



**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**

**Combined initial, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth
periodic reports of States parties**

Saint Lucia*

* The present report is being issued without formal editing.



GOVERNMENT OF SAINT LUCIA

***REPORT UNDER ARTICLE 18 OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL
FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN
TO THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST
WOMEN***

Combined initial, second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth periodic report

Introduction

The Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL) hereby presents the Combined Initial, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Report in accordance with Article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. This first report covers the period 1982 to 2002. In preparing the report, Saint Lucia has regarded the Committee's Revised Reporting Guidelines, effective December 31, 2002.

The report comprises two (2) parts. The first part provides the general background to the country, establishing the legal, administrative and constitutional framework within which the terms of the Convention will be implemented. The second part of the report provides specific information relating to the implementation of individual Articles of the Convention. Much of the data has come from Census and Survey Reports, Labour Reports, Economic and Social Reviews and the Annual Statistical Digest of the Ministry of Education. Consultations have also been conducted with individuals, private and public sector organizations.

The Government of Saint Lucia ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1982. The Convention came into force on November 7, 1982. However, it was only with the establishment of the Women's Desk within the Ministry of Community Development, Youth, Sports and Social Affairs in 1986 that an interest in the ratification process and a commitment to comply with the provisions of the Convention emerged.

Saint Lucia looks forward to discussing this Report with the Committee on CEDAW.

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List of Abbreviations

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BelFUND	James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Fund
BNTF	Basic Needs Trust Fund
CAFRA	Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CD	Conduct Disorder
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEE	Common Entrance Examination
CFPA	Caribbean Family Planning Association
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSA	Civil Service Association
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
DASGS	Division of Arts, Science and General Studies (SALCC)
DTEMS	Division of Technical Education and Management Studies (SALCC)
EPI	Expanded Programme of Immunization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOSL	Government of Saint Lucia
HIV	Human Immuno Virus
HRDC	Human Resource Development Center
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MMR	Mumps, Measles, Rubella
NCVWO	National Council of Voluntary Women's Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIS	National Insurance Scheme
NRDF	National Research and Development Foundation
NWM	National Women's Machinery
OAS	Organization of American States
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
PRF	Poverty Reduction Fund
REDIP	Rural Economic Diversification Incentives Project
SALCC	Sir Arthur Lewis Community College
SEDU	Small Enterprise Development Unit
SLDB	Saint Lucia Development Bank
SLHTP	Saint Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme
SLPPA	Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association
SLREP	Saint Lucia Rural Enterprise Project
SLTU	Saint Lucia Teachers' Union
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education and Scientific Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UWI	University of the West Indies
WAC	Women's Advisory Committee
WHO	World Health Organization

PART ONE

GENERAL BACKGROUND

(a) Describe as concisely as possible the actual, general, social, economic, political and legal framework within which Saint Lucia approaches the elimination of discrimination against women in all its forms, as defined in the convention.

Geographical Facts

1. Saint Lucia is the second largest of the Windward Islands. It is approximately 27 miles long by 14 miles wide, and has a total area of 238 square miles (616 sq. km). It is located between latitude 13 54 North and longitude 60 50 West.
2. The island is separated from the French island of Martinique to the north by a channel 26 miles wide. It is 21 miles north of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and 110 miles northwest of Barbados.
3. Saint Lucia is volcanic in formation, with highly mountainous terrain, thick forests and white sandy beaches. The highest peak is Morne Gimie 3,145 ft. (958 m). The island is famous for its twin pitons namely Petit Piton (2, 619 ft) and Gros Piton (2, 461 ft). These are two conical shaped mountains rising out of the sea on the west coast. Also, famous are the Sulphur Springs volcano in Soufriere on the west coast. There are several valleys, highly fertile, and made up mostly of alluvial soils.
4. The average rainfall is between 160cm and 360cm depending on the altitude. Temperatures range from 65 degrees F to 85 degrees F, and from 75 F to 95 F depending on the time of year. June 1 marks the commencement of the hurricane season which ends on November 30. Saint Lucia lies in the hurricane belt.

