia*, the formation of national adult education associations and the recognition of CARCAE as the regional advisory body on adult education. In 1984, the Council was recognized as the official advisory body on adult education to CARICOM and to governments in the region.

CARCAE's first assembly was held in the Bahamas in 1983, at which time its constitution was ratified and its first Executive Committee elected. It continues to exist and is comprised of a number of national adult education associations, organizations involved in adult education, and individual adult educators. It is governed by a constitution and convenes a General Assembly every three years at which an Executive Committee is elected. A representative of CARCAE sits on the ICAE executive committee at the level of Vice President, and provides official regional representation of the Caribbean.

Over the years, the Council has performed an important role in promoting and facilitating the development and provision of adult education in the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean. Its activities have included mounting the certificate course in adult education; the organization of regional conferences; the promotion of national adult education associations; the implementation of training programmes for adult educators; and research and documentation of adult education activities.

Promotion of Adult Education

From the outset, one of CARCAE's major goals was to increase awareness about the importance of adult education to the process and outcome of national development. In order to achieve this goal, the Council undertook a number of activities. Soon after CARCAE's formation, the then Chairman, Samuel Small, visited several countries to promote adult education. In the process, he met and held discussions with government officials in several ministries, representatives of NGOs, individual adult educators, and other stakeholders. In some countries, he also participated in and conducted workshops and seminars on adult education, and encouraged adult educators to form national associations.

CARICOM's acceptance of CARCAE as the official advisory body on adult education in the region provided an excellent opportunity for the Council to promote and influence policy. In 1984, the Council prepared and submitted its first *Brief on Adult Education* to the meeting of the Standing Committee of Ministers Responsible for Education (SCME), and it has done so at several subsequent meetings. At the same time, the participation of CARICOM representatives in regional conferences and meetings organized by CARCAE also allowed the Secretariat to be aware of the Council's activities, and of the educational needs of adults in the region. At their meeting in 1997, CARICOM Heads of Government agreed on a Human Resource Development Strategy, at the core of which is adult education. Lifelong learning is an underlying principle of the strategy, and the strengthening of the non-formal education process is one of the strategic imperatives. While this was another indication of the recognition of the importance of adult education and of the work of CARCAE by governments in the region, it was also a challenge to CARCAE to redouble its efforts to promote adult education in order to prepare and equip the people of the region for life in the new century.

At the national level, CARCAE has provided technical assistance to governments and NGOs for adult education activities over the years. Assistance has included the provision of information, advice, and resource persons; and the identification and accessing of funds from international agencies for training programmes, and for the participation of adult educators in regional and international seminars and conferences. In addition, the Council has encouraged and supported efforts of national associations and local groups to organize national fora and consultations on adult education, and to recognize and celebrate Adult Education Day, Adult Education Week, and International Literacy Day.

Among the outcomes of the Council's efforts to promote adult education was the establishment by some governments of Adult Education Units or Departments within MOEs, and the appointment of Adult Education Officers. For example, there are such units in St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. However, there are still a few countries in which there is no focal point for adult education within the government structure. In most of these cases, it is assumed that adult education is "covered" by the department that is responsible for tertiary education.

Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops

Conferences, seminars, and workshops are an important element in the promotion of adult education, and the Council has also played a key role in several national consultations, seminars, and workshops in many countries. At the fifth regional conference in The Bahamas in 1983, CARCAE put a mechanism in place for organizing subsequent conferences in collaboration with national associations as hosts, and for including General Assemblies and Executive Committee meetings as part of the agenda. The topics and issues that were examined and discussed at these regional conferences reflected the concerns of adult educators throughout the region, and also highlighted and focused on issues that were important to individual countries and to the region as a whole. Among the themes examined in the 1980s were: "Action and Interaction of Formal and Non-Formal Education" (Bahamas); "Exchange of Innovative Experiences and Training of Specialists in Adult Education and Literacy" (St. Kitts and Nevis); "Support for Adult Education and Literacy Programmes" (St. Vincent and the Grenadines); and "Science and Technology: Implications for Education and Development" (Trinidad and Tobago). Among the themes presented in the 1990s were: "Adult Education and Self-Sufficiency" (Curaçao); "Adult Education and Family Values" (Jamaica); and "Adult Education and Sustainable Development" (Barbados).

Individual as well as organizational members of the Council have participated in several regional and international conferences on adult education and literacy organized by ICAE, UNESCO, and the Inter-American Federation of Adult Educators (FIDEA). Participation in these activities provided opportunities for adult educators from the Caribbean to interact and share experiences with their counterparts from around the world. It also provided them with information and insights that were useful and valuable for promoting the growth and enhancing the development of adult education in the region. In addition, it helped to place adult education activities in the Caribbean within the wider context of the international adult education movement.

Formation of National Associations of Adult Education

The Adult Education Association (AEA) of Guyana was formed in 1952. It was not until 29 years later, in 1981, that the next national association, the Congress of Adult Education of Trinidad and Tobago (CAETT), came into being. Within the next four years eight associations were formed: The St. Lucia Association of Adult Education (SLACE) and the Barbados Adult Education Association (BAEA) were established in 1981; the Jamaica Council for Adult Education (JACAE) and the Adult Education Association of the Bahamas (AEAB) followed in 1982; the Dominica Council for Adult Education (DOMCAE) and the Antigua and Barbuda Adult Education Association (ABAEA) were created in 1983; and the St Kitts-Nevis Council for Adult Education and the Adult Education Council for Belize (AECB) were formed in 1984. The last associations to be set up were the National Association of Mass Education (NAME) in St. Vincent in 1985 and the Grenada National Council for Adult Education (GNCAE) in 1986.

These associations share several common characteristics. Like their parent body, they were created by a small group of committed adult educators who were willing to work on a voluntary basis, and who put a great deal of energy into their creation. In most cases, they had no institutional base or financial support,

but operated out of the homes or offices of one of the elected officers. Because their growth and development depended on the goodwill and enthusiasm of officers and members, it was often variable. Consequently, some were more vibrant and active than others, and some were better able to overcome obstacles, survive, and achieve significant goals. All, however, succeeded in stimulating interest in adult education in their countries, and in emphasizing the importance of adult education to the achievement of national development goals. In addition, they all organized national consultations, seminars, and workshops, and implemented programmes in response to needs identified by different groups of adults. A few conducted small research projects. In the last few years of the 1990s, however, several of these associations became dormant. This was partly due to the limited financial resources and institutional support in the countries. Additionally, donor funds were becoming less available internationally, and what was available tended to go to countries of Africa and Eastern Europe.

Training of Adult Educators

Along with the formation of national adult education associations, the foremost priority of the newly-formed CARCAE was the training of adult educators. The origin of the mandate to meet the need for training adult educators was a recommendation of the 1977 conference. In 1978, the first three-year Certificate Course for Teachers of Adults was implemented at the then Extra-Mural Studies Unit on the St. Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad and Tobago. The course was offered in association with the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Guyana (UG), and under the aegis of ICAE which provided Can \$10,000.00 for each of the three years in the first cycle. The German Adult Education Association (DVV) funded the next three cycles. In 1992, the location of the course was shifted to the Extra-Mural Department on the Cave Hill Campus of UWI in Barbados.

The course originally took the form of three classroom sessions in each of three consecutive years. During these sessions, trainees were exposed to the philosophy, theories, concepts, methods, and techniques of adult education, and to an examination of issues and concerns relevant to the development and provision of adult education in the Caribbean. Compulsory foundation courses in the philosophy, sociology, and psychology of adult education were offered in the first year. Second year courses focused on approaches and methodologies of adult education, and on research in adult education. In the third year, the focus was on issues in adult education, and trainees were able to choose and concentrate on those in which they were interested. During the inter-sessional periods, the trainees were required to undertake written assignments and practical research projects in their own countries.

In keeping with new and emerging trends in the 1990s, the difficulties with funding, and the availability of technology and distance teaching facilities at UWI, the General Assembly, in 1995, decided to offer the Certificate via distance. This decision was implemented two years later when the UWI School of Education offered the course through the UWI Distance Education Centre (UWIDEC). In its present form, the course differs significantly from the original. Participants may now complete the course in as little as 15 months or as many as 5 academic years. The programme is now more in line with other courses offered by UWI, and consists of eight 3-credit courses and one inter-sessional period worth six credits. The curriculum exposes participants to the fundamental principles and theories in adult education, and seeks to equip them with an understanding of how to use this knowledge to deal with contemporary issues. Their ability to do so is demonstrated in the projects they undertake, which are based on their local situation and work, and expected to address significant, contemporary issues. Among these are: Gender; Environment and prevention of ecological risks; Poverty reduction; Literacy; Economic conditions in the Caribbean, including the impact of globalization and structural adjustment policies; and Health, including sexually transmitted diseases.

Since the introduction of a formal training programme for adult educators 20 years ago, nearly 300 adult educators from governmental and non-governmental organizations have received the CARCAE

Certificate in Adult Education. However, many more have benefited from participating in non-formal training workshops organized by the Council. In 1987, in an effort to strengthen national associations, CARCAE organized a one-week Leadership Training Workshop in Dominica for officers of national associations. In 1989, the Council, with funds from DVV, developed a comprehensive training programme for adult educators in the Eastern Caribbean. An external evaluation of this programme indicated that approximately 600 persons from six countries in the Eastern Caribbean had participated in and benefited from the programme.

However, in spite of the Council's efforts in this area, there are still large numbers of persons involved in the education of adults as teachers, tutors, and facilitators who are untrained. Many have not been exposed to the philosophy or principles of adult education, and they have not been formally inducted into the methods and techniques that are appropriate for helping adults to learn. Moreover, many of these persons do not see themselves as adult educators, and are unaware that the activities in which they are involved are adult education activities. However, with the emphasis on human resource development (HRD) and on training and re-training of the workforce, these individuals will also need to be trained. The challenge is to raise their awareness of their role as adult educators; motivate them to want to pursue training in this field; and organize the relevant training programmes for them.

Research

In general, there is a dearth of research on adult education in the Caribbean and a lot more needs to be done to develop and expand the database on this aspect of education. The first major study on adult education in the Caribbean was the 1975 CARICOM study which took the form of a survey of adult education in the region. This study was of great importance, not only because it was the first comprehensive study of its kind, but because it provided concrete information and valuable insights that created the rationale and impetus for the future development of adult education in the Caribbean. In addition, it was the information obtained in this study, which was presented at the 1977 Seminar/Workshop on Adult Education, that led the participants in that seminar to: (a) define adult education as: "The provision of learning experiences and activities, other than those provided in the formal education system, for persons who are participants in the processes of society"; (b) agree that its aim was: "... to enhance the individual's quality of life and to enable each to contribute more effectively to the development of society; and (c) identify teachers of adults as: "...all those persons in society who are actively involved as facilitators in the process described above e.g. agricultural extension officers, paramedics, family life educators, community development officers, media personnel, etc." (CARICOM, 1977).

In 1988, CARCAE commissioned a study to survey the policy and practice of adult education; assess the impact of adult education programmes; and make projections for the next five years. The results were published in the document, *A Survey of Adult Education in the Caribbean: Policy, Practice, Impacts and Projections* (Harvey & Williams, 1990). This study was a landmark in the history of adult education in the region. It used a participatory process to involve a large number of adult educators, not only to provide information to the researchers but also to ensure their active participation in a regional consultation. The consultation served as a forum in which approximately 50 adult educators from across the region had the opportunity to analyze the research data, and to improve on their country reports by including programmes not recorded on questionnaires and/or in country reports. They also identified, described, and commented on practice and on the impact of adult education programmes; made projections; and formulated plans of action for the next five years. The results of the study are captured in a report that provides a regional analysis as well as analyses of adult education in 17 countries in the region.

The results of the survey drew attention to the dearth of documentation and the inadequate mechanisms for documentation, storage, and retrieval of information on the history, organization, provision, and impact of adult education in the region. The unavailability of proper records and specific information on adult education affected the ability of the researchers to do a complete analysis. In spite of this, the results provide useful information and valuable insights on the state of adult education at the time. The report provides information on adult education policy, organization, management, and administration; the type and range of adult education programmes offered; the sectors that these programmes addressed; and the impact of the programmes.

In the period between the 1975 and 1988 surveys, CARCAE encouraged adult educators to do research. For example, all of the participants in the certificate programme were required to undertake a research project between the second and third years of the cycle. Most of these projects were very practical and action oriented, and allowed the trainees to apply theories, concepts, and research methods and techniques that they had learned in the classroom; and to use these to examine problems, identify and analyze contributing factors, and explore possible solutions. The unpublished studies, although frequently exhibiting the shortcomings of student research, provided useful information and valuable insights into the practice of adult education. Moreover, they represent the largest amount of empirical research done in the region by practising adult educators. For this reason, a much greater effort and more serious attempts should have been made to publish and to disseminate some of the studies.

CARCAE has also commissioned external evaluations of its training programmes. In 1985, an evaluation study was done on the three-year certificate course and, in 1989, a similar study was done on the non-formal training programme. In addition to research undertaken or commissioned by CARCAE, there is a small number of studies on adult education in the Caribbean done by individuals, mainly as part of the requirement for obtaining graduate degrees at universities.

Documentation and Communication

The Council publishes a newsletter in an attempt to keep in touch and to share information with adult educators. This newsletter has had a chequered history and, at times, because of lack of funds, there have been periods when no issues were published. Towards the end of the 1990s, the newsletter was published by CARCAE Communications Network and produced by the Adult Education Unit in the MOE in Trinidad and Tobago. In 1988, the Council produced a *Directory of Governmental and Non-Governmental Agencies Involved in the Provision of Adult Education* (CARCAE, 1988a). It has also produced two training manuals: one for Caribbean adult education practitioners entitled, *The Rainbow Route: A Caribbean Experience of Adult Education* (CARCAE, 1988b), written by practising adult educators; and another for young adults entitled, *Relationships and Management: A Continuing Education Manual for Young Adults* (Patterson & McClenan, 1997), in collaboration with JACAE.

The Caribbean is the first region to pilot the international project on “Democratic Communication for Adult Education” (DECADE). The goal of this project is to democratize the use of information and communication technologies, and to integrate the latter with traditional means of communication so as to improve interaction among participants in adult education activities. To date, the first phase, the feasibility study, has been successfully completed in six countries (Marrett, McClenan, & Thompson, 1999).

CARCAE also has in its possession a number of conference, seminar, and workshop reports, as well as a number of published and unpublished papers on various aspects of adult education. In addition to those held by CARCAE, however, there are several other such documents in existence. The challenge is to identify, collect, and classify as many of the existing documents on adult education in the Caribbean as possible, and to store them in a central location so that they are available for use by adult educators as well as the general public.

Review of Adult Education, 1977-1999

Adult Education Policy

The establishment of Adult Education Units within MOEs and the appointment of Adult Education Officers were indications of the growing awareness of the importance of adult education in the early 1980s. However, there were few explicit policy statements or documents in which governments clearly articulated policies on adult education. Exceptions to this were St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and Guyana. At the same time, even though CARICOM Ministers of Education had accepted CARCAE as the official advisory body and endorsed its programmes, there was little evidence to show that governments understood or recognized the critical role that adult education plays in national development, especially in periods of rapid socio-economic change.

There were few pressure groups, and the level of advocacy on the part of CARCAE, national adult education associations, and adult educators themselves was low. Consequently, strategies that could have heightened awareness and influenced the development of policy were not very effective. The tendency to see adult education as remedial and supplementary to the formal school system rather than as developmental was, and still is, also a factor that contributed to the absence of national policies on adult education.

In the 1990s, many adult educators in the region continued to be concerned that, in spite of CARCAE's role as advisor to CARICOM and to Ministers of Education, adult education was still not regarded as a priority on the regional education agenda. However, in the last few years, actions of several governments would indicate that they see the need to develop the adult education sector. For example, the government of Belize recognizes that strengthening adult and continuing education is important to empowering all Belizeans, and the Adult Education Unit of the MOE planned to make relevant programmes available to the adult population throughout the country by the year 2000. Others, like Anguilla, have appointed Adult Education Officers and, like St. Vincent and the Grenadines, have had a series of consultations on adult education, the outcomes of which will influence national policy on adult education. In Trinidad and Tobago, the government has recognized that the changing needs and demands of the adult population require a change in focus to continuous learning. It has, therefore, changed the name of the existing centres managed by the MOE from Adult Education Centres to Lifelong Learning Centres, and is increasing the number of these centres.

At another level, some countries have prepared policy documents that describe the policy framework within which adult and continuing education will be provided. In St. Lucia, the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports has prepared a comprehensive document entitled, *Adult and Continuing Education in St. Lucia: Addressing Global Transformation and the New Millennium* (Jules, 1999). This document describes the philosophical and conceptual framework within which a National Adult and Continuing Education Programme will be developed and implemented. In St. Kitts and Nevis, *Learning and Growing: The Long Term Education Plan (1998-2011)* (St. Kitts and Nevis, Ministry of Education, 1998) includes a chapter on Adult and Continuing Education, and identifies short-, medium-, and long-term objectives to be achieved over the period covered by the plan. Among these are: (a) to enhance the adult literacy programme; (b) to revise existing and develop new curricula; and (c) to enhance the administration and management of adult and continuing education. There is also a detailed action plan for achieving the objectives. In the Turks and Caicos Islands, a policy framework for the delivery of adult education was recently developed, and a document describing a comprehensive,

integrated national adult education programme was prepared. The government plans to implement the policy and programme shortly.

Some of the Adult Education Units that had been previously established have been strengthened and have increased their activities. In addition to the programmes that they were offering in the past, they are offering new and different programmes that represent and respond to the changing needs of the adult population. In order to reach out to new groups of adults, several of these units are collaborating and working with NGOs and the private sector.

In spite of these initiatives, there are still some countries in which there is no clearly defined and articulated policy on adult education. This signifies the need for a more aggressive approach to advocacy, by both adult educators and the large number of NGOs involved in adult education.

Organization, Management, and Administration of Adult Education

Harvey and Williams (1990) showed that adult education was offered and provided by governmental and non-governmental organizations operating at the community, national, regional, and international levels. Among these were government departments of community development and health; community, church, and women's groups; and trade unions, professional associations, and businesses. In 1989, there were 115 governmental agencies; 167 local NGOs; 46 regional and 45 international organizations; and 155 other agencies including trade unions, professional associations, educational institutions, and businesses, involved in adult education. However, while these organizations catered for and were meeting the needs of significant numbers of adults, lack of coordination and cooperation often resulted in duplication, gaps in provision, and wastage of scarce resources. At another level, the majority of these organizations suffered from inadequate funding as allocations for adult education in national budgets were very small; in some cases as low as 3-4% of the education budget. As a result, many of them, especially the NGOs, depended on external funding agencies to fund their programmes. The absence and unavailability of financial resources resulted in unsystematic provision, and the reliance on external funding often influenced the type of programmes that could be offered.

For these reasons, adult education remained fragmented and somewhat ad hoc. Each provider operated in isolation and tended to offer programmes that reflected its own interest and focus. Consequently, most providers had little, if any, knowledge of what others were offering, and made little or no attempt to relate to or cooperate with other providers. Most providers did not keep accurate records of programmes offered, and did not collect information on participants or conduct regular evaluations of their programmes.

In the 1990s, adult education provision still remained very ad hoc and fragmented. Nevertheless, because of societal changes and the new demands on the adult population, there was an increase in activity in this sector and in the number and type of providers. While the traditional providers--governments, NGOs, and educational institutions like the universities in the region--are still very much involved, some others, like trade unions and professional associations, have taken on more prominent roles, and other new providers have emerged. Among the latter are private sector agencies, consultants, new national and regional organizations, and community colleges. The establishment of community colleges in several countries, and the number of formal and non-formal education programmes that they offer, have allowed many more adults to participate in and benefit from adult and continuing education programmes. For example, all of the community colleges offer a wide range of formal, academic, and non-formal programmes on a full- and part-time basis and, in some colleges, for example, in Barbados, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Lucia, there are Divisions of Adult and Continuing Education.

At the same time, while individual providers, by and large, continue to "do their own thing," there is evidence that many of them are attempting to offer programmes that will contribute to national and personal development. In addition, governments, through MOEs and Adult Education Units, are

collaborating with and providing financial and other resources to providers of adult education. For example, programmes being offered by the Barbados Community College and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic are seen by the government as important to its HRD programme, and to the development of the industrial sector. These institutions are, therefore, being allocated resources from the Human Resource Development Project by the MOE.

In some cases, Adult Education Units have been strengthened and are now better able to provide leadership and technical assistance to other providers, and to collaborate with them in organizing adult education activities and offering joint programmes. One example of this kind of collaboration between government agencies and NGO providers can be found in St. Lucia, where the Adult Education Unit has organized and supervised classes in literacy and numeracy at the request of several private sector companies. Another example is in St. Vincent, where the Adult Education Unit provides resource persons to groups, through collaboration with other ministries and government departments as well as with NGOs. It also designs and conducts training programmes for tutors, and facilitates the development and dissemination of learning materials.

At the same time, the use of technology and distance education has enabled some providers to reach a much wider audience. UWI, through UWIDEC, is now better able to offer a variety of education and training programmes to adults in all of the islands of the English-speaking Caribbean. One such programme, which was referred to earlier, is the Certificate in Adult Education that was formerly offered by CARCAE in collaboration with the Extra-Mural Department. Provision of this programme by UWIDEC lowers the cost and makes it more available to individuals who serve as tutors, instructors, and facilitators in adult education programmes and who are in need of training.

In spite of these advances, several constraints continue to plague adult education and to affect the efficiency of providers and, thus, influence the effectiveness of their programmes. Among these are: fragmentation; lack of collaboration and cooperation; insufficient financial and other resources; lack of consistency in approach and methods; and large numbers of untrained tutors and instructors. In addition, little research and virtually no evaluation of programmes, and the lingering belief by many that adult education must take second place to the education of children, pose significant challenges to adult education.

Type and Range of Programmes Offered

Between 1977 and 1988, nearly 5,000 different adult education programmes were being offered (Harvey & Williams, 1990). The majority of these (about 60%) were geared to the development of individuals, and another 33% were operating at the community level. In the 1970s, many governments had emphasized the importance of community development as a strategy for national development. The fact that only one third of the adult education programmes were operating at the community level was significant and, when juxtaposed with the lack of policy, reinforces the perception that they did not recognize the essential role of adult education in community and national development.

Adult educators who participated in the regional consultation in 1989 analyzed the information afforded by providers in all countries, and identified 14 different types of adult education activity: continuous professional development; skills training; academic upgrading; life skills; literacy/post literacy; consciousness raising; entrepreneurial activity; religious/spiritual education; community development; institution building and organizational development; adult education methods/studies; research, development, and documentation; project preparation, appraisal, and evaluation; and advocacy. These activities sought to address issues in various sectors of the economies of the various countries. As is to be expected, most (80%) of the adult education programmes were focused on and reflected the needs of the economic and social sectors. A few were focused on communication and information, science and technology, and infrastructure, in that order.

Analysis of these sectors shows that programmes in the economic sector included HRD; corporate business; agriculture and fisheries; and development and tourism. Within the social sector, offerings included political education, human rights, and trade unionism; health education, nutrition, and family life education; women, men, youth, and the elderly; and preservation of the environment and disaster preparedness. Programmes in science and technology included scientific literacy, and transfer and use of technology; areas that were to become increasingly important in the next decade. Programmes in communication looked at the mass media; culture and identity; printing and publishing; and the storage, retrieval, and dissemination of information; areas that are still of great concern today.

Recent country reports indicate that, in the 1990s, while programmes like personal development, interpersonal relations, group work, academic upgrading, and literacy were still important and, indeed, are still being offered, these have taken on new meaning in the light of recent societal changes, and are being approached and treated differently by some providers. In addition, several new issues are demanding attention, and many providers have added new areas and topics to their curriculum. An examination of recent reports from six countries--Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines--reveals that there were several programmes that focused on these new areas. To a large extent, these programmes are related to social development, and are intended to help adults solve some of the many social problems that have emerged in recent times. Among the issues that are being addressed are: sustainable development; diversity; poverty eradication; parent education; development of youth; care of the elderly; adult education for the disabled; human rights; lifelong learning and the creation of learning societies and learning organizations; and capacity building and institutional strengthening. Examples of programme development in the areas of poverty alleviation, parent education, and adolescent and youth development are described below.

Poverty alleviation

With the assistance of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and other international agencies, several countries in the region have undertaken poverty assessments and, in some cases, the results of these studies are having an influence on education policy and are forming the basis for education programming. For example, in Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry of Planning set up a special fund to make resources available to groups in poor communities. It has also developed a programme of institutional strengthening of NGOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) to improve their capacity and capability to work with individuals and groups in poor communities. Both of these initiatives involve the education of adults; those who manage the NGOs and CBOs as well as the beneficiaries in the communities. In St. Lucia, the results of the assessment are being used to inform policy and programmes in adult education and literacy and, in Barbados, the creation of a Ministry of Social Transformation is presenting new challenges to adult education and adult educators.

In several communities throughout the region, NGOs have been engaged in programmes to alleviate poverty and to improve the living conditions of people in poor communities for a long time. In all of these programmes, adult community education has played a central role and has provided people in poor communities with opportunities to acquire social, trade, craft, and technical skills. In this way, adult education has enabled them to make better use of scarce resources and to obtain information about how to access additional resources from a number of sources.

Parent education

Throughout the region, there is a growing concern with the erosion of traditional values and of the role of the family in preserving and transmitting societal norms and values. Recognition of the variety of family forms that exist and of the increasing number of single-parent families, as well as concern about

child-rearing practices, have resulted in more attention being placed on parent education. Within the context of family life education, new emphasis is being placed on parenting and on the need to equip parents with the skills that they need to be effective in their role as parents. In addition, because of the numbers of teenage pregnancies, several family planning associations are also offering adolescent parenting programmes.

For example, in Trinidad and Tobago, SERVOL (an NGO) has a comprehensive programme for parents of the children who attend their pre-schools. In Barbados, Parent Education For Development in Barbados (PAREDOS) has offered a number of programmes for parents, and has recently implemented an innovative community outreach in which sessions are conducted in a home with small groups of parents, to discuss relationships with spouses and between parent and child. Sessions are also designed to focus on self-development and to help parents to develop skills in communications and problem solving. The MOE in Barbados has also used PAREDOS to conduct education programmes for parents of children who performed poorly in the Common Entrance Examination, and has offered a programme for parents of children with learning disabilities and special needs.

Adolescent and youth development

Throughout the region, there is a great deal of concern about the number of young people who either drop out or leave school without having mastered basic literacy and numeracy skills, or without having obtained academic qualifications. Because of this, significant numbers of young people between the ages of 15-24 are unemployable and unemployed. The high level of unemployment among young adults is a problem in the small states of the Caribbean. In all countries, therefore, there are several programmes designed to prepare young people for the world of work, and to provide opportunities for them to acquire marketable skills. Among these are the formal technical and vocational programmes in technical schools and institutes; special non-formal skills training programmes and apprenticeship schemes; and an increased number of youth enterprise and job-creation projects.

In addition to the high level of unemployment among youth, there is also grave concern about the use of drugs and the increase in crime and violence by young people. Although there has been some decline in the number of teenage pregnancies, this phenomenon is still present in some countries. There is also growing concern about the early age at which young people are engaging in sex, and about the increase in the number of young people with sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS. At the same time, there is general dissatisfaction with, and concern about, the negative attitudes and undesirable behaviours being displayed by adolescents and young people in the region.

In several countries, NGOs have taken the initiative and have developed programmes designed to address these concerns. Among these are: the Adolescent Development Programme in Grenada run by the New Life Organization (NEWLO); the Hope in Youth Programme in Guyana; the programme run by the Centre for Adolescent Rehabilitation (CARE) in St. Lucia; programmes of the Centre where Adolescents Learn to Love (CALLS) in Dominica; and programmes organized by the Mariaqua Christian Women's Group in St Vincent. In all of these programmes, young people are exposed to a wide variety of non-formal education and training programmes. By participating in these programmes, they not only learn skills but also have opportunities to build their self-esteem and to develop their self-confidence. They also acquire desirable values and attitudes and learn to display socially accepted behaviours.

Impact Of Adult Education Programmes

Although providers kept few accurate records, there is sufficient evidence to show that adult education programmes have impacted positively on individuals and communities in the region. They have promoted and facilitated personal development, and have contributed to the social and economic development of

several countries. As a result of these programmes, many individuals have been able to acquire skills that have increased their marketability and their ability to gain employment. They have also been able to improve their skills in literacy and numeracy; upgrade their academic qualifications; enhance their self-esteem; and increase their self-confidence. Social and economic programmes have contributed to public and private initiatives in HRD; to the development of small businesses; and the development and expansion of the tourism industry.

Issues in Adult Education in the 1980s and 1990s

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, a number of international developments occurred that had, and continue to have, significant impact on the development of countries in the Caribbean region. It is not only important for Caribbean people to be aware of these developments, but also to understand the implications and the ways in which these changes, which are occurring at an increasingly rapid rate, can and will affect their lives. This awareness and understanding, and the ability to successfully manage the changes will only come through a process of continuous learning. A brief description of some of these developments in the geo-political, economic, and social spheres is given below, followed by discussion of the areas of technological changes and the growing importance of IT and the world of work. Concern about literacy levels, health and the environment, and gender issues, also emerged as important areas of focus for adult education in the 1990s.

Geo-Political Development

The geo-political landscape changed drastically with the break-up of the Soviet Union and the near demise of communism as a ruling ideology. The resulting shift in the balance of power led the way for the United States (USA) to emerge as the only super power in the world. Accompanying this, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany; the formalization of the European Union; and the rise of the Asian Tigers all resulted in the creation of “new” political entities. Of significance, too, was the dismantling of the system of apartheid in South Africa.

Nearer home, the political landscape has also changed significantly. The expulsion of “Papa Doc” and the supporters of his regime from Haiti; the formation of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS); the inclusion of non-English-speaking Caribbean countries in CARICOM; and continued attempts at Caribbean integration, are all indications of the changing political landscape in the region.

