



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination  
against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under  
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms  
of Discrimination against Women**

**Seventh periodic report of States parties**

**Addendum**

**United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

**Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom**

## **THE VIRGIN ISLANDS PERIODIC REPORT ON THE CONVENTION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW) 2007 - 2010**

### **Introduction**

This report covers the period from May 2007 to December 2010, and it seeks to highlight Government's progress in complying and implementing of the Convention. The Virgin Islands has seen some historical milestones since the last CEDAW report in 2007. A new Constitution was enshrined in June 2007 and a new Labour Code was introduced in July 2010. These accomplishments will be further articulated under the appropriate Articles.

The Government of the Virgin Islands is committed to implementing and complying with UN CEDAW in achieving gender equality, equity and empowerment of women by 2013. One of the Government's strategic objectives is to support and promote the fundamental rights of women, men and children to live productive lives free of violence and other forms of discrimination. The Virgin Islands Government is also committed to establishing and enhancing the socio-economic services provided to women, men and children, especially the girl child. The Government will also seek to fulfill its mandate to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all, especially women and children with special needs. Government's motto is to also move the education system, including adult literacy and vocational programmes from good to great.

The Government will continue to collaborate with national agencies, and Non governmental agencies, to work towards prevention and intervention on social issues. The Government has a zero tolerance on gender-based violence and child abuse. The rising incidents of this phenomenon over the years is startling. The Government will continue to ensure that women and men receive equality of treatment in employment as articulated in the new Labour Code of 2010.

### **Population of the Virgin Islands**

The 2010 housing and population census is still being conducted, and as such the estimated population from 2007 to December 2010 stands at 29,537. The age groups ranged from zero months to 80 + years. Table 1. in the Appendix gives a detailed breakdown.

### **Preparation of the Periodic Report**

The Ministry of Health & Social Development, through the Office of Gender Affairs conducted a working session on March 1, 2011, with representatives from the government departments, units and divisions. The objectives of the meeting were to reiterate the importance of compiling the report on our achievements of the UN CEDAW, explain the relevance of the articles to the Virgin Islands and to solicit input from the relevant agencies. In support of the meeting, information received from UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office was shared, also copies of "CEDAW Made Easy: Questions and Answer Booklet" compiled by UNIFEM Caribbean Office.

The booklets were with the compliments of UNIFEM now UNWomen. Guidelines were also provided for compiling and submitting information for inclusion in the national report.

Following the meeting, the departments, units and divisions submitted information to the Office of Gender Affairs for inclusion in the Territory's report.

The Ministry reviewed the report and provided comments and feedback and also assisted in collecting data from the relevant Departments and Units.

## **Challenges**

Following the submission of the last report, the CEDAW Committee directed no specific questions and recommendations to the Virgin Islands. It would have been very useful to receive concluding comments observations and recommendations from the Committee on how the Virgin Islands is complying with the CEDAW and what areas required special focus. Unfortunately, there would be no submission of a shadow report from the NGO's, there has never been any such reports. The Office of Gender Affairs will endeavour to include all the NGO's in its public education and awareness activities on the Convention, which is expected to commence during the third quarter of 2011.

Another challenge faced in preparing this report was the absence of statistics by sex to demonstrate how many men and women access the health clinics for family planning services. The Virgin Islands Government will ensure that all the gaps related to sex disaggregated data will be made available for the next reporting period.

## **Article 1: Definition of Discrimination**

The Government of the Virgin Islands shall continue to ensure no person particularly women is excluded or restricted and discriminated against based on sex, marital status and nationality.

In accordance with the Virgin Islands Constitution Order of 2007, chapter 2, page 8, "Fundamental Rights and Freedoms of the Individual" "Those fundamental rights and freedoms are enjoyed without distinction of any kind such as sex, age, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin association with a national minority, property, family relations, economic status, disability, age, birth, sexual orientation, marital status or other status" These fundamental rights are upheld in the new Labour Code of 2010, and in the other services provided in the Virgin Islands.

Under the VI Constitution, a Complaints Commission was established in 2009; women have equal access as men and are allowed to file complaints to this Commission. The complaints are usually with regards services offered by public offices. The new Virgin Islands Constitution Order has provision for the establishment of a Human Rights Commission, which is expected to be established before the next UN CEDAW reporting period.

## **Article 2: Policy Measures to Be Taken**

The Government of the Virgin Islands shall continue to collaborate with other agencies to develop and implement policies to eliminate discrimination against all persons especially women and girls.

## **National Policy for Gender Equity and Equality**

The process of a national policy on gender began in March 2008, in collaboration with the Centre for Gender and Development Studies: Nita Barrow Unit of the University of West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados. The meeting was convened for policy makers and other senior officers to develop a "Framework for a National Policy on Gender."

The main objectives of the consultation were to:

create awareness among policy makers of the importance of a National Gender Policy for the BVI.

begin the process of consultation to create a policy which would translate the government and the private sector commitment to gender equality and equity into a reality.

In 2010 the Government of the Virgin Islands in collaboration with the Institute of Gender & Development Studies, University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus, and Trinidad

& Tobago commenced the development of a national policy for gender equity and equality. The Virgin Islands Government and UNWomen, Regional Office Barbados are co-funding this project. Three (3) phases for the development of the policy have been completed.

These phases included capacity building workshops on gender analysis tools policy makers and senior officers of the public and private sectors. Workshop for media workers, outreach programmes consultations and interviews with key stakeholders, and the production of a training manual to assist facilitators with national consultations.

The policy will ensure:

- I. more optimum use of the country's human resources to benefit men and women, girls and boys and to contribute to the further development of the British Virgin Islands.
- II. incorporation of a gender perspective in all development planning as the strategy for promoting gender equality and fairness.
- III. promote recognition and value of women's roles and contributions as agents of change and beneficiaries of the development process.
- IV. gender mainstreaming in all areas of the public and private sector.
- V. Legislative changes and public awareness of relevant legislation and their implications as it relates to gender differentials in society.

The gender policy will be addressing seven thematic areas of concern which will improve the lives of and conditions of women and men, boys and girls and they are:

Gender & Education

Gender & Health Care – HIV /AIDS, Family Planning, etc.

Immigration and National Security

Labour & Employment

Economic Development

Gender & Democracy

Legislative changes

Gender & the Environment

The draft gender policy is expected to be completed by the consultants during the second quarter of 2011, following which national consultations, research and interviews with key stakeholders.

### **The National Disability Policy Project**

This project was initiated in 2008 as part of the 2007 Manifesto of the Virgin Islands Party Government and political mandate under the direction of the Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development.

This project was commissioned under the theme "Disability is what I have, not who I am" The Government demonstrates its commitment to eliminate all forms of discrimination against, women, men and children with disability in the Virgin Islands. The implementation of the policy will seek to enhance access to services, education and economic opportunities, housing, transport and the environment. Thus addressing the needs and providing actions to facilitate an improved life style and well being for persons with disability.

The policy is currently being circulated to key stakeholders for feedback and recommendations.

Thereafter the it will be submitted to Cabinet for approval and implementation.

### **Article 3: Guarantee of Basic Human Rights**

The Government of the Virgin Islands shall continue to collaborate with other agencies to develop and implement policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate the violation of human rights especially gender base violence.

Government is committed to introduce Policies and Programmes to Reduce Gender-based violence.

The Government has a zero tolerance on gender based violence. Perpetrators are brought to justice, and in many instances served prison terms for these acts of crime. The Royal Virgin Islands Police Force-Family Juvenile Division over the last four years dealt with over two hundred (200) reported cases. These included indecent assault, common assault, assault and wounding, criminal damage and threatening language, against women. The issue of gender disparities and inequalities is a major concern in the Virgin Islands and one which the Government and Non-governmental organisations continuously address.

The Family Support Network (FSN) is a non-governmental organisation in existence for over twenty (20) years which provides service to women who are victims of abuse, in the Virgin Islands. Over the last three years FSN provided services for over one hundred (100) women. These services included, counseling, temporary shelters, filing applications for protection and occupancy orders in the magistrate's court. The government supports this organisation through an annual subvention to assist with its mandate. The FSN provides temporary shelter for victims up to three nights, because there are no permanent safe houses or shelters for victims of domestic violence. Unfortunately after providing temporary shelter, the victims may have no other alternative, but to return to the violent environment. The absence of a permanent shelter for abused women is an area of concern and the relevant government agencies and the NGO's will be addressing. It is envisaged that a permanent shelter for abused women and children will offer greater protection for victims.

### **National Domestic Violence Protocol**

A national domestic violence protocol was re-developed and reviewed in 2008/2009 in collaboration with four multi-agencies, namely, Law Enforcement, the Judiciary, Medical Services and Social Services. A number of workshops, consultations, research and interviews were held with key stakeholders in the development of the protocol.

The Protocol addresses intimate partner relationships. One of the specific objectives of the Protocol is, to enhance the systemic responses by agencies to domestic violence so as to ensure more effective service delivery to victims of domestic violence. In 2010 Cabinet approved the implementation of the Protocol for four key stakeholders. Also in 2010 a five day workshop was held for the stakeholders on the use and application of the protocol.

### **Virgin Islands Domestic Violence (Summary Proceeding) Act of 1995**

In 2009 a multi-agency committee was established to review the domestic violence Act in conjunction with the OECS model Legislation. Thereafter recommendations were submitted to Cabinet for their approval of the repealing of the Domestic Violence Summary Proceeding Act of 1995 and to adopt the OECS Family Law and Domestic Violence-Model Family Legislation with minor changes. Approval was granted in 2010, and the Attorney General Chambers is currently drafting the new Bill, which will be circulated to the relevant agencies for review and feedback.