Population and Demography

5. The estimated population of Saint Lucia in June 1983 was 126,000, and in June 1988 was 145,000. The population is estimated to have grown by some 17.2% between 1960 and 1970; between 1970 and 1980 the estimated increase was 13.9%, and between 1980 and 1990 the increase was some 16.1%. At the end of 1994 the estimated population was 142,689 an increase of 2781 over last year's population of 139,908. Evidently there was a marginal decline in the rate of natural increase from 19.8 in 1993 to 19.5 in 1994. This decline is consistent with a fall in the crude birth rate from 26.7 in 1993 to 25.6 in 1994. The last census was held in 2001, at which time the population was estimated at 157, 898. the mid-year population in 2002 was 159,133.
6. This growth rate over the years indicate that despite a decline in the birth rate, Saint Lucia moves into the twenty-first century with a relatively young population. The country is already undergoing a demographic transition in which the largest proportion of the population are in the under

15 age group, and a large number of women are of child bearing age (15-49 years). Population estimates from 1982 to 2002 are shown in Table 1a below.

Year	Population	Year	Population
1982	119,360	1992	137,607
1983	121,083	1993	139,908
1984	122,944	1994	142,689
1985	124,805	1995	145,213
1986	126,666	1996	147,179
1987	128,527	1997	149,621
1988	130,388	1998	151,952
1989	132,249	1999	153,703
1990	134,110	2000	155,996
1991	135,975	2001	157,898
		2002	159,133

Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

7. In classifying the population by sex in 1994, males accounted for 48.6% (69,327) of the total population while females made nearly 51.4% (73,362) (See Table 1). The working age population (15-64) was 58.4% of the total population, a percentage which represents a marginal growth of 0.4% when compared to that of 1993.

8. The 1991 Population and Housing Census indicated that nearly two thirds of the Saint Lucia's population live in rural communities. Table B shows the distribution between rural and urban communities.

Population	FEMALE	
	Number	Percentage
Urban	21,093	30.72
Rural	47,570	69.28
Total	68,663	50.0
Population	MALE	
	Number	Percentage
Urban	18,332	28.35
Rural	46,313	71.64
Total	64,645	49.99

Source: Population and Housing Census, 1991

9. Although Saint Lucia is a predominantly rural country in terms of land use, the highest population density is in the urban areas north of the island. The city of Castries and its environs is home to approximately 39 percent of the population. This is due to the high level of economic activity in the capital city. Other population centres of some significance are the towns of Vieux Fort and Soufriere to the south and south west of the country respectively. A good road network links rural communities and villages to the population centres.

10. The population of Saint Lucia is predominantly of African origin, but there are minorities of people of Indian descent and of mixed ancestry. The demographic structure is a legacy of the country's colonial past as a plantation economy based on slavery and indentureship. The slaves were all Africans, and the indentured labourers who replaced the slaves on the plantations after the emancipation, were Indians from the continent of Asia.

11. The official language of Saint Lucia is English, but a substantial proportion of the people also speak a French-based patois.

12. For the earlier part of the reporting period, the majority (over 80%) of the population were Roman Catholics. Other denominations represented among the remaining 20% are Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostal and Bethel Tabernacle. There has been a marked reduction in the proportion of Roman Catholics on the island, though the influence of the Church's doctrines continue to be evident in some of the laws and other practices.

13. Women are very well represented at the administrative and managerial levels in the churches. The information obtained from the National Report on Women indicated *"an almost equal balance between women and men as support staff, outreach workers and executive board members."* According to the Report, women are not represented in the higher echelons of the churches; such positions as clerics, pastors and ministers have been held by men. (See Table C).