Economic Development

The worldwide economic recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s had a significant impact on Caribbean countries. Because of policies and decisions of the World Bank and other international lending agencies, several countries, for example, Jamaica, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago, were forced to introduce Structural Adjustment Programmes, or SAPs as they are popularly known. Aspects of these programmes included currency devaluation, retrenchment in the public service, and cutbacks in the provision of social services, especially health and education. At the same time, international funding agencies also cut back on grants to NGOs, many of which worked with communities and disadvantaged groups to provide some social services, and to promote and facilitate personal and community development through non-formal adult education. The focus of world financial aid also shifted to the countries of Eastern Europe.

At another level, the creation of large trading blocs and new agreements for international trade, for example, trade liberalization, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the World Trade Organization (WTO), have resulted in the opening up of markets and the loss of protectionism and preferential treatment for some commodities such as bananas from the Windward Islands (i.e., Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, The British Virgin Islands, the Virgin Islands). Recent issues raised about offshore banking threaten economies of countries like The

Bahamas and The Cayman Islands. These have all had an impact on the ability of small Caribbean countries to produce goods and services for export, and to compete with any degree of success in the global market place.

Meanwhile, the recession and the implementation of SAPs have caused several companies and firms in the Caribbean to “downsize,” retrench workers, and restructure their operations. As a result, some small businesses in the region have disappeared altogether. This has created opportunities for larger firms to take over or buy up smaller businesses, and has led to the creation of large conglomerates dominating the market place. Organizational restructuring and transformation has, therefore, become a necessity for many companies and, with it, the need to retrain employees, including managers. At the same time, it has created opportunities for entrepreneurs to create new businesses and, therefore, the need for more and different kinds of training in entrepreneurship and small business development.

New products have also emerged, especially in the technological field, and new industries like the knowledge and service industries have sprung into prominence. Along with these have come a focus on productivity and customer service, and on providing quality goods and services. Some traditional jobs have disappeared and new jobs and career options are now available. These changes have been rapid and have caused dramatic changes in the nature of work and of the workforce.

The challenge for the Caribbean, as for other countries, is to train and retrain workers, at a fast enough pace to meet the rapidly changing demands of the labour market for multi-functional, multi-skilled workers. Adult education has an important role to play in “retooling” the workforce, and in helping workers and their employers to deal with and manage the transformation that is taking place in work and other societal organizations.

Social Development

Unequal distribution of wealth and power among the nations of the world, and failure of economic policies to benefit the majority of the world’s people have led to exploration and experiments with alternative approaches to development. Consequently, during the last quarter of the twentieth century, there was a gradual recognition of the value of people and of the importance of social development, and more attention began to be paid to the so-called “soft sectors.” During this period, a number of world conferences sponsored by the United Nations (UN) focused attention on development issues and identified the poor, women, children, and the disabled as “vulnerable groups” that were not benefiting from development initiatives intended to bring about economic growth.

Gradually, it became clear that the benefits of economic growth do not necessarily trickle down to the poor, and that large numbers of people have not benefited from this type of development. Moreover, there was evidence to prove that in many countries, especially in so-called third world countries, the number of poor people and vulnerable groups have increased. Consequently, in recent years, much attention has been paid to poverty alleviation and eradication, and much of the development aid and programmes being funded by international agencies, including those of the World Bank, are geared towards helping countries to alleviate and eradicate poverty.

In 1995, the UN Summit on Social Development focused the world’s attention on the fact that although there had been unprecedented progress and prosperity, there was, simultaneously, a rapid increase in the degree and levels of poverty. At the same time, rapid technological and other changes had created inequalities and marginalization of vulnerable groups in many societies. For the first time, there was consensus about the important role that social “soft” issues play in achieving sustainable development. Consequently, during the last few years, much more attention has been paid to social development as an important and essential contributory factor to the achievement of national development goals. One of the outcomes has been a shift in emphases and initiatives in many countries to set in place social “safety nets,” to help cushion the adverse effects that globalization is having on some groups in the

population. To this end, many Caribbean governments, with the assistance of the CDB, are conducting country poverty assessments designed to provide them with empirical data on the levels of poverty and the needs of the poor.

The recognition of the importance of people as the most valuable resource and the emerging concept of “human capital” have caused countries to recognize the importance of developing their human resources, and have resulted in a focus on human resource development and management. In the Caribbean, as elsewhere, public, private, and voluntary sector organizations are, therefore, investing a significant amount of their financial resources in educating and training their employees and members. Consequently, there has been a mushrooming of HRD departments. The mandate of these departments is to identify the education, training, and other needs of their staff; to create learning environments; and to implement programmes to meet those needs. One of the key roles of newly-appointed human resource managers is, therefore, that of adult educators.

The Information and Technological Revolution

The technological revolution has dramatically changed communications and has given rise to an increase in knowledge-based industries. New information and communications technologies have increased the speed with which information can be communicated across the globe. They also provide quick and easy access to information on virtually every subject through the Internet, and have given rise to electronic commerce. Technology has also enabled businesses to create the “virtual office,” and to “out source” specific tasks and some aspects of work to the most qualified or available workers. This will require that individuals entering the labour force, as well as those already employed, be technologically aware and computer literate. Training and retraining of workers in computer applications is, therefore, a prerequisite for employability.

On the individual level, technology is already affecting the individual’s ability to function effectively in today’s society. The introduction and widespread use of credit cards and automated bank transactions through the automated teller machines (ATMs) are rapidly transforming the management and use of money. In addition, large numbers of people now own personal computers and conduct their business and communicate with friends via the Internet. To be computer literate, to keep abreast of the rapid changes in technology, and to acquire the skills needed to make use of the new technologies, individuals must not only be trained but must be committed to continuous learning and willing to continue to educate themselves.

However, while advances in technology have tremendous advantages, they can, as pointed out in the draft declaration of the “Fifth International Conference on Adult Education” (UNESCO, 1997), create and produce undesirable negative effects. These may include the exclusion of groups and individuals that do not have access to the technology and who may be unable or unwilling to adapt. Among such groups are the elderly and the poor who represent a significant percentage of the populations of many countries in the region.

In the Caribbean, as elsewhere, rapid technological changes, the common use of computers, the speed at which information can now be communicated, and the development of knowledge-based industries have created the need for people to develop and master new skills. However, in spite of a dramatic increase in the number of education and training programmes in every country, the demand for people with the necessary skills at all levels is still largely unmet. A recent study on IT and education (Caribbean Telecommunications Union, 1999), stressed the need for close collaboration between the IT industry and the educational institutions in the region, and for teaching institutions to be more flexible in their response to the changes in the IT sector.

One area in which regional educational institutions are utilizing the technology is in distance education programmes. Distance education provides opportunities for individuals in all countries to access

educational programmes in other countries. Several years ago, when UWIDITE was established, students in non-campus countries were able to do part of their degree programme without leaving their country. They were able to interact with lecturers and other students through audio-graphic teleconferencing,. In addition, UWI also mounted a number of non-formal education programmes for several groups including pre-school teachers and literacy facilitators. Over the years, UWI has expanded its distance learning programme and now has UWIDEC through which it delivers many programmes. For example, in 1997, it introduced a programme that seeks to respond to and meet the needs of individuals in the region who want to pursue degree courses without having to go to one of its campuses. In this programme, students in 17 countries are exposed to and use a number of multi-media technologies to facilitate learning, mainly self-study print materials and audio-graphic teleconferences, with growing use of computer-assisted learning and use of the Internet for e-mail and web access.

The Caribbean Regional Centre of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, located in Guyana, has also developed a distance education programme through which youth leaders in several countries are exposed to leadership training and related subjects. In 1993, in preparation for the implementation of the distance education programme, the Centre ran workshops for individuals who were writing the course material and tutors of the programme. One of the modules for the course was entitled “Communications and Adult Learning.” Other educational institutions offering courses and training in the use of technology include the University of Technology (UTECH) in Jamaica, where the use of IT is extensive, and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in St. Lucia, which is using video conferencing in several of its programmes. At the same time, some private sector agencies have also begun to offer training programmes in the use of IT. For example, the Belize Information and Technology Systems Ltd. has recognized the need for distance education at the tertiary level, and has implemented a number of programmes to fill this need. In Trinidad and Tobago, the Royal Bank, through the Royal Bank Institute of Business and Technology (ROYTEC), offers courses in Management Information Systems and Business Administration.

In the twenty first century, Caribbean economies will be greatly affected by the level and quality of the IT in use in each country. Aptitude and skill in the use of IT tools will, therefore, be essential. Already, the demand for computer training has led to an increase in the number of private education institutions, and to the establishment of several “computer schools” in every country. These schools offer basic and advanced training programmes to large numbers of young as well as older adults. In addition, in 1999, in anticipation of the millennium, several public and private companies and professional associations in all countries organized public seminars and workshops on the “Millennium Bug.” These activities were intended to increase public awareness about the dangers of the “bug” and the importance of becoming Y2K compliant, and to identify and explore software solutions to the problems that had been expected to hit computers on January 1, 2000.

While the need for training in the use of IT is real, it is important to realize that the very presence of the technology and the acceleration in its use is excluding significant numbers of adults, who are either unwilling to embrace the technology or have no access to it. Among this group are older adults, adults who are functionally illiterate, and those who have not actively participated in any educational activities for long periods. To motivate these groups and to help them to acquire and develop their skills in the use of the various technologies will be one of the major challenges to adult education in the early years of the twenty first century.

Work

The changing world of work is of enormous concern and relevance to adult learning. The improvement needed in production and distribution in industry, agriculture, and services require increased competencies, the development of new skills and the capacity to adapt to the continuously changing demands of employment throughout

working life. The right to work, the opportunity for employment and the responsibility to contribute, at all ages of life, to the development and well-being of one's society are issues that adult learning must address. (UNESCO, 1997)

The nature of work has changed as a result of the global recession and economic restructuring; trade liberalization; globalization and the emergence of the global market place; the growth and increasing importance of the service industry; the technological revolution; acceleration in technological change; and the development of an intensive information and knowledge industry. Among the changes are the disappearance of some jobs and the emergence of new and different kinds of jobs; new knowledge and different skills required by those in the labour force; reorganization of the workplace; and the restructuring of organizations. In today's global economy, quality and variety are the norm and, therefore, a different response to organizing work is required.

Restructuring of economic activity and the increase in the use of technology have also necessitated changes in patterns of employment. As production becomes more automated, there is an increased demand for more highly-skilled workers, especially at the professional, managerial, and administrative levels, and for technical skills in intensive and knowledge-based occupations. Technological changes have also resulted in a shift away from manufacturing to service and information and knowledge industries. Advances in information and communication technologies are influencing how people work and the type of work they do. These advances have also increased the demand for skills in operating complex information systems and in analyzing data. As a result, there has been a decrease in the demand for low-level skills, with the consequence that low-skilled and unskilled workers who do not have opportunities to retrain or to upgrade their skills are in danger of losing their jobs.

Economic and technological changes have resulted in the reorganization of work and the workplace, and have created the need for organizational restructuring. Reduction in the amount of financial resources and the need to cut costs have led many businesses to downsize and retrench staff; to outsource some of their activities; to transform their previously hierarchical structures into flatter, more decentralized ones; and to introduce and practise more participatory styles of management. At the same time, there has also been a shift away from merely increasing productivity levels to ensuring and maintaining quality, and to keeping customers satisfied by responding to and meeting their ever-changing needs and demands. In addition, progressive organizations have realized that an important contributor to their success is their ability to continue to learn, and so the concept of "the learning organization" is becoming more widely accepted.

All of these changes demand and depend on a workforce that is highly skilled; that is able to undertake a wide variety of tasks; and that is flexible, adaptable, and able to respond quickly to the rapidly changing demands of the labour market. In addition to technical skills, therefore, today's workers need to acquire a broader base of knowledge, skill, and understanding. For example, front-line workers now have more responsibility, and are expected to use their judgement and to make decisions that will impact on productivity and profits. Therefore, workers must not only have more skills but must be empowered to use them. They need skills in problem solving, teamwork, creativity, and critical thinking, and the motivation and will to learn and to continue learning are becoming more important. Having a high school certificate or diploma is, therefore, no longer sufficient or a guarantee of success in the job market. Training and retraining the workforce is, therefore, critical, and training that is responsive to the changing technology and to how business is now being organized and conducted is the key to success in the global market place. Within this context, adult education has a vital role to play in meeting the changing educational needs of workers and potential workers, and equipping them to function efficiently and effectively in today's world of work.

In the Caribbean, as elsewhere, there is a pressing and urgent need for highly-skilled and multi-skilled workers. For example, a study on tourism training needs, commissioned by the Caribbean Tourism

Organization (CTO), found that there is a shortage of managers and professional personnel in the local and regional tourism industry (Caribbean Tourism Organization, 1999). Among the most critical and urgently needed skills that the study identified were tour guiding, food and beverage service, and maintenance related skills. Training in interpersonal relations, management and supervision, computer skills, foreign languages, and marketing were also identified as being essential to the success of the industry. In addition, the study found that nearly two thirds of the workers in the industry were under 40 years of age, and that the majority had completed some level of formal education, including university.

Another important finding of the study was that local and regional institutions that offer training in tourism are not effective and are not meeting the training needs of the industry. Employers in the public and private sectors continue to complain about the wide gap between the world of work and that of formal tertiary education institutions. They express concern that graduates of the present education system are not adequately prepared to meet the development needs of the region and to solve its economic problems. These findings and concerns raise serious questions about the ability of existing educational and training institutions to meet the demands of the labour market and the educational needs of workers in the region. In order to improve performance and productivity in the tourism and other sectors of Caribbean economies, therefore, there must be more and closer collaboration between industry and the institutions and agencies that offer training. The challenge facing tertiary and other training institutions is to review their curricula, and to take steps to ensure that these reflect current labour force trends and respond to the demands of the labour market and to the needs of workers. Within this context, it is also important to address the educational needs of self-employed workers and workers in the informal sector.

At the same time, adult educators need to upgrade and improve their methods of delivery, and ensure that they are informed by the psychology and principles of adult learning. Too often, adults attending courses offered by tertiary institutions in the region are in classrooms that mirror those of secondary schools and that bear very little, if any, resemblance to their own reality or to the world of work for which the courses are supposed to be preparing them. They are likely to be subjected to boring, long-winded lectures at the end of which, if they are lucky, they may be able to ask a few questions. They seldom have opportunities to be creative; to share information or discuss their ideas in small groups; to engage in interactive exercises; or to reflect on their own experiences as workers or potential workers. In an era where people have almost unlimited access to information through the Internet and the World Wide Web, lecturers, tutors, and instructors in tertiary and other training institutions must realize that their main role is not to transmit information but to facilitate learning, and to motivate people so that they will want to continue learning. To be able to do this, however, they need to see themselves as adult educators and to be exposed to training in adult education.

Skill Training and Upgrading

By the end of the 1980s, it was widely recognized and accepted that there was a need to focus on, and to improve and expand, technical and vocational education and training in the region. As a result, CARICOM (1990) developed a regional strategy for technical and vocational education and training, and in 1995, in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), it developed a core curriculum for the training of technical and vocational teachers. (Commonwealth of Learning (COL) & CARICOM, 1995).

Across the region, therefore, steps have been, and are being, taken to expose students to programmes designed to equip them with marketable skills and to prepare them for the world of work. Much of the technical and vocational training is carried out in tertiary institutions including technical institutes and colleges and, to a lesser extent, at UWI. Just over half (56%) of the young students (20-24 years) in tertiary institutions in the region are enrolled in technical and vocational programmes. However, while the majority of the students in these institutions are young adults, in the last few years there has been a

gradual, but noticeable, shift in the student profile from young, full-time day students to mature adult, part-time students. The latter are often employed, and while many of them may not have any formal qualifications they certainly may have a significant amount of knowledge of the job and the working environment; would have acquired and developed skills; and would have accumulated a great deal of working experience. Their reason for participating in the programmes being offered is to acquire formal qualifications at the technician level or higher. This shift in the type of student population has implications not only for the type of programmes being offered and the way in which they are delivered, but requires that the tutors and instructors be trained in adult education. This is important if they are to be better suited to the older, mature student and if they are to help them to learn and acquire new competencies.

In most countries in the region, there are also a number of non-formal skills training programmes and apprenticeship schemes in which unemployed young people have the opportunity to acquire a wide variety of trade skills. At the same time, a significant number of training programmes are also offered to individuals in the workforce so that they can upgrade existing skills and acquire new skills. However, in addition to technical skills like strategic planning, banking, computer operations, accounting, and auto mechanics, more emphasis is now also being placed on human relations and interpersonal skills, on teamwork and team building, and on customer relations. While many of these skills training programmes are part of in-house programmes provided by companies, several employers also support and provide their workers with opportunities to participate in relevant, external education and training programmes.

In all Caribbean countries, education and training programmes to increase and upgrade the skills of workers and potential workers are offered by public as well as by private agencies. Among the providers are technical and vocational institutes, various ministries of government, including Ministries of Agriculture and Health and Departments of Women's Affairs, and private training institutions like secretarial colleges and computer schools. The programmes offered by these institutions vary widely in duration, scope, and quality as well as in terms of the qualifications, training, and performance of the tutors employed. However, they all display some important characteristics: (a) employers seldom have any input into the training curricula, and they do not monitor performance of trainees or give feedback on their performance; and (b) the training institutions do not follow-up on trainees and, in the absence of feedback from employers, are unable to measure the extent to which training is contributing to transfer and use of skills learnt, or to improved performance on the job.

Because of the growing importance being put on entrepreneurship and on the development of small businesses, there has been an increase in the number and variety of training programmes for unemployed and self-employed persons. For example, in most countries, the national development foundations organize several training programmes for owners of small businesses and for individuals who are interested in going into business. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Adult Education Unit has provided some training for out-of-school youth and adults through education for work projects, and in Antigua, the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Centre (GARDC) provides training in agriculture for young men and women, farmers, and low-income and unemployed women. Topics covered in the training programmes offered by the Centre include egg production, rabbit production, and bee-keeping. It has also conducted an agricultural enterprise course for unemployed women. The GARDC programme and others like it in the region have provided valuable and much-needed training to unemployed persons; preparing them for successful entry into the growing informal sector that has emerged in several Caribbean countries.

Human Resource Development

The small nation states in the Caribbean have few natural resources and there is a general acceptance that their most valuable resource is their people. With the economic recession and the decrease in the

amount of development aid that they can attract, these small countries are having to rely more and more on their human resources, and on the initiative, creativity, and commitment of all members of their populations. At the same time, because of the rapid economic, social, and technological changes, there is an urgent need to tap and develop the potential of every citizen. For these reasons, HRD has become a priority in many countries in the region, and education and training the strategy to achieve this.

The emphasis on HRD has led to an increase in the number of HRD consultants and persons qualified in this area, and several companies now have HRD specialists on staff. One of the major responsibilities of these officers is to identify the training needs of staff members and to develop, design, and conduct training programmes and activities to meet those needs. In this way, companies are attempting to retool their staff, and to ensure that they have the knowledge and the variety of skills that they need to be able to adapt and respond quickly to the demands of the market, and to manage and function effectively in organizations that have been transformed. Consequently, much more attention is being given to training managers to use more participatory approaches to management; to relate to a more diverse workforce; to use new strategies like teamwork and outsourcing; and to motivate their workers to consistently produce work of high quality. However, it is important to note that a great deal of the training to which managers in the region are being exposed is based on and mirrors that offered to managers operating in other cultures and social and political contexts, especially those of North America. Greater efforts must, therefore, be made to develop and expose managers in the region to training programmes that are based on and reflect the cultural realities of the Caribbean, and through which they will be able to learn how to translate and make practical use of current management theories, concepts, and approaches in their own organizations.

In several countries, too, there has been an increase in the number of education and training programmes organized by professional associations, and that designed to promote, encourage, and facilitate the continuing professional development of accountants, medical practitioners, teachers, engineers, HRD specialists, and secretaries, among others. Education and training activities include long and short courses, conferences, seminars, and workshops. Many professional organizations also organize education activities for the public.

At the same time, several governments in the region are undertaking public sector reform, an important component of which is a comprehensive education and training programme for civil servants at all levels. Although, in some cases, specialist consultants have been contracted to develop and conduct these programmes, in all countries, the training divisions of the public service play a key role and continue to organize in-service and on-the-job training programmes for government officers, from permanent secretaries to junior clerks. In recent years, in addition to traditional topics that refer strictly to civil service regulations and procedures, new topics like strategic planning, total quality management, product development, consumer affairs, maintenance of hardware and management of software, and health and safety in the workplace, are now regular topics in these programmes. In 1998, 330 public servants participated in in-service training programmes organized by the Training Division of the Service Commission Department in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and, as part of a drive to educate workers, the Labour Department sponsors a radio programme entitled "Employment in Focus."

At another level, it has been recognized that the emotional and psychological well-being of workers has a direct effect on their productivity and, ultimately, on the organization's performance and is, therefore, at least as important as their professional development. Much more attention is, therefore, being given to areas such as time and stress management, coping strategies, problem solving, and conflict resolution. As a result, more employers are adding these topics to their staff development and training programmes. In addition, private sector companies as well as governments in some countries have implemented Employee Assistance Programmes, in and through which employees have opportunities to obtain confidential counselling and assistance in dealing with difficult personal and work-related problems.

Trade Unions and Worker Education

There are five labour colleges in the English-speaking Caribbean and, together, they offer a wide range of formal and non-formal education and training programmes to workers. These include Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies (CCL) in Trinidad and Tobago, Critchlow Labour College in Guyana, Barbados Workers' Union Labour College, and the Trade Union Institute in Jamaica. A proposal was put forward to upgrade the labour colleges and put in place a system of certification and accreditation that would allow the courses by the colleges to be transferable and tradable across the region. The CCL is also proposing the development of a workers' trust fund that would be used to support workers who wanted to participate in education and training programmes.

While the majority of the programmes offered by the various colleges are national and intended for workers in the country in which the college is located, they also become involved and participate in regional activities including programmes, conferences, seminars, and workshops. For example, between 1991 and 1992, in response to the need identified by female members of trade unions for an education programme specially geared to address issues of concern to female workers and to develop female union members, a regional project was implemented. The project, which was entitled "Women Trade Union Membership Project," provided opportunities for female members of trade unions in the region to be trained as discussion leaders, and to develop and write training and resource material for women workers. This project trained 170 women from 9 countries as discussion leaders, and 480 women participated in workshops to test the Study Circle materials that were produced. Among the topics covered in the *Study Circle Workbook* are: "Images of Women," "Women at Work," "Women's Health," "Collective Bargaining and Women Workers," and "Sexual Harassment."

At the national level, all trade unions have education and training programmes for their members. They organize conferences, seminars, and workshops, and their training programmes cover a wide range of subjects including collective bargaining, health and safety in the workplace, and courses for new workers, shop stewards, supervisors, and managers.

Literacy

For quite some time, it has been recognized that literacy rates in the Caribbean are higher than those in many other developing countries, with some countries quoting figures in the high 90s. However, in all countries in the region, there has been a growing realization and concern about the increase in the number of students who, after having completed their formal education, have failed to completely master skills of literacy and numeracy. Consequently, while the number of persons who are totally illiterate may be small and may include mostly older adults, there are large numbers of adults whose literacy levels make them unable to function effectively in modern societies characterized by rapid change.

In 1990, International Literacy Year (ILY), several regional and national activities were organized to focus attention on the growing problem of illiteracy and functional illiteracy. Several countries appointed National Committees to develop and implement programmes to provide information; to highlight the problems associated with illiteracy; and to stimulate ideas and discussion on possible solutions. Among the activities organized during the year were conferences, seminars, workshops, debates and discussions, programmes on the radio and television, and articles in the print media. A regional conference held in Jamaica, entitled "Literacy in the Region: Strategies For the Nineties," examined the issues, identified the need for integrated planning, and explored strategies for developing and planning functional literacy programmes. The activities of ILY not only stimulated interest but also led to a number of follow-up activities and programmes in several countries. For example, in the following year, the Faculty of Education on the St. Augustine campus of UWI hosted a symposium on "Literacy in the Modern World."

This symposium provided a forum in which participants were able to explore literacy at a more conceptual level, and helped to increase understanding that literacy was more than just equipping people with rudimentary skills in reading and writing.

An examination of the country reports presented at the “Regional Consultation on Adult Education” held in 1998 (Marrett & McClenan, 1998) reveals that several countries are concerned about this phenomenon and are taking steps to deal with it. For example, the Anguilla report identifies “pockets of illiteracy” and those who have not completed formal schooling as issues to be addressed when formulating a programme of adult and continuing education. In Belize, it is believed that adult education should target persons who have not completed their basic education, and it was expected that by the beginning of the twenty first century, the Literacy Council would have increased the national literacy rate to 90%. In The British Virgin Islands, the challenge is how to convince members of the population that levels of literacy and numeracy in the country are not as high as they should be.

In an attempt to find out the true state of literacy, several countries undertook literacy surveys in the 1990s and, in order to address the problem of illiteracy and functional illiteracy, some governments and NGOs have implemented literacy programmes. In 1993, a survey conducted to ascertain the level of illiteracy in Dominica discovered that 18.8 % of the population was illiterate, and that 24.3% of primary school students leave school without attaining functional literacy (Dominica. Ministry of Education, 1993). In 1995, a literacy survey conducted by the Institute of Economic and Social Research on the St. Augustine Campus of UWI (St. Bernard & Salim, 1995) found that 12.6% of the population in Trinidad and Tobago was illiterate and, in 1996, a survey carried out in Belize (Roberts, Palacio, Paredes, & Hobo-Arnold, 1996) placed the national literacy rate at 75.1%. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, there are plans to conduct a national survey to determine the level of literacy and functional literacy of the out-of-school adult learner. It is, however, difficult to assess the true situation because different measures are used in different countries, making comparative analyses difficult.

In some countries, like Dominica, Jamaica, and St. Lucia, the government has implemented national literacy programmes; in others, like Trinidad and Tobago, NGOs have organized national programmes; and in several others, churches have organized programmes for their members. In addition, more companies are taking the initiative to offer classes in literacy and numeracy to their employees. For example, in St. Lucia, the Adult Education Unit has organized and supervised literacy classes for Cable & Wireless, the Electricity Company, and the Water and Sewage Authority. The Adult Education Division in Dominica has also helped some companies to integrate literacy into their in-house training programmes.

The national literacy programmes in St. Lucia and Dominica are informed by the existence of large numbers of the population who speak French Creole. In St. Lucia, the Adult Education Unit was established to develop programmes to help individuals to acquire basic knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, and in reading and writing. In the early 1990s, literacy programmes were implemented in several, mainly rural, communities. Between 1992 and 1996, other components, among them English, mathematics, family life, and basic skills training for unemployed youth were added. By 1997, the programme was being implemented in 38 communities and had attracted 4,502 adult learners, the majority of whom were women, and who were participating in classes three times per week. All facilitators, irrespective of their professional training and ability, are trained prior to becoming involved in the programme. The training ensures that they are equipped to teach adults. In St. Lucia, the experience of working for a decade with adults who are illiterate or functionally illiterate has shown that it takes about two years of literacy training for someone to become literate.

In Dominica, literacy programmes are a major activity of the Adult Education Division. Programmes are organized for prisoners, for participants in the Youth Skills Training Programme, and in communities. In 1997, several adults participated in basic literacy classes that were divided into five levels to cater for: (a) individuals who were unable to read; (b) individuals who could only recognize simple words; (c) those

who could read simple sentences; (d) those who could read but needed help in using English and in solving mathematical problems; and (e) those who needed reinforcement to enable and to prepare them to continue their education.

Throughout the region, there is a growing recognition that the entire population needs to master basic literacy and numeracy skills. In several countries, a great deal of emphasis is being placed on helping more people to acquire and develop those skills; there is also a growing recognition that there are other “essential literacies.” Among these are: parental literacy--the development of parenting skills and the ability to be an effective parent; social literacy--the development of social skills and the ability to interact with others in the community and society; workplace literacy--the ability to function effectively in the workplace and in the changing world of work; and technological literacy. This is yet another challenge for adult education, because while there is a need to focus on and to facilitate the development of these other literacies, it is important to recognize that the basic skills of reading and writing are important factors that contribute to and facilitate the acquisition of all other literacies.

Health

In Caribbean countries, diseases such as tuberculosis, cholera, malaria, and typhoid that were once prevalent have virtually disappeared. Some of the reasons for this include better education; improvement in living conditions and nutrition; the emergence of more affluent societies; expansion of the health services; and better health practices that controlled the spread of communicable diseases. However, in their place, new and different diseases have emerged that are equally life threatening, many related to lifestyle. Among these lifestyle diseases are: obesity; diabetes; hypertension and other stress-related diseases including stroke and heart diseases; social diseases including drug abuse; and STDs like HIV/AIDS.

These diseases and the health problems associated with them are complex, and are the result of the interplay of economic, social, and behavioural factors. In several countries, governments have adopted policies intended to enable them to deal with these diseases more effectively. Consequently, the “Community Health Services Conference” held in Trinidad and Tobago in 1988 produced the Alma Alta Declaration, a focus of which was the improvement of primary health care and a call for “Health for All by the year 2000.” This led to a shift in focus from cure to prevention, and from an emphasis on disease and illness to the promotion of health and wellness. In response to this challenge, several countries, including some in the Caribbean, have implemented programmes to encourage citizens to adopt healthy lifestyles. There has also been a growing interest in alternative medicine and traditional healing practices and remedies, and recognition of the importance of patient management of health and illness. For example, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in that order, have the highest incidence of heart-related disease in the region. Concerned about the increase in obesity, diabetes, strokes, and heart disease in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, officials in the Ministry of Health recently organized a series of inter-ministerial consultations as part of their strategy to develop a national health policy and plan of action. They also organized several community meetings and consultations to share research findings; inform communities about the factors responsible for the increase in these diseases; and get ideas from community members to include in the national policy and plan of action.

At the same time, because of advances in technology and medicine, people are living longer and the world’s population is aging. Countries in the region are, therefore, faced with challenges of how to prevent marginalization of the elderly; how to make use of the knowledge, skills, and experience of older citizens; and how to ensure that they can continue to make meaningful contributions to the society. At the same time, several Caribbean countries are facing the challenge of how to provide appropriate care for the elderly. To be able to successfully address these and other related health issues, will require the adoption

of new attitudes and the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. Health education programmes will, therefore, not only become more important in the new millennium, but will be critical.