The new Bill will offer a broader definition of domestic violence, for example, economic abuse, harassment, stalking, sexual abuse or threats of sexual abuse. Women in visiting relationships will now be able to apply to the Magistrate's Court for protection orders against their partners.

### **Partnership for Peace: A Violence Intervention Programme for Men**

In October 2009, through the Office of Gender Affairs, in partnership with UNIFEM now UNWomen Regional Office, Barbados a 16-week violence intervention psycho-educational programme for men was established, developed and implemented. Prior to the development of the programme an intensive five day facilitators training was conducted for persons who will deliver the curriculum.

The programme is court-connected and most of the referrals are through that system. A total of 13 men successfully completed two cycles in May and September, 2010. A third cycle is currently in progress. The curriculum is geared at decreasing men's violence against women and family violence. Accordingly, group participants are challenged to change their violent behaviour and support each other to live violence-free lives. The main goals of the programme are:

To help participants stop violence in their lives.

To help participants understand that violence is a choice.

To help participants accept responsibility for their behaviour and to choose alternatives to violence.

To help participants understand the costs of violence to themselves, their partner, their children and society in general.

### **Child Abuse Protocol**

As a result of the rising incidents of this phenomenon, a Child Abuse Protocol has been developed and is designed to provide national agencies with a systematic guideline for the coordinated actions in child abuse or neglect prevention, reporting, investigation and management. The Protocol was therefore formulated with multi-disciplinary collaboration, an approach which is widely recognized as the most effective way of handling child protection cases. The protocol is currently awaiting the approval of Cabinet; thereafter it will be implemented, through the Social Development Department.

The number of reported child protection cases by type during the four-year period, 2007-2010, was over two hundred (200), of this figure one hundred and forty-two cases were against girls. The appropriate intervention was delivered to the victims and their families. Many of the perpetrators were brought to justice. Table 2 gives a breakdown of the type of assault.

In order to create an awareness of the phenomenon, during the last five years, the department has designated April as the month for Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month. A number of activities are executed to bring greater public awareness on the issue in the Virgin Islands.

For example, talks to children in the primary and secondary schools by social workers, police and probation officers.

### **Article 6: Trafficking and Prostitution**

Governments will work to eliminate trafficking in women and the exploitation of the prostitution of women.

The Government of the Virgin Islands' House of Assembly approved an amendment to the Criminal Code, section 201(a) in 2007 which addresses Human Trafficking of individuals, women or men, as a crime.

During the reporting period, measures were introduced to combat human trafficking and strengthen the Government's enforcement capacity with the establishment of a task force among law enforcement departments. Another measure was to introduce in 2009 legislation which penalises the agents or owners of vessels (any description of boats or aircraft) who

knowingly transport persons to the Virgin Islands who do not meet the legal entry requirements.

Prostitution is illegal in the Territory, and is not widely practiced in the Virgin Islands. The Government acknowledges it must be proactive in eliminating the exploitation of women. As such the Criminal Code of the Virgin Islands includes language such as “causing or encouraging prostitution, etc. of a girl under sixteen”, “keeping brothels” and “letting premises for use as brothel”. There is no data to show how many women or girls work in prostitution and whether their working conditions are healthy and safe.

In an effort to eliminate the trafficking of women and the exploitation of the prostitution of women, the immigration legislation empowers immigration officers to refuse entry to an individual “who is reasonably believed to have come to the Territory for any immoral purpose, or who is believed to be a prostitute or have come to the Territory for the purpose of prostitution.” Notwithstanding that the Government will make every effort through other agencies to implement measures to collect data on this supposedly job market.

#### **Article 7: Political and Public Life**

Government ensures that women are not discriminated against in public and political life.

In the Virgin Islands, women have the right to vote, contest general elections, and hold political and other public offices.. In August 2007, General Elections were held in the Virgin Islands, and the Virgin Islands Party won in a landslide victory. Six women contested the elections, but unfortunately only two were successful. The Deputy Premier and Minister of Health & Social Development is the only female Minister in Government, and Territorial-at-Large Representative. The former Attorney General, who was a woman, was an ex officio member of the House of Assembly from 2007-2010; she demitted office in 2010.

Women have prominent positions at the senior and middle levels in the public service and in the private sector. Four of five Permanent Secretaries are women. The Human Resources Department is headed by a woman.

The positions of Deputy Governor and Registrar of Civil Registry and Passport Office are held by women. The positions of Clerk and Deputy Clerk of the House of Assembly are held by women. The Accountant General and Chief Auditor are women. The Director of Public Prosecutions, Supreme Court Judges, Registrar, and two Magistrates are all women.

It has been recognized that more women needed to be represented in the House of Assembly. It is imperative for programmes to be developed to give women the tools and the opportunity to lobby and enter the race for seats in the House of Assembly. The Office of Gender Affairs will endeavour to facilitate the process. More voter education is required and will be done in collaboration with other national agencies. General Elections are constitutionally due by November 2011 and it is not yet known how many women will contest this year's election.

#### **Article 8: Participation at the International Level**

Governments will take action to ensure women the opportunity to represent their government at the international level and participate in international organisations.

The Public Service of the Virgin Islands is dominated by women, especially in the top tier positions. Therefore, more women have the opportunity to represent the Government at the international level and participate in international organisations. Five of the seven Ministries are headed by women who, as permanent secretaries, are the Territory's focal point for various international organisations such as the European Union/Overseas Countries and Territories Forum, Commonwealth, the United Nations and its related organisations. The two women legislators also represented the Government at international

meetings of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association on many occasions during the reporting period.

A total of 219 women represented the Government at seminars, meetings, workshops, conferences and meetings regionally and internationally. Table 3 in the Appendix provides a breakdown of the number of women who represented the government at events organized by the respective agencies.

### **Article 9: Nationality**

Governments will grant women equal rights to change or retain their nationality and that of their child.

Women are granted equal rights to retain their nationality and that of their children by satisfactorily meeting eligibility requirements in accordance with the Immigration and Passport Ordinance (Cap.130) which grants Belonger Status and Residence Status in the Territory of the Virgin Islands.

This legislation does not affect individuals' nationality as persons are only granted the legal requirement to live and work in the Territory since as a British Overseas Territory, nationality is granted by the British Government. The law has been amended to be gender neutral and with the word 'man' now changed to 'spouse'.

The Government has granted naturalization or citizenship status to a total of five hundred and ninety-eight (598) women and men. Two hundred and ninety-eight (298) were women and three hundred (300) men were naturalised for the period 2007-2010. Men are slightly ahead in this category, but this is by no means discriminatory.

### **Article 10: Equal Rights in Education.**

Government grants women equal access and the same opportunity as men in the field of Education.

It is evident that women and men have equal rights and access to education both at the college and vocational level. The Virgin Islands has a Community College that offers various Associate Degrees and certificate courses. There is a University of the West Indies (UWI) Open campus located at the College.

Public officers are granted study leave with full salary for the first year and half salary for subsequent years to attend the College. Time off is also granted for staff to study on a part-time basis. Special leave is also granted for staff to write mid-term and final examinations.

At all levels of education, boys and girls, women and men have access to the same curricula, same examinations and teaching staff. Women and men have the opportunities to benefit from the same from scholarships and other study grant.

Please see Table 4. in the Appendix which demonstrated the number of women and men who received scholarships from the Virgin Islands Government to pursue studies in the social, medical and technical fields.

### **Article 11- Employment**

Men and women have equal access to employment in the public and private sectors once duly qualified, skilled and experienced in the specific fields. The employment population is made up of over fifty-percent (50%) of expatriates, and their profession include attorneys-at-law, teachers, medical professionals, engineers, among others.

The Virgin Islands Labour Code, 2010

A new Labour Code of 2010 (No. 4. of 2010) was gazetted on July 16, 2010 and came into force on October 4, 2010. The new Labour Code replaced the Labour Code of 1975.



The Office of Gender Affairs, had the opportunity to provide information for the Labour Code from CEDAW Article 11, section 2 (a), (b) which states that “a woman should not be dismissed on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave; and discriminated against on the basis of marital status...” The National Gender Policy will seek to address Article 11: (d) “establishment of and development of a network of child-care facilities”. There are such facilities, but the inexpensive ones open up to 5:30 p.m., while those that offer a twenty-four(24) service is very expensive, and many women would not be able to afford to use the services. The time frame of up to 5: 30 p.m., does not allow parents (women) who are in full time employment to pursue studies at the college, after work.

The Virgin Islands Labour Code, of 2010: “Equality of Treatment in Employment” (Part V11) states that persons cannot be discriminated against on the grounds of race, sex, colour, religion, nationality or sexual orientation, disability, HIV or other medical status, pregnancy and marital status. An employer cannot discriminate against an applicant by requesting her to take a HIV and or pregnancy test before she is offered the job. The Labour Code also has provision for one month’s paternity leave without pay. This provision of paternity leave is discriminatory and efforts will be made to review it so that men could receive remuneration.

### **Article 12: Health Care and Family Planning**

The Government ‘s policies provide for women and men to have equal access to health care services.

Health Care and Family Planning, including the epidemic HIV/AIDS are major concern, for the Virgin Islands Government. Over the last four years, a number of activities and policies have been developed and implemented to support and improve the nations’ health and well being. Women and men have equal access to health care services.

The Ministry of Health & Social Development is the focal point for HIV/AIDS in the Virgin Islands since 1988 and the National AIDS Programme (NAP) was officially established in 2003 to mitigate the health and socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS. To achieve this goal, the NAP provides coordination of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support programmes and services throughout the Territory through a multi-sector approach. The Ministry has international linkages and received technical and financial support from agencies such as PAHO/WHO, DFID/AID Inc./Opitons, CAREC, and UNAIDS to execute programmes and projects, not only for HIV/AIDS and STI’s, but other primary health care.