Table C: Male and Female Administrative Staff of the More Popular Religious Denominations						
POSITION	1980		1985		1993	
	F	M	F	M	F	M
Pastors/ Clerics/ Ministers	0	31	0	36	0	46
Support Staff/ Executive Boards/ Outreach Workers	43	56	51	54	55	57

Source: National Report on Women

The Economy

14. Traditionally, and during the period under study, agriculture has been the mainstay of Saint Lucia's economy, with significant support from the important sectors of tourism and the manufacturing industries. Economic growth was also accelerated by a high level of activity from a developing construction sector. Preliminary estimates indicated a stronger growth in the economy in 1988 than in the previous years. This growth was in part due to the relatively strong performances in the agriculture, tourism and construction sectors.

15. The Agricultural Sector accounts for 30% of export earnings, and it is the largest single employer of labour in Saint Lucia. The main crops are bananas, coconuts and copra, cocoa, mangoes, root crops and vegetables. Of these, bananas are the principal contributors to the agriculture industry and recorded increased production up until 1992 when 133,000 tons were produced; an increase on the 100,592 tons recorded in 1991, bringing in earnings of EC\$184 million.

16. Throughout the review period, the industry was beset with problems. Unfavourable weather conditions such as a prolonged drought and tropical storms, conflicts between the Saint Lucia Banana Growers Association (SLBGA), industrial action by farmers for increased prices and dissolution of the SLBGA Board, plagued the Banana Industry causing a significant decline in banana production. Banana output fell to 90,050 tons in 1994. In spite of this drastic decline, bananas have remained the major export crops exported to the United Kingdom each year. Revenue generated in 1995 was approximately EC\$107.7 million, the lowest recorded since 1985. The present situation in the Banana Industry has had adverse effect on the overall economic performance and economic life of Saint Lucia.

17. The future of the Banana Industry depends critically on the farmers' ability to improve their level of competitiveness and maintaining the preferential treatment according to ACP banana growers under the Lome Convention. Also, the development of the Industry's infrastructure is in need of urgent attention.

18. In 1991, the Coconut Industry was hit by marketing and payment problems. As a consequence, the Copra Manufacturers Limited Group of Companies ceased to purchase the crop on the local market. However, a project to expand the base of the Coconut Industry by producing palm oil for local and regional consumption was undertaken with limited success by the Saint Lucia Coconut Growers Association.

19. Government has embarked on a programme of agricultural rehabilitation, and many farmers have been encouraged to use the large quantities of suitable agricultural land to produce non-traditional crops such as hot peppers, flowers, root and timber crops, citrus, vegetable, peanuts, among others. In spite of these encouraging initiatives, the specific plans necessary to effect the diversification of the agricultural sector have not been officially formalised.

20. Tourism has fast become of driving force of Saint Lucia's economy. Over the time period, there has been a steady annual increase in visitor arrivals (stay over visitors and cruise passengers) from the United States and major markets in Europe.

21. The consistent growth in the Tourist Industry is due in part to the many developments which have taken place, and continue to take place to expand and enhance the tourism infrastructure, and to diversify what the sector has to offer. However, the most significant development has been in hotel construction and refurbishment. There are now nearly 3,000 hotel rooms in Saint Lucia, and this number is likely to increase as the island's popularity as a tourist destination increases.

22. The government of Saint Lucia has provided a wide range of incentives to investors who wish to construct new hotels and tourism-related facilities on the island. These incentives include duty free entry of building materials and equipment, and a license granting duty free privileges and income tax exemption for up to 15 years.

23. The economy made significant progress towards diversification in the latter half of the 1980s and the 1990s. The growth of the service sector, driven mainly by the expansion in the tourism sector, has transformed of the structure of the economy from primary-commodity based to service based.

24. The greatest decline in contribution to GDP was experienced in the agricultural sector over the last decade (13.87% in 1993 – 5.91 in 2002). The most significant increases were observed in the utilities sector followed by the hotel and restaurants sector (see table D below.)