The creation of a *Caribbean Charter for Health Promotion* in 1993 (CARICOM, 1993b) suggested that health promotion is the new approach intended to improve the capacity of individuals and communities to control disease, and to improve and maintain physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual health. Because the achievement of health promotion and well-being depends on an informed public, health education is essential. By participating in education and training programmes, individuals can obtain new knowledge, acquire new skills, develop new habits, be encouraged to change their attitudes towards sickness and wellness, and learn to live healthy lifestyles. Thus equipped, they are then better able to adopt proper disease prevention strategies, and to manage and maintain a state of wellness and a sense of well-being.

Throughout the region, governments as well as NGOs and CBOs have implemented health education programmes. For example, in some countries, Health Education Departments have been established within Ministries of Health. CARICOM has produced materials on health and family life education, which is now among the subjects covered in some teachers' training colleges. In some countries, community health aides and other health personnel are exposed to on-going training. Moreover, organizations like family planning associations, diabetes associations, cancer societies, and AIDS support groups have on-going education programmes for those who are suffering from the disease, as well as for the general public. Health professional associations also organize education and training programmes for their members. For example, nurses in eight Caribbean countries were selected by their national nurses' associations to participate in a project called "Leadership for Change." This project was intended to strengthen the leadership and management skills of nurses so that they would be better equipped to improve and enhance the health care systems in their countries.

The private sector and organizations engaged in private health care also organized health education programmes. In 1995, individuals from several countries participated in a regional workshop in Dominica on traditional and herbal medicine. The workshop provided opportunities for participants to identify and discuss local herbs and their medicinal qualities, and to share their experiences of using them. Organizations like the Inner Life Foundation organize monthly seminars to inform and educate people on how to take responsibility for their own health in order to maintain good health. The Caribbean Association of Complementary and Alternative Medicine also organizes educational activities, and disseminates information on alternative approaches and strategies for achieving and maintaining good health.

The Environment

Natural resources of land and sea are an important part of the region's resources. They provide goods and services that are of benefit to the small economies as well as to the well-being of the population. Improper care, misuse, and abuse of these resources will, therefore, have long-term adverse economic and social effects. For example, tourism and industrial development, if not carefully planned and executed, can threaten and could eventually destroy the natural resource base of many of the islands.

The "World Summit on the Environment" held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 brought into sharp focus, and helped to increase understanding of, the serious consequences for humankind if more attention is not paid to preserving and conserving the environment. Participants at the summit recognized that the world's natural resources had to be managed with care and sensitivity. As a result of the summit, Caribbean countries, the majority of which are low-lying, coastal, small island states, have become more aware of their vulnerability and have implemented environmental programmes.

In 1994, as a follow-up to the World Summit, the "UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States" was held in Barbados. The conference highlighted and drew attention to

the fragile ecosystems of the small islands of the Caribbean, and stressed the importance of educating the population about the need to protect and preserve them. In response, several governments established ministries of the environment, or environmental departments, divisions, or units within other ministries. Among the concerns on which the programmes of these departments focus are pollution, sewage disposal, management of solid waste, garbage disposal, and coastal management. In order to address these concerns, several countries have implemented large and small projects within which environmental education is an important component.

Environmental education programmes are designed to inform the general public as well as particular groups about the importance of protecting the existing ecosystems, and especially the marine and coastal areas, for example, in Antigua and Barbuda and the Tobago Cays in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In Grenada, Dominica, and Trinidad and Tobago, national parks have been created and programmes have been developed to inform and sensitize the public about these protected areas. In St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Lucia, there are projects and programmes to increase awareness about the links between tourism and the management of the natural resources. These programmes identify and help people and the policy makers to be more sensitive to some of the adverse effects that tourism can have on the islands' natural resources. They stress the importance of managing both the natural resources and the tourism industry, and enable those who participate in them to explore individual and community strategies for natural resource management and for tourism development.

In addition, over the last two decades, a number of regional and national NGOs have emerged whose programmes focus on environmental issues. Among these are the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) and the Caribbean Natural Resource Institute (CANARI). The CCA, with headquarters in Barbados, is involved in research, training, and communications, and in the development of projects designed to increase public awareness on environmental issues. Its training programme includes public education, regional conferences, seminars, and workshops that it organizes in collaboration with local, national environmental and conservation organizations and conservation associations. One of the programmes which it has implemented is the "Caribbean Heritage Programme." Within this programme, training in natural heritage management has been provided by CANARI to the British Virgin Islands National Park Trust, the St. Lucia National Trust, the Anguilla National Trust, the Dominican Conservation Association, the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust, and the Barbuda Council. The training and other technical support provided to each of these institutions has improved their capacity and increased their ability to better manage and protect their country's natural heritage.

Since its establishment in the late 1970s, CANARI has been working to promote the development of policies and programmes to encourage and facilitate greater participation of communities in the management of natural resources. With offices in St. Lucia and St. Croix, it has developed and manages an integrated programme of research, training, and advocacy. It uses a participatory methodology and community-based approach in all of its activities. To date, it has conducted research into mangroves, national parks, sea urchin fisheries, reef monitoring, and marine management. The research findings are used as the basis for training courses and study tours, and to develop and produce training and resource materials.

The aim of its training programme is to create a cadre of Caribbean persons with the skills and expertise to promote and support the management of natural resources. In Dominica, in collaboration with the Department of Forestry and Wildlife, CANARI implemented a project to establish Cottage Forest Industries and, within this project, participants were trained in silviculture practices and forest conservation, and three sawyers were trained as "paraforesters." In addition to providing training to individuals in special environmental projects, each year CANARI also organizes a number of practical, hands-on workshops. Among the topics covered are: "Community-Based Tourism in the Caribbean," "Participatory Mangrove Management," "Understanding and Managing Natural Resource Conflicts," and "Gender Planning for Participatory Resource Management." In addition to skills-oriented workshops,

CANARI's training programme includes study tours, short courses on co-management approaches, and support to university courses. In this way, the training programme caters to a wide cross-section of adults, groups, organizations, and agencies. Among these are individuals in communities, NGOs and CBOs, government agencies, and university students.

In 1991, CANARI organized two regional workshops, one on "Seamoss Cultivation" and the other on "Coral Reef Monitoring." In the same year, the Consortium of Caribbean Universities for Natural Resource Management contracted CANARI to produce modules on "Natural Resource Management" and on "Management of Parks and Protected Areas." These modules are two of five basic courses that form the basis of a master's degree programme. The modules have been distributed to all 17 universities that form the Consortium. In 1992, CANARI organized a regional, six-week, three-course programme on "Co-Management for Sustainable Development" in which 24 individuals participated. The training took place in Dominica and St. Lucia, and the participants were from government, non-governmental, and community organizations. A follow-up three-day workshop held in St. Lucia on the use of Lotus 1-2-3 software for monitoring natural resources, particularly reefs and beaches, attracted resource managers from several countries in the region. In this year, too, a workshop was held in St. Kitts to assist government and non-governmental organizations in monitoring activities on reefs. In 1993, a similar workshop was held in Tobago to expand monitoring as activities started at Bucco Reef. In the same year, a "Wetlands Management Workshop" was held in Grenada, and participants included representatives from agencies that had responsibility for wetlands, as well as members of NGOs and CBOs that were interested in wetlands conservation and coastal resource management. CANARI also publishes a *Bulletin on Caribbean Parks and Protected Areas* and a newsletter entitled *Community and the Environment: Lessons from the Caribbean* and, through its Information Centre, collects and disseminates information on the Institute's research activities and training programmes (CANARI, 1995).

Because of the recognition of the close link between environment and health, governments in the region have put mechanisms in place to address this issue. For example, Ministers of Health have set up the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute. Based in St. Lucia, the Institute carries out research; implements training programmes and projects; and identifies and monitors actions and practices that are detrimental to health and the environment. It also produces publications and disseminates information on environmental health issues.

While there is a growing awareness about environmental issues, and while initiatives are being taken to address these in many countries, it appears that their impact has been limited, since people continue to practise environmentally-harmful behaviours. Consequently, there is still an urgent need for environmental policies and for environmental and health education programmes. Such policies and programmes are essential in order to increase awareness, and to help people to understand the links between environmental health and the impact of the environment on their own health and that of the entire society. A recent initiative that could help to increase awareness about the importance of health and environmental health is the establishment of the UNDP/PAHO/UWI Centre for Health and Development, and the implementation of a regional Project entitled "Training in Health and Environmental Health," in which 13 countries are participating.

Gender

The first World Conference on Women held in 1975 drew attention to the role and status of women, and to the valuable contributions that they were making to the development of their countries. Following this, the United Nations Decade for Women (1975-1985) and subsequent world conferences on women critically examined the impact of development initiatives on women. One outcome of the earlier conferences was the implementation of programmes designed to raise awareness of women's position and to improve their economic situation. However, evaluation and assessment of these programmes led to the

realization that women's disadvantaged position was often legitimized by cultural traditions and customs; institutionalized by the way society was organized; and reinforced by societal structures and processes. Further analysis of the last also led to a better understanding of the societal factors that contributed to the unequal relations between men and women. As a result, more recent UN conferences on women have paid more attention to unequal gender relations, and have highlighted the fact that these not only affected women's ability to achieve their full potential, but also affected the ability of countries to achieve equitable and sustainable development.

During the 1970s and 1980s in the Caribbean, as elsewhere, governments and NGOs became involved in a number of activities, projects, and programmes that were designed to examine women's status and position, and their role and contribution to development. A major component of these activities was community-based research and education, especially non-formal education. Governments established national machinery and created bureaux, departments, and divisions of women's affairs. The CARICOM Secretariat also appointed a Women's Affairs Officer. With assistance from the Secretariat and with the help of the Women's Affairs Officer, the bureaux designed and implemented projects to focus attention on and to address women's problems and concerns. Education and training was often the main component of these projects and programmes. They were designed to increase public awareness about women's position in society vis-à-vis that of men; to educate and train women; and to equip them with skills that could be used to improve their condition and change their position. Programmes of the bureaux were also intended to sensitize policy makers and to influence policy and decision making. In addition, several regional workshops brought women from across the region together to discuss "women's issues," and to develop plans of action for improving the position and condition of Caribbean women.

One of the regional organizations that spearheaded the work on women in development was the Women and Development Unit (WAND) of the Cave Hill Campus of UWI. Established in the late 1970s, WAND developed and implemented a comprehensive adult education programme. Its aim was to increase awareness of the role, status, position, and condition of women and of the valuable contribution that they were making to the development of their countries and to the region as a whole. The objective of WAND's education programmes was to equip women with knowledge and skills; to increase their competence and capacity to develop themselves; and to increase their participation in decision making and in the development of their communities and their countries. These were also intended to empower women and to enable them to change and improve the conditions in which they were living. The programmes covered a wide range of subjects and topics including leadership, women's reproductive health rights, managing community economic enterprises, community needs assessment, programme planning and evaluation, and adult education and literacy. Throughout this programme, WAND experimented with, used, and made popular, a participatory methodology in all of its research, education, and training programmes, and it regarded community-based research as an integral part of the process of education and change.

In 1992, WAND implemented a programme designed to strengthen women's capability to secure more resources and to become more self-reliant. The Communities Organizing for Self-Reliance (CORE) Programme was implemented in 14 communities in seven countries and contained four major components: non-formal education, research and documentation, networking, and advocacy. Through participation in community-based research and education and training programmes, women gained self-confidence and improved their skills in group work and leadership, participatory research, planning, information sharing, and networking. Representatives from intermediary organizations working in the 14 communities also participated in several workshops. The representatives improved their skills and gained some new skills in organizational development and leadership, and in using participatory approaches and methods to mobilize communities, to carry out community-based research, and to plan, implement, and conduct community education programmes and community projects. Within the project, women and men were also exposed to gender training through which they acquired a new sensitivity and deeper

understanding of the economic, social, and cultural factors that caused women's work to be undervalued. They were also able to identify some of the barriers that prevented women from having equal access to resources.

Over the years, hundreds of women and men in communities throughout the region have participated in education and training programmes organized and implemented by WAND at the regional, national, and community levels. The WAND programme also provided the foundation and impetus for the creation of Women and Development Studies Groups at UWI that were the forerunners of the present Centre for Gender and Development Studies. In addition, it helped to strengthen existing women's organizations in many of the countries, and to spawn new ones like the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA).

Governments and NGOs have formulated policies, and are now implementing programmes and projects that are designed to increase sensitivity to gender issues; to deepen understanding of the factors that influence gender relations; and to incorporate a gender perspective in their work. For example, in some countries, former Departments of Women's Affairs have been renamed Departments of Gender Affairs, and are now staffed by males as well as females. At the same time, Women's and Gender Affairs Departments, while continuing to mount education and training programmes for women and to address women's issues, also organize gender training and sensitization programmes in which both women and men participate and address issues affecting both men and women.

Gender training has, therefore, become an important and increasingly integral part of the education programmes in countries throughout the region. It has built on and, in some cases, replaced some of the original consciousness-raising programmes of the 1970s and early 1980s. It is used to sensitize men and women in communities, outreach workers, programme planners, and policy makers to gender issues, and to deepen their understanding of the factors that influence and determine the roles that women and men play in society and how men and women relate to each other. Exposure to and participation in gender training also helps those who participate to acquire skills in gender analysis and gender planning, and to gain some experience in developing and designing programmes and projects that are gender sensitive and that address the problems and concerns of men as well as of women.

One of the first gender training workshops was organized by the CARICOM Secretariat in 1990. The participants--directors, and coordinators of women's bureaux and desks, planners, and individuals in planning institutions--came from 11 countries. During the workshop, they were introduced to a number of techniques that could be used to incorporate gender into national plans. Among the tools that they learnt to use was a Gender Planning/Policy Matrix. Since then, several gender training workshops have been conducted and courses on gender and development implemented. In 1993, as part of a strategy to implement its Plan of Action, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) organized a "Sub-Regional Workshop on Building a Network of Agencies and Institutions in Support of Rural Women." This workshop brought together men and women working in agricultural agencies in several countries, and engaged them in an analysis of the gender relations within the agricultural sector and of the strategies and programmes of agricultural agencies. From this analysis, they were able to identify barriers to full participation of women in rural communities, including cultural traditions and legal frameworks that deny them equality with men.

In most countries in the region, March 8th, International Women's Day, is celebrated and is often preceded or followed by a week of activities. During this period, a large number and wide variety of education and training activities are conducted. Among these are conferences, seminars, and workshops. In recent years, on Fathers' Day, similar activities have also been organized focusing on men and on their role in the family. In some countries, women's affairs departments have taken steps to mainstream gender and to incorporate gender into national policies and sectoral plans, and to introduce gender management systems (GMS) as a strategy for achieving gender equity and equality. For example, the government of St. Kitts and Nevis produced a *National Gender and Development Plan (1996-2000)*, and as part of its

programme for mainstreaming gender, the Directorate of Women's Affairs organized an Equality Forum on International Women's Day in 1999.

At the regional level, too, UWI, through its Centre for Gender and Development Studies has implemented a comprehensive programme of research, education and training, and documentation on women's issues and on gender issues. The Centre, established in 1993, grew out of the Women and Development Studies Groups that operated on the three campuses during the 1980s. It has locations on each of the three campuses and its work involves teaching, research, and outreach. Undergraduate and graduate programmes are offered on each campus, and courses are designed to introduce students to women and development issues and to feminist theories and gender concepts. Among the courses offered to undergraduates are: "Introduction to Women's Studies," "Gender in Caribbean Culture," and "Gender Issues in Agriculture." At the graduate level, there is a Master of Science (M.Sc.), a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.), and a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Gender and Development Studies.

In addition to offering undergraduate and graduate courses, each Centre organizes short courses, seminars, and workshops. For example, as part of its outreach programme, the Centre at Cave Hill offers a Certificate Course in Gender and Development Studies every two years in which men and women from across the region participate. Among the topics covered are: "Gender, Media and Popular Culture," "Gender and Caribbean Political Economy," and "Women, Health and Development." The Centre is also planning to develop a Women's Leadership Institute. The Centres on all three campuses organize public lectures, workshops, and seminars from time to time.

Other UWI departments are also engaged in organizing education and training programmes, and in conducting research to generate new information and insights on women's issues and on gender issues. For example, the School of Education on the Cave Hill Campus has developed a module on "Gender Issues in Education" that is being implemented in teachers' colleges in the Eastern Caribbean. The Faculty of Agriculture in St. Augustine has incorporated gender in several of its degree and outreach programmes.

At another level, several NGOs have also been implementing education and training programmes that examine the unequal power relations between men and women. Among these are two regional events that took place in 1998 to discuss women and power, and women's participation in politics and in decision making. The first was a meeting held in Trinidad and Tobago in May in which participants launched the Caribbean Sub-regional Branch of the Global Network of Women in Politics. The second, organized by CAFRA and the Women's Forum of Barbados, took place in October in Barbados. A number of female politicians and women actively engaged in politics participated in these activities, and shared their experiences of life in the political arena. They also explored and suggested a number of strategies for encouraging more women to become involved in politics and to face the electorate. Activities like these have been playing a critical role in heightening public awareness about the many barriers that women have to overcome before they feel confident and brave enough to enter the political arena. They have also highlighted and drawn attention to the unequal distribution of political power between the sexes, and the implications of this for achieving equitable societies.

A great deal of public education and sensitization is also taking place about laws and practices that reinforce and perpetuate discriminatory practices. Among the issues being discussed are domestic violence and abuse of women and children. In 1998, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) organized a regional workshop for representatives of shelters for battered women and, in November 1999, organized a public forum on violence against women, in which women from several countries gave "testimonies" and shared their experiences of enduring abuse and violence. This activity had a powerful impact and sparked off public and private debates and discussion in countries throughout the region.

Because of concern about how the police respond to and handle complaints on domestic violence and the abuse of women, programmes to sensitize the police about gender issues have been conducted at

regional and national levels. At the regional conference of Police Commissioners held in December 1999, sessions on domestic violence were incorporated into the programme. As a follow-up to this, the Regional Police Training Centre in Barbados has included a two-week course on domestic violence in its training curriculum. In Trinidad and Tobago, sessions on domestic violence and abuse have also been included in the training being offered to police officers engaged in community policing.

As the decade progressed, and as more programmes focused on gender issues and on the relationships between men and women, there was a feeling that in too many cases the focus was on women's concerns, and that men were not only being blamed for all of women's problems, but that they were being excluded and marginalized, and that their problems and concerns were being ignored. Consequently, many men were confused, defensive, and angry, all indicating that a need existed for men to have opportunities to express emotions and opinions, share experiences, and discuss ideas. Such opportunities can be found in educational activities including public fora, workshop sessions, and seminars. In response to these criticisms, more attention is now being paid to "men's issues," and, in some islands, men's groups have emerged and are organizing sessions and workshops for men in which they have the opportunity to discuss their problems, concerns, and topics that are of interest to them. One outcome of this thrust has been an increase in the number of public debates and discussions on topics such as: "Are Caribbean Men in Crisis?" "Irresponsible Caribbean Men: Fact or Fiction?" and the "Poor Performance of Boys in Schools." Concern about these and other men's issues has led to a number of research studies being undertaken to generate new knowledge and deeper insights into masculinity and about what it means to be a man in the Caribbean.

The Caribbean Child Development Centre at UWI, Mona carried out a study in 1993 (Brown, Chevannes, & Anderson) to find out what contribution Caribbean men were making to the family. This study was carried out among low-income households in urban and rural communities in Jamaica, Guyana, and Dominica. It sought to examine how Caribbean males and females were socialized. One of the methods used to generate information was community discussions in which men and women in the selected communities had the opportunity to share their experience of parenting and to express their views and opinions. Among the topics discussed were: "Caribbean Manhood," "Man/Woman Relationships," "Child Rearing Practices," and "Parent/Child Relationships." The study has generated information that can be used in gender training programmes to help explain how child-rearing practices and socialization determine gender differences, and to increase understanding of the factors that influence gender roles and relations in the family.

The Centre for Gender and Development Studies is also undertaking a number of research studies on men and masculinity. As part of this initiative, in January 1996, it organized a three-day symposium entitled "The Construction of Caribbean Masculinities," out of which has emerged an agenda for research on men. Among the studies being conducted are "Marginality of the Caribbean Male: Fact or Fiction?" "Masculinity, Ethnicity and Identity," and "Why Men Batter: Men and Domestic Violence."

At the beginning of the twenty first century, as people reflect on the issue of gender, the debate about men is becoming more intense and, with it, the realization that there is a lot of work to be done to understand the forces that have shaped Caribbean men and the role that they play in the society; the way that they interact and relate to women and to their changing roles; and to provide them with space within the larger debate on gender. The challenge for adult education and adult educators will be to provide spaces for men to reflect on and analyze their experiences and to formulate their own agenda, without detracting from or minimizing the need to continue to focus on and to address women's issues, problems, and concerns. The challenge will also be for these understandings to permeate all adult education variables.

Approaches to Adult Education

As has been pointed out, rapid societal and technological changes have resulted in the emergence of new issues, new concepts, and new ways of thinking that have resulted in several paradigm shifts. This, in turn, has led to new approaches, new ways of doing things and of dealing with issues that require new knowledge and skills, and emphasizes the need for continuous learning. These factors resulted in the decade of the 1990s being a period of reform. If these reforms are to succeed, to be effective, and to achieve the expected outcomes, different segments of the population and the population as a whole will have to be reoriented, re-educated, and retrained. This is, therefore, an important role for adult education and for adult educators.

Among the strategies for initiating and implementing reforms have been on-going dialogue, consultations, and discussions at the community, national, and regional levels. This is an attempt to inform the population, to involve them, to increase the participation of a wide cross-section of the population, and to incorporate their ideas into the processes of policy formulation and national planning. These processes themselves constitute important aspects of adult education. Moreover, in all of the “reform documents,” adult and continuing education are identified as necessary activities. For example, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States’ (OECS) *Education Reform Strategy* (Education Reform Working Group, 1991) identifies specific strategies for reforming tertiary and adult continuing education into “an engine for Human Resource Development.” It sees adult education as providing compensatory, second-chance education; as providing opportunities for education renewal and advancement; and as contributing to knowledge generation as well as for acquiring skills.

The importance of adult education in the 1990s and beyond has been the focus of several international conferences. Among these are UNESCO’s “World Conference on Education for All” held at Jomtien in 1990; the “World Conference on Literacy” and the International Literacy Year (1990); and the last UNESCO conference on adult education, CONFINTEA V, held in July 1997, which produced *The Hamburg Declaration* and an *Agenda for the Future* (UNESCO 1997).

ICAE has had a long association with UNESCO and has also organized several international and regional conferences in adult education, often in collaboration with UNESCO. Through its work, it has spearheaded a dynamic and vibrant international adult education movement that helped to focus attention on key issues as they emerged at the international level, and on the role of adult education in helping people to address these issues with a measure of success. The Council has also encouraged the growth of new philosophies, methodologies, and approaches to the theory and practice of adult education. On a practical level, it has facilitated the development and implementation of new, creative, and innovative adult education programmes, and provided support and resources to adult educators around the world in their efforts to meet the educational needs of the world’s adult population.

Many of the national adult education associations in the Caribbean had been dormant in the late 1990s. However, because of an interest in CONFINTEA V, and in preparation for participation in CARCAE’s “Sixth General Assembly and Regional Consultation on Adult Education,” held in Barbados in 1998, several countries held national consultations. An examination of the country reports and reports of the national consultations reveals that adult educators and providers of adult education programmes have been responding to the challenges posed by the political, economic, and social changes. However, while a number of new providers have become involved in adult education, and while new programmes have been implemented to meet the changing educational needs of adults, some of the old problems and concerns still exist.

Educational planners in St. Lucia are of the view that it is in small developing countries, like those in the Caribbean, that the education of adults and adult education face their greatest challenges--that of overcoming the educational deficits of the last century. To be able to live productive lives and to make a

meaningful contribution to the development of their countries, Caribbean people must be prepared and well equipped to manage change. This is the challenge to adult education and adult educators in the region as the Caribbean faces the new century.

Adult Education in Five Selected Countries

The five countries selected for examination are Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. While the choice of these countries was primarily dictated by the ease with which information was available to the authors, the countries do have characteristics that together represent the region as a whole in terms of size, population composition, culture, politics, and socio-economic conditions. They also provide examples of the type, level, and variety of adult education offerings; the extent to which the main themes have been given priority; the key issues that have emerged; and the challenges facing adult education and adult educators at the turn of the century.

Barbados

Barbados, the most easterly of the Caribbean island chain, is located just 100 miles east of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Because of its location, it affords easy access to and regular contact with North America and Europe. It also hosts the regional offices of several UN and other international agencies that work in the Eastern Caribbean. It has an area of 166 square miles and, with a population of approximately 265,000, is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Facilities, including water, electricity, and telephones are widely available, and the majority of households can boast of having all three as well as TVs, VCRs, and an ever-increasing number of computers in private homes.

The island is generally flat with a few hills. A good network of roads and regular transport system allow people from all 11 parishes to have easy access to Bridgetown, the capital, and to a wide range of social services. The National Health Service allows pensioners and children under 16 free access to health care, and it provides people suffering from chronic diseases with free medication. As is true of all countries in the region, Barbadians value education highly and parents will deny themselves in order to ensure that their children “get a good education.” Education from primary school to university is free and, in theory, there is a place for every child in primary and secondary school.

Like most of the other countries in the region, Barbados is a former British colony. It became independent in 1966 and, like most of its counterparts, is governed by a two-tiered Parliament along the lines of the Westminster Model. Sugar cane was the backbone of the economy in the past, but for several years now, the development of a manufacturing sector as well as the tourism industry and other service sectors has contributed significantly to the national economy. More recently, the development of the offshore financial services sector and the informatics industry has also been responsible for generating substantial amounts of revenue.

A stable political climate, a judiciously managed economy, and a good system of education and other social services have contributed to a high standard of living. According to a recent poverty study conducted by the Inter-American Development Bank (Diez de Medina, 1998), just about 7% of the population is living below the poverty line and, according to the UN Development Index, the country is one of the most developed of the developing countries.

Policy

While there is no separate policy document on adult education, the government’s policy on adult education is contained in its *White Paper on Education Reform* (Barbados. Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 1995). The section on adult education begins with a statement that acknowledges the

need for lifelong, continuous learning. It also defines adult education as including post-secondary and tertiary education provided by formal educational institutions like the Teachers' College, the Community College, the Polytechnic, and the University; and by quasi-formal institutions like the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP), private sector agencies, NGOs, and community groups.

Provision, Management, and Administration of Adult Education

Within the Tertiary Division of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, there is a Senior Education Officer with responsibility for adult education. The MOE provides formal education to adults through tertiary institutions like the Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, the Teachers' Training College, and UWI. It also offers a number of non-formal education programmes including evening classes for school leavers who have failed to gain passes in the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) examinations, and programmes in character building and life skills for young people enrolled in the Barbados Youth Service.

Along with the MOE, other government ministries and departments also organize education and training programmes for adults. Among these are the Ministries of Agriculture and Health, the Community Development Department, and the Training Division of the Ministry of the Civil Service. However, each of these departments usually organizes its programmes independently and with little, if any, collaboration with other departments. Consequently, although programmes organized by the Ministries of Agriculture and Health and by the Community Development Department are often intended for the same adults in the same communities, these providers are often unaware of the programmes being run by each other. At the same time, the programmes are seldom, if ever, developed, designed, implemented, or delivered by persons trained in adult education.

Tertiary institutions offer a wide variety of formal and non-formal programmes to young and old adults alike. The Cave Hill Campus of UWI not only offers courses in traditional subjects geared to academic qualifications but, from time to time, it also develop programmes specifically designed to meet the needs of the government and different groups in the society. The majority of the latter are delivered by the School of Continuing Studies (SCS), which is the outreach, adult education arm of the university.

Over the years, the SCS has offered programmes to individuals who are desirous of upgrading their academic credentials in order to pursue higher education. Along with professional associations, it has organized courses for secretaries, insurance agents, health workers, and property evaluators. It also organizes training programmes for community groups and leaders and, in 1991 initiated an education programme for prisoners. From time to time, the SCS also organizes seminars, workshops, and public lectures on a variety of subjects. An important activity of the School has been the training of adult educators, and it has run several training workshops for adult educators, as well as for literacy facilitators and tutors in its own programmes, for adult educators generally, and for officers of the prison and fire services. In addition, before the Certificate Course in Adult Education was taken over by the DEC, the SCS ran that programme for a few years.

The Barbados Community College is the premier national tertiary education institution. With over 4,000 students on its roll, it caters to a wide cross-section of the target population for adult education. Through its different departments and institutes, it offers formal academic programmes leading to associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates. For example, the Hospitality Institute provides training for individuals who are in, or who hope to work in, the tourist sector, and academic programmes include pharmacology, technology, and commerce, to name a few. Its well-equipped and state-of-the-art Language Laboratory and Resource Centre offers training in several foreign languages including German, Chinese, and Italian. This is not only important for meeting the needs of the tourism industry, but because Barbados is often the site of international conferences and meetings, it is also meeting the growing demand for translators. The Adult and Continuing Education Department at the College offers a wide

range of academic and special interest programmes to the general public. Among these are programmes in basic and advanced psychology, art history, economics and sociology, and information technology and computer applications.

In addition to government educational institutions, there are a number of private educational institutions, including the O'Level Institute, secretarial colleges, and computer and business schools and academies, that offer a wide range of formal and non-formal programmes to out-of-school youth and adults. At the same time, several NGOs and CBOs are also involved in adult education. Among these are the BAEA; youth, women, and church groups; and membership organizations and associations like the Barbados Agricultural Society and the Barbados Association of Retired Persons. Over the years, the BAEA has attempted to increase awareness about the importance of adult education and, on occasion, has played an advocacy role in this regard. However, it has mainly been involved in organizing conferences on matters of national interest, in collaboration with other organizations like the SCS and the Barbados Teachers' Union; and in organizing training workshops for particular groups like adult educators, prisoners, literacy facilitators, and teachers. The Association has also participated in several regional and international conferences and workshops on adult education.