### **Prevention-of-Mother-To-Child-Transmission (PMTCT)**

For the period 2008-2010, one thousand six hundred and forty-six (1,646) women have accessed antenatal care and ultimately PMTCT HIV testing at the community health centers. HIV testing during pregnancy began in the early 1990’s and continues to offer the services to women. Currently there is 100% utilization of this service. In 2010, 122 pregnant women were screened for HIV. One mother- infant pair was HIV positive.

The implementation of PMTCT has been a collaborative effort of the NAP and the BVI health sector to reduce the transmission of HIV to the babies of infected pregnant women. PMTCT recommends that the standard of prenatal care should include HIV screening for all pregnant women twice during their term of pregnancy. These screenings occur at the initial prenatal evaluation and prior to delivery. Every HIV infected pregnant woman and child born to her receives the appropriate standard of treatment and care before and after the birth. The child receives follow up testing for the first 18 months to determine whether it is HIV infected.

### BVI Policy & Legislative Analysis on Sexual Health

Capacity building and technical assistance are accessed through the Department for International Development (DFID) based in the United Kingdom (UK). DFID is committed to supporting Caribbean and South Atlantic British Overseas Territories (UKOTs) to build up their local capacity for action against HIV/AIDS. Options in partnership with the Associates for International Development Incorporated (AID Inc.), both based in Barbados, have been contracted by DFID to provide technical assistance to ten UKOTs, to name a few Anguilla, Bermuda and British Virgin Islands.

This project will address priority areas such as, enhanced prevention efforts; improved access to care and support for PLWH; strengthened human rights, reduction of stigma and discrimination and improved strategic information management. DFID's three year project (Feb 2008-Feb 2011) continues and expands its support to the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) which provides planning and technical assistance to the Caribbean UKOTs

### Development of BVI National Strategic Plan (NSP) for HIV/AIDS/STI

The EU Project "Strengthening the Integration of the British and Dutch OCTs in the Regional Response to HIV/AIDS through the Pan American Partnership against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP)" is in keeping with the Contribution Agreement between the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Commission (EC). This 6,000,000 Euros funding project directly benefits the British and Dutch Overseas Caribbean Territories (OCTs) to scale up HIV programmes and services. PAHO HIV Caribbean Office (PHCO) manages the financial resources provided by the EU Fund as well as provides technical support for the implementation of the EU Project.

### Family Planning Services

The BVI Health Services Authority has responsibilities for community clinics which offers a number of services for men and women. It was somewhat difficult to obtain statistics for the period 2007-2010 from this entity. The services offered include:

1. Counseling
2. Oral Contraceptives- Microgynon and Logynon
3. Injectables- Depo-Povera, Noristerat and Mesigyna.
4. Condoms
5. Referrals for Tubal Ligation, IUCD and Vasectomy
6. Pregnancy Test

The table below showed services provided by the health clinics:

<i>Community Clinics</i>	<i>Oral</i>	<i>Injectables</i>	<i>Condom</i>	<i>Papsmear</i>	<i>Pregnancy Test</i>	<i>Total</i>
Capoon's Bay	1	10	4	0	0	15
Jost Van Dyke	1	3	2	0	0	6
East End	4	13	4	6	3	30
Long Look	3	8	4	5	6	26
Virgin Gorda	31	32	6	12	5	86

*Source: BVI Health Services Authority*

### Non-communicable disease Risk factors STEPS Survey

During 2009 the Ministry of Health in collaboration with CAREC, PAHO/WHO and the BVI Social Security Board embarked on a survey in the Virgin Islands on Non-

communicable disease Risk factors STEPS survey. The purpose of the STEPS Survey was essentially to provide scientific data on healthy behaviours and bio-chemical test results to be used in the following ways:

- To estimate the prevalence of risk factors and to identify groups at risk for NCDs in the population.
- To provide baseline data on prevalence of the risk factors for chronic non-communicable diseases by 20 years strata by male and females age 25-64.
- To utilize the information for developing a national strategy for the NCDs prevention and control.

#### **Cancer screening for women:**

Many organizations in the Virgin Islands, both public and private provide cancer screening opportunities for both women and men. The survey results showed that screening for cancer among women were (26.4%; 95% CI 24.2-28.3) who had a mammogram, while (82.1%; 95% CI 78.9-85.3) had been shown how to examine their breasts. Women in the BVI are also accessing screening for prevention of cancer of the cervix. The majority of the women in the survey (94%) reported having had a pap smear test.

Cancer research and the implementation of a cancer register has been identified by the Ministry of Health as the way forward as the next step to assess and plan for the implementation of programmes to guide education on cancer and prevention.

#### **Article 13: Economic Life, Sport and Culture**

Governments will act to eliminate discrimination against women in the economic and social arenas. Women will have equal access to family benefits, loans and credit, and an equal right to participate in recreational activities, sports and cultural life.

The Cabinet in 2007 approved a new trade policy, the National Trade Policy of the Virgin Islands. This policy ensures both women and men have equal opportunities and access to operate businesses in the Territory. In 2007 the Government through its Department of Trade and Consumer Affairs established a Small Business Bureau which guarantees equal rights for women to participate in economic activity. Women also have equal access to and benefit from training opportunities, technical assistance and other related support in the operations and management of their small businesses. The Banks give loans to women to buy houses and land and in some instance to build houses, once they meet the requirements.

#### **Article 14: Rural Women**

Government ensures that women on the sister islands are not discriminate against.

This article does not apply to the Virgin Islands, since we don't have rural areas. The Virgin Islands is made up of many islands referred to as the sister islands. Women on these islands have access to services, such as health clinics, banks, utility services, educational institutions and are gainfully employed.

There is no discrimination against women on the sister islands. They can also travel by ferry service from one sister island to the main land-Tortola to source services not available on the sister-islands.

#### **Article 15 Equality Before the Law**

The Virgin Islands Constitution Order, 2007 states that everyone is equal before the law and every person has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. Women in the Virgin Islands have the same rights as men to enjoy all rights and freedoms and be protected from inhumane treatment. Women have legal rights to enter into contracts, and

administering or owning properties or land. They also have the right to choose their domicile.

The Virgin Islands is home to many expatriates women and men, who can reside here and work for government or the private sector, once they meet the stipulated criteria.

#### Conclusion

The Virgin Islands have over the last four years made some progress in implementing and complying with the UNCEDAW. The Office of Gender Affairs which is the focal point for the Government, on gender equality, equity and women empowerment will continue to implement international agreements such as the Beijing Platform for Action and Declaration, along with the Convention.

However, there is scope for additional action in specific areas of women and gender prior to the next reporting period. The Government of the Virgin Islands pledges to continue to implement those policies, protocols and programmes, that will reduce and eliminate gender disparity as was alluded to in the report.

The revision and amendment of legislations will be high on the national agenda that deem to be discriminatory against men, women and children. The government also pledges to build more alliances, network and collaborate with national agencies and non-governmental organizations and to develop a national plan of action. For example, including public education and awareness campaign on human rights, especially targeting women and girls.

The Government of the Virgin islands will continue to strive towards achieving gender equality and equity by 2013.

#### **Appendix**

Table 1

Population of the British Virgin Islands by Age Group 2007-2010

Age	2007			2008			2009			2010		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0-4	1,424	1,435	2,859	1,452	1,462	2,914	1,441	1,450	2,891	1,403	1,413	2,816
5-9	1,056	1,063	2,119	1,118	1,127	2,245	1,202	1,212	2,414	1,293	1,304	2,597
10-14	995	980	1,975	997	980	1,977	993	981	1,974	1,000	991	1,991
Total 0 - 14	3,475	3,478	6,953	3,567	3,569	7,136	3,636	3,643	7,279	3,696	3,708	7,404
15-19	887	986	1,873	928	1,003	1,931	966	1,009	1,975	995	1,011	2,006
20-24	919	920	1,839	928	956	1,884	940	999	1,939	954	1,037	1,991
25-29	1,028	1,015	2,043	1,033	1,000	2,033	1,042	993	2,035	1,055	999	2,054
30-34	1,150	1,190	2,340	1,145	1,168	2,313	1,144	1,146	2,290	1,145	1,127	2,272
35-39	1,281	1,313	2,594	1,274	1,305	2,579	1,265	1,295	2,560	1,257	1,282	2,539
40-44	1,244	1,303	2,547	1,274	1,328	2,602	1,300	1,343	2,643	1,320	1,349	2,669
Total 15 - 44	6,509	6,727	13,236	6,582	6,760	13,342	6,657	6,785	13,442	6,726	6,805	13,531
45-49	1,044	1,034	2,078	1,097	1,102	2,199	1,145	1,172	2,317	1,190	1,237	2,427
50-54	793	795	1,588	839	837	1,676	895	877	1,772	953	922	1,875
55-59	659	591	1,250	677	627	1,304	693	670	1,363	714	715	1,429
60-64	485	449	934	521	472	993	558	492	1,050	591	515	1,106
Total 45 - 64	2,981	2,869	5,850	3,134	3,038	6,172	3,291	3,211	6,502	3,448	3,389	6,837
65-69	295	279	574	325	310	635	356	345	701	389	379	768
70-74	178	181	359	188	186	374	203	195	398	223	210	433
75-79	125	155	280	127	160	287	130	162	292	133	161	294
80+	139	127	266	140	127	267	140	128	268	141	129	270
Total >65	737	742	1,479	780	783	1,563	829	830	1,659	886	879	1,765
Total	13,702	13,816	27,518	14,063	14,150	28,213	14,413	14,469	28,882	14,756	14,781	29,537

Source: Development Planning Unit(DPU)

**Table 2**  
**Reported Child Abuse Cases by type (Jan - Dec 2007)**

<i>Category of Child Abuse</i>	<i>No. of Clients</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Child Neglect	8	10	18
Physical	2	6	8
Sexual	3	9	12
Verbal	-	2	2
Total	13	27	40