Table D: Percentage Distribution of GDP by Economic Sector 1993-2002

SECTOR	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Agriculture, livestock, forestry, fishing	13.7	10.8	11.2	11.1	9.1	9.1	7.2	7.4	6.0	5.9
Mining & quarrying	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.5	0.5
Manufacturing	7.2	6.7	7.0	6.5	6.4	6.1	6.2	6.0	6.0	6.3
Construction	8.2	8.4	8.5	8.1	8.1	8.6	8.4	9.0	8.9	8.3
Electricity & water	3.3	3.5	3.7	3.7	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.6	5.0	5.0
Wholesale & retail trade	15.7	14.7	13.6	13.4	13.8	13.5	13.5	12.6	11.2	10.8
Hotels & restaurants	9.6	11.2	11.2	11.9	13.0	12.9	13.0	13.4	12.6	12.5
Transport & communication	10.1	10.7	10.7	10.6	10.9	10.9	11.1	11.0	11.3	10.9
Banking and Insurance	7.8	8.4	8.6	9.1	9.7	9.9	10.4	10.7	11.5	11.9
Real estate & owner occupied dwellings	6.9	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.0	7.2	7.7	8.1
Producers of government services	12.1	12.5	12.7	12.5	12.5	12.3	12.1	12.2	13.0	13.1
Other services	1.6	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.8	5.0	4.8	4.9

Source: Ministry of Finance, International Financial Services and Economic Affairs

25. Prior to the 1980's, Saint Lucia produced mainly coconut oil, soap, beverages, cigarettes, clothing and furniture primarily for local and regional markets. In 1995, the island's industrial base had been significantly diversified to include a variety of sporting gears, electronic components, paper and concrete products, toys, rum, plastics, cardboard boxes, wearing apparel, costume jewellery, food products and handicrafts. Most of these products were exported to international markets, and this exchange played a critical role in manufacturing production.

26. A number of companies from developing countries have established manufacturing operations or assembly plants in Saint Lucia, thus taking advantage of the favourable investment climate and political stability which prevailed, and the easy access to major international markets.

27. As in the case of the Tourist Industry, the Government encourages investment by providing a wide range of incentives to potential investors. Some of these are listed below:

- The leasing of factory facilities to investors at very reasonable rates.
- Tax holidays.
- The exemption of customs duty.
- No restrictions on repatriation and capital.
- Under the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) special concessions are granted to goods manufactured in Saint Lucia when entering the United States.
- Caribcan also grants special concessions to goods manufactured in Saint Lucia when entering the United States.
- Under the Lome IV Convention goods manufactured in Saint Lucia are granted special concessions when entering Europe.
- Tax relief on export profits.
- Preferential access to Caricom markets.

28. Saint Lucia, over the years, has placed great emphasis on its infrastructural development. The island has two commercial airports which serve both the regional and international markets. Regular scheduled flights to major destinations are available on Air Canada, American Airlines, American Eagle, British Airways, British West Indian Airways, and Leeward Islands Air Transport. The island has two major sea ports fully equipped with facilities for storage, berthing, loading and unloading bulk cargoes and containers.

29. Saint Lucia has a very efficient and modern communication system which is provided by Cable and Wireless. A digital phone system with easy IDDD to most parts of the world is now in operation and is being utilised by more than 27,000 customers. Public offices and hotels are now well equipped with telex, facsimile and data services as well as traditional cable and telegraph service. The island also has a fully digital satellite earth station for international communications.

30. There has been a demand for increased electricity in the domestic, industrial and street lighting categories. The electricity service on the island is not very reliable, with frequent power shortages due, in part, to "load shedding." There is a need for a significant rise in electricity generation to

improve the efficiency and quality of this service. Many areas in the rural communities are still without electricity.

31. Saint Lucia's water supply has generally been under increasing pressure over the years. With the increased number of hotels, there has been greater demand for water, but the supply of water has not increased proportionately. Efforts are being made by government to bring water to every household in major communities and pipe-borne water to all rural communities.