More recently, in 1998, in preparation for the "Regional Adult Education Consultation," it held a "National Symposium on Adult Education" to examine ways in which adult education could be used to address some of the problems facing Barbadian society. Among the topics discussed were youth unemployment, the environment, and the older adult. However, like most other national associations in the region, the BAEA has had a chequered career and has experienced dormancy and well as vibrancy. While lack of interest and motivation as well as lack of human, financial, and other resources have contributed to its recent state of inactivity, it is hoped that the few dedicated members will be motivated by the challenges of the new millennium to revive the Association.

While several other NGOs do organize some education programmes around general topics, the majority of their programmes are usually intended to raise awareness among their members, and to increase their knowledge and skills about topics in areas that are of particular interest to them. Several church, women's, youth, and farmers' groups, as well as sports, drama, and cultural clubs, organize workshops and training programmes for their members on a regular basis. Many professional associations do likewise. At the same time, service clubs like the Kiwanis and Lions, and organizations like the National Advisory Council on AIDS and PAREDOS organize national conferences, seminars and workshops, and community education programmes to raise awareness about, and to provide information on, issues of national concern like drug abuse, AIDS, school performance, and parenting. At the community level, CBOs like the neighbourhood watches, crime prevention committees, and community groups organize programmes to educate community members, and to assist them in developing strategies and in acquiring skills to deal with community problems.

Work

The *White Paper on Education Reform* (1995) recognizes that the changing world of work has created the demand for a workforce that is multi-skilled and flexible enough to respond quickly to the changing demands of the labour market. It also recognizes that retraining of the present workforce and equipping prospective workers is an urgent and pressing need. The government has, therefore, taken steps to put mechanisms in place, and to develop strategies to promote, provide, and facilitate programmes to create a workforce that will be well equipped to meet the challenges of the twenty first century.

Educating and training young people for the world of work is carried out in formal tertiary institutions, as well in institutions that offer non-formal education and training. In addition to academic programmes, the Technology Department of the Community College also offers a wide variety of technical and vocational programmes at the technician, middle, and advanced levels. Within the context of the Human

Resource Development Project, and in close collaboration with the private sector, the College has developed training programmes that respond to the needs of industry. The Barbados Vocational Training Board provides skill training to unemployed youth through several training programmes and an apprenticeship scheme. However, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic is the institution that provides most of the technical and vocational training, and it offers full-time and part-time courses in a wide variety of technical and craft subjects at basic, intermediate, and advanced levels.

In order to respond to the challenge of creating a multi-skilled and competent workforce that can compete with workers worldwide, and that is capable of maintaining high levels of productivity and quality, the government recently created the Technical and Vocational Council. Recognizing the need for a workforce that is creative, learner oriented, adaptable, and comprised of individuals that are able to work as a team, the Council is promoting and creating learning opportunities and programmes that will motivate young people to maximize their abilities. It recognizes that members of the workforce now need to learn how to do things differently; how to use new technologies; how to deliver new products and services; and how to take on new jobs, roles, and responsibilities. However, it also recognizes that in order to motivate workers to want to continue learning, it is important to make learning attractive to adults; to make learning opportunities available in places and at times that are suitable to them; to build on their strengths; and to build the self-esteem and confidence of those who have lost faith in their ability to learn.

To date, the Council has developed policies and strategies for technical and vocational education and training, and is developing occupational standards. In terms of the latter, it has set up Lead Bodies in Tourism and IT, two important sectors of the economy. These Lead Bodies have, among other things, the task of deciding the skills and level of operations required by workers in the respective sectors. During the first quarter of 1999, the Council organized two workshops on Occupational Standards to introduce members of the Lead Bodies and other interested individuals to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) that have been in use in the United Kingdom (UK) for some time. The NVQs will not only identify the skill requirements and set the standards, but will also determine the qualifications to be obtained by workers in the different sectors. The Council has also set up an Employment and Training Fund to be financed partly by a training levy paid by employers. Money from the Fund will be used to promote and support training, and to upgrade the skills of the labour force. For example, it is possible that resources from the Fund could be used to train retrenched workers or self-employed persons.

In addition to these government initiatives, every year, the Barbados Workers Union (BWU) holds a one-day seminar, entitled "Preparing Young People for the World of Work," for students in fifth and sixth forms of secondary schools. The purpose of the seminar is to provide the students with information about different occupational options, and to expose them to some of the realities of the world of work. At the same time, the Union has a well-established education programme for its members, for workers in general, and for the public as a whole. The BWU is the largest union in Barbados and has been in existence for a quarter of a century. The education programmes of the BWU are also intended to provide the leaders of the union with skills in the organization and management of trade unions, and with knowledge and skills to meet the challenges now facing unions. From time to time, the union organizes activities to inform the public and to increase their awareness of the role of trade unions and of the labour movement.

The BWU also organizes conferences, symposia, seminars, and workshops, and a Certificate Course in Industrial Relations offered in collaboration with the SCS and BIMAP. Orientation workshops for new workers, self-development workshops, workshops to improve literacy and numeracy, and leadership training workshops are regular features of the education and training programme. The education programmes are designed to reach various groups of workers including shop stewards, clerks, supervisors, workers about to retire, and leaders. The programmes cover a wide range of topics including "Work Ethics, Attitudes and Motivation"; "Globalization and the Workplace"; "The Law and the Worker";

“Productivity Bargaining”; “Environmental Awareness”; “Conflict Resolution”; “Computer Awareness”; “Public Speaking and Debating”; “Occupational Health and Safety”; and “Prevention and Management of Industrial Disasters.”

The union also organizes seminars and workshops intended to increase awareness and broaden the knowledge base of workers, so that they are better able to understand their role within the wider national and international context of the labour movement. Among the topics discussed in these workshops and seminars are: “The International Trade Union Movement and its Work”; “The Workings of the ILO”; “The World Bank and the IMF”; “Gender and Development Issues”; and “The Development and Role of Social Partnerships.” The union is a member of the Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados (CTUSAB), which was formed to promote and facilitate a closer relationship between the government, the private sector, and trade unions.

The National Union of Public Workers (NUPW), the two teachers’ unions, the Barbados Employers’ Confederation, the Public Workers Cooperative Credit Union, and various professional associations also coordinate education and training programmes. For example, the NUPW recently organized a training workshop for telephone operators and receptionists and, over the last six years, the Public Workers’ Cooperative Credit Union has been conducting an HRD programme in which all staff members participate. This programme is designed to improve supervisory and managerial skills; promote and encourage a strong team spirit among executive and committee members; eliminate inter-departmental strife; encourage employee involvement in the day-to-day running of the organization; and develop a customer-friendly information service. The Barbados Employers Confederation, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and the Productivity Council also organize seminars and workshops for employers and workers in the private sector and, from time to time, organize conferences on topical issues related to the world of work.

The Central Bank is also involved in public education and it occasionally hosts public lectures and organizes seminars for the public. Different educational institutions and organizations also organize education and training activities for particular groups of workers, in order to provide them with specific information and to enable them to acquire particular job-related skills. For example, police officers in Barbados have participated in a one-week course run by the Regional Police Training School. The course, designed to help law enforcement officers to upgrade their skills in fighting crime, was conducted by experts from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI).

Information Technology (IT)

In Barbados, there is a growing awareness that the technological revolution has brought about fundamental changes in the way that individuals, businesses, and society as a whole operate, and a growing recognition of the need for people to become adept at using the new technologies. In many homes, microwave ovens, personal computers, and many other electronic devices are common, and computers are gradually taking over as the preferred means of communicating, obtaining and transmitting information, and doing business. This has created the need for individuals to develop skills in using the Internet and e-mail, in e-commerce, in accessing the World Wide Web, and in operating and managing complex electronic multi-media systems.

In response to this need, several public and private institutions and organizations are now offering education and training programmes designed to provide participants with the required new skills. Within the public service, for instance, many of the operations that were previously done manually have been computerized, and training in the use of computers is now an integral part of the HRD programme being undertaken within the context of public sector reform. Interestingly, it is not only civil servants at the lower rung of the scale who are participating in these programmes, but also Permanent Secretaries and

Ministers. At the same time, to ensure that young people are well equipped with the knowledge and skills that will be required in the future, the government has taken several initiatives.

For example, it requires IT companies to contribute to the development and implementation of IT training programmes being offered on the Cave Hill Campus of UWI, and it supports and, in some cases, pays for unemployed youth to attend computer courses run by approved computer schools. In addition, the government has implemented a pilot project called *EduTech 2000* in secondary and primary schools. The project is based on the premise that since the children in school will comprise the workforce in the twenty first century, it is important to expose and train them in the use of computers. An important aspect of this project is the training of teachers in the project schools. These teachers are all participating in an intensive and comprehensive programme in which they are learning how to use computers to facilitate learning.

Since Barbados has a large and growing informatics industry, another important initiative by a quasi-government organization is the annual conference organized by the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC). Since 1991, the BIDC has organized the Barbados Information Services Conference (BISC). This conference provides information on global trends in technology development and use, and also offers opportunities to showcase and explore information services, and to focus on data acquisition and software development. It identifies new challenges and opportunities for IT users and helps them to chart their path through the global marketplace. Through a variety of displays, it also demonstrates how global IT organizations are using offshore IT operations to enhance and increase productivity at lower costs. BISC 2000 focused on "Interactive Technology Development in the Caribbean," and included topics such as "Offshore Software Development and International Out-Sourcing" and "Competitive Telecommunications Issues in the Caribbean Basin." The Information Society of Barbados also recently hosted a two-day conference and trade exhibition entitled "The Challenges of Information Technology in the New Millennium." Among the topics discussed were: "The Future of the Internet," "Software Development Strategies," and "Building the Corporate Warehouse." Education activities like these serve two purposes: (a) they provide information to the public and increase public awareness about the possibilities and challenges of using or not using new information technologies; and (b) they provide users with new up-to-date information about emerging trends, with opportunities to interact with experts and to upgrade their skills in the use of the technology.

In response to the need for training in IT, there has been an increase in the number of private computer schools and private sector organizations offering training programmes and courses in the use of computers and software development. The focus of many of these programmes is on preparing and equipping individuals to be able to function effectively in the new millennium. In addition, as companies continue to acquire and introduce new models and more up-to-date equipment, they are also exposing their staff to training, either through in-house programmes or by providing staff members with opportunities to participate in external training programmes and activities.

A major issue that demanded the attention of all computer users in 1999 was the "Millennium Bug," and several seminars were organized to inform the public and business places about the risks and possible dangers, and to encourage them to become Y2K compliant. Not only did the government and most private companies implement plans to ensure that they were Y2K compliant, but they also mounted public education programmes, and disseminated relevant information to their clients and customers in leaflets and through the print and electronic media.

In the late 1990s, there was a significant increase in the number of educational activities designed to increase awareness of, and to help people to acquire knowledge in, the use of IT. However, although the participants in these programmes were adults, the majority was usually younger adults. The absence of large numbers of older adults in these programmes suggests that sufficient attention is not being given to the needs of this group of adults to become knowledgeable and skilled in IT. If this problem is not addressed, there is a real possibility that a significant section of the population will be left behind, and that

the country will not be able to benefit from the contributions of an important segment of its population. The challenge is to motivate older adults to participate in IT training, and to design programmes that are attractive to them and that take into consideration their fear and reluctance to venture into new and unfamiliar territory. This is particularly important in a small country like Barbados in which the population is aging rapidly, and in which nearly one third of the population will be over 50 years old.

Literacy

In Barbados, while scarcely anyone still believes that the literacy rate is 98%, no attempts have been made to carry out a national literacy survey nor to find out, with any degree of accuracy, what is the level of literacy, functional illiteracy, or illiteracy in the country. However, there are signs that there has been an increase in functional illiteracy, especially among the younger members of the population. This is evidenced by the growing number of students who complete primary and secondary school without having mastered basic skills in reading and writing, as well as the number of university graduates who are not able to articulate ideas or express themselves clearly in Standard English. More worrying is the performance of a number of children who sat the Common Entrance Examination in 1999 and who failed to get any marks in the Language and Mathematics papers.

While the MOE does have a remedial reading programme in schools, and classes in four centres in which adults can upgrade their literacy and numeracy skills, there is no national literacy programme. However, several NGOs have recognized this need and have organized literacy programmes. The oldest of these programmes is perhaps the one that the SCS has been offering since 1980. Formerly entitled "Upgrading of Reading and Writing for Adults," it is now called the "National English Skills Programme." Although the programme was at one time promoted on the radio, it has become very low-keyed. Participants come from all 11 parishes and range between the ages of 18 and 78 years of age. In 1992, 160 persons participated in the programme. The course is not free and several business houses and individuals have assisted learners in paying the fees. The original coordinator, a retired secondary school principal, is still coordinating the course. Tutors have included teachers, business people, and trained adult educators and, over the years, in order to ensure that they are equipped to conduct the classes, the SCS has run special training courses and workshops for the tutors in the programme, as well for literacy facilitators in other similar programmes. Because the programme is a practical one, the resource materials provide learners with opportunities to improve their ability to fill out bank slips and income tax forms, to use the telephone directory, and to read the newspapers. The two companies that publish the two daily newspapers have provided 100 newspapers twice per week to be used in the programme. The course has been reorganized and, for the first time, university students will be serving as volunteer tutors.

In addition to this programme, in 1991, the SCS launched a new thrust in literacy education in the prison and has trained prison officers in adult education. One of the officers went on to do the Certificate Course in Adult Education offered by CARCAE. The inclusion of literacy in the prison education programme has been welcomed by both prison officials and inmates, and has resulted in several of the latter being motivated to continue their formal education.

Besides the SCS, a few private sector companies concerned about the inadequate literacy skills of some of their employees have organized or made literacy programmes available to employees. Since basic literacy is the foundation on which all other literacies build, workplace literacy programmes will have to become more common in the next decade, and this will be a challenge to the private sector. A number of NGOs have also implemented small-scale literacy programmes. Among these are several churches that organize literacy classes for members of their congregation. Unlike in earlier times, however, the aim of these classes is not merely to teach participants to read the Bible, but to enable them to develop skills and competence in reading and writing a wide variety of materials.

It will be increasingly difficult for the government to ignore the fact that the formal education system is producing some people with inadequate literacy and numeracy skills that are essential for them to participate fully in, and to contribute to, their own development and to that of the country. The challenge is to conduct research that will provide accurate information on the state and level of literacy, functional illiteracy, and illiteracy in the country. Such research is not only necessary as the basis for developing literacy programmes, but it must also be seen as an integral part of a strategy for tackling the present problem, and for creating a fully literate population that is well equipped to meet and overcome the challenges of the twenty first century.

Health and the Environment

Health

The increase of diabetes and other lifestyle diseases like obesity, hypertension, cancer, and cardiovascular diseases, along with the growing incidence of substance abuse, asthma, Sjorgren's syndrome, and sickle-cell disease is a matter of growing concern. As a result, government and the general populace are becoming more aware that it is important for individuals to take responsibility for their health. The Health Development Plan (1993-2000) identifies health promotion as one strategy for encouraging people to live healthy lifestyles, and to become more actively involved in managing their own health. It also identifies health education and the dissemination of information as key factors in achieving these goals. In addition, recognition of the need to reform the health sector led the Ministry of Health to implement a Health Sector Rationalization Programme, a key objective of which was to improve the quality of health care offered by the health services.

Within this context, health education and the training of health professionals are crucial. The Health Education Department of the Ministry has an extensive programme that includes public education and community education. The Public Education Programme is designed to focus the public's attention and provide information on general health issues, as well as to provide information on and treatment for specific diseases. The programme is delivered through the print and electronic media, and through a variety of audio-visual materials at conferences, public lectures, and discussions, and in seminars and workshops.

A great deal of health information is also disseminated in the eight polyclinics strategically located throughout the country, and their programmes include the provision of a wide range of services to the communities that they serve. For example, in the Maternal and Child Health clinics, mothers are educated on how to care for themselves during and after pregnancy, and how to care for their babies and young children. They are given information on family life, breast-feeding, diet and nutrition, and immunization. In addition, nurses and doctors from the clinic make periodic community visits, and special counselling is provided as necessary.

The success of health promotion initiatives depends, to a large extent, on whether or not health care professionals and workers are kept up to date with new developments in the field of health, and on the extent to which they are well equipped with the required knowledge and skills. The polyclinics are well staffed by teams of health professionals that include specialists in a variety of disciplines. These, along with their counterparts in other areas of the health care system, are exposed to training on a continuous basis. In addition to the preparatory education programmes to which health care workers like nurses, doctors, dieticians, and medical records clerks are initially exposed, they are also being exposed to specific training related to the "new" lifestyle diseases. For example, in order to improve the capacity of the health care system and the ability of health care professionals to deal with the increase in the number of people suffering with AIDS, the Ministry, in collaboration with the National Advisory Committee on AIDS, implemented a structured education programme for health care workers in 1992. Between 1993

and 1997, 33 seminars and 6 HIV/AIDS workshops were conducted at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and 57% of the participants were nurses.

Health care workers are also being exposed to training in the use of computers for the management of health information. Health care professionals in Barbados often participate in regional training programmes. At the community level, health education programmes are carried out by the polyclinics. Several NGOs are also involved in programmes to educate the public and particular groups on matters of health. The education programmes of the Health and Family Life Organization and the Christ Church Health and Education Guild are designed to encourage individuals to change their attitudes towards sickness and disease, to develop healthy lifestyles, and to adopt practices that allow them to manage their health and to create a healthy environment for family members. An important aspect of health and health promotion that is now receiving more attention is occupational health and the impact of disease on the ability of workers to perform effectively.

As part of the health promotion thrust, a number of activities are now being organized and special days and weeks celebrated. Among these are health feasts, World AIDS Day, Drug Awareness Week, and community health fairs. The main aim of these activities is to raise public awareness and to share information on health and health-related issues. Within this context, educational activities like public discussions, radio and television programmes, supplements in newspapers, conferences, seminars, and workshops are all organized and well patronized.

Since 1993, the Nation Publishing Company has been promoting the concept of healthy lifestyles by sponsoring and advertising a number of activities intended to focus the attention of the entire population on common causes of ill health, and to educate and motivate people to maintain healthy lifestyles. The highlight of these activities is the Annual Healthy Lifestyle Extravaganza held in Queens' Park in the capital. Hundreds of health care providers, producers of health products, and other health-related organizations set up stalls to display and provide information on their services. The Extravaganza provides the opportunity for citizens to obtain information on several health issues in one place at the same time and, in 1998, over 7,000 persons attended. Those attending can participate in workshops, listen to lectures, watch slide shows and video presentations; get free tests for blood sugar, cholesterol, hypertension, and AIDS; get advice on specific diseases and ailments; see demonstrations on proper diet, exercise, weights, and yoga; and can participate in aerobic exercises.

They can also learn about and see demonstrations on alternative approaches to healing; learn about alternative medicines; and collect a vast amount of literature on various aspects of health and disease. In addition to all of the above, the Extravaganza creates a healthy environment with healthy food, without alcohol or cigarettes, in which all members of the family can have fun as well as learn a lot. As a follow-up to the Extravaganza, "Healthy Lifestyle Teams" have been travelling from community to community putting on "mini-extravanzas" to encourage community members to live healthy lifestyles and to involve them in aerobic exercises. In addition, the two daily newspapers, *The Nation* and *The Advocate* produce supplements on healthy lifestyles on a regular basis. The result of all these activities is a growing interest in health and health issues, requests for more information on health, and an increase in the numbers of people who are becoming involved in exercise, and attempting to eat healthier and to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The Environment

In Barbados, in the last two or three decades, there have been many developments that have created threats to the environment and threaten to destroy the fragile ecosystems of the country. There has been a dramatic increase in the amount of garbage being generated. The development of the tourist industry in the 1970s and 1980s, and the increase in the number of hotels and other tourist-related businesses have created a number of environmental problems along the island's coasts. Among these is the pollution of

the coastline as a result of improper disposal of sewage and industrial waste products into the sea. The result has been damage to coral reefs and to other coastal ecosystems. At the same time, illegal dumping of garbage in gullies and ravines has caused deterioration in the quality of spring water and the danger of flooding during storms.

An important aspect of the work of the Environmental Engineering Division, the Sewage and Solid Waste Project Unit, the Environmental Special Projects Unit, and the Coastal Zone Management Unit is public education to raise the awareness of the entire population about environmental issues, and to provide information on sound and safe environmental practices. They are also expected to implement education programmes to sensitize other government agencies, the public and private sectors, and other specific groups on issues of sustainability, as well as to ISO 1400, the international standard that looks at the implementation of environmental management systems.

The Special Projects Unit recently implemented two projects, "Beautify Barbados 2000" and a "Feasibility Study on a Marine Reserve." The main focus of these projects is to educate the public about the adverse effects of littering and illegal dumping and about what they can do to preserve the environment. The Sewage and Solid Waste Project Unit has an Integrated Solid Waste Management Programme, a key component of which is environmental education and the promotion of waste-reducing activities. Other important activities being undertaken are consumer education, seminars on composting, and providing assistance to businesses and to the manufacturing sector to carry out waste audits. The result of these activities has been a more informed and aware public, and new interest in environmental issues.

One NGO that is actively involved in environmental education and other activities designed to increase awareness about environmental issues is the Future Centre Trust. This organization grew out of the Village of Hope that was erected during the "UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States" held in Barbados in 1994. The Trust mounts exhibitions and disseminates information through leaflets, brochures, and other print media, as well as through radio and television programmes. It also organizes hikes and clean-up campaigns. Its programmes are intended to sensitize and inform individuals, groups, and the public as a whole about what will happen if the present trends in pollution and destruction of the environment continue. It also provides information on what can be done to ameliorate and reverse the present trends.

While there has undoubtedly been an increase in awareness about environmental issues, it is still common to see people littering the roads and beaches and not properly disposing of household garbage. Consequently, the challenge is to develop and implement a comprehensive and continuous programme of environmental education to target specific groups, and to encourage and facilitate the participation of community groups and organizations in more environmentally-conscious activities.

Gender

Since its establishment, the Bureau of Women's Affairs has been developing and implementing projects and programmes to address women's problems and concerns, and education and training programmes have been one of its main activities. These programmes have included public awareness and advocacy programmes to raise awareness of women's issues, and skills training programmes for women to promote and facilitate personal development, and to help them to acquire leadership skills and marketable and income-generating skills. Hundreds of women have participated in public lectures and discussions, seminars and workshops, and community education programmes. In most cases, the Bureau's programmes are developed and implemented in association with other government agencies, women's organizations, and other NGOs. In recognition of the shift in focus from women's issues to gender issues, the government has changed the name of the Bureau of Women's Affairs to the Department of Gender Affairs.

As was previously noted, the Bureau and some other government agencies and departments have also incorporated women and development issues and gender issues into their programmes. For example, because of the increase of domestic violence and abuse against women, police officers are being exposed to training to sensitize them to gender issues. Training is also being designed to help them to view these offences as crimes; to better understand the contributing factors as well as the implications for the victims and perpetrators; and to increase their sensitivity and skill in handling these complaints. In addition, several police officers are now also participating in gender activities organized by other organizations.

At the same time, because of the poor performance of males compared with that of females in the school system, several research and training activities are being undertaken by education institutions. For instance, issues of gender are being incorporated into several courses offered by the Teachers' College: components on gender have been incorporated into the diploma and certificate courses; and the College has organized special seminars to discuss gender issues in education. In 1998, as part of its 50th anniversary celebration, the College organized and hosted a two-day symposium on "Gender and Achievement in Schools." In 1997, the College organized a number of workshops for teachers in the system to look at issues such as the "School Curricula" and "Academic Achievement of Boys and Girls."

The existence of a Centre for Gender and Development Studies on the Cave Hill Campus, and its implementation of programmes that focus on gender issues have helped to create a climate in which it is now easier to raise and discuss gender issues. Through its outreach programme, it has organized a number of public lectures, panel discussions, seminars, and workshops to raise awareness about, and to disseminate information on, women's issues and gender issues. Among the topics that have been discussed are "Female Entrepreneurs and Economic Relations in Barbados," and a lecture series on "Caribbean Women, Catalysts for Change," in which one of the lectures highlighted the work of the late Dame Nita Barrow, the former Governor-General of Barbados. Among the research studies conducted by the Centre is a study on "Gender and the Economy: The Impact of a Stabilization and Structural Adjustment Programme on Four Communities in Barbados." More recently, the Centre has been conducting studies on "Caribbean Masculinity" and is incorporating issues that focus on and highlight men's concerns.

Among public education and other educational activities organized were a television programme on domestic violence, and a public march and rally to protest the increase in domestic violence. Organized by the Crisis Centre of the Business and Professional Women's Club (BPWC) in collaboration with several other organizations, the rally attracted nearly 300 persons. During the rally, presentations and speeches were made by politicians, representatives of government agencies, the police, and the church, and by individuals from several communities. An important part of the BPWC's programme is the training of individuals who volunteer to serve as counsellors in its Crisis Centre. It has also established the first shelter for battered women in Barbados, and will provide counselling and education and training programmes to the women who seek shelter there. The Club has also organized training programmes for young unemployed women on several occasions.

The two Soroptomist clubs organize programmes for young and older women. One manages a "Village" in which elderly men and women live, and in which they are exposed to education programmes in health care and craft, among other things. The other has a programme for young women in secondary school, and has carried out a study on abused females. The results of this study are being widely shared with several groups in the society, and will be used to establish a shelter for abused young women. The National Organization of Women has organized self-development and leadership training programmes for women, and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) has a comprehensive education and training programme in which hundreds of women participate every year.

Because of the new awareness of the importance of gender in the life of men and women and to national development, other organizations have also implemented education and training programmes to address gender issues. For example, the BWU has organized seminars and workshops on topics like

“Gender Perspectives on Globalization,” “The Importance of Gender Analysis in Industrial Relations,” “Collective Bargaining Practices and the Gender Implications,” “Gender Issues in the World of Work,” “Female Participation in Trade Unions,” and “Sexual Harassment.” Between 1997 and 1998, about 250 women and 237 men participated in seminars and workshops on these and similar topics.

There has been an increase in the number of men who are interested in and becoming involved in discussions on gender, and of groups of men who are raising issues that are of concern to men. The idea that Caribbean men are in crisis has triggered several heated debates, and several public events were organized to discuss the issue. One such event was a dramatic performance by a group of male actors entitled “Man Talk.” Using a number of dramatic techniques, the players raised and discussed male socialization; father/son and mother/son relationships; boyhood games and pastimes; dreams and aspirations of young men; manhood and learning how to be a man; courtship and marriage; fatherhood; relationship with women and children; images of men in the media; homosexuality; and male violence. Following each of the performances, the players invited the audience to respond and to participate in a discussion of the issues raised. The play attracted such wide interest and comment that it was later presented on local television in four parts. Here again, after each presentation, a panel representing different organizations and interests discussed the issues and the implications for men, women, and the society as a whole. The studio audience also participated in the discussion. This illustrates the critical role of informal adult education in general awareness and promoting social change.

Education and training programmes and activities have been key methods used by various groups and organizations to sensitize the population about women’s issues, men’s issues, and gender issues. It is evident that these activities are having some effect and impact on the way that men and women in Barbados now perceive each other; on their attitudes; and on the way they interact and relate to members of the opposite sex. However, there are still many people who question the value of such programmes, and others who continue to believe that they are having serious negative effects on men, women, families, and the country as a whole. The challenge is to take their concerns seriously and, through education, to attempt to reconcile some of the ambiguities and contradictions and, to lessen, if not entirely expel, their fears.

Conclusion

The relevant administrative agencies in Barbados have given due regard to the issues that affect the daily existence of the island’s populace. The wide range of programmes that are offered to educate Barbadians on issues including health, IT, and environmental awareness is indeed encouraging. It testifies to the commendable strides that the region has made in the field of education in general, and in adult education in particular.

Guyana

A prerequisite to the exploration of adult education in Guyana is an examination of the contextual factors that inform the training needs of Guyanese adults. Located on the north-eastern coast of South America and occupying an area of 214,969 square kilometres, Guyana is bordered by Venezuela on the west, Brazil on the south, Suriname on the east, and the Atlantic Ocean on the north. Guyana has a population of approximately 805,000, 90% of whom reside along the narrow coastal plain. The remaining 10% of the Guyanese population is dispersed in mostly isolated pockets in the largely forested and mountainous hinterland, where the population density is 0.4 per square kilometre as opposed to 115 per square kilometre along the coastal plain. The majority of the population falls within the age range of 15-65 years which, to a large extent, represents the economically active sector of the population; 33.4% is

under 15 years and 3.8% is 65 years and more. The labour force comprises an estimated 268,000 persons, between 60-80% of whom are employed in the public sector. Unemployment is in the vicinity of 12-15%.

Policy

A “National Consultation on Adult Education,” sponsored by the MOE, the Institute of Distance and Continuing Education (IDCE), and the AEA was convened on 25 and 26 March, 1998. Its theme was “Adult Education for Sustainable Development.” The report of this consultation brings into focus, *inter alia*:

- The infrastructural deficiencies which constrain communication with persons in remote areas.
- The economic factors which affect the provision of education.
- The thrust towards increased exploitation of natural resources and the concomitant need to focus on sustainable development.
- The inadequate educational achievement of a large percentage of out-of- school youth and the resultant shortage of skills. (Marrett et al., 1999)

As a sequel to the report, an analysis was done to investigate the extent to which the adult education sub-sector is organized to deal effectively with the implicit needs of the populace. This investigation considered approximately half of the major adult education providers in Guyana. The results suggested that although the adult education system in Guyana had registered considerable success in some regards, there was need for improvement. It was recommended that more participatory methods of teaching be used, and that the knowledge of distance education methods should be enhanced. Proposals were also made for the introduction of better mechanisms for quality control and the accreditation and articulation of programmes.