*Source: Social Development Department, of the Ministry of Health*

**Child Abuse Cases by type (Jan - Dec 2008)**

<i>Category of Child Abuse</i>	<i>No. of Clients</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Child Neglect	8	18	26
Physical	1	11	12
Sexual	6	6	12
Verbal	-	2	2
Total	15	37	52

*Source: Social Development Department, of the Ministry of Health*

**Child Abuse Cases by type (Jan - Dec 2009)**

<i>Category of Child Abuse</i>	<i>No. of Clients</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Child Neglect	12	10	22
Physical	13	13	26
Sexual	1	17	20
Verbal	3	5	8
Total	29	45	74

*Source: Social Development Department, of the Ministry of Health*

**Child Abuse Cases by type (Jan – Dec 2010)**

<i>Type of Abuse</i>	<i>No. of Clients</i>		<i>Total</i>
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
Neglect	9	4	13
Sexual	7	17	24
Physical	14	12	27
Total	30	33	63

*Source: Social Development Department, of the Ministry of Health*

**Table 3***Women 's participation at the international level*

No.	Organisations	Years			
		2010	2009	2008	2007
1	Caribbean Epidemiology Center(CAREC)	2	3	16	4
2	Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)			1	
3	Caribbean Community(CARICOM)	3	7	1	
4	Caribbean Correlation of National AIDS Programme Coordinators		1		
5	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute			1	
6	Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute	1			
7	Caribbean Health Research Council			4	
8	Caribbean Institute on Alcoholism	1			
9	Caribbean Social Security Organization		1		
10	Commonwealth Foundation	1			
11	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association(CPA)		1		
12	Commonwealth Steering Committee for Nursing and Midwifery	1			
13	Dawn Caribbean Training Institute	1			
14	Institute for Integral Development			2	
15	Inter American Centre for Security Studies	1			
16	International AIDS Society	1			
17	International Training Center of the International Labour Organisation		1		
18	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States(OECS)	6	7	3	
19	Pan American Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS(PANCAP)		1		
20	Pan American Health Organization(PAHO)	35	40	36	12
21	United Nations Children Fund(UNICEF)	1		8	2
22	United Nations Development Programme(UNDP)	1	1	1	
23	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean(UNECLAC)		1		
24	United Nations Population Fund(UNFPA)			1	
	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS				1
25	United Nations Development Fund for Women(UNIFEM)		2		
26	University of the West Indies (UWI)	1			
	TOTAL	56	66	74	19

*Source: Ministry of Health & Social Development*

**Table 4***STUDENT ABROAD LIST STATISTICAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENT AWAY IN TRAINING FOR 2007-2010 YEARS*

Field Study	STUDENT ABROAD LIST STATISTICAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENT AWAY IN TRAINING FOR 2007-2010 YEARS									
	2007		2008		2009		2010		Total Number Trained (2007 - 2010)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Accounting			0	2	2	9			2	11
Accounting/Finance							2	6	2	6
Aeronautical Science							1	0	1	0
Aerospace Engineering							1	0	1	0
Architectural Building Engineering							0	1	0	1
Architecture					2	0			2	0
Biology/Chemistry							0	4	0	4
Business Administration			0	1	1	6			1	7
Business Management/Administration							2	2	2	2
Computer Science/Engineering							3	0	3	0
Computer Science/Information Technology					2	4			2	4
Computer Studies			1	0					1	0
Culinary Arts							2	0	2	0
Early childhood Education			0	1					0	1
Economics					0	2			0	2
Education							6	6	6	6
Electrical Engineering					1	0			1	0
Electronic Engineering			1	0					1	0
Electrical Engineering/Technology							3	1	3	1
Elementary Education			1	2					1	2
English							0	2	0	2
General Science/Natural Science					1	1			1	1
Health Information Management					0	1			0	1
Hotel Restaurant Management			0	1					0	1



## STUDENT ABROAD LIST STATISTICAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENT AWAY IN TRAINING FOR 2007-2010 YEARS

Field Study	STUDENT ABROAD LIST STATISTICAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENT AWAY IN TRAINING FOR 2007-2010 YEARS									
	2007		2008		2009		2010		Total Number Trained (2007 - 2010)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Information Technology							0	1	0	1
Industrial Technology			1	0					1	0
Interior Design							1	0	1	0
Law	1	4	0	1	1	11	3	4	5	20
Law & Criminology	0	1							0	1
Legal Studies	1	2							1	2
Management & Technology							0	1	0	1
Management Studies					1	1			1	1
Marine biology & Coastal Ecology	0	2							0	2
Marine Technology			2	0					2	0
Marine/Auto Mechanics	1	0							1	0
Marketing					0	1			0	1
Mechanical Design Technology	1	0							1	0
Medical Sonography					1	0			1	0
Medicine			1	1	2	5	4	2	7	8
Nursing	0	1	0	1	0	5	0	2	0	9
Nutrition	0	1					0	1	0	2
Physical Education			1	0					1	1
Political Science	0	1			1	0			1	1
Practical Nursing Programme	0	1							0	1
Pre Journalism							0	1	0	1
Pre-Dentistry					1	0			1	0
Project Management					1	0			1	0
Psychology					2	6			2	6
Public Administration					0	3			0	3

## STUDENT ABROAD LIST STATISTICAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENT AWAY IN TRAINING FOR 2007-2010 YEARS

Public Health	0	1						0	1
Science								0	1
Social Science								0	1
Social work	0	1						0	1
sociology					0	2			0
Spanish/Language	0	1							0
Field Study									1

## STUDENT ABROAD LIST STATISTICAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENT AWAY ON TRAINING FOR 2007-2010

	2007		2008		2009		2010		Total Number Trained (2007 - 2010)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Surveying Engineering					1	0			1	0
Teacher Education			1	0					1	0
Travel Tourism Management			0	1					0	1
									61	122

Source: Ministry of Education &amp; Culture

## **FALKLAND ISLANDS 7<sup>TH</sup> UN CEDAW REPORT 2011**

The cultural, legal, and historical, links between the Falkland Islands and the United Kingdom mean that many of the problems faced in the United Kingdom as detailed in the WNC report on rape and sexual violence and domestic violence are replicated in the Falkland Islands, albeit on a smaller scale. However, additional resource limitations and the small and isolated nature of the community do compound some of those problems further.

However in the area of rape and sexual violence against women, some positive progress can be reported during the last 18 months. The very small size of the community means that numbers involved in cases of rape and serious sexual violence are necessarily quite low (as distinct from low conviction rates, which is also a problem as indicated above). However, successful prosecutions for rape and for sexual activity with a [girl] child have been achieved in 2010 and 2011, including several historic rapes dating back to the 1970's. The convictions appear to have already had a positive impact on community confidence in terms of reporting sexual violence against women; evidenced by an increase in complaints of historical sexual violence against women.

## TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS

### Population Estimates

1. The last official census was conducted in 2001. The results of the census revealed an almost equal split between the male and female population with 49.8% of the population being male and 50.2% being female. This information can be seen in table 1. A similar trend was reflected in the breakdown of the population by status. In 2010 the Statistics Unit conducted a listing exercise and the results shows a slight shift in the male versus female population of the Turks and Caicos Islands, with 52.6% being female and 47.4% being male. This can be seen in table 2.

*Table 1. Population by Gender: 2001*

AREA	POPULATION		
	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
TURKS AND CAICOS	19,886	9,897	9,989
GRAND TURK	3,975	1,854	2,121
SALT CAY	120	59	61
SOUTH CAICOS	1,063	531	532
MIDDLE CAICOS	301	145	156
NORTH CAICOS	1,348	676	671
PROVIDENCIALES	13,021	6,590	6,431
PARROT CAY	58	41	17
Source DEPS			

