



# Drugs Policy: Making the Case for Women and Girls in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

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# Presentation Outline

- Overview of Women and Girls in the Caribbean
- Challenges and Assets
  - Special Vulnerabilities
  - Role in advancing Sustainable Development
- Drug Policies and Programmes: Making a Paradigm Shift

# CARICOM STATES



# Women and Girls in the CARICOM

- **Population**

- Slightly more women than men in the population

- **Education**

- More women and girls (than male) completing secondary education and graduating from tertiary education institutions

- **Poverty**

- Women and girls are among the poorest

- **Employment**

- female unemployment is higher than male unemployment in spite of higher educational levels among women
- More women than men employed in low paying jobs

# Drug Use Among Women and Girls

- Alcohol
- Prescription drug
- Marijuana
- Inhalants

# Drug Use Among Women: Influencing Factors

- Factors intrinsic to the individual woman
- Family Factors
- Social and environmental factors
- Life stresses/relationship issues
- Peer pressure
- Substance use/abuse as a coping mechanism

# Vulnerabilities

## **Special Vulnerabilities**

- High level of domestic violence perpetrated among women and children
- Double burden of work in public and private domains
- Higher rate of increase in the disease of drug use disorders among women
- Drug use under reported
- Few treatment facilities

# Barriers for Seeking Treatment

- Availability and Access
- Fear of losing custody of children/Lack of child care services support
- Cultural barriers



# Where are we in CARICOM?

- Strengthening human, technical, and institutional capacity to address drug use/addiction
- Prevention programmes targeting schools and communities
  - Reducing vulnerabilities/building protective factors
  - School Drug Policy

- Treatment and Rehabilitation
  - Drug Treatment Courts
  - Engendered programmes and services
  - Increasing availability and access to treatment and rehabilitation programmes and services for women and children
- Standard of Care

**LOOKING AHEAD**

# Drug Policies and Programmes: Making a Paradigm Shift

- **Integrated Policy Development**
  - Key players/Sectors - Health, Education, Criminal Justice/Judiciary sectors,
  - Drug Observatories
  - HRD Strategy
- **Overarching Framework**
  - Public Health Approach
  - Sustainable Development Goals (special reference Goals 3, 5, 10)

**THANK YOU**