The *State Paper on Education Policy 1995* states:

Education is a critical factor in the national effort to promote productivity and economic growth, and to enhance the quality of life of the Guyanese people. It is vital for the personal growth and self-realization of people, and it is important as the basis on which they will develop their personal and social lives as far as art will challenge them and as deep as culture will lead them. (Guyana. Ministry of Education and Cultural Development, p. 6)

Despite these assertions, the education sector continues to be under resourced. In the period 1989-1992, Guyana’s expenditure on education was only 5.5% of its total revenue. This compares unfavourably with almost all countries of the world. By 1998, the rate had improved to 12.9%. It was still, however, far short of hemispheric and global norms. Two of the most grievous consequences of this allocation level are low teachers’ salaries and a shortage of funds to improve physical plant and to supply materials (Guyana. Ministry of Finance, 2000, p 199).

This has resulted in the destruction of the enviable reputation established by Guyana in the 1960s, as having one of the best educational systems in the Caribbean. In 1976, all the schools were brought under state control, and education was declared free from nursery to university. The heavy financial burden on the state was not sustainable, and led to the collapse of the infrastructure and a continued haemorrhage of teachers from the system. It should be noted that small percentages of students perform satisfactorily at the CXC examinations, but several students drop out or leave the school system ill-equipped for the world of work.

Provision, Management, and Administration of Adult Education

Guyana's Minister of Education convened a Senior Policy-Making Group (SPMG) in the MOE, which is charged with the formulation of policy pertinent to the Ministry's objectives. The MOE and the Regional Departments of Education are, in turn, responsible for the execution of policy under the instruction of the Chief Education Officer (CEO). The CEO is assisted by three Deputy Chief Education Officers (DCEOs) in charge of Administration, Development, and Technical Education respectively: the DCEO Administration supervises the schools and staffing; the DCEO Development oversees innovations in the system, including training programmes and curriculum development; and the DCEO Technical oversees technical and vocational programmes within the learning institutions. In addition, there are four Assistant Chief Education Officers (ACEOs) with functional responsibility for nursery, primary, and secondary education and an inspectorate unit. Each ACEO operates at a national level within his/her area of responsibility. The ACEO Georgetown and the Regional Education Officers (REdOs) are accountable for monitoring and supervising all educational activities within their specific departments of education.

Guyana is divided into 11 administrative education districts. Of these, 10 correspond to the administrative and geographical regions of the country, while the capital Georgetown is dealt with as a separate education precinct. Georgetown's educational budget is controlled by the MOE, while every other area takes charge of its own expenditures. REdOs are responsible for all the schools within their respective regions. They enjoy a certain degree of autonomy in that they are able to transfer teachers within their area, grant leave, and employ and dismiss teachers. REdOs convene on a monthly basis with central Ministry officials to evaluate and monitor the progress within their respective regions.

Adult education is also offered by non-formal institutions such as the May Rodrigues Early School Leavers' Centre and the Guyana Forum for Lifelong Learning. Such programmes have the impact of increasing employment opportunities for graduates with vocational proficiencies. As such, graduates of technical and industrial training have been supplying the labour market with competencies that are in short supply. Some of the participants in these programmes have become self-employed. In addition to improving home and family life, instruction in home economics allows for the supply of skills to restaurants and garment factories.

Work

Adult education in Guyana is provided by several institutes that cater to the nation's need for functionally literate and flexible individuals. A wide variety of options are offered through the programmes. Despite the nation's harsh economic environment, policy makers are working assiduously to create educational opportunities for persons who are above school age. Administrators are also seeking to deal with the deficit of skills that plagues Guyana's labour force.

The Guyana Government Technical Institute and the Agency for Craft Production Design provide skills training in technical education, while the Carnegie School of Home Economics provides instruction in home economics. The Guyana Industrial Training Centre, the New Amsterdam Technical Institute, the Linden Technical Training Complex, and the Guysuco Technical Training Centre provide industrial training. Public service professional training is provided through the Public Service Training Division and the Foreign Service Training Institute. Their activities include institution building and organizational development as well as political education. The thrust of this initiative is to achieve improved performance of personnel.

The Kuru Kuru Cooperative College and the Guyana Coop Credit Union League have both embarked upon cooperative education programmes for adults. This undertaking, like the environment and health initiative, contributes to the increased awareness of Guyanese adults. The Critchlow Labour College, the Guyana Public Service Union, and the Guyana Trade Union Movement undertake labour education

programmes, while human resource management (HRM) is done through the Recruitment and Training Division of the Public Service Ministry. Other entities that participate in HRM include the Guyana Bauxite Industry, the Human Resources Practitioners of Guyana, the Guyana National Engineering Corporation, and the Guyana Telecommunication Corporation. The cooperative education programme facilitates professional recognition of graduates who have completed courses in fields such as statistics. It also strengthens the cooperative enterprise and supplies skills in the commercial field. The labour education programme has made the trade union movement stronger as a result of an improved knowledge base. It has also resulted in improved bargaining.

Adults also receive instruction in protective services through the National Guard Service and the Guyana Prisons Service. The Felix Austin Police College and the Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association (GRPA) also offer similar tuition. This programme contributes to institution building and organizational development. Continuing education programmes are offered by the IDCE, the May Rodrigues Early School Leavers' Centre, and the Guyana National Service. The AEA, Critchlow Labour College, and the Guyana Forum for Lifelong Learning are also part of this drive. These programmes have been particularly successful in addressing the problems of slow learners. They have also assisted in helping students to reach matriculation standards, and have allowed an expanded curriculum for professional workers. Although continuing education programmes enjoy a good response and result in job mobility, they are incentives to emigration.

The Agricultural Extension Services, the Guyana School of Agriculture, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), the Ministry of Agriculture, and the National Agricultural Research Institute provide research and development, as well as documentation, in their contribution to adult education in Guyana.

Lack of funding and inadequate infrastructure have implications for the role, content, and methods of adult education. This includes the need to ensure that workers are properly equipped for with the relevant knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that are essential for succeeding in a highly competitive global market. In order to survive in the era of globalization, employees must ensure that they are exposed to foreign languages, are culturally aware, and must exhibit respect and tolerance for persons of different ethnic and cultural origins. The curriculum content of the adult education programmes, therefore, needs to address such areas.

Information Technology

The late twentieth century and the early twenty first century have been characterized by significant technological advances. Caribbean countries are, therefore, challenged to stay on par with the rest of the world in this regard. Despite its economic constraints, Guyana has sought to keep afloat technologically by modernizing schools and classroom facilities through greater use of communication technologies. In addition to programmes organized by training institutions such as the IDCE and UG, a number of computer schools have mushroomed in both urban and rural areas. Some of the courses offered are Windows 98, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft Access, together with Introduction to the Internet and e-mail. These programmes attract a wide cross-section of youth and adult groups, and give a good indication of the growing awareness of the need to come to terms with the technological and communication revolution which is engulfing Guyana and the world.

In the early 1990s, a special effort to provide new opportunities for greater access to education for persons unable to attend traditional adult education classes led to the introduction of distance education. This strategy was introduced by the Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (IACE), now the IDCE. Correspondence courses from Wolsley Hall, Bennett, and Rapid Results (UK institutions) were done earlier by persons who wanted to gain post-secondary education certificates, diplomas, and degrees. In 1992, at the launching of the distance education programme in Linden, a bauxite mining town 75 miles

south of Georgetown, the capital, the IDCE Director, in his inaugural address, indicated that the aim was to use distance education methods to provide pre-university and university education for all those who are capable of it, regardless of their age, status, or previous academic qualifications. The statement continued:

We are relying on distance education for several reasons:

First, in a situation like ours where because of the brain drain, there are small groups of resource persons in various fields, distance education will allow the University to maximise the influence of the knowledge and skills of that small group of professionals in meeting some of the educational needs of our population scattered across the coastland and hopefully into the interior in the not too distant future.

Secondly, since distance education relies on 'pre-packed' materials prepared by teams of highly trained professionals; it can provide standardized and high quality education to persons scattered throughout the country.

Thirdly, it will help us to reach those shift workers, housewives, and other persons who may find it impossible to attend traditional classes. In addition, distance education has potential in terms of economies of scale. A distance education course which reaches large numbers of persons can do so at lower costs than courses conducted by traditional face-to-face methods. Indeed the list of sound reasons for using distance education is almost unending.

The Institute of Adult and Continuing Education Distance Education Division will use multi-media courses - those are courses which combine a number of media such as print, teleconferencing and radio broadcasts or audio cassettes as well as face-to-face sessions - to conduct upgrading courses in core areas such as English language, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, and Physics, advanced level courses as well as credit and non-credit courses in a range of academic, technical and professional areas.

Technology is, therefore, being used to spread the reach of adult education.

Literacy

Within recent years, there has been increasing recognition of a literacy problem in Guyana. The findings of low literacy arose from an extensive survey of 3,196 Guyanese youths (53% male and 46% female) conducted by UG in 1995 (Jennings, Kellman, Clarke, & Joseph, 1995). This study was initiated after Guyana's national literacy rate was given as 96.4% in a 1993 national report. This misleading figure was partly due to an international redefinition of the term "literate" (able to read and write a simple message) to the term "functionally literate" (the state of being able to engage in all those activities in which the use of skills in literacy and numeracy are required for effective functioning in one's group or community). A major finding of the survey was that 89% of the out-of-school youths, aged 14-25, across all 10 regions of Guyana was achieving "low to moderate levels of functional literacy." Key recommendations arising from the study included the establishment of a functional literacy committee and the linking of national literacy programmes for youths with training for employment and employment generation. As a result, the National Functional Literacy Committee was set up by the Guyana Government in 1996, publicly committing the government to eradicating illiteracy across the country. Coupled with the government's commitment, this finding squarely places literacy as a priority on the education agenda of the MOE as well as formal and non-formal education agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and all Guyanese citizens. An appropriate multi-pronged strategy must be devised to address this

very important issue.

Guyana's EFA 2000 Assessment country report (Stuart, 1999) briefly records the response of three NGOs to the literacy problem: NACOSA, a organization of Muslims who work within their religion to increase the literacy levels of their members; DAYSPRING, a non-profit organization, established in 1994, working to help disadvantaged youth to realize their potential; and the Baha'i Faith which initiated a reading programme entitled "On the Wings of Words." Participation in the last-mentioned programme, which aims to train persons interested in working with communities to improve literacy, followed by working with a group for one year, entitles the trainer to a certificate from the IDCE. As of June 1998, the programme had trained 1,000 facilitators and contributed to the literacy of over 3,000 students.

In addition to its continued support of the Baha'i Programme, the IDCE, in collaboration with three Canadian colleges of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, obtained funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for a project entitled "Literacy for a New Economy - Skills for Success." The overall goal of this project is to strengthen the essential skills required for Guyanese youths to become empowered through employment, and through effective functioning in their workplaces, communities, and families. This will be achieved through improving the target group's essential skills (more specifically, literacy, numeracy, and entrepreneurial/business skills), by working with and providing training for community outreach networking links in the 10 administrative regions of the country.

Another programme that contributes to the improvement of literacy in the community is a programme called "Parents as Teachers At Home (PATH)." It began as a one-year evening programme in the Teaching of Reading at the Linden Centre of the IDCE, targeting teachers, community workers, and parents who were concerned about the declining levels of literacy in the Linden Community. It now attracts groups from Parent Teacher Associations, and the new name indicates the expansion of the programme to cover related aspects which influence the learning process of children. Similar programmes are developing in other parts of the country.

One of the most effective adult education programmes is the Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Training Programme. The Guyanese CBR programme, "Hopeful Steps," offers training for volunteers who work at the community level with children with disabilities and their parents, as well as with adults. The programme, which has attracted international funding, has expanded across the coastland and interior regions. The initial focus was on persons with disabilities; persons who cannot see, hear, move, or learn. The programme, now in its 12th year, has expanded and provides opportunities for the acquisition of relevant knowledge and life skills. The advocacy for inclusive education and to work with teachers in schools is a continuing strategy. Workshops are conducted for school teachers, health workers, and parents of children with disabilities. The aims of these sessions are:

- To sensitize participants about the CBR Programme.
- To encourage them to foster positive attitudes among members of the community towards persons with disabilities.
- To demonstrate various ways of teaching persons with disabilities to think, move, and become independent.

This training programme has attracted representatives from Caribbean, Canadian, European, and African countries. It can be seen, therefore, that within the rubric of adult education there are several initiatives to deal with literacy.

Health and Environment

Health and environmental education for adults in Guyana is tackled by way of curricula developed by the country's Environment and Health Unit and its Environmental Protection Agency. This effort has resulted in the raising of consciousness, and has improved skills training as well as personal and family health standards. An important area of health education that has received much attention in recent years is that of Occupational Safety and Health. The objective is: "To improve working conditions and environment, with the emphasis on preventative rather than curative measures" (Guyana. Ministry of Labour and Health, 1999). The services of the Occupational Safety and Health Division of the Ministry of Labour and Health embrace all workplaces and extend throughout the length and breadth of Guyana. The Division is charged with the responsibility of enforcing and encouraging the practice of good workplace safety and health practices and, as such, it provides information, advisory, supervisory, and regulatory services to assist employers and trade unions in the recognition and control of workplace hazards. Its scope includes legislation, inspection and investigation, chemical safety, training and education, and research and information. In order to achieve its objective, the Division is required to undertake certain key responsibilities which are as follows:

- Promote the establishment of Workplace Safety and Health Committees.
- Initiate public awareness programmes and conduct safety and health surveys.
- Coordinate and liaise with local and international agencies with similar interest.
- Investigate complaints and workplace accidents.
- Organize and conduct training seminars.
- Inspect workplaces.
- Review/revise safety and health regulations and enact legislation.
- Register factories and record steam boiler inspection certificates.
- Establish and implement safety standards and a Chemical Safety Programme.
- Maintain an information system on Occupational Safety and Health.

Two programmes organized by the IDCE provide support to the work of this Division: a Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health that can be completed either one year full-time or two years part-time at UG, and a Certificate in Workplace Safety and Health, which is a 12-week programme (one day a week release) that attracts participants from a wide range of agencies.

HIV/AIDS

The Caribbean has the world's second highest rate of HIV/AIDS infection. According to UNAIDS/WHO estimates, there are 310,000 adults and children living with the disease in the region today. HIV/AIDS and illicit drugs currently represent monumental threats to the Caribbean. The region, then, is under siege by this deadly disease which has a prevalence rate of 1.9%, that is, 2 out of every 100 persons in the Caribbean are infected. As a result of the alarming increase in HIV/AIDS in Guyana, the activities of the Occupational Safety and Health Division have recently been expanded to include HIV/AIDS prevention and protection. The new community education programmes aim to increase awareness about HIV/AIDS among workers, youths, and employers, and to distribute appropriate posters on HIV/AIDS prevention and protection as well as condoms in the workplace.

Gender

Special training in leadership for women

The establishment of the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute in December 1997 marked part of Guyana's commitment to the Beijing Declaration: to implement strategies for the advancement of women through empowerment, equality, and full participation in the leadership and decision-making process. The stated aims of the Institute are to:

- Develop career advancement/training programmes for women and girls at different stages of their development.
- Create a conglomerate of women leaders, executives, and managers in critical sections of the society.
- Foster networking and cooperation among women.
- Provide gender-sensitive training for decision makers and others in the society, with a view to advancing gender equity.
- Strengthen the leadership capacity of women and girls.
- Provide continuous training and education on issues affecting women's growth and development.

The range of programmes geared to building the capacity of women in government, the public

service, the private sector, community development, and entrepreneurship offered by the Institute include: Community Development; Small Business Management; Leadership Skills; Women's Health; Marketing; Gender and Politics; Computer Training; Environmental Management; Skills Management; Hospitality Management; Image Building & Etiquette; Customer Relations; Organizational Skills; Conflict Resolution; Effective Communications; and Gender Awareness. As part of its Outreach Programme, the Institute also provides training through seminars/workshops in the rural and hinterland communities in the areas of: Mentoring; Persuasion Techniques; Gender & Politics; Leadership Skills; Community Development; Environmental Management; Healthy Lifestyles; Organizational Skills; AIDS Awareness; Women and Drug Trafficking; Empowering Disabled Women; Women and the Media; and Food Preservation Techniques.

The work of the YWCA and a variety of other women's groups continues to support the thrust of improving the position of women in society. The GRPA, an NGO, has been working for the interest and welfare of women. The GRPA executes its mandate through the provision of information and education on issues that address women's development, their reproductive health, and the role of women in homes, workplaces, and communities. It:

- empowers women by affording them access to knowledge so that they can make informed choices;
- provides opportunities for young women to learn a skill, become self-sufficient, and take care of themselves and family members;
- provides reproductive health services like family planning, pap smear services; the management of reproduction health disorders, and breast examinations;
- helps women to protect themselves from STDs and unwanted pregnancies;
- provides pre- and post-abortion counselling, as well as counselling on domestic violence and related issues, and facilitates collaboration with other services through referrals.

A new educational programme specifically directed at increasing the range of skills in society focuses on non-traditional training for women. This is a Caribbean regional programme funded by the IDB, with the Human Employment and Resource Training (HEART) Trust of Jamaica as the overall executing agency for the project. The implementing agencies are: the Centre for Employment Training (CET) - Belize; the T. A. Marryshow Community College - Grenada; the IDCE - Guyana; the St Vincent Development Corporation - St. Vincent and the Grenadines; and the John Donaldson Technical Institute - Trinidad and Tobago. All the selected implementing agencies have:

- extensive experience in delivering job training programmes;
- capacity to provide the counterpart logistical and administrative support needed during the project;
- established links with private sector and employer groups;
- experience with adult learners;
- access to infrastructure (classrooms and laboratories) needed for the training programmes to be developed under this project;
- potential to sustain training programmes after the project is completed.

The overall objective of the project is to increase the level of skilled labour available in the country, by increasing access and employment opportunities for a marginalized but substantial sector of the labour force--low income women--through the delivery of training for specialized skills. The specific objectives of the project are:

- To design and implement a training model that will enable technical/vocational training institutions and organizations to deliver skills training programmes that respond to labour market demand and supply.
- To strengthen the labour market information systems so as to provide a direct link between the labour market, skills training programmes, employers, and prospective employees, thereby improving the training programme design and delivery.
- To ensure placement of trainees in employment at the conclusion of their training.
- To increase linkages and to establish cost recovery and other mechanisms that will enable training institutions, private sector agencies, and community organizations to offer sustainable training programmes for low-income women.

This programme was launched in Guyana in October 2000, and the overwhelming response to the advertisement indicated the dire need for an educational programme of this kind. Training has begun for 200 women, and the skills that will be taught initially are: Plumbing; Masonry; Literacy/numeracy; Entrepreneurial skills; Carpentry; Electrical installation; Gender; and Life and job coping skills.

The principal objective of the AEA, which was established in 1957, was to awaken an active interest in continuing education. The Women's Outreach Programme (WOP), an affiliate body of the AEA, was established in April 1995 with the dual aim of "teaching skills as a means of saving money and teaching skills as a means of earning money" (CARCAE, 1999). The goals of WOP are:

- To facilitate the building of a better self-image for women, and to create better members of the community.
- To teach empowerment skills and literacy for family members.
- To provide a forum for addressing issues related to women and family.
- To teach traditional and non-traditional skills to women.

A coordinator, based at the headquarters, is responsible for organizing the activities undertaken by WOP. Outreach centres have been set up within the various regions across the country. These are managed by regional coordinators who are charged with identifying the needs and desires of the target groups in their respective districts. Courses offered by WOP include baking, care of the elderly, childcare management, and small business management. Programmes to improve the status of women in Guyana are offered by the Council for the Affairs and Status of Women (CAWSIG), the YWCA, the Federation of Women's Institutes, the Women's Studies Unit (UG), the Women's Affairs Bureau, and the Women's Leadership Institute. These involve political education for women, increased awareness, and social development. These projects also contribute to an increasing involvement of women at the leadership and management levels.

Meanwhile, men's issues are not adequately addressed. Attempts are being made by a number of men's groups in churches and other fora (e.g., GRPA), and call-in programmes and discussion groups on radio and television, to discuss the changing role of men in society and the man's role in the family. Nonetheless, there is need for an institution to take the lead in organizing some educational programmes that will help to deal with their changing role in society, foster better relations between men and women, and improve family relationships.

At the last two IDCE Annual Tutor Workshops held in October 1999 and November 2000, tutors were guided in strategies aimed at making the curriculum gender sensitive as well as inclusive. However, gender issues have been an important component of the agenda of the Outreach Berbice Centre which has had an affiliate, the Women's Community Development Committee (WCDC), for over three years. WCDC is an amalgamation of women's groups

throughout the region. Apart from forging ahead in ventures to improve the life experiences of women, it has sought to address the much-talked about issue of the “boy-child.” Every effort is being made to encourage women to realize that they play a major role in training the boy-child who grows into manhood, sometimes, ill-prepared for this role.

In Guyana, like the rest of the Caribbean community, women outnumber men graduating from university, and attending and completing non-formal adult education courses in both urban and rural areas. It is argued that men seem to outnumber women only in prisons.

Conclusion

The changing face of the international environment has inevitably led to shifts in Caribbean policy in many regards. The structural adjustment initiatives of the 1980s--the Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher era--have had far-reaching implications for the countries of the economic South. It is within this context that Guyana’s efforts at adult education must be analyzed.

The dawn of the new millennium has dictated the paths that must be followed by Caribbean states. Rapid technological advances and the accompanying globalization have created the twin realities of improvement of the quality of life and increased unemployment. As such, Guyana, like other Caribbean territories, has been thrust into the actuality of re-tooling its workforce in order to meet the demands of the twenty first century. This exercise has, in large measure, placed great emphasis on skills training.

The recent launching of the Guyana Forum for Lifelong Learning is indicative of the fact that adult and distance education providers are aware of the need for collaborative and networking approaches in the quest of future goals in lifelong learning. The vigorous participation and energy of the population are crucial to the development of the nation’s education system. Despite the economic constraints and the political instability that often characterize the country, Guyana remains relentless in its pursuit of adult education.

Jamaica

Historically and culturally, Jamaica is very much part of the Anglo-Caribbean, which shares a common heritage of British colonization and a government based upon the Westminster bicameral pattern. Yet, this largest of the English-speaking islands, and largest demographic unit of the group (approximately 2.5 million of a total of 5.5 million), is geographically isolated in the central Caribbean, being part of the Greater Antilles chain. It is approximately 90 miles from Cuba, 100 miles from Haiti, and roughly equidistant between Port of Spain and New York. The island has a mountainous interior, with the majority of the population located on the coastal plains.

In Jamaica, as in most other developing countries, skills are needed in a number of critical development areas. These areas include health, sustainable development, parenting, gender, politics, and IT. The development of the educators of Jamaican adults is, therefore, of major importance.

Provision, Management, and Administration of Adult Education

There are a number of organizations and individuals involved in adult education in Jamaica, delivering a wide range of programmes. Some of these are JACAE, the JAMAL Foundation (for literacy), and the UWIDEC.

JACAE, established in 1984, is the chief NGO responsible for the development of adult education and for promoting the training and development of adult educators in Jamaica. JACAE’s vision is to promote high-quality lifelong education for all Jamaican adults, and to hone the skills and attitudes of all trainers of adults in Jamaica. To this end, JACAE examines

problems which affect adult education programmes, and develops and implements strategies to enhance the future of adult education in the country. In the 1990s, JACAE made significant strides in the development of adult educators. For example, in 1998, JACAE, in collaboration with Mount St. Vincent University (MSVU), Halifax, Canada, initiated a masters degree programme in adult education and, in 1999, two cohorts of 66 students were enrolled in this degree programme. JACAE also participated in the development of the two-year Certificate in Adult Education via UWIDEC in 1997/98. To further develop the knowledge and skills of adult educators, JACAE, in association with JAMAL, established a JAMAL/JACAE Adult Education Resource Centre that now contains a Documentation Unit, which houses a growing collection of adult education materials. The Centre also has an audio-teleconferencing unit that links four sites in Jamaica to facilitate the delivery of the MSVU certificate programme, and which also facilitates collaboration among adult education agencies. A computer laboratory was scheduled to be opened in 2000.

JACAE has also employed other creative strategies to encourage adult educators to participate in activities to increase their skills in the rapidly-widening field of adult education. The organization observed several Adult Education Weeks in the 1990s, with each week having a special theme. Activities included lectures, seminars, and symposia, and awards were given to individuals and organizations that had made significant contributions to the development of adults. Activities such as Adult Education Week, and other promotional strategies such as the preparation of a *Directory of Adult Education in Jamaica* have resulted in an increase in the membership of the organization to over 90 professionals.

In addition to its work in developing adult educators, JACAE promotes stronger partnerships between the public and private sectors in the delivery of adult education programmes, including the development of educational materials. The links between JACAE and CARCAE were also strengthened in the 1990s. In 1997, JACAE hosted a workshop in preparation for "UNESCO's Fifth International Conference on Adult Education," and recommendations were sent for inclusion as part of the position statement from JACAE. As a result of the recommendations from the UNESCO workshop, JACAE held a National Consultation in May 1998 on the theme "Policies and Priorities for Adult Education," in which the *Agenda for the Future of Adult Education* was critically examined. A *Plan of Action* for Jamaica was subsequently developed, and presented to the MOE.

In the early 2000s, the Council will continue to lobby for the formulation of a national policy on adult education, and for allocation of financial and human resources to enhance adult education and lifelong learning. JACAE's public relations drive has done much to counteract the widespread perception that adult education pertains solely to literacy education for adults. In the 1990s, the Council addressed at least six critical adult education areas: literacy, work, IT, health, environment, and gender. Each of these six specialized adult education areas contains special challenges. The positive indication, however, is that there is now a rapidly-increasing awareness in a greater number of Jamaican adults that participation in a variety of lifelong education activities is essential to the development and maintenance of a high quality of life.

Worker Education

Worker education in Jamaica will be reviewed from three perspectives: the provision of worker education; problems pertaining to worker education; and reflections on worker education.

Management and worker education is provided by several institutions in Jamaica such as UWI, UTECH, and the Northern Caribbean University. Many of these institutions train thousands of persons every year. The SCS had a turnover of approximately 9,000 students in the 1998/99 academic year, with the most popular courses being the Certificates in Business, Accounting, Personnel Management, and Computer Studies. In 1997, the Management Institute for National Development (MIND) provided management and work-related training to 8,000 private and

public sector workers. In the same year, the Institute of Management and Production provided a number of business courses for about 3,500 persons in management studies and business administration at the certificate, diploma, and associate degree levels. Over 3,600 persons who lost their jobs because of downsizing in the public and private sectors have been trained by the Work Force Development Consortium (WFDC) in technical and supervisory skills.

The HEART Trust/National Training Agency (HEART/NTA) also provides training to thousands of young adults in the following skills areas: construction, art and craft, commerce, cosmetology, sewing machine mechanics, automotive mechanics, apparel products, agriculture, data entry, hospitality, industrial maintenance and repair, and maritime studies. HEART/NTA has developed a series of excellent and attractive manuals for students in all these disciplines. It will also, among other efforts, upgrade its programmes to deliver higher level skills and strengthen services to industry. HEART/NTA has also been advising on worker education in other countries, including Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.

The 1990s saw an increase in offshore private educational institutions offering degree programmes in Jamaica: Nova South Eastern University which offers a Bachelor of Professional Management, a Master of Business Administration and, in 2000, instituted a Ph.D. programme in various management disciplines; the Jamaica Institute of Bankers offers the Master of Business Administration in association with the University of Wales; and Mico Teachers' College offers a Ph.D. in Instructional Technology in association with Nova South Eastern University. Such programmes have increased the number of persons trained in advanced professional studies in Jamaica.

Business organizations also provide training to their staff through their in-house training programmes. According to the *Social and Economic Survey* (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 1998), information received from 12 major private sector companies in 1997 showed that over 12,254 persons received training in areas such as Management and Administration, Computing, Banking, Financial Management and Accounting, Customer Relations, and Supervisory Management. The Trade Union Institute of Jamaica regularly holds comprehensive courses for union personnel, not only in industrial relations but also on topics such as social skills in the workplace. It is currently developing women in their role as union delegates.

As illustrated above, several courses and seminars are offered to the Jamaican workforce. Most courses are excellent in content and in delivery. There is obviously a heavy emphasis on skills development, but training programmes can alter work behaviour in ways other than skill development. Another strategy is to increase a worker's self-efficacy, which not only gives the worker an opportunity to develop skills, but also the opportunity to develop the level of reflective and critical thinking to resolve both common and unusual work problems. Workers with high self-efficacy have strong expectations about their abilities to perform successfully in new situations; they are confident and expect to be successful. Training, then, is a means to positively affect self-efficacy because workers may be more willing to undertake job tasks and exert a high level of effort. It is questionable whether worker education in Jamaica promotes the type of critical thinking that helps in developing self-efficacy. This assertion is made in the context of the low productivity of the Jamaican workplace today.

Training programmes should be planned and implemented in such a manner as to promote critical thinking to resolve the problems facing the Jamaican workforce in the twenty first century. Four major problems in the Jamaican workforce today which lower productivity and have implications for training are: the de-motivation of many Jamaican workers; poor transfer of learning from training course to workplace; the low participation of senior management and males in training courses; and an increasingly unhealthy work force. The de-motivation of Jamaican workers is due primarily to the conditions in the workplace, including the lack of effective leadership skills of supervisors and managers. Carter (1997), in his study of Jamaican workers found that there are several reasons for worker dissatisfaction in Jamaica:

they [the workers] are deliberately working below their potential, they do not believe that management will share the benefits of increased production with them, they believe their salaries and promotions are based on factors that have absolutely nothing to do with production or production-related considerations and that the benefits of hard work are concerted to the good of the few. (p. 169)

The de-motivation of workers is partially responsible for the poor transfer of learning from training course to workplace. Yet, not only is learning not being transferred because of unfriendly organizational cultures, but also because education is seen by too many workers as simply additional certification to be placed on their resumes and, unfortunately, some employees do receive higher positions without having to demonstrate or prove critical thinking skills in their areas of responsibility. De-motivation and poor transfer of learning are linked to inadequate senior management participation in courses and seminars on effective leadership. Since most senior managers are male, this might in fact simply emphasize the unwillingness of many males to attend courses. The disproportion is seen in most institutions that provide worker training, for example, 64.2% of the persons trained at the Jamaican Institute of Management in 1997 were female.