**Chart 1. TCI Population by Gender: 2001**

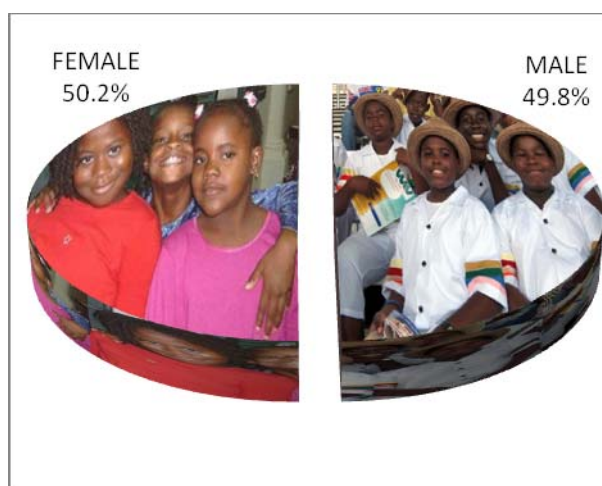
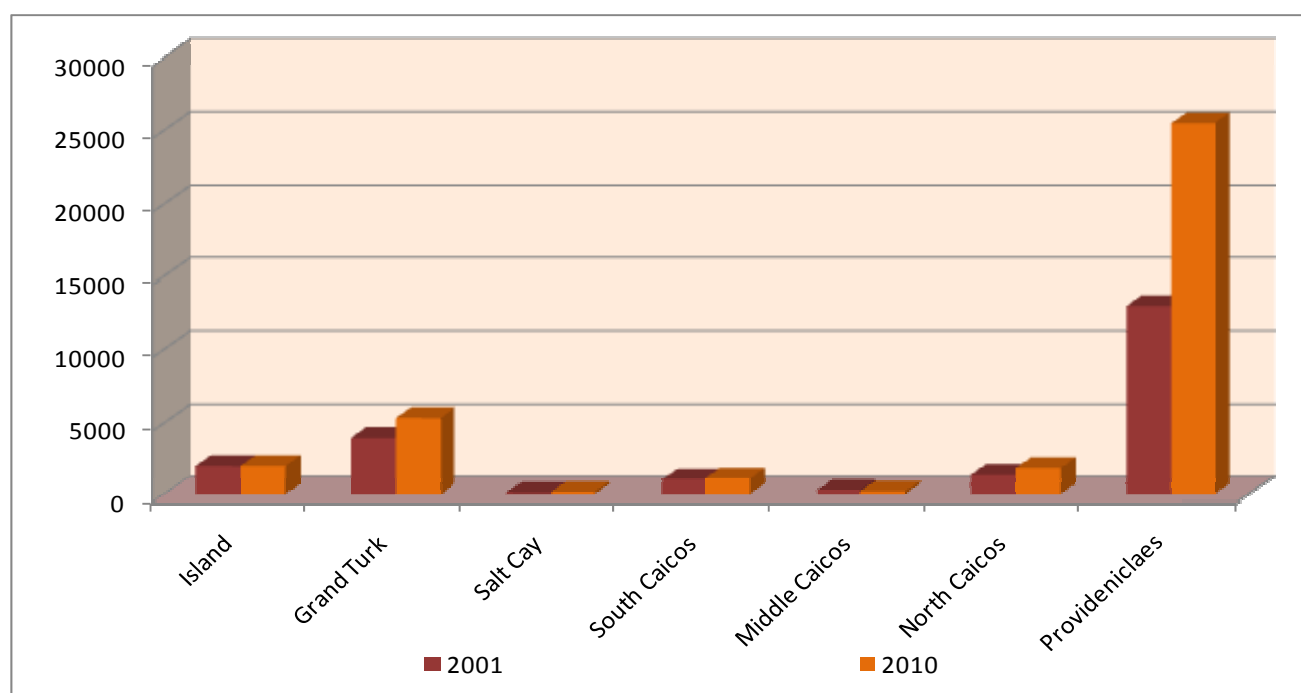


Table 2. Population by Island: 2010

Island	Male	Female	Total Population	Male %	Female %
01 Grand Turk	2,694	2662	5356	50.3	49.7
02 Salt Cay	96	72	168	57.0	43.0
03 South Caicos	610	529	1139	53.5	46.5
04 Middle Caicos	97	99	196	49.5	50.5
05 North Caicos	1,016	857	1873	54.2	45.8
06 Providenciales	13,480	12026	25506	52.9	47.1
Total	17,992	16,245	34,238	52.6	47.4

\* Parrot Cay is included in North Caicos; Pine Cay is included with Providenciales.

Chart 2. TCI Population by Island: 2001 and 2010



### Women and legislation in TCI

2. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was extended to the Turks and Caicos Island (TCI) in 1986. The principal TCI legislation is the Sex Disqualification (removal) Ordinance (cap.97) of 1950. Fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual and protection from discrimination are expressed in the TCI constitution of 1988 (cap.1 articles 67 and 78) whatever (the individual's) race, place of origin, political opinions, color, creed or sex.

### Legal and Other Measures Adopted Since the Previous Report

3. The CEDAW was extended to the TCI over a period of twenty-five (25) years. It is through the dedication and commitment of the Gender Affairs Unit that The Family Law and Domestic Violence legislative programme saw progress with the Childcare and Adoption Bill, with discussion and passage by the Advisory Council and the Consultative Forum in 2010. However, the draft Domestic Violence Ordinance slated for discussion and subsequent passage has now been placed, among the other family law reforms in the general Law Review programme as recommended following findings of 'systemic weakness in legislation', in the Commission of Enquiry. The six model legislations covered family courts, childcare and protection, the status of children, juvenile justice, domestic violence and adoption.
4. The Human Rights Commissioner has been working tirelessly bringing awareness to the problem of domestic violence throughout the country and continues to counsel women who are victims of violence. In 2007 The Commissioner drafted applicable legislation and is actively working on formulating its operational and investigating procedures.
5. In 2008 the Human Rights Ordinance was enacted. The Commission consists of five members, of which the Chairman was appointed by the Governor. The Commission bears the responsibilities to inquire and investigate complaints of alleged or perceived human rights abuse and complaints regarding procedures, with a view to promoting respect for and observance of fundamental rights as enshrined in the constitution.
6. The Chairman also attended a workshop in October 2010, in Anguilla. The workshop was held in the context to build human rights capacity in the British Overseas Territories. Each territory was provided with an outline plan for implementation over the next three (3) years and the TCI was no exception.
7. The Chairman has been very supportive in creating awareness in addressing local and regional issues with reference to women, exchanging information and ensuring that women's rights take centre stage as we champion the course for gender equality and equity for our women and girls.

### Actual Progress to promote and eliminate discrimination against women

8. The Gender Affairs Unit continues to function under the leadership of a new Director who took up office on March 1, 2011. The Unit in Grand Turk is manned by the Director, Assistant Director, and Secretary. A Deputy Director and Administrative Officer man the office in Providenciales. All staff are female; however, plans to strengthen the national machinery are in progress with the employment of a male during the course of the year. We are also proposing to establish offices on the other islands, where the demand for such a unit is becoming increasingly visible.
9. The Gender Affairs Unit remains committed and dedicated to advocating and ensuring gender equity and equality. The Unit continues to organize workshops, seminars and talk shows to increase awareness on issues related to gender equality. In May of 2010 the Gender Affairs Unit in collaboration with the National AIDS Programme conducted a two-day workshop on "**Women, Violence and HIV**". This workshop was made possible by funding from PAHO, a partner in the fight of HIV/AIDS. The aim of the workshop was to empower women and adolescent girls with knowledge on their legal, social, economic and reproductive health rights.
10. Additional workshops were also held earlier this year with emphasis on Child Protection. These workshops were sponsored by the DfID funded project, Safeguarding Children in the Overseas Territories, in collaboration with the Ministry Of Home Affairs and Public Safety.

11. The purpose of the workshop was to engage community and civic leaders on the importance of the role of the community in safeguarding the children and exploring how we define child abuse, how it makes us feel and how this may impact on our practice. Safeguarding children, and in particular sexual abuse, continues to have a high profile on the Gender Affairs Unit's agenda

12. The Etiquette Programme is sponsored annually by the Gender Affairs Unit in collaboration with the Women in Action (WIA). Although inactive at the moment, it will commence as usual during the month of September 2011. Young girls and boys are selected by their principals and the teachers from the respective schools. The event is spearheaded by the Gender Affairs Coordinator with support from leaders of NGOs. The general objective of the Etiquette Programme is to build self-esteem in young people and to encourage them to believe in themselves no matter what because they can become whatever they want to in life.

13. The Gender Affairs Unit also launched a radio talk show "GENFO" in collaboration with Women in Development (WID). This programme focuses on different issues facing the country including educating the general public on the CEDAW platform and how it affects civil society. The programme is a one-hour call-in show which airs every Tuesday. Response from the community at large has been positive.

14. In 2009 the Gender Affairs Unit lobbied the Royal Turks and Caicos Islands Police Force (RTCIPF) to establish a Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Unit, and was successful in achieving this initiative for women's protection. This Unit is spearheaded by Women Detective, Irene Butterfield who after completing her studies in Jamaica was promoted to Inspector. Inspector Butterfield also received training in the Bahamas. She worked in the field for many years with sexual offences, particularly with children. She has been successful in bringing about 80% of these cases before the courts with some perpetrators receiving sentencing for their offences.

### **Information relevant to articles of the convention and the Beijing Declaration**

#### **Development and Advancement**

15. A Single Parent Network was organized from a workshop that was facilitated by the Gender Affairs Unit on both Grand Turk and Providenciales in August of 2009. The mandate for this committee has been clear from the onset; to be a support for single parents, male and female, and to encourage, empower and create an environment conducive to positive growth for parents and children.

16. The Gender Affairs Unit in Providenciales has also launched A "Bullying Programme" where personnel from the department visit the various schools throughout the district to hold session with students on "Bullying". These sessions are proving to be very beneficial, as students are more sensitive to the negative impacts of bullying.

17. The Gender Affairs Unit remains committed to the promotion and protection of women's rights. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action constituted the most comprehensive set of international commitment to gender equality and women rights; the call for actions remains relevant today.

#### **Family Education and Maternity**

18. Married women are now at liberty to make their own decision regarding tubal ligation. The availability of prenatal care is still accessible through the local clinics which are held regularly.

### Trafficking in Women- Violence Against Women and Girls

19. The Gender Affairs Unit continues to work in collaboration with the Police Officers, Social Workers and other NGO's advocating against violence and abuse in any form or fashion. Training workshops are ongoing. On March 2, 2011, an *Armed Violence Capacity Building Workshop* was held, which was funded by CAFRA. Little progress was made with the Women Crises Center in Providenciales. However, recent information received regarding the status of the building architectural plans was promising. Hopefully some progress will be made during the course of the year.

20. The Domestic Violence Foundation is inactive; plans are afoot to revitalize this organization as well as other dormant organizations within the year. If we are to empower our women we must have adequate resources for their safety, therefore the need for the establishment of a crisis center should be given priority, as for the first time, it will provide women with an essential, viable alternative to staying in an abusive relationship.

21. The challenges encountered remain the same. Women come forward and speak about the abuse while still maintaining their decorum within society and not having prejudices levied against them.

22. The number of domestic violence cases within the period 2009/10 has escalated to alarming proportions and the nature of the attacks have become more violent resulting in serious physical injuries. However, the government within the last year recruited several police officers including a new Commissioner of Police, of Canadian nationality, to assist in the establishment and enforcement of new regulations to eliminate the plight of violence against women thereby ensuring that frontline police officers have the support they need to keep our communities safe and secure.