Another problem is the declining health of the Jamaican workforce, resulting in their lower productivity. This problem is either ignored in most worker education programmes or dealt with quickly and casually in the general curriculum in personnel management course. Personnel departments in many organizations report increases in absenteeism due to illnesses. Declining health may be partially due to hazards at the workplace, such as inhalation of chemicals and dust, and offices that are not organized in a proper ergonomic manner. Workplace hazards cause or exacerbate a wide variety of minor and short-term ailments such as headaches, nausea, dermatitis, and fatigue, all conditions which lower productivity. There is eye damage and radiation exposure from looking at computer screens which are not protected by anti-radiation screens for long hours. Many occupational illnesses go unreported because their effects occur much later in life, and it is difficult to make a cause-and-effect link at that time. It is known that a large number of health problems such as cancer, spontaneous abortions, impotence, and respiratory diseases such as asthma are related to workplace hazards.

Research in the area of Jamaican worker education is required on the problem areas previously identified, especially on how to improve the work ethic, transfer learning, and increase the participation of males and senior management in further education. Resolution or improvement of human resource problems in the workplace requires changes in management behaviour, and therefore, in management education. Much research needs to be done on how Jamaican managers think, and why they take the actions they do.

However, addressing appropriate management education only takes care of the dynamics within the workplace. Efforts to educate the many good workers who have been displaced through re-engineering must continue so that they can re-skill themselves and develop entrepreneurship skills. Even though, in the present climate of downsizing, the thrust is on finding employment for the young and healthy, the physically and mentally challenged, and other people that are disadvantaged with respect to learning should not be forgotten. As progress is made in this area of human concern, adult and continuing technical and vocational education must develop teaching/learning programmes and strategies that enable such potential learners to broaden and deepen their aspirations and achievements, within their social and economic contexts.

Information Technology

As the business climate continues to evolve, computer education also continues to enjoy an increasingly strategic role. The increased emphasis on productivity, the dawn of the mobile professional, and e-commerce all make computer education essential. Managers need information

at the lower operating levels, and executives need information to support long-range planning and policy decisions. Training in systems and information technology today is critical. Systems training is a powerful tool because it creates a framework for both excellent problem solving and decision making.

Many organizations are involved in computer education in Jamaica. For example, UTECH offers degree, diploma, and certificate programmes in computer education. The Institute of Management and Production offers a certificate in systems analysis, and the Jamaican Institute of Management and the Info Serve Institute of Technology offer diplomas in computer studies. In 1999, organizations such as the Jamaica Employers Federation organized several seminars on Y2K. Many training institutions are also offering seminars on e-commerce.

The main objectives of the Jamaica Computer Society Education Foundation (JCSEF) are to improve the quality of computer science education; to assist in the development of curricula which include the use of technology; and to promote the use of instructional technology in teacher training experiences and methodologies. In collaboration with the JAMAL Foundation, and the WFDC, the JCSEF is currently implementing "The Adult Computer Education Programme," a programme that is geared towards improving competencies and productivity in the workplace. This programme is promoting an acceleration in the attainment of literacy and numeracy skills by adults, and increasing the number of school leavers and adults who have basic computer skills in areas such as word processing and spreadsheets. The programme also hopes to increase the number of adults who have specific computer skills in areas such as graphic presentations, technical drawing and design, and data entry.

The programme not only seeks to equip adults with skills that are more applicable to the requirements of business and industries, but to prepare adults to become eligible for certification from HEART/NTA and other tertiary vocational training institutions. A pilot project for the "Adult Computer Education Programme" was launched in May 1997, with an initial two-day "Teacher Computer Orientation Workshop," adult evening classes, and a series of classes held during the summer. Evaluation results to date have shown that the effort has been very successful.

Many Jamaicans are making every effort to keep abreast of new computer applications, in order to do research on products and services important for the survival or development of their businesses; to facilitate work processes; and to complete educational projects. The new computer applications often contain opportunities for self-directed learning. Once persons are taught how to teach themselves, they may only require additional training on how to handle problems and to learn the new applications that are currently in vogue.

Literacy

The main provider of literacy education to adults in Jamaica is the JAMAL Foundation, formerly the Jamaican Movement for the Advancement of Literacy (JAMAL). JAMAL was established in 1974 with the objective of eradicating illiteracy in the shortest possible time, and to help in the development of human resources. JAMAL continues to enjoy considerable support from the government, many private sector bodies, and individuals. The illiteracy rate in Jamaica decreased from over 40% in 1970 to 18% in 1987. Through JAMAL's programmes, over 250,000 persons have been made literate and there are thousands of success stories. Many graduates have become skilled in professions such as nursing, banking, and auto-mechanics, and some have rejoined the programme as teachers and field staff.

The data from a research study conducted on 31 businesses (JAMAL, 1997b) were analyzed to assess the impact of employee literacy on productivity, and the cost of illiteracy to Jamaican businesses. The results of the study were revealing: 74% of the companies surveyed believed that they had a significant problem with basic illiteracy in some area in their organization, and 43% of these companies had taken steps to address the problem of illiteracy. Of the employers responding to the survey, 64% indicated that inadequate literacy skills were responsible for

production issues such as accidents, absenteeism, and poor work attitude, while 48% stated that illiteracy adversely affected product quality. Based upon the above, the study found that, in 1995, direct costs to business respondents attributed to illiteracy, was approximately J \$3.9 billion, or 2.4% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Based on the results of this research study, JAMAL is revamping its approach to adult literacy, and is currently working on two programmes that will take the literacy movement in Jamaica into the twenty first century. The two projects, the “Life Skills Programme” and the “Workplace Learning Programme,” are both targeted at equipping the adult learner for the workplace. The “Life Skills Programme” is conducted in collaboration with the George Brown College in Canada, and modules are currently being developed. It aims at equipping students and adults to enable them to cope in the workplace. “The Workplace Learning Programme” helps industries to assist employees with learning. The workplaces are partners in this project, providing the venue for classes and the students. JAMAL assesses the work of the teachers who are paid by the Foundation. These new initiatives are part of JAMAL's mandate to develop a new consciousness in the attitude of society towards the organization, which has been in existence since 1974. The efforts at revamping JAMAL have resulted in the curriculum being rewritten to take in new approaches to learning, with community education being the focus.

JAMAL is developing human resources in the workplace and at its Adult Education Centres, by linking literacy skills with four other important skills: numeracy, life skills, accessing of information, and personal development. Numeracy is emphasized because of the importance of developing integrated skills, as opposed to an emphasis on purely functional literacy. Life skills enhance the individual's ability to interact not only in the workplace, but also in the family and community. The dissemination of information on work, education, health, and culture will enable adult learners to participate meaningfully in the economic and social affairs of the country. Personal development will develop adults' attitudinal skills that are crucial for their well being and happiness.

JAMAL is also emphasizing new and innovative teaching methods, many of which will make use of the new computer technologies. Consequently, in association with JCSEF, JAMAL has put in place some of the elements of computer-assisted learning programmes in its Adult Education Centres in six parishes. Use of JAMAL's website is also available in these parishes. The facilities of the Adult Education Centres are also being expanded to assist in the provision of secondary school education for those adults who do not have high-school education or diplomas.

In addition to JAMAL and its partner business organizations, there are other providers of literacy education to adults in Jamaica. A number of churches in many denominations have been active in literacy education. Many non-literate persons find the less business-like and generally more compassionate atmosphere of the church more conducive to an admission of their inadequate literacy skills. Though the training given at these churches varies widely in terms of methods used, they have benefited many persons.

It is very difficult to determine precisely what literacy skills are essential to succeed in any society, therefore, the results of the JAMAL survey provide no firm answers to such questions. It is clear, however, that political will has to be widened to encompass the national will if literacy action is to be sustained and be successful. It will also be necessary to generate political will from those at the grassroots level. Unless the genuine motivation of the target population is raised, no significant breakthrough will be possible. Political will, in its genuine sense, must thus be enlarged to a national will covering political, governmental, technical, and popular will.

Health Education

The level of morbidity, the provision of adult health education in Jamaica, and recommendations for its future are important considerations in any discussion of health in Jamaica. Diseases of various kinds impose a significant burden on the population in terms of

long-term illness, disability, and death. In Jamaica, non-communicable diseases, including heart disease, cancer, stroke, hypertension, diabetes, and injuries, are the leading causes of illness and death. Where communicable diseases are concerned, improvements in social conditions and public health programmes have largely controlled mortality, although the AIDS epidemic remains a serious problem. According to Figueroa and Brathwaite (1995), at the end of December 1994, 1,028 AIDS cases had been reported in Jamaica, a cumulative AIDS case rate of 47 per 100,000 population.

Drug use also poses problems for the Jamaican population. In a study conducted by Figueroa, Fox, and Minor (1999) of 958 persons (454 males and 504 females) aged 15-49 years, whose demographic characteristics were similar to the general population, smoking cigarettes and marijuana was common among men (36%), with 11% among women, as was heavy alcohol use (30%), with 9% among women. The high level of rum intake among Jamaican males not only leads to health problems for the individuals involved, but poses risks of accident and injury to others.

The Government of Jamaica, through its Ministry of Health, NGOs, and service and community-based organizations, has been attempting to resolve the health problems discussed above by using various educational strategies: manpower development, drinking water quality and supply, sanitary solid waste disposal, food and nutrition, and maternal and child health. According to the *Social and Economic Survey* (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 1998), activities under the health education programme are increasing, as the Ministry of Health continues to promote wellness and prevent the occurrence and spread of diseases in the population. The main providers of health education are Ministry of Health Officers, doctors and nurses, and other health care professionals.

The Ministry of Health has been very active in education concerning STDs, and health personnel regularly visit communities and work organizations to give talks on the prevention of STDs. The Ministry of Health's Epidemiology Unit has been running the National HIV/STD Control Programme established in 1987. Between 1992 and 1998, support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) enabled the development of a major condom promotion campaign, including advertising, face-to-face education, and widely-distributed printed material. The safe sex campaign used popular methodologies and was supported by artistes such as DJ Shabba Ranks and other musicians. The programme's communication team used research results and lessons learned from previous communication campaigns to identify target groups and develop strategies for each group. Each part of the communications strategy was narrowly focused. The target group of sexually active young adults, for example, was divided into men and women entering new relationships, women in need of condom negotiation skills, men with STDs, and women with STDs. Public relations messages were also extensively used to influence youth and opinion leaders from the media, churches, the music industry, and communities. The mass media coverage generated by the programme reinforced the messages Jamaicans received from thousands of outreach workers, counselors, and public health staff. The programme also worked with employers to establish prevention programmes in dozens of workplaces (National Environmental Education Committee, 1998, p. 65).

NGOs and alternative health organizations are also involved in health education. Common methods used to disseminate information by these bodies are classes, conferences, posters, booklets, leaflets, occasional health fairs, and the media. The mass media is being used in new ways to promote health on a variety of issues: alcohol and tobacco control, lead poisoning, nutrition, the prevention and treatment of HIV, and violence prevention, to name a few. Community personnel have been encouraged to participate actively in these meetings and fora.

Some of the health NGOs which are heavily involved in adult education activities are: the Heart Association of Jamaica, the Diabetes Association of Jamaica, the Jamaica Cancer Society, the Sickie Cell Club of Jamaica, and the Addiction Alert Organization. NGOs provide health care services and education for the Jamaican populace in the area of chronic diseases. However,

limited human and financial resources impede the achievements, extensions, and availability of services offered by these organizations. Much of the educational thrust of the Heart Association is on the maintenance of a suitable diet for heart patients. The Diabetes Association of Jamaica has also been active in education concerning diet and lifestyles, and has been very proactive in training its own personnel. For example, the Diabetes Association has trained over 200 Diabetes Lay Facilitators. Educational programmes provided by the Addiction Alert Organization included training of adolescent facilitators, peer educators, an out-patient treatment programme, and a workplace/institution/community training programme to equip employees and other relevant persons with skills and knowledge to manage substance abuse and abusers. The drug rehabilitation services provided by the Richmond Fellowship were expanded to include a two-year prevention programme to be implemented in a nearby school.

Service industries have also been active in health education. Women's organizations, Rotary, Lions, and the various service clubs often promote disease management or prevention. There are also several groups that educate adults on holistic health and "natural" health practices. The Reflexology Association of Jamaica and the Alternative Market of Jamaica are examples of alternative health groups that regularly provide health education classes and activities.

Environmental Education

Environmental education is provided at all levels of the education system in Jamaica. At the primary level, an awareness of the environment is included in the general curriculum. At the secondary level, principles of environmental awareness are taught in the natural and social sciences. At the tertiary level, including UWI, UTECH, and some teachers' colleges, environmental concepts and principles are addressed in the natural and social sciences, and in health education programmes.

Several agencies are presently undertaking community-based, non-formal environmental education for sustainable development programmes in specific communities. These include central government agencies, local authorities, NGOs, service clubs, professional associations, and CBOs. Central government agencies carry out environmental activities that are linked to policy. Their target audiences may be broadly defined as the general public, though many have a particular focus on resource users and local communities. Most NGOs seek linkages with other similar groups, and with public and private sector partners, in order to gain strength and achieve collective lobbying.

Adult environmental education programmes seek to encourage adults to be concerned about ecological principles that affect the entire population, and to show that they can improve their own environment. Educational efforts have been geared towards informing society of the resource limitations and the development options available within the fragile island ecosystem. The major vehicles for the dissemination of this information have been the mass media, public exhibitions, posters, and informal lectures and seminars which have been geared to a wide cross-section of the population. The method employed in this public awareness effort is the presentation of complex environmental principles in simple terms so that they can be easily assimilated by the wider society.

The National Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) in the Ministry of Environment and Housing is one of the most active organizations currently involved in environmental educational activities. The NRCA is a statutory agency that provides the management framework for conservation, protection, and sustainable use of Jamaica's natural resources, in collaboration with partners in the private and public sectors. The organization is committed to providing leadership in environmental policy development, and the establishment of standards, legislation, and regulations among other activities. The NRCA has established the public's "right to know" through full disclosure of Environmental Impact Assessments, thus facilitating communities in addressing environmental issues. It has encouraged many different groups, including teachers, to

guide students in understanding the importance of local wetlands; encouraged new parents to revive deep-seated traditions by planting a tree to mark the birth of a child; shown citizens how to become game wardens; and helped land developers to avoid cutting down trees in order to minimize erosion.

The Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (NCRPS) seeks to protect the coral reef, which is a mainstay of the town's tourist industry. The installation of mooring buoys that allow boats to anchor offshore without damaging the reef was one of the Society's first solution-oriented programmes. It has also developed an education programme for boat operators and tourists that has resulted in the virtual elimination of anchor damage to the reefs. The Society has used educational strategies such as posters, brochures on reef etiquette in hotel rooms, and tee shirts with messages. It has trained fishermen, who form a major resource user group which provides seafood for tourists, and has discussed with them matters concerning their own livelihood such as threats to the reef, sea turtle protection, and seaweed culture as alternative income earners. Based on their knowledge and experience, fishermen have helped to determine which areas of the park should be zoned for fishing and fish nurseries (National Environmental Education Committee, 1998).

The National Environmental Education Committee, another NGO, among its many educational initiatives, recently produced a highly innovative environmental education resource kit. This kit assists trainers to raise issues on environmental matters and can be used in various training settings. It contains definitions and concepts of the environment, exercises to promote environmental education for sustainable development, training tips, and tools and resource materials. According to the National Environmental Education Committee (1998), the Manchioneal Cultural Environmental Trust, a CBO, uses dance and art to highlight traditional, cultural practices while simultaneously creating environmental awareness. Specific programmes are aimed at reviving cultural and social values; promoting positive attitudes and values related to the sustainable use of natural resources; encouraging awareness concerning the dangers of deforestation; replanting 1,000 trees; cleaning up selected beaches; conducting education campaigns about the negative results of over-fishing; and fostering the kind of community spirit which will sustain a healthy, productive environment. The programme, which has had funding from the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica, has ongoing talks with farmers and fishermen, with the assistance of staff of the Fisheries Division who visit the fishermen's beaches regularly. The talks seek to help fishermen understand the dangers of over-fishing and the harmful effects of chemicals on marine life, and to encourage the farmers to replant trees and use compost as fertilizer.

Activities such as those described above have been useful and heartening. However, as environmental degradation is now a very serious problem in the country, there is a need for more high-quality environmental educational programmes. Directions for the future include improved coordination of environmental education programmes, the greater use of media and communication, and the development of methods to control pollution emanating from industry. At the present stage of Jamaica's development, there is also an urgent need for a change in the national attitude to one that endorses conservation and encourages the wise use of the country's resources. The achievement of this goal will require a well-coordinated public environmental education programme.

As far as training is concerned, implementing sustainable philosophy requires nothing less than a total paradigm shift; away from isolated and piecemeal specialization towards an integrated, holistic, interdisciplinary approach which recognizes that environmental issues have technical, economic, ethical, and social dimensions.

Gender

There are several themes highly appropriate to gender education in Jamaica. Among these are women's economic and political activities, negative attitudes towards women, and parenting skills. In Jamaica, there is a tradition of women's involvement in economic activities to support their families. The ability to set up one's own business became imperative for many Jamaican women in the 1990s. In 1995, the unemployment rate for women was twice that for men--22.5% for women as against 10.8% for men (International Labour Organization (ILO) Caribbean Office, 1997). Both men and women have suffered the consequences of downsizing, enterprise closures, staff reductions, terminations, lay-offs, and a lack of recruitment in the 1990s. There is no hard data on gender which indicate who has been the more affected, but the indications are that women have been the greater casualties, for example, because of the extensive lay-offs in the Free Zone area, where over 90% of the employees are women.

The Centre for Gender and Development Studies, UWI, has held many courses promoting the economic development of women. In 1999, as part of a larger inter-agency project on "Micro-enterprise in Jamaica," the Centre implemented a project entitled "Women and Micro-enterprise Development in Jamaica." Within this project, the Centre has held workshops across the island for women engaged in micro-enterprise activities and a manual, developed to facilitate this training, is being edited for publication by the Centre.

Workshops on "Community Economic Development and Women's Empowerment" are also being conducted by the Bureau of Women's Affairs. Agricultural micro-enterprise projects, in the urban inner-city communities and for the rural poor, were established in collaboration with British West Indian Airways (BWIA) through funding from the Netherlands, UNESCO, and FAO. The Jamaica Employers' Federation (JEF), in collaboration with the ILO, was particularly active in 1998 and 1999 in promoting gender education to close the gender gap in economic empowerment and participation. In 1998, a workshop on "Gender Discrimination in the World of Work – Impact and Implications for Productivity and Economic Development" was presented by the JEF. Obstacles to gender equality were identified and recommendations included strategies for Information, Education, Communication (IEC) Advocacy, Networking, and Collaboration.

With respect to women's participation in politics, there is low participation of women at the highest levels in the government and in both opposition parties. In 1999, there was only one female Minister of Government. To date, this female politician has consistently been very popular in the polls, so the issue is not disapproval of women in politics. The issue may arguably be the hesitation of women themselves to enter politics. At all levels in the political process, women are far less represented than their male counterparts, yet the evidence suggests that they are major organizers and promoters at the grass-roots level. In order to encourage the participation of women in the political process, the Jamaica Women's Political Caucus, an NGO working to increase the number of women at the decision-making levels of the political arena, undertakes, among other activities, the training of women involved in politics; supports and encourages women to run for political office; and carries out public education programmes on women in politics.

Apart from women's relatively low participation in economic and political activities, gender education is required to combat negative social behaviour against women in Jamaica. Males exert substantial control over women in a variety of spheres, and much of this control is negative. Some argue that one of the most powerful forms of social control over women is the fear of physical and sexual abuse and violence from men. Reported cases of rape and carnal abuse in 1998 numbered 1,420 (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 1999), but many such crimes go unreported.

Where violence is concerned, data from the Criminal Investigations Branch indicate that there were a total of 1,775 incidents of offences against the person in 1998, both male and female. Haniff (1994) reports that in only one month in 1994 there were 409 acts of violence committed against women in Jamaica, and much domestic violence is unreported. In the continuing stressful

atmosphere of organizational downsizing and the resultant frustrations, there has been a growing incidence of domestic violence towards women.

To reduce negative attitudes towards women, the JEF and all gender organizations have also sought to include males in their concerns about equality and safety of women. Campaigns against domestic violence are held regularly and there is a collaborative Inter-Agency Campaign Against Violence Against Women and Girls. The main objectives are to raise awareness and increase sensitivity in relation to violence against women and girls. In order to sensitize the public on issues related to violence against women, the Bureau of Women's Affairs organizes workshops, presentations, displays, and panel discussions to observe International Day for Women. To counteract violence against women, media and public education campaigns are also regularly launched, notably by the Women's Media Watch, Fathers Incorporated, Sistren Theatre Collective, Woman Incorporated, and the Centre for Gender and Development Studies. The Association of Women's Organizations in Jamaica (AWOJA) is currently overseeing a project involving the training of persons in the health and criminal justice systems in selected inner-city schools in particular, as well as in other secondary schools which lie outside of the inner city and government homes of safety.

Poor parenting has considerable social implications. Children in Jamaica are often compromised at an early age because their parents lack effective parenting skills. The low level of breast-feeding in Jamaica suggests poor mothering habits. Exclusive breast-feeding at 6 and 12 weeks were 52.9% and 47.0% respectively, a figure lower than the target set by the Ministry of Health. Non-involvement of the father in children's lives affects not only the economics of their home but also their emotional development. Evans (1989) comments on the effects of the father's absence on the development of boys' masculinity and girls' social interaction with males in Jamaica. Many studies suggest that a yearning for a strong father, combined with anger at the mother for deprecating him, can precipitate sexual promiscuity in girls, and the father's absence during a boy's childhood has been associated with a high crime rate.

Organizations and groups have worked to help parents improve their skills and share responsibilities with each other. The National Parenting Programme, coordinated by the Coalition for Better Parenting, has streamlined and integrated service delivery of programmes island-wide, thus improving quality and eliminating duplication of effort. With UNICEF sponsorship, the activities of the Coalition for Better Parenting are monitored and evaluated to assess needs, and the effectiveness and impact of the programmes of the member groups of the Coalition. A formal assessment and analysis of parenting issues is being conducted, and objectives, strategies, and monitoring indicators for the future work of the Coalition will be defined. Fathers' Incorporated, formed in 1991, has done a great deal of work in the education of males with respect to their relations with women, with other males, and fathering. This organization emphasizes the importance of fathering through its annual Model Father Awards Ceremony and programmes for the counselling of fathers.

Research is very important to inform the kind of gender-related education required in the Caribbean. There has been considerable research and education done by all the gender organizations. For example, the Regional Coordinating Unit of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies has developed a pilot project that determines performance differentials between males and females at the primary and secondary levels of education in Jamaica. The Centre has also done considerable research in developing a module for a Gender Awareness Training Programme for teacher educators in the region, in collaboration with the MOE and UWI's Faculty of Arts and Education. AWOJA has continued its research work and has launched its website as a part of its Tenth Anniversary celebrations, in an effort to strengthen networking locally, regionally, and internationally.

There is a converse side to gender bias in Jamaica, in that girls tend to outperform boys at the level of university entry, and registration statistics at the Mona Campus of UWI show three female students to every two males. Part of this may be the reputed attitude of parents who feel

that it is a better investment to educate their daughters than their sons. In the more privileged section of society, therefore, women are making great strides in the public service, industry, and commerce; they dominate the middle management strata; and, while the glass ceiling still exists, women are increasingly being promoted to higher posts.

It is best if gender research organizations work more actively with health and environmental organizations so that they too may promote gender welfare. Gender should be related to the health of children, for example, an absent father may lead to a malnourished child. Gender education may be related to environmental education in that healthy social relationships will tend to foster a healthy physical environment. The political voice, as in all adult education issues, needs to be heard more on how gender issues affect the economy of the nation.

Conclusion

Jamaica, like all other Caribbean countries, is under intense pressure to compete successfully in the new century. Constant worldwide changes in technology and markets have necessitated a new approach toward the need for lifelong learning in the six critical areas that have been discussed in this section. However, there is not only a need for a greater quantity of adult education programmes. In the rush to attain quantity, the quality and creativity of adult education programmes have sometimes been compromised. The formidable array of internal social changes confronting the country has heightened the need for new, more dynamic, training strategies. Indeed, in a number of cases in Jamaica, it has been found that only the most innovative of adult educational packages have delivered the promised gains in well-being, productivity, and efficiency. The positive indicator is that a much wider band of Jamaican adult educators is attending ongoing training in the creative and dynamic delivery of adult education programmes. This, in itself, holds much promise for the future of adult education in Jamaica.

Trinidad and Tobago

The twin-island republic of Trinidad and Tobago lies at the southern end of the archipelago of islands in the Caribbean Sea. The capital, Port of Spain is located at the foot of the Northern Range in the north-west peninsula on the coastline of the Gulf of Paria. San Fernando, the second largest town, is located in the south of the island in the foothills of the Southern Range. Because most of the oil-related industries are also in the south, San Fernando is often referred to as the industrial capital of the country. Pointe-a-Pierre, north of San Fernando, is the home of one of the largest oil refineries in the Commonwealth, and Point Lisas, a few miles further north, is the site of several industries and the centre of a great deal of industrial activity. Further south, in Point Fortin, is the world-famous Pitch Lake and related industries. Between Port of Spain and San Fernando is a smaller Central Range and the Caroni Plains. Most of the fertile land is in these plains which comprise the agricultural belt in which sugar cane, some rice, and vegetables are widely grown.

The country has a population of 1.3 million comprised of several ethnic groups. The largest of these are Indo-Trinidadians and Afro-Trinidadians. There are also significant numbers of French Creoles, Chinese, Syrians, and a small number of local and expatriate whites. The country became independent in 1962 and, like the other English-speaking countries, it has a two-tiered parliamentary system. Tobago has its own House of Assembly that deals with affairs related specifically to Tobago. As is the case in all Caribbean countries, in Trinidad and Tobago, education is regarded as important for employment and for social mobility. The formal education system includes primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions and education is free. The St. Augustine Campus of UWI provides opportunities to pursue higher education, and its non-formal education programmes cover a wide range of subjects.

Provision, Administration, and Management of Adult Education

Adult education is provided by the government, private educational institutions, private sector agencies, and NGOs. Among them, they offer formal and non-formal education and training to the adult population as a whole and to different groups of adults.

Within the MOE, the Adult Education Division is responsible for adult education and for organizing programmes that meet the learning needs of the adult population. In order to get a more accurate idea of the educational needs of the adult population, the Division organized a national forum to identify national needs in adult education and to determine priority programmes in 1998. The 100 participants identified the need to focus on lifelong learning and learning organizations; on effective parenting; on the aging process and enrichment activities for retired persons; on violence; on the changing workplace; on essential literacies for survival now and in the future; and on health.

The Adult Education Division operates 46 adult education centres located throughout the country, and there are plans to construct more. The centres are managed by 275 tutors and 40 supervisors, and offer a wide range of programmes including remedial and second-chance education, occupational courses for unemployed youth, basic education and literacy, family life education, public affairs and citizenship, and leisure time activities. The Division also conducts classes in literacy which are geared towards members of the population who are 16 years of age and over. Adult literacy classes are also offered by organizations such as the Adult Literacy Tutors Association (ALTA) and Moms for Literacy. The government set up a Ministry of Information and Distance Learning with responsibility for the creation and implementation of national distance education programmes. The intention is to employ the electronic media in the delivery of the programmes. For this reason, two television stations and a radio station have been obtained (Thurab-Nkhosi, 2000).

The SCS also has several centres throughout the country, and offers a wide range of formal and non-formal education programmes in which thousands of adults participate; in 1995, nearly 8,000 adults participated in its programmes. They include a general education programme which focuses on preparing students for CXC and A'Level examinations; a vocational and job-oriented programme; a special skills programme that includes adult literacy, English proficiency, and computer skills; and a further education programme that includes such areas as business studies, care of the elderly, and security. Among the formal courses are part-time certificate courses in Pre-Primary Education, Addiction Studies, and in Social Development and Disability, offered in collaboration with Mount Royal College in Alberta.

Work

Because of the industrial base of the economy, there is always a need for skilled technicians and for people skilled in the use of modern machines and technology. However, in 1992, 43 % of young people between the ages of 15-19 years and 36.1% between 20-24 years were unemployed. Consequently, a great deal of attention has been placed on education and training programmes to equip young people with marketable skills and to make them more employable. Both government and NGOs have implemented technical and vocational and skills training programmes for this group of young adults. The government's technical and vocational education and training programme is carried out in its two technical institutes, one each in Port of Spain and San Fernando. Their programmes are extensive and they offer full- and part-time courses in such subjects as repairs of electrical appliances, air conditioning and refrigeration maintenance, auto-mechanics, small appliance repairs, sign painting, upholstery, and food preparation. Students are prepared for local and external examinations including the City and Guilds Examinations.

Towards the end of the 1980s, conscious of the growing number of idle, unemployed youth, and concerned about the possible increase in social problems because of this, the government

implemented the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP). YTEPP's goal was to train 20,000 young people between the ages of 15-25 years so as to increase their access to apprenticeship, wage employment, or self-employment. The YTEPP programme consists of five components: a basic education project that seeks to upgrade literacy and numeracy skills; a vocational skills training project; an attitudinal development project; a work experience project; and a post-training support project. It is interesting to note that more females than males applied to and participated in the programme and that, although most of the applicants had attended secondary school and had failed to gain passes in the CXC examinations, prior to applying for entry to YTEPP, they had not been participating in any adult or continuing education programmes.

In 1995, the government contracted the Training Department of Metal Industries Company (MIC) to develop and organize a national skills training programme to equip individuals with the skills required by the energy-based, heavy industries and the light manufacturing sector. The objective of this programme is to deliver training at levels that will ensure a skilled and competent workforce to support the country's thrust in industrial development into the twenty first century. In order to produce "master craftsmen" and "master technologists," training is done in a factory environment with leading-edge technology within this programme.

Another large non-formal technical and vocational education and training programme is run by SERVOL, an NGO that has been conducting training programmes for unemployed youth for over 25 years. Through its Life Centres, situated in different parts of the island, it offers training to young people in a wide variety of areas. Among these are the construction trades, welding and auto straightening and painting, childcare and home health, garment construction, refrigeration, beauty culture, and food preparation. Within these programmes, there are several opportunities for the students to gain practical hands-on experience through training in the workshops and through work attachments. The latter also give them opportunities to gain first-hand experience in the real world of work, and to observe and learn how to manage a business. In addition, through its Adolescent Training Programme, students are exposed to education and training activities that help to improve their self-esteem and build their self-confidence; develop their interpersonal and communication skills; and develop positive attitudes to work.

In its job-oriented programme, between 1994 and 1995, the SCS trained approximately 500 persons who were exposed to training in auto-mechanics, television and radio repairs, and air conditioning and upholstery, to name a few. Within its certificate programmes, SCS also offers work-related programmes in topics such as business studies, including banking, accounting, and management; and in tourism development and management. It has also run courses for fire engineers, corporate secretaries, and guidance counsellors.

The CCL is a community-type college that specializes in labour and cooperative studies. It offers associate degrees, diplomas, and certificate courses in a wide variety of subjects, among which are the Associate Degree in Labour and Cooperative Studies, and Diplomas in Project Management and Occupational Health and Safety. It also runs a number of non-formal programmes and organizes conferences, seminars, and workshops. Its full-time, part-time, and outreach programmes are intended to promote and facilitate the professional development of workers, and to provide them with opportunities to participate in educational activities and to continue learning. Within its programme, too, attention is paid and emphasis placed on issues that affect male and female workers; on the labour movement; and on health and safety in the workplace. Among the topics covered in its outreach programme are corporate operations and applications, cooperative management, industrial relations, and security administration and management.

Several private sector companies have also implemented HRD and staff development and training programmes. For example, the Chamber of Commerce and the Manufacturers' Association organize seminars and workshops for their members and other employees in the private sector on a regular basis. In-service, on-the-job training is a feature of many of these

programmes. Many companies are also sending members of their staff to training courses, and to participate in workshops and seminars.

Information Technology

As in other countries in the region, in Trinidad and Tobago, aptitude and skills in the use of IT tools will become more and more important as the twenty first century progresses. There is a high demand for IT professionals and for people skilled in the use of different types of IT tools and applications. However, the most common tool is the computer, and most government offices and private businesses now use computers to record and store information and to transact business. Consequently, during the 1990s there was a dramatic increase in the number of “computer schools” and training programmes designed to encourage the use of computers, and to help people to develop skill and competence in their use. However, while a small number of older people do participate in these programmes, on the whole, the majority of students are the young and unemployed.

SERVOL also offers computer training to unemployed youth. In recognition of its success in working with young people, the World Bank gave SERVOL a large grant to develop and implement a comprehensive programme to train young people in the use of computers. Through this programme, young people throughout the country are being equipped with skills that should increase their chances of becoming employed, and that will help them to function effectively in the modern world of work and business.

Another important initiative was the creation by the Royal Bank of Trinidad and Tobago of ROYTEC, an organization that offers a large number of programmes in the use of various information technologies. Among these are a programme in distance education to promote IT use in instruction, and a programme in management information systems and business administration. In addition to offering its programmes to the public and to representatives of other businesses, it has also developed and conducted programmes for the Ministry of Information, Communication, Training and Distance Education.

Literacy

While efforts to make the adult population more computer literate have intensified, there has been a growing realization of the need to ensure that adults have mastered the skills of basic literacy. Originally, it was believed that the literacy rate in the country was between 90-95%. In 1991, the Faculty of Education at UWI, St Augustine, organized a symposium entitled “Literacy and The Modern World.” One of the objectives of the symposium was to focus attention on literacy beyond the mere act of equipping people with rudimentary skills in reading and writing, and to explore literacy at a more conceptual level. Several individuals from educational institutions, government agencies, and NGOs participated in the symposium activities and, as a result, there was an increase in awareness about the importance of literacy for personal and national development. At the same time, there was also an increase in concern about the number of people in the society who were illiterate and functionally illiterate.

Literacy is one of the programmes offered by the Adult Education Unit in its centres. Within YTEPP, there is also a Basic Education Programme in which the young adults who participate are exposed to remedial instruction in literacy and numeracy skills, and literacy and numeracy is integrated into all aspects of the programme for career enhancement. In 1992, a group of citizens, concerned about the levels of illiteracy in the country, formed ALTA, which provides a comprehensive and structured national literacy programme. The programme is provided free to persons who are over 16 years of age and, presently, over 1,000 learners attend 60 classes in centres throughout Trinidad and Tobago, and are taught by volunteer tutors who are trained by ALTA. The training programme for tutors is based on training packs from Canada and the UK,

and on similar programmes in Jamaica and St. Lucia. It is designed to expose the tutors to the theory and practice of teaching literacy to adults, and it is usually run for five consecutive days, followed by a half-day session six weeks later, and by regular sessions thereafter. While its format is similar to the Initial Certificate in Teaching Basic Communication Skills that is in current use in the UK, the course content has been adapted to local conditions and needs. Among the training materials used are video materials for the Basic Reading Tutor Training Workshops, produced by Literacy Volunteers of America; local literacy material for adults produced by ALTA that includes graded reading materials, teaching aids for literacy tutors, and books from ALTA's library.

In 1994, after providing literacy instruction for two years, ALTA conducted a survey to generate empirical data and to provide insights into the factors and practices that contribute to and maintain illiteracy and functional illiteracy. The survey was informed by literacy surveys carried out in Jamaica in 1970 and in Antigua in 1993. Before designing the survey, ALTA agreed on definitions for the functionally literate, the functionally illiterate, and the illiterate. Volunteer interviewers conducted 1,868 interviews in the north-eastern, north-western, central, and southern regions of Trinidad, and in Tobago. Analysis of the information collected revealed that 77% of the population was functionally literate, 15% was functionally illiterate, and 8% was illiterate, and that functional illiteracy and illiteracy were more common among persons over 45 years of age. The results of the survey also showed that age, place of residence, and educational background were factors that influenced and determined levels of literacy and illiteracy. For example, illiteracy and functional illiteracy were higher among people living in low-income households and rural communities (Adult Literacy Tutors Association, 1995).

ALTA's work in literacy and the literacy survey it carried out helped to focus the attention and interest of many individuals and organizations on literacy and illiteracy. Consequently, in 1994, the National Research Committee agreed that it was important to carry out a more formal study on literacy and, in 1995, the Institute of Social and Economic Research on the St. Augustine Campus of UWI carried out another national literacy survey (St. Bernard & Salim, 1995). This survey was carried out under the auspices of the UNESCO Commission in Trinidad, and was designed to develop instruments that could be used to test and measure levels of literacy. It was also designed to examine various definitions of literacy and to provide information on levels of literacy among adults over 15 years of age. In addition, it attempted to provide some insights into the reasons for the prevalence of illiteracy in spite of the fact that the government had allocated and was spending large sums on education. At the same time, it explored whether there were links and relationships between illiteracy in youth and adults and the increasing levels of unemployment, the declining levels of male participation in the labour force, domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, the increase in criminal activity and drug trafficking, and in unhealthy lifestyles and environmental degradation.

Among other things, the results of this study showed that 86% of the population was literate, 8.7 % was functionally illiterate, and 12.6% illiterate, and that the prevalence of illiteracy affects the individual's ability to acquire marketable skills and choose career paths, especially among the 15-24 years age group. Another important outcome of the study was the use of the concept of "functionally literate" and the breakdown of this into three levels. The lowest of these, level one, was defined as the possession of limited reading and/or writing skills that are insufficient to allow an individual to perform very basic, everyday tasks. The highest, level three, was the ability to read, write, and draw inferences with ease and to perform a wide cross section of everyday tasks.

The study also found that 78% of persons "15 years and over were literate" (St. Bernard & Salim, 1995, as cited in Jules & Panneflek, 2000). In this instance, literate was defined as the ability to "read and write with relative ease and having very little difficulty using skills to respond appropriately to tasks such as completing application forms and expressing thoughts in writing after drawing inferences from labels and short proeses" (St. Bernard & Salim, 1995, as cited in Trinidad and Tobago. Ministry of Education, 1999, p. 14). Estimates indicated that 8.7% of the

Trinidadian populace was peripherally literate and 12.6% was illiterate (Jules & Panneflek, 2000).

The results of these two surveys and the concrete data that they generated provided many pointers and suggestions for those engaged in developing adult literacy programmes (Jules & Panneflek, 2000). For example, they suggest that programmes should be designed to cater for adults of different ages; that they should address other functional deficiencies in addition to reading and writing deficiencies; and that they should focus on ensuring that, on completion, the learners are capable of performing the functions expected of them in various socio-economic settings.

Health and the Environment

In an attempt to decentralize and to make health care more responsive and more easily available to the population, the government set up Regional Health Authorities. In 1995, a survey conducted among individuals suffering from chronic diseases and attending health centres in the North West Region revealed that they were obese, and that they were not managing or controlling their illness through exercise and diet. The survey also revealed that the information that patients were getting from doctors and nurses was inadequate, and showed that some doctors and nurses were themselves obese. As a result of these findings, in collaboration with the St. George West Association of Village Councils and PAHO, a number of education and training activities were implemented within the framework of a project called Healthy Communities Partnership Programme. In 1996, a one-day workshop was held for representatives of village councils and community groups. The workshop identified factors that promote health and well-being, and provided participants with knowledge and skills that they could use to help their groups to develop health promotion programmes in their communities.

This workshop was followed by a half-day workshop for Community Development Officers, to introduce them to the concept of health promotion and to discuss how they could incorporate this concept into their work in communities. In addition, three community consultations were held in order to broaden the communities' perspective on health; to identify specific health issues in the communities; and to assist the communities to address the issues identified. For example, one community identified rats and vector infestation as its priority health issue. At the same time, a training programme was implemented for doctors and nurses in the management of chronic diseases through exercise and diet, and health centres were equipped with exercise machines to encourage the health care professionals to exercise. By exposing community members, community organizations, and health professionals to education and training, the North West Regional Health Authority has demonstrated the importance of health education and of adopting an integrated approach to health promotion and well-being.

Over the last two decades, HIV/AIDS has emerged as a menace to human existence internationally. The rate in the Caribbean is particularly alarming since the region accounts for the second highest incidence worldwide. It has been agreed that public education is the best mechanism to address the spread of the disease. To this end, Trinidad and Tobago, "ranked as the location of the second highest rate of reported cases in the Caribbean" (Rostant, 1997), has undertaken initiatives to educate its populace about the disease. Policy formulation at the national level has led to emphasis being placed on the screening of expectant mothers, promotion of the sale of condoms, and promotion of healthy sexual behaviours. In addition, vaccine trials have also been considered and a National AIDS programme has been established (Steele, 1999).

Prevention strategies for HIV/AIDS at the level of the community entail a recommendation for "social marketing" and "tailoring of messages" in order to reach a wide cross-section of persons (Morisky & Coan, 1998). Public service announcements carried by television sought to invite individuals to obtain more information about the deadly disease. "Studies of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and practices (KABP), and sometimes skills (KABPS), of members of a population

usually provide baseline information for communication and education programmes about HIV/AIDS“ (Steele, 1999, p. 3). The results of the 1988-1989 KAP and the reports of a series of focus group interviews in 1992 led to the birth of the peer education project, RAP PORT. This initiative falls under the auspices of the National AIDS Programme of Trinidad and Tobago and the Health Education Division of the Ministry of Health. The programme has been described as being apt in speaking to the needs of young people. Its most potent outreach has been its employment of the medium of television as a means of disseminating information to the youth. An assessment of the work of RAP PORT has revealed that it has had a profound effect on the youth (Griffith, 1998).

It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the RAP PORT programme quantitatively due, in large measure, to the unavailability of post-evaluation data to programme administrators. Nonetheless, during its first eight months of existence in 1995, 580 young people sought information, 322 had sought counselling, while 29 sought both information and counselling (Brathwaite, 1996). This thrust is consistent with the notion of enlightening the young members of a society in order for them to contribute to nation-building and posterity. In the final analysis, educated young people will choose more responsible lifestyles that will translate into a healthier Caribbean and, by extension, a healthier global space.

In 1998, the Health Education Division of the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources, the Ministry of Social and Community Development, and PAHO, implemented the Healthy Communities for a Better Life programme. One of the communities in which it was implemented was Beetham Gardens. The emphasis here was on nutrition, proper diet, and food preparation and preservation. Within the project, a community self-help group became involved in backyard gardening to produce food for their families. The Ministry of Agriculture organized a 13-week training programme in which group members were exposed to techniques of plant production, agro-processing, food preservation, and preservation of meat and fish.

Another activity that is being emphasized in the thrust to promote health and well-being is breast-feeding, and several programmes have been organized around this theme. In 1997, a seminar on breast-feeding was held to promote breast-feeding in rural communities, and training was conducted for breast-feeding counsellors.

The Environment

In Trinidad and Tobago, as in other countries in the region, there is growing concern with the degradation of the environment and with the need to conserve and preserve it. Government agencies and NGOs regularly organize programmes to raise public awareness about environmental issues, and to stress the need for communities and community residents to become actively involved in maintaining a clean and healthy environment, and in taking measures to preserve it. Among these were the passing of a Litter Act and a workshop in 1997 in which participants were introduced to the Act, and in which they identified and discussed the negative consequences and health hazards of littering and agreed on the duties of Litter Wardens. At the same time, the Civilian Conservation Corps is a mechanism through which young people between the ages of 18-25 years are being trained to pursue activities to conserve the environment.

There are also several projects and programmes aimed at protecting the natural resources like the swamps, the flora, fauna, forests, wildlife, and marine life in the country. Programmes to educate the public are a major aspect of the work of agencies and organizations that are concerned about the environment, and they often organize public discussions, seminars, and workshops on a regular basis. They also use the local print and electronic media to keep the public informed, and disseminate information through leaflets, brochures, and newsletters. Two organizations that are very active in this field are the Asa Wright Foundation and the Wild Fowl Trust.

Gender

The Gender Affairs Division, formerly the Division of Women's Affairs, is the department through which the government addresses gender issues. Its goal is to mainstream gender in all government policies, plans, and programmes. In order to carry out its mandate, the Division has set in place a number of mechanisms and implemented a number of activities, projects, and programmes. For example, the Division has developed a national gender policy and has set up an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Gender and Development. This committee is a mechanism that is intended to sensitize all ministries to women's concerns and gender issues, and to promote and facilitate the integration of gender issues into the plans and programmes of every ministry. It is also expected to inform and influence the formulation of national policies that are sensitive to and reflective of an understanding of the importance of gender to the achievement of national development goals. The Division has also been instrumental in facilitating legislative reform in support of gender equity, including the passing of the Domestic Violence Act, and it has also set up a hotline and a comprehensive programme to address the needs of the victims as well as the perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse of women.

A critical element of these strategies and of all the Division's work is education and training. The Division has, therefore, organized and conducted a wide range of education and training programmes for policy makers, researchers, programme planners, other government ministries and departments, the private sector, NGOs, community groups, men, and women. Among these was a working meeting of local experts to develop relevant and community-specific gender sensitive indicators, attended by statisticians working in the field of gender-related statistics. In the workshop, they identified gaps in existing statistics; began work towards establishing a base for collecting national statistics and indicators; and examined ways for incorporating gender-relevant variables and indicators into their work.

Another training programme consisted of 12 two-day workshops with the police, and with individuals who work with the hotline and in shelters for battered women. Police officers and supervisors were also exposed to training in managing diversities and gender conflicts. A series of workshops on gender issues was also conducted with new recruits of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, and participants included the first batch of female recruits. Under the auspices of the North West Regional Health Authority, the Division has also conducted a series of training workshops with the staff of the St. Ann's Psychiatric Hospital. A significant part of the Division's work is with women in communities, and it has implemented a number of education and training programmes for community groups and for women in communities throughout the country. In 1997, the Division implemented a comprehensive training programme in training and sensitization in gender and development. This one-year programme consisted of a pilot project in gender training, training of gender trainers, staff development and gender training for the staff of the Division, and development and production of training materials.

Within this programme, training sessions and workshops were conducted with a number of key individuals, organizations, and groups. Among these were members of the Cabinet, Permanent Secretaries, Chief Technical Officers from various ministries, extension and field workers, and representatives of private sector agencies, NGOs, and women's groups. The Training of Gender Trainers programme was conducted with individuals who, as part of their work, developed and conducted education and training activities with groups and communities. In addition to sensitizing participants to gender issues, and providing opportunities for them to acquire skills in gender analysis and gender planning, the programme also exposed them to the principles of adult education and to several methods and techniques that they could use to facilitate learning and change.

At every step of the programme, members of the staff of the Division were actively involved in planning and designing training activities, and in conducting and evaluating training

workshops. One concrete product of the programme is a *Gender Training Manual* comprised of training activities that were used, tested, and refined in the various workshops and sessions. The manual also contains a section with “Notes to Facilitators.” A video entitled “Through the Eyes of the Camera” was also produced, which looks at how behaviours displayed by males and females are shaped by family, peers, advertising, and social norms. The video is an excellent tool that can be used with groups to stimulate discussion of gender issues.

A recently-conducted survey of living conditions in Trinidad and Tobago revealed that 54.8% of women receive less than TT \$500 per month; that 31.7% of women live below the poverty line; and that poverty is more widespread among female-headed households and among women with low education levels. Cognizant of these data, and of the implications for women and for the society as a whole, the Division is intensifying its work, especially its education and training programmes with women in poor and rural communities. For example, in 1998, the Division implemented a project to promote and facilitate economic empowerment of community-based businesswomen. Within the project, workshops have been conducted for community leaders and community groups, and women have developed a set of indicators by which to identify and assess the benefits of being an entrepreneur. The Division has also established the Women’s Leadership and Training Institute.

Other government agencies and NGOs also conduct training programmes designed to sensitize the public and particular groups in the society about gender issues. For example, the Ministry of Agriculture has conducted a workshop for extension workers on how to integrate gender-sensitive activities into agricultural extension programmes. The Centre for Gender and Development Studies at the St. Augustine Campus of UWI also conducted a two-day workshop in 1995 for the Ministry of Agriculture. The workshop, organized in collaboration with IICA, was entitled “Gender in Policy and Planning: A New Vision for Agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago.” In 1996, the Centre, in collaboration with the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) and the National AIDS Programme, conducted a two-day workshop on “Gender and Counselling in Sexual and Reproductive Health.”

In Trinidad and Tobago, as in some other countries, in addition to the work being carried out by large numbers of women’s groups, several groups have emerged that are focusing on “men’s issues.” Among these are Men Against Violence Against Women (MAVAW), which has a training of trainers project entitled “Man To Man” among its projects. This one-year project is a joint undertaking of MAVAW and another NGO, the Women and Development Studies Group on the St. Augustine Campus of UWI. Within it, 15 men (7 from rural and 8 from urban communities) are being trained in methods and techniques to sensitize male residents in communities in which they work. They will then set up outreach men’s groups of about 15 men in each of their communities, and these will continue to sensitize other men and to disseminate information on gender issues. When completed, the project will have impacted on about 225 men and on the women and children with whom they come into contact daily. Workshop facilitators include psychologists, gender specialists, and experts in re-evaluation counselling.

Conclusion

Trinidad and Tobago has been thrust into the whirlwind changes that dominate the twenty first century. Like many other small island states, this Republic has devised strategies for coming to terms with the effects of these adjustments. In order to effectively deal with these challenges, this oil-producing nation has been intent on affording its people a sound adult education product. The Trinidadian government, in collaboration with NGOs, is seizing the moment to educate and, in many instances, retrain the workforce so as to produce versatile workers.

The adult education drive has also focused on environmental preservation and promotion of good health. It has also dealt with gender issues which continue to present themselves, in a very real way, to human existence in this new century, through the changing gender roles. The content

of the programme ought to result in the creation of well-rounded persons who are properly equipped for the demands of this era. Trinidad and Tobago's efforts represent improvement for the country's education sector and spell great hope for the future.

The Turks and Caicos Islands

The Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) consists of 40 islands and cays located at the southern tip of the Bahamas, 575 miles south-east of Miami, Florida. Only eight of the islands are inhabited and these fall into two groups separated by the Turks Islands Passage. The Turks Islands are Grand Turk and Salt Cay, and the Caicos Islands are North, Middle, and South Caicos, Providenciales (Prov), Pine Cay, and Parrot Cay. The total area of the TCI is 193 square miles. Grand Turk is the administrative capital, but Providenciales is the largest island and, in the last ten years, has emerged as the centre of the country's development. The TCI is administered as one unit of Britain's Overseas Territories, and is governed by an Executive Council, of which the Governor is the Chief Executive Officer, and an elected government, the head of which is a Chief Minister. There are two political parties and every four years a new government is elected.

According to the last population census in 1990, the population of the TCI is 12,000, however, it is widely believed that it is nearly twice that number. This discrepancy is largely attributed to the existence of an immigrant population that consists of large numbers of illegal immigrants from Haiti and, to a lesser extent, from the Dominican Republic. In most cases, the Haitian immigrants not only come to the TCI to seek employment but to escape harsh political conditions in their homeland. In addition, there are several individuals from other Caribbean countries working and living in the TCI. Among these are teachers, nurses, and other professionals. At the same time, there is small but growing population of expatriates from (a) the UK, holding key posts in the civil service, and (b) from North America, involved in the tourism and offshore financial sectors. A significant proportion of these immigrants, commonly referred to as Non-Belongers, live on Providenciales. For example, 1994 National Insurance Scheme figures for workers under 60 years showed that there were 2,536 Non-Belongers compared to 1,805 TCIslanders (Belongers).

In former years, the salt industry was the backbone of the economy of the TCI, however, in the last 15 years there has been rapid growth in the tourism and offshore industries, especially on the island of Providenciales. Since 1992, the service sector has accounted for 78% of the GDP, and tourism now accounts for 31.7% of the GDP. This rapid and somewhat unplanned development has had a significant impact on all aspects of life in the TCI. For example there has been a significant amount of internal migration as individuals from the smaller islands flock to Providenciales to seek employment in the "new" industries. For the same reason, some Belongers who had migrated to the Bahamas and to the USA after the collapse of the salt industry in the mid-1960s have now returned. In addition, there are those who are reluctant to work for low wages. Consequently, the increase in the number of Haitian immigrants fills the need for cheap labour, and other Non-Belongers fill the need for professional and skilled labour.

Education is free in the TCI. There are 10 primary and 4 secondary government schools, 11 private pre-primary and primary schools, and 1 private secondary school. There are no remedial classes or classes for children with special needs. About 10% of pupils in schools in Grand Turk and 19% in schools in Providenciales speak a French patois as their first language. At age 12, children automatically go from primary to secondary school. Some 66% of the staff at secondary schools are expatriates on short-term contracts and there is a high turnover of staff. School performance is generally low, for example, of the 64 students who sat the CXC examinations in 1993, only 15 gained between 4 and 7 subjects at Grades I and II. In the 1998 examinations, only 23% of students in government secondary schools passed English; only 12% passed mathematics; and only 31% of all fifth form students in the country passed 4 or more subjects. As a result, only about 25% of the adult population has obtained O'Level/CXC certificates or higher, and the

educational level of the adult population is, therefore, relatively low. In addition, people seem to place a low value on education as a means to social and economic mobility, and there is growing concern about the inability of the present education system to produce an educated, skilled, and competent population of Belongers.

Policy

The government is acutely aware of the limitations of the present education system and, therefore, in an attempt to address its shortcomings and to respond to the education and training needs of the population and of the country as a whole, has taken a number of initiatives. The implementation of a Further Education Project and the establishment of The Turks and Caicos Islands Community College in 1994 are indications that the government recognizes the need to encourage citizens to further their education and to continue learning. Consequently, it has implemented an Education and Development Programme, the aims of which are to promote, stimulate, and facilitate the creation and maintenance of a learning environment; to increase the capacity and capabilities of educational institutions; and to improve the quality of education through teacher training and curriculum renewal. Within this context, it has formulated a policy for HRD, developed a five-year education plan (1999-2004) and, more recently, an adult education policy and a national adult education programme.

In order to ensure that the last was based on and reflected the educational needs of the adult population, an adult education consultant was contracted to carry out a study towards the end of 1999. Some objectives were to assess the educational needs of the adult population; to identify and examine current opportunities for, and accessibility to, adult education; to review current practices, provision, and delivery of adult education; and to use the information collected to formulate an adult education policy that would increase opportunity and access to adult education programmes that met the needs of the adult population.

The study provided opportunities for a wide cross-section of adults to participate in small group discussions, in a workshop, and in a national consultation on adult education. Within these activities, they discussed the role of adult education in the TCI; identified learning needs of different groups of adults in the society; shared ideas; and gave their views and opinions on the type of education programmes that are needed for the adult population and for different groups of adults. In this way, they contributed to and were directly involved in formulating the policy on adult education, and in determining the components of a national programme of adult education.

The goal of the adult education policy is to create a learning society and to promote lifelong learning, and to encourage TCI islanders to continue to learn. In order to achieve these goals, the policy makes provision for the establishment of an Adult Education Unit and of Adult Education Working Groups on each island. It also provides a framework and guidelines for implementing a comprehensive programme of adult education that meets the educational needs of the adult population, and that contributes to national development. The proposed adult education programme is comprised of several components that are designed to meet the educational needs of the adult population as a whole, as well as those of particular groups of adults. Among the areas to be covered in the programme are citizenship education, technical and vocational education and training, basic education and literacy, community education, entrepreneurship and business education, and the training of adult educators.

Provision, Management, and Administration of Adult Education

Although some adult education is provided by the government, private sector agencies, and NGOs, the demand for education by the adult population is not very high. There seems to be a general lack of interest in pursuing further education. In a recent study on adult education in the islands (Ellis, 1999), less than a quarter of those surveyed had participated in any education

activities in the last five years, and several indicated that they were not interested. The lack of interest in continuing education could be because most school leavers can get jobs fairly easily, and many have hopes of going abroad to the USA or to the Bahamas to join relatives and to continue their education there.

Before the Community College was established, the government operated an Evening Institute in secondary schools to assist students preparing for secondary school-leaving examinations, but this was not very successful. There was a large number of dropouts, and of the 84 students who took the exams, only 8 passed one subject at Grades I or II, while 34 obtained Grade IV. Prior to 1994, anyone wanting to pursue higher education had to go overseas supported by study grants and bursaries from the government. In 1993, there were 113 students on scholarships or bursaries. The establishment of the Community College in 1994 created opportunities for school leavers and adults to pursue post-secondary and continuing education at home for the first time.

While enrollment figures have improved from 16 full-time students in 1994 to 112 full-time and 218 part-time in 1999, participation in the College's programmes is still low, and practically all of the students are from Grand Turk and Providenciales, the two islands on which the College is located. One of the challenges facing the College is how to develop an outreach programme, through which residents in all of the islands can access and participate in its programmes. To this end, in 1997, in collaboration with UWI and with financial aid from the CDB, the College implemented a Continuing Education Studies and Distance Education programme. Another challenge is for the College to take steps to create and maintain a culture of learning, and to implement non-formal, community-based programmes that would raise awareness of the importance of education, and that would stimulate and increase interest in continuing education.

In addition to the Community College, the Training Unit of the Public Service organizes education and training programmes for public servants. In 1994, in order to update and reorient the training policy, a training needs analysis and review was conducted. It showed that absence of a coherent training policy, plan, or programme was resulting in the loss of opportunities and of local talent; in underachieving and frustrated staff; and in poor job performance. It also pointed out that shortages in professional and technical skills was a major reason for the high dependence on expatriate staff; that the academic performance of many civil servants was low; and that they lacked the educational qualifications required to pursue further education. It recommended that the capacity of the Training Unit should be enhanced so that it would be better able to develop training programmes and to manage the training function. In 1995, the Training Unit conducted a Training of Trainers Programme and, in 1996, it implemented a Staff Development and Training Programme. The latter is intended to build competence in the Public Service, and to inculcate in civil servants, a sense of identity with and commitment to the Service through shared learning. The in-service training programme consists of three components: generic training is provided to civil servants at all levels in areas that are common to all civil servants; technical training is provided in order to upgrade and improve skills that are specific to particular jobs; and developmental training is intended to build succession to senior management by improving the leadership skills of senior managers, and by preparing junior managers to take over senior management positions when required.

From time to time, some private sector businesses and agencies like the banks and the Chamber of Commerce organize educational activities and training programmes for employees. In addition, NGOs like churches, women's groups, youth groups, and men's fellowships, and service clubs like the Soroptomist Club, Kiwanis, and Rotary occasionally organize educational activities. For example, the Salem Baptist Church has organized workshops on family life education and sessions for young people, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church has run classes in English as a Second Language. The Soroptomists in South Caicos have organized programmes in personal development and in health education, as well as panel discussions to improve awareness on important social issues. Classes in First Aid have also been organized in North Caicos, and in some islands there may be groups, like the Salt Cay Day Committee, that organize

education and community development activities that focus on special occasions and events which are of importance to the community.

Work

Rapid economic growth and the demands for an educated and skilled labour force for the tourist, hospitality, and financial sectors have created a situation in which there is a shortage of qualified, skilled, and competent workers. The need for low-skilled, low-paid labour and, to some extent, for semi-skilled labour in the tourism and service sectors is being fulfilled by immigrants. However, the existence of only a small number of Belongers who are well-qualified and highly-skilled professionals has serious implications for the country's development, and for its ability to maintain the present rate of growth. The education system is, therefore, challenged to catch up and to respond to the need for a multi-skilled and competent workforce by producing people with the competencies needed.

One way in which this is being attempted is through the expansion of post-secondary and further education programmes offered at the Community College. Among the College's programme are a number of certificate and diploma programmes in business studies and office procedures, hospitality, engineering technology, and electronics and electrical installation. The College is also establishing relationships with businesses in industry and in the private sector, in order to develop special courses and training programmes for working adults to improve job efficiency, and to motivate them to advance their careers. The College also offers part-time certificate courses for corporate and administrative secretaries, on franchise from the SCS in Trinidad and Tobago.