23. The Gender Affairs Unit would like to continue to raise the level of awareness on domestic violence, and sexual abuse of minors, but due to scarce resources the Unit's hands are tied to the formidable red tape. Since the establishment of the Domestic Violence Unit there has been a marked increase in the number of complaints filed and more cases brought before the courts. Nevertheless, a number of offences against women continue to go unreported, and there are instances where women sometime withdraw complaints even at the late stage.

24. There is also an initiative through the Department of Social Development (DSD) and Gender Affairs Unit to sensitize women on issues that were once thought of as myths in the TCI. Persons are now able to be educated on the ramifications of domestic violence.

25. The Gender Affairs Unit in collaboration with DSD, National AIDS Programme, TCIRPF, Women in Development (WID) and NGO'S have established procedural guidelines where each agency will be proactive in sensitizing the public on issues relating to women and girls.

26. The Gender Affairs Unit in keeping with Article 6 of the CEDAW convention – the state shall take all measures to stop all forms of trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution of women- has established a process for persons within the respective communities to register their complaints regarding foreign women, mainly from the Dominican Republic who is believed to have been brought into the country for employment opportunities but end up as prostitutes. Members of the government and private sector addressed these issues at a forum and it was highlighted that most of these women are sexually abused by their employers. To date, there is no anti-trafficking legislation in place to protect these vulnerable women and children. However the government is keen to address this matter in light of reports of human trafficking to the TCI. Plans are underway to agree on an Action Plan and the Immigration Advisor is seeking assistance from UK Border Agency for assistance with training in this area. Additionally, the EU funded



Legislative Reform project has identified legislation in this area as one of the possible priorities for drafting.

### **Political and Public Life**

27. Women continued to struggle in the political life of the country for the period 2007-2008. There were two (2) female members holding cabinet positions, one as Minister for Education, Youth and Culture and the other as Minister for Health. The latter held this position for about two years. For the period 2008 – 2009 one female member continued to serve in the cabinet and was appointed Deputy Premier. She served in that capacity for about three months. Thereafter, two female members, following a change in party's leadership, were appointed and served as ministers for three months. The House of Assembly had a total of three (2) female members throughout.

28. In 2009 following the suspension of parts of the 2006 constitution the country's women saw themselves being singled out for leadership roles in a higher proportion than their male counterparts. The opportunity provided for their involvement in the decision making process of the Interim Administration. The membership of the Consultative Forum (CF) consists of eight women coming from various professional backgrounds while the Advisory Council (AC) saw two women nominated to that body. The CF meets on a regular basis to discuss affairs of the country, including debating legislation. However, it is not the same as Ministerial government where the political will of representatives are motivated by their constituents' interest and the will to ensure that persons are empowered to their fullest potential.

29. There are currently eight (8) local women attorneys, six (6) of whom have been appointed in the Attorney General's Chambers. Also, the president of the Bar Association is a woman.

30. Since the last report the retirement age of fifty-five has been enforced and many women have retired in the given period. However, women still hold senior public service positions including the Chairman of the CF, Principal of the Community College, Director of the National Trust, President of the Bar Association, Human Rights Commissioner and several Permanent Secretaries. Many represent the TCI at international and regional meetings.

### **Marriage, Nationality and Equal Rights for Children to Nationality**

31. Under Direct Rule all issuance of Belongership status has been placed on hold, with the exception of person(s) married to a Belonger or has lived with his/her spouse for not less than five years or would have done so but for the death of the spouse, and that on the date of application was not formally or, where spouse died has not married. On the other hand persons who have over ten work permit endorsements are eligible for Permanent Residency Certificate. All children in TCI have equal rights to education.

### **Education and Employment: Economic Benefits**

32. All children are entitled and receive compulsory education from ages 4-16 years of age. Since the last report a number of private schools were established at both levels and also extensions on most of the government schools to accommodate the drastic increase in enrollment. The Continuous Education programme for teenage mothers and other high school dropouts are still ongoing and the results are encouraging.

33. The Turks and Caicos Community College (TCICC) still serves as the local institution for continuing education where the main campus is located in Grand Turk and the other in Providenciales. Currently there are 99 females on government awarded scholarships at the TCICC, 55 are at the Grand Turk Campus and 44 at the Provo Campus.

The majority of teachers at the community college are female (table 3) as well as female students (table 4). Areas of studies are:

- a. Business Studies
- b. Primary Education
- c. Computer Electrical Engineering Technology
- d. Computer Studies
- e. General Studies (Science and Humanity)
- f. Public Sector Management
- g. Social Work and Welfare
- h. Hospitality
- i. Building and Design Technology

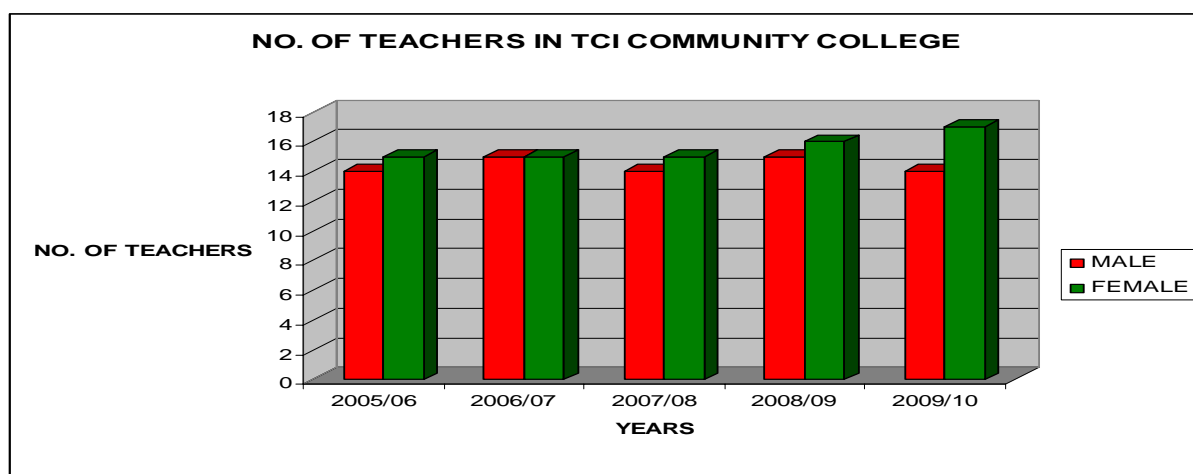
34. Most of these areas are the traditional areas of study for woman and the majority of the female students are enrolled in the traditional areas; however, a few have ventured into the non-traditional area of Building and Design Technology and are performing well within that area.

35. A number of students have returned home after studying abroad with their various professional degrees, and are currently unemployed. This is very frustrating and could be detrimental for the future, especially for young women. This came about, as a result of the global recession; however it is hoped that when the economy recovers employment opportunities would be made available. In the interim several students are prepared to be under employed to ensure an income.

**Table 3. Number of Teachers at the TCI Community College by Gender for the Period: 2005/06 – 2009/10**

	2005-2010				
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
MALE	14	15	14	15	14
FEMALE	15	15	15	16	17

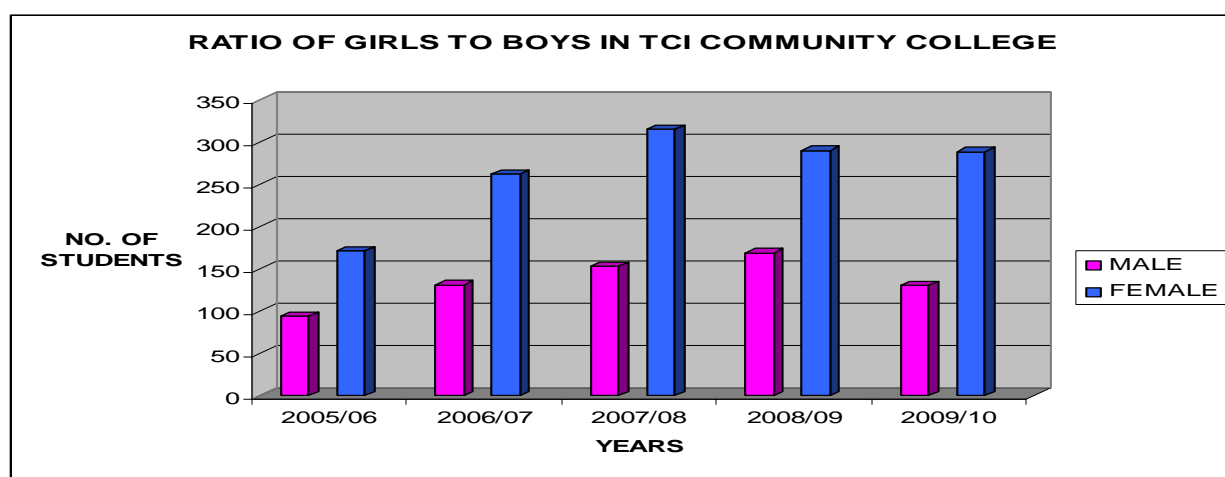
**Chart 3. Number of Teachers at the TCI Community College by Gender for the Period: 2005/06 – 2009/10**



**Table 4. Ratio of Girls to Boys in TCI Community College**

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
MALE	94	131	153	169	130
FEMALE	171	262	315	290	289
RATIO	1.81	2	2.05	1.71	2.22

**Chart 4. Ratio of Girls to Boys in TCI Community College**



### Health Care

36. The TCI government remains committed to the health of its people. In 2008 the construction of two state-of-the-art hospitals were launched, one in Grand Turk, The Cockburn Medical Center and the other in Providenciales the Cheshire Medical Center.