The training needs analysis conducted by the Training Unit stressed the importance of linking training to job performance, and of seeing that training to enhance job performance was as important as training for personal benefits. As a result, the Unit runs competence-based training to equip civil servants with the skills that they need to be able to perform their jobs more efficiently and effectively, as well as training to improve non-technical skills like critical thinking. The Unit's Staff Development Programme includes induction training, training for support and clerical staff, training for supervisors and frontline managers, and training for senior managers and top management teams. Among the topics covered in the first two programmes (Levels one and two) are business and communication skills, computer skills, customer service skills, and organizing skills. Programmes in Level three are for officers who are responsible for decision making, planning and organizing work, problem solving, and the day-to-day supervision of staff. They cover topics like management of human resources, supervisory management, team leadership, and financial management. Level four programmes are designed for Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments, and other senior officers, and cover strategic planning, organizational development, management and change, providing quality service, and team work. Participants in the Level five programme are exposed to all of the topics covered in the first four levels, and then they focus on the strategic process and how to integrate mission, policy, and strategy and how to translate them into programmes. Training is also provided to help public servants acquire, upgrade, and improve their skills in making presentations and in public speaking; in planning and managing meetings; in managing time and money; and in report writing.

There is a general consensus that the majority of employees in the private sector are not well equipped, and do not have the skills that are necessary to function effectively, and that there is, therefore, an urgent need for training in the private sector. Some of the larger companies in the private sector provide opportunities for members of their staff to participate in education and training programmes on a regular, ongoing basis. However, staff of smaller, locally-owned businesses have little, if any, opportunity to do so. Employees of companies like Cable and Wireless, the commercial banks, and other financial institutions that are subsidiaries or branches

of regional and international companies often participate in training programmes developed and offered by the head or regional office. Through these programmes, they are exposed to training in technical skills in administration and management, the use of technology, and human relations. In addition, some of the larger companies and hotels like Beaches also conduct in-house, on-the-job training designed to meet the specific needs of their staff. In Grand Turk and Providenciales, there are also two business colleges that offer training programmes to secretaries, office assistants, typists, and clerks. Among the topics covered are office procedures, office management and administration, accounting, and computer applications.

The number, type, and variety of education and training programmes being offered to adults in the society are insufficient to meet the current needs of the adult population and of the country as a whole. Except for the Community College which has an organized programme, the availability, accessibility, and provision of adult education is irregular, ad hoc, and uncoordinated. Moreover, outside of Grand Turk and Providenciales, very few, if any, opportunities exist for adults to participate in formal or non-formal education programmes. The implementation of the new policy and programme will go a long way to ensure that the adult population has access to relevant and appropriate programmes, and that adult education programmes are well managed and administered.

Information Technology

Training in IT is mostly limited to training in the use of computers. The Community College, Training Unit, business schools, and other private education institutions offer training in the use of computers, word processing, and spreadsheet analysis. In addition, in order to prepare the population for the new millennium and the possible risks and problems that might be created by the Millennium Bug, in 1998, the government established a committee to monitor initiatives and progress being made to ensure that the TCI was Y2K compliant. As a result, a Millennium Compliance Task Force was created, and it undertook a number of activities including the implementation of a public awareness programme involving the public and private sectors, and discussions on appropriate strategies to prevent and to remedy possible adverse outcomes.

Literacy

In the TCI, there is a large immigrant population whose first language is not English. Moreover, because significant numbers of these are “illegal,” many children are either not in school or enter the school system late. In addition, negative feelings and attitudes towards these immigrants and the sometimes reluctance of school principals to accept Haitian children, mean that there are a significant number of people in the population who are illiterate. At the same time, the low performance of students and the low educational level of the adult population also suggest that significant numbers of Belongers are functionally illiterate. Evidence of this was seen in the report of the training needs assessment. The report indicated that basic literacy and numeracy were problems in the civil service, and that support staff had problems in writing reports and in using correct grammar and syntax. Illiteracy and functionally illiteracy are, therefore, problems that need to be addressed.

There is no national programme designed to upgrade or improve the literacy skills of the adult population. However, in 1990, the Soroptomists began to focus on literacy and organized classes in an Anglican church hall. The classes attracted about 35 adults, the majority of whom were Haitians. Reading materials and workbooks were acquired from JAMAL in Jamaica. In addition, as they became aware of a number of students who were having reading difficulties, they started to conduct two-hour classes weekly for some of these students at a day care centre. Within the civil service, clerical and support staff are exposed to training to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. At present, except for one class at the Community College, there are no other

special programmes to teach English as a second language. However, recognizing the importance of creating a literate multi-lingual population, the recently-developed national adult education programme has made provision for a literacy survey and programme, and for second language teaching.

Health and the Environment

The Department of Health offers two types of adult education programmes: one that focuses on the education and continuing education of health personnel, and the other on providing health education and information to the population at large. While most health personnel receive their professional training overseas, either in the Caribbean or the UK, the Department does organize seminars and workshops for health care givers from time to time. For example, as part of its in-service training, it has organized workshops on disaster management, mass casualties, and resuscitation. It is also planning to offer a course for clinical nurses in collaboration with the Community College.

In terms of educating the public on health issues, the Department organizes a number of education and training activities to increase awareness and to provide information on a variety of topics. Among these is a programme on HIV/AIDS developed and implemented by the HIV/AIDS Coordinator. This programme is targeted at young people and at women of child-bearing age, and there is an outreach programme to the Creole-speaking population. Workshops have also been held with teachers to enable them to deal with questions from students on this topic. A wide variety of strategies and media are used to deliver the programme. A similar programme on drugs is organized by the Drugs Coordinator. Informal education sessions are also held with adults who attend health clinics, and during these sessions health problems are discussed and information on a wide range of health topics provided. With the recent appointment of a Health Educator, the Department is in the process of developing a more comprehensive and widespread health education programme that will reach all members of the population.

Environmental Education

The TCI is well known for its beautiful, unspoiled beaches and marine life, and many tourists and visitors go there to dive and to enjoy the underwater scenes. Fishing for conchs and lobsters is also an important activity that contributes to the economy. The islands are surrounded by coral reefs and populated by flamingoes, and on all of the islands there are habitats of birds and other wildlife. The environment is very fragile, and the government as well as other organizations are very concerned about any activities that would damage the environment and the country's fragile ecosystems. Several initiatives are, therefore, being taken to preserve the environment and to raise public awareness about environmental issues.

The main government agencies responsible for environmental issues are the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Department of Environment and Coastal Resources. Every year, an Environmental Week is celebrated in all of the islands, and among the activities that take place are speeches and talks to schools; exhibitions and displays; clean-up campaigns; and field trips and guided tours of North and Middle Caicos on which there is conch and lobster fishing.

The Department of Environmental and Coastal Management has an extensive programme of education that includes both training for its staff and public awareness programmes. It has organized workshops on beach erosion, fisheries management, and information systems for staff. It also organizes workshops for fishermen to share research findings, and to increase their understanding of the serious and irreparable damage that is done to the reefs and marine life when they continue to use undesirable practices like using bleach to stun fish. The Department has also organized a workshop on ISO 900 that is mounted for fish processing plants that have plans in place to prevent, control, and deal with contamination of marine products. In order to ensure that

high standards of sanitation are maintained and to prevent sea-borne illnesses, the Department monitors how fish are caught, handled, and processed, and organizes workshops on seafood handling for workers in fish processing plants, and on food hygiene for food handlers in hotels and restaurants in Provo.

There are also several projects within which research and education are major activities. Some of these are a National Parks Project, a Natural Resource Management Project, and a Coastal Resource Management Project. Within all of these projects, education is a key strategy for raising public awareness on environmental issues and community clean-up activities. News releases, leaflets, newsletters, and brochures are used to disseminate information to the public.

The National Trust is also concerned with environmental matters. It was created by the government in 1992 as a statutory body to safeguard the natural and historical heritage of the islands. Its goal is to promote the conservation and preservation of wildlife, lands, coral reef and marine resources, and places of historical interests. It collects and disseminates information on coral reefs and mangroves, and designs programmes to preserve wildlife.

In addition, there is a Centre for Marine Resource Studies on South Caicos where North American students are involved in research and study of marine life. Its programmes are designed to increase understanding of the complexities and inter-relatedness of environmental issues, and to help the TCI to develop sustainable fisheries. The Centre works with the fish processing plants and with residents to research the marine resources, in order to find out if they can sustain the economy. The results of the research are presented in public fora, in which community members participate in discussions of the research results as well as on other community problems. The students also conduct environmental education programmes and assist in teaching in the schools.

Although some education on environmental issues is being provided by government departments and other interested organizations, a lot more needs to be done to promote health; to heighten public awareness about environmental issues; and to influence attitudes and change the behaviour of the population towards their own health and towards the environment.

Gender

Special programmes to address and deal with gender issues are not yet common in the TCI and, according to several women, the issue of women in development is still in its infancy. However, while for many years no special account was taken of women's social and economic needs by the policy makers, women and women's organizations like the Soroptimists and church groups were active in many fields.

In 1993, a committee comprised of women from different sectors in the community was formed. Its original role was to prepare a report for the "Fourth World Conference on Women" held in Beijing in 1995. In order to prepare the report, a researcher, funded by CARICOM, visited and held meetings with women in all of the islands. On completion of the report, the committee expanded its role and set out objectives, among which were: (a) to heighten awareness of women and to empower them so as to reduce their vulnerability to abuse; (b) to advise the government on issues that affect women; and (c) to assist in the reform of laws related to women and children. The committee also organized a symposium and workshops, and requested the government to establish a Women's Desk. It prepared a short document entitled *National Council for Gender and Development*, in which it outlined the goals, objectives, and activities of the Council. It also recommended that gender issues be assigned to a specific Ministry, and that a specific officer be assigned to deal with gender issues. However, it is only recently that a Coordinator of Women's Affairs was appointed.

Since taking up the position, the Coordinator has been visiting all of the islands to organize meetings with women; to get their ideas about what should be included in a national programme; and to set up committees in each island. One such meeting in Grand Turk took the form of a workshop in which over 30 women participated. In small groups and in plenary, the women

shared their experiences, problems, and concerns, and by the end of the workshop they had defined the issues that needed to be given priority, among which were violence and abuse against women. They also agreed to set up a Steering Committee, identified the role of the committee, and agreed on some of the activities that the committee should undertake.

With the recent establishment and official launching of the Women's Desk, several educational activities have been organized. Among these were meetings with groups of women in each of the islands and a one-day seminar on "Violence Against Women" in Providenciales. Over 300 women participated in these activities. The meetings served two purposes: (a) to provide information about and to explain the purpose of the Women's Desk; and (b) to provide an opportunity for women to identify and articulate their concerns, problems, and needs. The latter will form the basis for ongoing education and training programmes to be implemented by the Desk. The seminar, hosted jointly by the Women's Desk and the Social Welfare Department, was attended by representatives of a wide variety of organizations including the church, the police, the media, politicians, and housewives. It dealt with the various types of violence and abuse to which women are subjected.

This overview of adult education in the TCI illustrates that the need for extending provisions in all areas has been recognized. The thrust now would need to be on the implementation of that policy to contribute to a competent and skilled local labour force to drive the economy of the TCI.

Issues Emerging from the Country Studies in Adult Education

An examination of the cases shows that in all of the selected countries a rich and varied diet of adult education is being provided to a wide cross-section of the adult population. However, in all of the countries, there is very little documentation on adult education, and what exists is scattered and is mainly in the form of short, usually undated reports. This is one of the reasons that the case studies are so uneven, both in scope and in depth, and particularly in relation to the dominant themes. In addition, because there are virtually no records on participation rates or patterns, and no evaluation or follow-up of programmes, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the programmes being offered are meeting the educational needs of the adult population and different groups of adults in these countries. Although it can be assumed that the adults who participate in the programmes that are offered have benefited, for the reasons cited above, it is also difficult to identify duplication or gaps in provision; to give an accurate assessment of the effects and impact of adult education; or to determine the extent to which it is contributing to the development of individuals, of different countries, or to the region as a whole.

A closer look at the information on adult education in the selected countries and in the region as a whole reveals a number of important insights, points to emerging trends, and suggests steps that need to be taken if adult education is to play the important role that it must in personal, national, and regional development. For example, in terms of adult education policy, while some countries have policy statements on adult education, and a few have comprehensive policy documents, the majority have no clearly articulated policy. The information suggests that governments in the region need to recognize, value, and pay more attention to adult education as a strategy for achieving personal and national development goals: to clearly articulate an adult education policy; and to see adult education as an integral part of the national education system.

In every Caribbean country, there are several groups, organizations, and agencies that provide and offer education programmes to adults. In most cases, these providers operate quite independently of each other and are often ignorant of other providers and of what they are offering. Indeed, in very few, if any, of the countries is there a register or directory of organizations and agencies that offer or provide adult education programmes. In addition, there are no mechanisms for coordinating or monitoring the programmes being offered in any of the countries. There is also no quality control, and no way of pooling resources or of ensuring that programmes complement rather than duplicate each other, or that all sectors of the adult

population are being served. While it would not be advisable to be too rigid or to demand conformity among providers, some coordination and collaboration would help to address the current ad hoc and piecemeal approach to adult education.

In each country in the region, the type and number of education programmes that are provided and offered to the adult population differ widely. For example, in terms of the dominant themes, as well as in relation to programmes that focus on other topics and issues, there are significant differences in the type and amount of attention that has been given to each of them; in the type and number of programmes; and in the groups of adults to which different programmes are directed, offered, or made available. For example, in every country there are large number of formal education programmes for young adults, and programmes to prepare young people for the world of work and to teach them marketable skills. However, similar programmes for older adults appear to be fewer in number. This is especially true of training programmes in the use of computers and other new information technologies. At the same time, there is some evidence of community education.

In most countries, too, it would appear that insufficient efforts are being made to reach all sectors of the adult population, and to encourage different groups of adults to participate in educational activities on an ongoing basis. For example, although there is a dearth of documentation and accurate records on participation, it is generally accepted that in all countries more females of all ages are participating in adult and continuing education programmes than males. In addition, it appears that when males participate, the majority is less likely to participate in programmes that are geared to personal and social development or that deal with social issues. At the same time, while there has been an increase in gender-sensitization programmes, many of the programmes that are being offered are still gender specific. Another trend and important issue that needs to be addressed in all of the countries is follow-up, monitoring, and evaluation of programmes.

In terms of strategies and methodologies being used in adult education programmes, while in every country, public education seems to be used as a strategy for raising public awareness, it appears that the programmes do not always reach all sectors of the population and, therefore, do not have the kind of impact expected, and do not always bring about the desired changes in attitude and behaviour. This seems to be especially true of health and environmental education programmes. However, it does appear that it is in small-scale, community, non-formal education programmes organized by local NGOs and CBOs that more participatory approaches and interactive methods are being used to facilitate learning and change. In the more formal and larger programmes, especially those offered by education and training institutions, in spite of an increase in the number of older and more mature students, there is still the tendency in many tertiary institutions to use traditional, non-participatory methods and to retain the atmosphere of “secondary school” and treat adult learners like children.

The tendency of tutors, lecturers, and trainers to use traditional non-participatory teaching methods with adult learners is one indication of the large numbers of “adult educators” that have not been exposed to training in adult education. Indeed, there are large numbers of individuals in a large number of agencies and organizations who are developing and designing education programmes, courses, and activities for adults, and who are serving as lecturers, tutors, instructors, teachers, and facilitators in adult education programmes, who have had no training to equip them with the knowledge and skills required to function as adult educators. The majority of these may well not be aware that they need special training to equip them to function effectively in these roles. At the same time, while some attempts have been made to organize training for adult education, training in this area is still not available to the majority of adult educators. It appears that the training that is available is directed at teachers and facilitators and that it focuses, to some extent, on the adult learner and more heavily on methods and techniques. It does not appear, therefore, as if enough attention is being paid to: (a) programme planning and curriculum development for adults and for different groups of adults; (b) the development of learning and

instructional material for adults; (c) research and assessment of the learning needs of different groups of adults; (d) programme evaluation; and (e) record keeping and documentation of adult education programmes. The provision of relevant, appropriate, and high-quality programmes to adults in the region will depend on the competence of individuals in these areas, therefore, the need for training in adult education is not only great but urgent.

If adult education is to play its rightful role in promoting and facilitating the development of individuals and countries in the Caribbean then, in addition to training adult educators, serious attention will also have to be paid in the twenty first century to research and evaluation of adult education programmes; to providing education programmes to meet the specific education and learning needs of particular groups of adults in society; to the curriculum content of adult education programmes; to coordination, administration, and management; and to closer monitoring and evaluation of adult education programmes.

A Caribbean Adult Education Agenda for the Beginning of the New Millennium

To be able to meet the challenges of the new decade, 2000-2009, with some degree of confidence and to overcome them with some degree of success, the people of the region will have to be well equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to function effectively and to lead meaningful lives. At the same time, they will need to have acquired a wide variety of skills that will ensure that they and their countries can maintain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace. While some of the issues of the late twentieth century will continue to demand and require the attention of governments and people alike, new issues are already emerging that will move to centre stage in the first few decades of the new century.

Challenges to Adult Education and to Adult Educators

To be able to face the challenges of the new millennium, there will have to be a shift in the present education paradigm, and in emphasis away from schooling to lifelong learning. The creation and maintenance of a culture of learning, learning environments, and learning organizations will, therefore, be essential. Providers of education as well as individuals at all levels of the society will have to be encouraged to see and use a wide variety of places and spaces for learning. At the same time, the emphasis in education will have to be shifted from imparting knowledge to helping people to learn how to learn, to think critically and to reason, to be selective, and to make judgements. Education must also release the creative potential in people and must motivate individuals to want to continue learning. This is particularly important for the many adults who have not been accustomed to participating in educational activities on a continuous basis; who have been led to believe that they are too old to learn or have lost confidence in their ability to learn; and to those who are demotivated and disinterested in learning. The major challenge to adult education and to adult educators, therefore, is to make a large number and a wide variety of learning opportunities and education and training programmes available to all sections and groups of the adult population.

The Issues of the Twenty First Century

Diversity

In several countries of the region, the composition of the population is resulting in demographic shifts and changes. These changes include changes in the ethnic composition as well as changes in the age structure of the population. In Caribbean countries too, as elsewhere, with outsourcing and the movement of work and workers from one country to another in the global marketplace, it is likely that more non-Caribbean people will become part of the population in several countries. Given these trends, people in the region will not only have to become more aware of and more sensitive to cultural differences, but to the realities of other groups in the society like people with disabilities and the poor; of their special needs and of their right to be included in all societal processes. The demographic changes and the new awareness and sensitivity to difference will require that attention be paid to the issue of diversity. Training in the management of diversity will, therefore, be essential in order to ensure that none of the groups that make up the population are marginalized or excluded, and that each country and the region as a whole can benefit from all of the region's human resources.

The aging population

For some Caribbean countries, like Barbados, by the end of the first decade in this new century, a significant percentage of the population will be over 50 years of age, due to the decline in birth rate and the ageing population. While the education of young adults was a priority in the last century, and while this will still be important in this one, continuing education for older adults will become more important. Within this context, understanding older adults and their educational needs, retirement planning, health, and leisure will be important topics in adult education activities for this age group. At the same time, it will also be important to provide more learning opportunities for older adults so that they will become comfortable with and gain skills in the use of new technologies, especially information technologies. More education programmes will also have to be provided in the care of the elderly for professional caregivers as well as for family members. Another challenge will be how to make more and better use of the knowledge, experience, and wisdom of older adults by creating and providing them with opportunities to serve as adult educators.

Change and the management of change

Even more than the last, this new century will be characterized by rapid change in every aspect of life and living. How individuals and countries adapt to, deal with, and manage the changes will determine their quality of life and their ability to achieve individual and collective goals. If Caribbean countries are to maintain a competitive advantage in the global marketplace and not be left behind, then institutions as well as people will have to be able to articulate a new vision for the region. However, care will have to be taken to ensure that the change is not haphazard. Providing learning opportunities and involving people in education activities is one strategy for achieving and facilitating change. Continuous learning must, therefore, become the motto as well as the strategy for personal and national development.

Technology

As the new century progresses, the use of technology will become even more widespread and extensive, and serious and systematic efforts will have to be made to ensure that people at all levels of the society are well equipped with knowledge and understanding of the various technologies, and with skill in using them. Greater efforts will also have to be made to increase the number of IT professionals and the number of training programmes and courses that take people beyond the rudimentary skills of word processing and spreadsheets to development of hardware and software. There will also be need for more technicians to repair and maintain the hardware. Training in IT and other technologies will also be essential to ensure employability. On the other hand, much greater use will have to be made of modern technologies as tools to increase education and learning opportunities and to facilitate learning. While in some countries, computers and other technologies are already being used in schools and other education institutions on a small or pilot scale, in the new century this will have to become the norm. For this to happen, however, there will have to be a wholesale retraining of teachers, tutors, instructors, and facilitators at all levels of the education system and in NGOs as well.

Essential literacies

While acquisition of skills in basic literacy and numeracy will still be critical, the concept of other “essential literacies,” and the need to acquire literacy skills in a wide range of areas will assume greater importance. Of course, computer literacy will be essential, but so too will workplace literacy, environmental literacy, foreign language literacy, and financial literacy, to

name a few. Creative ways will, therefore, have to be found to encourage people to become literate in several fields, and to integrate some aspects of other literacies into basic literacy programmes. At the same time, a greater and more serious effort will have to be made to stop the increase in the number of young adults who leave school functionally illiterate. Creative strategies will have to be found and implemented in primary and secondary schools to ensure that students there acquire skills in basic literacy and numeracy. In this regard, it might be worthwhile to look at what other countries outside the region are doing to deal with the problem of illiteracy.

Health and the environment

In the areas of health and environment, all countries in the region are making efforts to sensitize and inform their populations of the importance of improving health and well-being, and of preserving the environment. In spite of this, it appears that the current initiatives have so far had only minimal impact. Consequently, much more will have to be done and more comprehensive and intensive programmes will have to be implemented. Health education and environmental education will become more important, and new methods will have to be found to reach all sectors of the population, including policy makers and health care providers. All indications suggest that greater emphasis will be on encouraging and training people to take responsibility for and to manage their own health. However, it will be just as important to sensitize and train the health care professionals in interpersonal relations, in working with people, and in communication. This will help to ensure that their interaction with patients will be more sensitive and caring, and will increase their ability to inspire patients with confidence in their ability to manage their own health.

Gender

In the area of gender, there will have to be more attempts to increase understanding of the relationship of gender to the process and outcomes of development policies, plans, and programmes, and of the ways in which gender socialization determines gender identity and influences gender relations. Gender training programmes will have to be designed to motivate men and women not only to change societal structures, but also to change their perceptions and beliefs about, and their attitudes towards, each other. Gender training programmes will also have to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to create and maintain societies in which gender equality and equity are common characteristics.

An Adult Education Agenda

Policy

While many governments in the Caribbean recognize the importance of lifelong learning and say that they are committed to it, their words are not always followed by actions that demonstrate their commitment. Policies based on the concept of lifelong learning will encourage all citizens of all ages to continue learning, and will make provision for and put mechanisms in place so that all members of society have opportunities to participate in a wide range of educational activities. In order to formulate adult education policies, however, policy makers must begin to see that the education of adults is as important as that of children, and to make adult education an integral part of national education systems. In many countries, adult education is not regarded as a priority by governments, and while some of the programmes offered in tertiary education institutions are not only necessary but useful for adults, it is mainly the younger adults who participate in these.

At the same time, large numbers of older adults participate in programmes organized and offered by NGOs. It might well be that NGOs are better placed to provide some groups of adults

with opportunities to participate in a wide variety of educational activities, but this should not remove government's responsibility for adult education. In addition to formulating and articulating firm policies for adult education, therefore, governments should recognize the role that NGOs are playing and will have to continue to play in this area, and should support and provide them with resources and technical assistance. However, this support should not be limited to providing financial resources, as there are several areas in which NGOs need assistance and in which government's intervention and input would be more appropriate and desirable. Among these are research in adult education, the training of adult educators, and the production of educational and instructional materials for adults. Government also has a role in the administration and management of adult education, in coordinating adult education provision, and in helping to create mechanisms to bring adult educators together and to encourage more cooperation and collaboration among them. At the same time, in order to encourage adults at all levels of the society to continue learning, governments, with financial assistance from businesses and the private sector, could also set up and equip "learner friendly" adult learning and resource centres.

Adult education programmes

Given the unfinished business of addressing and dealing with the issues that emerged in the last century and the emerging issues that will be the focus of this one, the providers of adult education and adult educators will be called upon to provide an even larger number and a wider variety of programmes for adults. For example, in addition to retraining the workforce and to teaching work-related skills, programmes will have to increase the individual's ability to work in teams comprised of different types of people, to manage change, to take initiative, and to work with the minimum of supervision. They will have to encourage creativity and the use of initiative, as well as develop skills in decision making. They will also have to help people to review and critically examine and reflect on their values and attitudes, and empower them so that they have the confidence to make decisions and take action to change their own attitudes as well as undesirable situations. It is clear that these topics and the emerging issues will have to form part of the content of adult education programmes. However, it will also be crucial for providers to develop and design programmes that are more focused on meeting the specific educational needs of particular and hard-to-reach groups in the society, for example, older adults, the poor, and adults with disabilities. In order to be able to do so, however, all providers must conduct research to identify and assess the needs of these and other similar groups, and to use the information collected as the basis for developing relevant programmes.

Record Keeping, documentation, and information sharing

Record keeping and documentation of adult education programmes is also limited. In most cases no records are kept; in some others attendance records are kept but, often, these are the only records available. There are few documents with details of the content or topics covered; with information about the length and duration of the programmes; or which describe the process, the learnings, the outcomes, or the benefits to or impact of the programme on the learners. At the same time, while there are some reports available, many of these are not analytical but merely descriptive, not widely disseminated, and not easily accessible or available. This is also true of articles and research reports. This mainly applies to all Caribbean countries except Jamaica.

During 2000-2009, more serious efforts will have to be made to document and disseminate information and material on adult education in the region, and this should be seen as one of the priorities in the DECADE Project. Within this context, greater efforts will have to be made to use the new communication technologies to engage adults and adult educators, and to encourage them

to share information through such channels as distance education programmes, learning networks, and virtual classrooms.

Research and evaluation

In the Caribbean, there is a dearth of research on adult education, and while a few research studies have been done, no serious attempts have been made to publish or disseminate them. Because of the lack of empirical data on adult education and the educational needs of adults, many adult education programmes are not based on accurate information obtained from the needs assessed nor on problems identified by adult learners themselves. At the same time, very little, if any, evaluation of adult education programmes is carried out. There is an absence of a “culture of research,” and many people do not see research as important to policy formulation or to the development of appropriate and relevant programmes. There is also a great deal of suspicion about, and negative feelings towards, research as well as a reluctance to share information. At the same time, many researchers in the region continue to use traditional rather than participatory research approaches; to stress “objectivity;” and to rely solely on quantitative data. Together, these factors have all contributed to the suspicion about, and negative attitudes towards, research, and to the continuing belief that research is “something that is done by people in the university.” Consequently, when budgets for adult education projects and programmes are being developed, research activities are seldom included.

Over the last two decades, participatory research approaches and methods have become widely recognized as strategies for involving ordinary people in all stages and phases of the research process, and as tools for collecting data that provide a multi-dimensional view of social reality, and for facilitating learning, change, and action. It allows people to identify their problems and needs; identify, examine, and analyze the contributing factors; explore possible solutions; and become motivated to take action to bring about change. It also allows them to reflect on their experience and on the actions that they took, and to assess the outcomes, effects, and impact of their actions. Participatory research is well suited to adult education as it involves learners in generating data about their needs, expectations, and the benefits derived from participating in adult education programmes. It is therefore important that individuals involved in the development, design, delivery, and conduct of adult education programmes be exposed to training in this type of research.

Training of adult educators

Perhaps the most important item on the agenda of adult education and adult educators in the region is the issue of training. While CARCAE must be congratulated for its sterling effort in providing training for adult educators, and while the programmes being offered on the Mona Campus of UWI are worthwhile, given the large number of individuals involved in developing, planning, and conducting adult education programmes, many more and a wider variety of training programmes are needed at various levels.

First, there needs to be an intensive effort in each country to expose as many of those involved in adult education as possible to orientation programmes in order to introduce them to: (a) some of the basic concepts and principles of adult education and adult learning; (b) the psychology of adulthood and adult learners; and (c) methods that will facilitate adult learning. Then there is a need to provide programmes designed to help individuals to acquire knowledge and skills in particular aspects of adult education. Moreover, it should be mandatory for teachers, lecturers, tutors, and instructors in tertiary institutions, including those at universities, teachers’ colleges, and community colleges, to participate in training programmes in adult education. At the same time, trainers in companies, instructors in industry and other private sector agencies, and NGOs should also be expected to participate in introductory as well as advanced courses in adult

education. The latter should take the form of intensive training workshops on different aspects of adult education, including the design and conduct of needs assessment, programming planning, and evaluation, development and production of adult learning materials, and record keeping and documentation. These programmes could be developed and delivered, where appropriate, by teachers' colleges, community colleges, or other suitable bodies including national adult education associations, and they should be developed, designed, and delivered by qualified, well-trained, and experienced adult educators.

At the moment, many such persons must travel to universities outside of the region. UWI, therefore, needs to implement certificate, diploma, and degree programmes in adult education as soon as possible, and to make these available on all three campuses and through the SCS in every country. The recent adoption of the Certificate in Adult Education by the DEC is a start. The JACAE/MSVU masters' programme offered in Jamaica is another encouraging initiative. Such efforts need to be expanded and intensified to make professional training in adult education more widely available in the region.

Conclusion

In every society, it is the adults, not the children, who are responsible for deciding and charting a country's, and therefore a region's development and for shaping its future. It is they who will initiate or retard change; it is they who will either manage or cope with change successfully or who will be crushed or devastated by change. Therefore, it is they who must be well equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are necessary to move this region with confidence into the new millennium, and to ensure that it will be able to take its place proudly and function effectively alongside of other nations and regions of the world.

These then are the issues that need to be addressed, and the challenges facing adult education and adult educators in the Caribbean at the beginning of the twenty first century. It is the belief of the authors that adult education is critical, and that appropriate, relevant, well-planned and well-conducted adult education programmes can help people and countries to achieve their goals. We are confident that all governments and adult educators in the region will rise to and successfully meet the challenges.

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