The construction of these facilities has improved the range and quality of primary and secondary care services available on island.

37. The hospitals were officially open in April 2010; offering a standard of care and services which allows the hospitals to apply for full accreditation by Accreditation Canada within their first two years of operation and for that accreditation to be maintained.

38. The executive body comprises five members, locally three (3) females and two (2) males. Approximately 72% of the hospital employees are female, with 28% being male. To date, there have been a total of two hundred and forty-eight (248) male births and two hundred and twenty three (223) female births.

39. Women and children have easy access to health care at reasonable cost. In addition to the establishment of the new hospitals; a National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) was implemented. The programme is mandatory where all employees and employers must make contributions. The recently unemployed is registered through the Labor Department and contributions for prisoners, indigents and wards of the state are made by the government. Children are endorsed under their parents plan.

40. A relationship was also established with key stakeholders including, National Insurance Board (NIB) to ensure that persons are complying with the rules set out and to ensure eligibility of health benefits. Service provided at the hospitals include:

- a. primary care clinics
- b. outpatient consultation following referral by a GP or Primary Care Provider
- c. pre-operative assessment and preparation
- d. diagnostic imaging
- e. laboratory investigation
- f. surgical, obstetric and endoscopic procedures
- g. inpatient care of admitted cases
- h. follow-up outpatient consultation
- i. pharmaceutical care
- j. emergency care

41. The TCIG continues to push the area of Primary Care on wellness with particular regard to reducing the incidence of chronic non-communicable disease such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity that afflict our people, especially our women. A healthy lifestyle campaign was also launched by the Ministry of Health and Human Services, with a view to encouraging the population to adopt healthier practices in their daily lives.

#### **Poverty Alleviation, Economic and Social Benefits**

42. Despite the fact that a few women continue to make their mark in senior positions in Government, the status of women over the past two years have been affected by a number of incidences, including the global recession and the fall out of two major hurricanes in 2008. The Turks and Caicos Islands depend mainly on tourism for its survival; once tourism is affected a large percentage of our women are affected, as so many are employed in the formal and informal sectors. While tourism has increased significantly revenue is declining as a result of the expanded tax base systems and increase in fees including driving licenses, vehicle registrations and business licenses, customs processing fees, water tax, fuel tax and electricity tax just to name a few.

43. In addition to the suspension of parts of the 2006 constitution, the global financial meltdown and property crash in 2008 brought growth to an abrupt halt. As a result, the country continues to suffer from huge debt which has crippled investor confidence nationally and internationally. In addition, salary cuts, vast cuts in budget; and programmes and projects being placed on hold, have created an atmosphere of uncertainty. Many large projects are placed on hold inhibiting inward investment and jobs are made redundant.

44. All this will affect women most, as social programmes are usually geared towards single parent families, which are usually headed by women.

45. In April of 2010, the sole indigenous banking facility went into liquidation without warning, leaving many people in limbo financially, some with their entire life savings in the bank, including retirement funds. This situation is very critical to the progress of women's economic empowerment.

46. After several offers to save the bank failed, and the Supreme Court ordered the bank into full liquidation. As a result, thousands of customers, men and women alike, will only get pennies on the dollar for money they had in the Turks and Caicos Islands' only indigenous bank.

47. Persons who had both loans and deposits at the bank have asked to have their deposited funds subtracted from their loans, but the provisional liquidators were unable to comply with the requests. The liquidators are trying to collect before creditors receive any of the money they had in the bank when it was closed. To date, customers were asked to submit claims for consideration by the Provisional Liquidators.

48. The unemployment statistics on women currently stand at five hundred and sixty-one (561) women and six hundred and fourteen (614) men. These figures by no means reflect the total number of unemployed as most persons have failed to register.

49. The National Insurance Board continues to assist women with maternity grants, widow's grants and benefits. A very important aspect of social security legislation, in keeping with social cultural norms, is the provision for payment of benefits to women who are not legally married but who are living in common-law relationships. National Insurance schemes have therefore enabled all women to improve their financial status.

50. The Small Business Enterprise programme managed by TC Invest has throughout the years provided loans to more than sixty percent of young women, who are successful business women today and own their homes.

51. With the establishment of the Cruise Ship center in 2006, which remain a form of investment and empowerment, many local women continue to benefit, especially women who have recently retired from the civil service and are noticeably seen in the forefront as entrepreneurs.

### **Legal Capacity**

52. Since the submission of the last report the family court legislation is still in consultative review. Meanwhile when dealing with sensitive issues the Court usually has close door sessions on matters relating to juvenile and family matters, this allows more privacy.

53. WID continue to be a catalyst for women's rights through mentoring and networking. The WID has launched a membership drive to encourage more women to join the organization as we advocate for human rights for women thereby raising the level of self-esteem, safety and security.

54. We realize that we are living in a multicultural society, where membership is being extended to women of different nationalities. This will help us to address gender issues from a broader prospective.

### **Religion**

55. Religion continues to be the main source of spiritual guidance and plays the most vital role within society. There are one hundred and forty six churches in the Turks and Caicos Islands and again women play a lead role in most of these churches. There are also a number of churches headed by women. Additionally, there are a number of young women who are leaders of the various church groups including Sunday school teachers.

### **Constraints**

56. The Gender Affairs Unit remains committed to the empowerment of women, but the scarcity of resources, both human and financial, has hampered the Unit's ability to implement programmes for future economic and social development of women. There is also a lack of logistical support such as transportation. Additionally, the absence of domestic violence legislation and lack of support systems for victims makes it difficult to address the problem in a holistic manner. Therefore human and financial resources are needed to ensure that programmes are successful and sustainable.

**The Report on the Turks & Caicos Island was prepared by the Gender Affairs Unit within the Ministry of Home Affairs and Public Safety with input from relevant Government Departments and NGO'S to which the report relates. The preparation of the report has enabled each organization to become more familiar with the CEDAW and to consider the measures that they have taken to implement its provisions.**

(Draft of April 2011 prepare by the Gender Affairs Unit, Grand Turk)

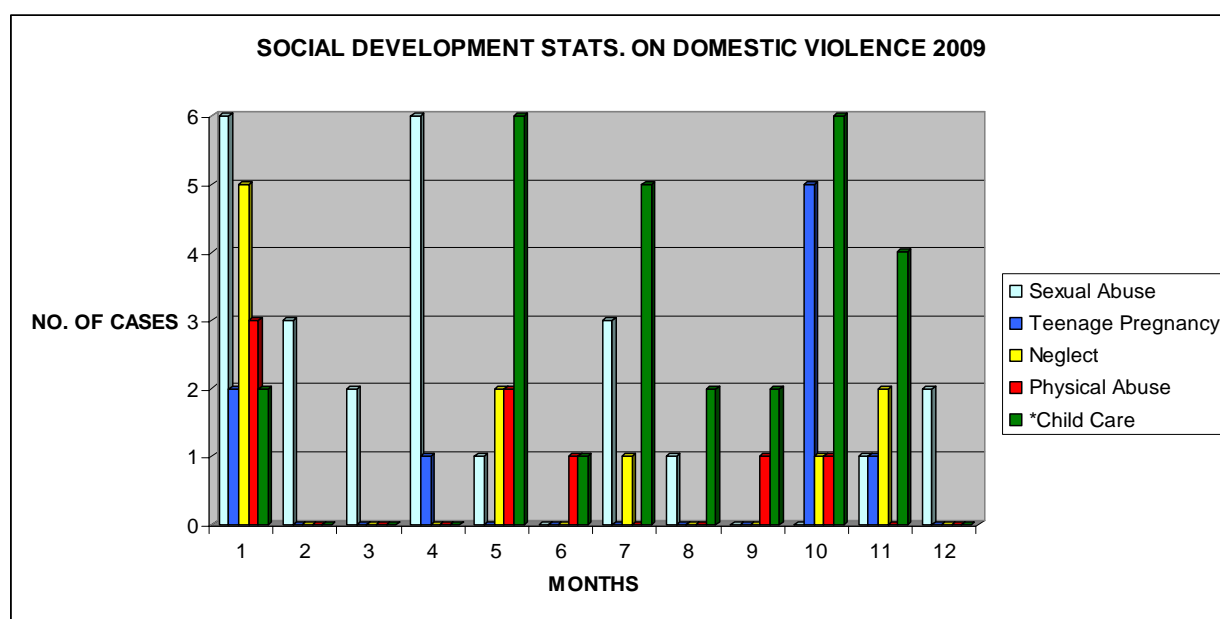
## APPENDIX

## ADDITIONAL TABLES AND GRAPHS

Table 5. Social Development Statistics: 2009

Month	TOTAL	Male	Female	Sexual Abuse	Teenage Pregnancy	Neglect	Physical Abuse	*Child Care
January	18	4	14	6	2	5	3	2
February	3	0	3	3	0	0	0	0
March	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
April	7	0	7	6	1	0	0	0
May	11	2	9	1	0	2	2	6
June	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
July	9	3	6	3	0	1	0	5
August	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	2
September	3	1	2	0	0	0	1	2
October	13	5	8	0	5	1	1	6
November	8	1	7	1	1	2	0	4
December	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	81	18	63	25	9	11	8	28

Chart 5: Social Development Statistics: 2009



**Table 6. Social Development Statistics: 2010**

<i>Month</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Sexual Abuse</i>	<i>Teenage Pregnancy</i>	<i>Neglect</i>	<i>Physical Abuse</i>	<i>*Child Care</i>
January	7	5	2	1	0	5	0	1
February	3	0	3	1	1	0	1	0
March	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
April	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
May	5	4	1	1	0	3	1	0
June	2	0	2	1	1	0	0	0
July	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0
August	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
September	5	3	2	1	1	0	3	0
October	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	0
November	3	1	2	1	1	0	1	0
December	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>

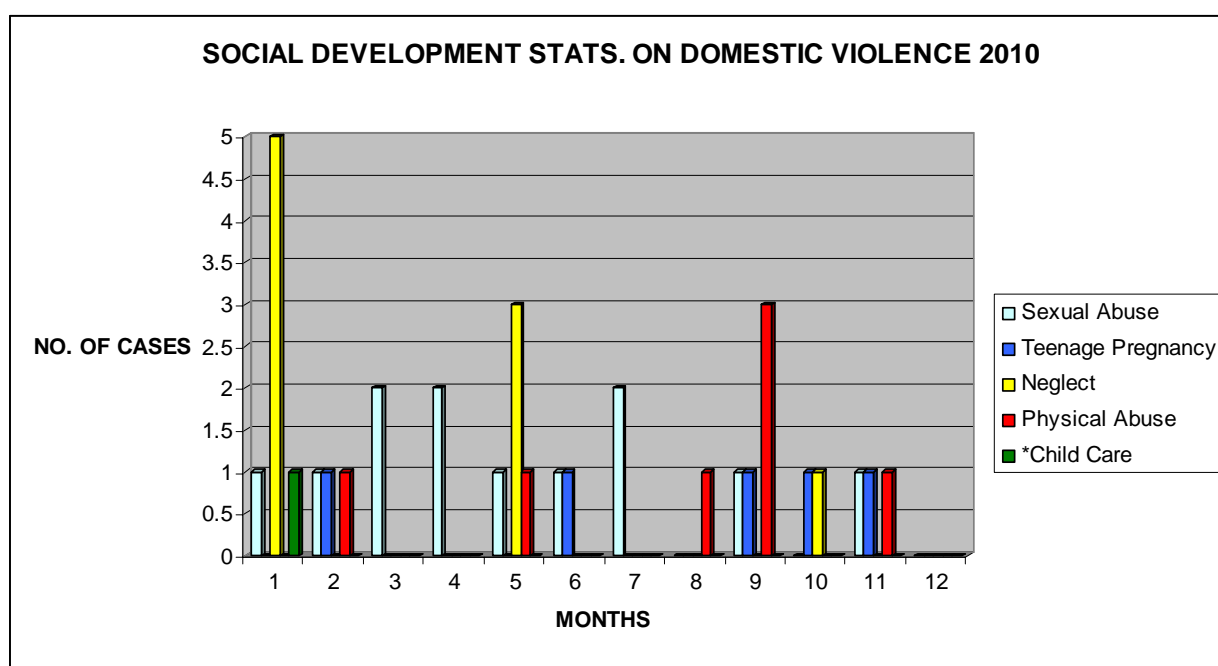
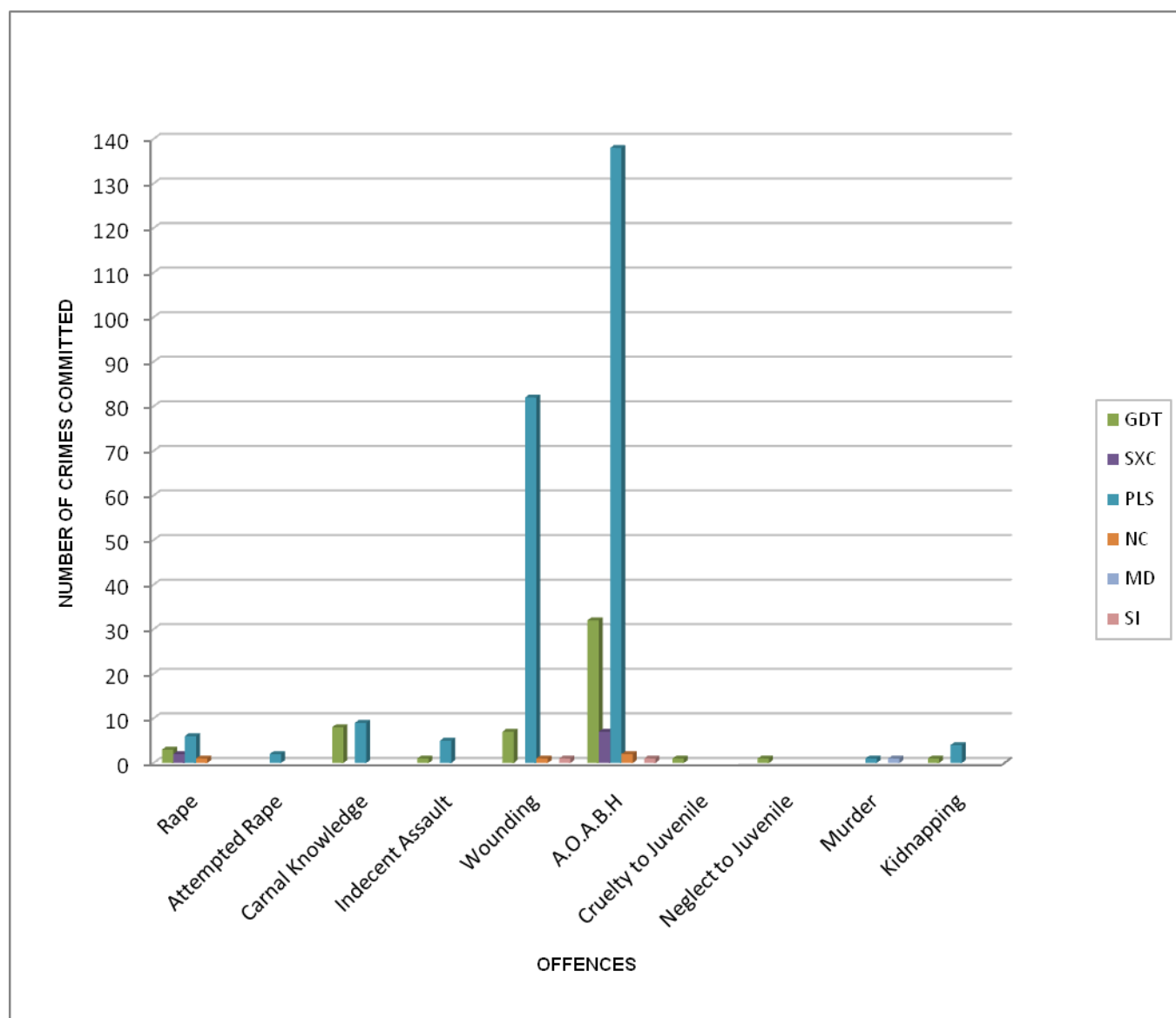
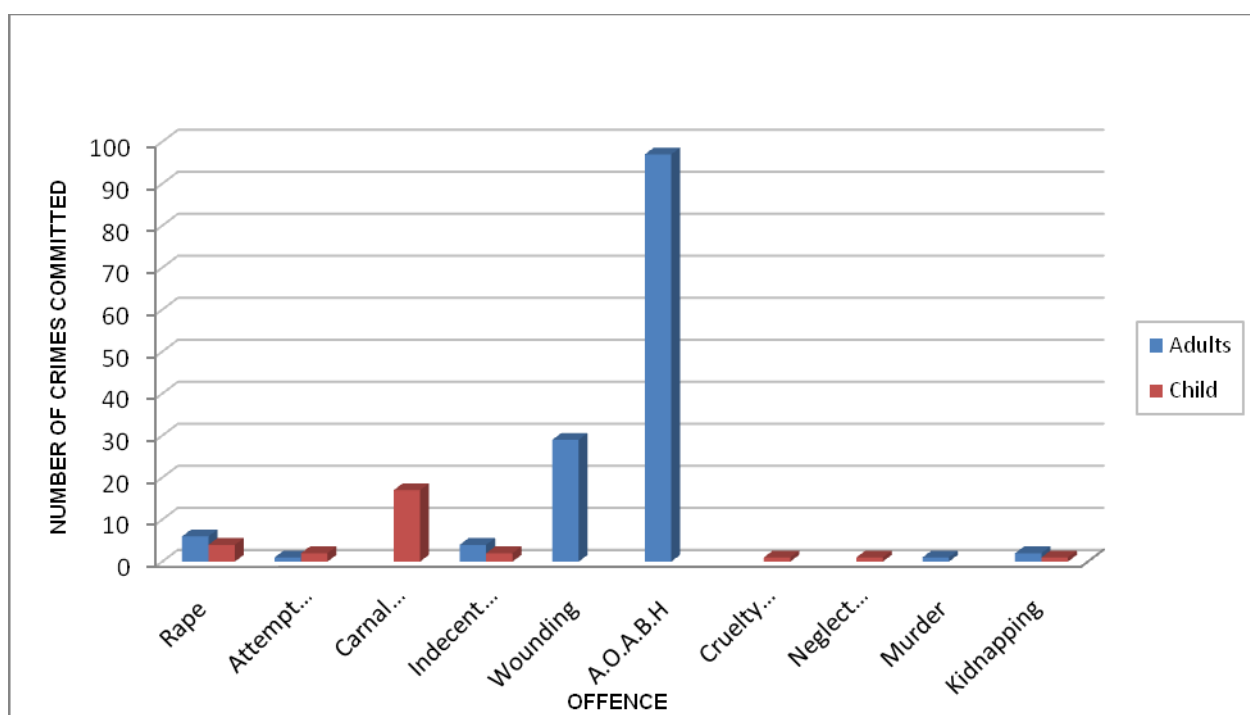
**Chart 6. Social Development Statistics: 2010**



Chart 7. Crimes Committed Against Women by Island, January – September 2010



\*Royal Turks and Caicos Island Police Force (RTCIPF)

**Chart 8. Number of Crimes Committed Against Women, Jan – Sept 2010**

\*Royal Turks and Caicos Island Police Force (RTCIPF)