32. During the reporting period, Saint Lucia has experienced a few natural disasters which have caused severe damage to treatment plants and pipelines. However, the multimillion dollar dam project undertaken to eliminate the current water shortage experienced in the north of Saint Lucia for the next 20 years, has helped in increasing water supply, though there is still room for improvement.

33. Saint Lucia has a stable currency. This monetary unit is the East Caribbean dollar (EC\$). It is linked to the United States dollar (US\$) at the parity of US\$1 to EC\$2.70. A number of local, regional and international banks provide a wide range of financial services to the island. Also available are other financial investment and consultancy firms and various insurance companies.

Constitutional Background

34. Saint Lucia achieved nationhood on February 22, 1979 and has become an independent member of the Commonwealth. The constitution recognises that Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of State and the Governor General appointed by her, is her representative in Saint Lucia. Universal Adult Suffrage was introduced in 1951.

35. The Executive authority of Saint Lucia is vested in Her Majesty. However, in accordance with the provisions of Saint Lucia's Constitution, this Executive function may be performed on behalf of Her Majesty, either directly by the Governor General or indirectly through the Cabinet of Ministers.

36. Presently, the Executive function, which is to control and direct government is entrusted to the Prime Minister and his Cabinet of Ministers. The Governor General, acting in accordance with the Constitution, appoints as Prime Minister the leader of the majority party in the House of Assembly. Acting on the advice of the Prime Minister, the Governor General appoints the Ministers of Government from the members of the House and the Senate. Parliamentary Secretaries are also appointed to assist the Ministers in the conduct of their duties. Cabinet, therefore, is selected from Parliament and is collectively responsible to Parliament for any advice given to the Governor General by or under the general authority of the Cabinet, and for all things done by or under the authority of any Minister in the execution of his office.

37. The Prime Minister and other Ministers of Government sit in Cabinet which is in reality the body which governs Saint Lucia. Cabinet acts as a final decision maker on all important matters on policy, decides the contents of Government Bills to be introduced to the House of Assembly, and also make decisions on government spending. It is the real power of government. The Prime Minister has

the right to select and dismiss members of Cabinet. He may select his ministers either from the Upper House or the Lower House.

38. The Parliament of Saint Lucia is regarded as the highest Court of the Land with procedures based on the Westminster Parliamentary model of Great Britain. It has three main functions:

1. *making laws governing the country;*
2. *taking formal action in order to make available money for the needs of the country;*
3. *criticizing and controlling the government.*

39. The Parliament consists of the Sovereign (Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth), a Senate and a House of Assembly. The two Houses, the Upper House (Senate) and the Lower House (House of Assembly) represent a bicameral legislature. The House of Assembly is the elected House of Parliament, whose members serve for a five-year term. The Senate is the nominated House. Members of the House and the Senate may be appointed as Ministers of Government.

40. There are eleven members in the Senate. The members are appointed by the Governor General as follows: six on the advice of the Prime Minister, three on the advice of the leader of the Opposition, and two at the discretion of the Governor General after consultation with religious, economic or social bodies or organisations from which he considers that such Senators should be selected. Unless circumstances arise whereby Senators are made to vacate their seats, they shall remain in the Senate until the next dissolution of Parliament after their appointment.

41. In practice, the members of the House are elected by universal suffrage in accordance with the Electoral Act of 1951. The Prime Minister must have majority support in the House, to which the Cabinet is responsible. Each Parliament has a term of five years, unless it is dissolved earlier. The Governor General has the power to summon, prorogue and dissolve the House. The Governor General acts on the advice of the Prime Minister and other Ministers of government.

42. The Constitution provides for Parliament to have full power to make laws in Saint Lucia. This is how a law is made: A Bill is drafted and taken to the House where members engage in debate at the second reading, in an endeavour to look carefully at all aspects of the proposals. It is the stage where merits and shortcomings are discussed, and amendments and changes made. The Bill is then taken to the House for the third reading and voted on. It is either accepted or rejected. After the Bill has been voted on and accepted by the House by a majority, it is then sent to the Senate where a similar procedure is followed. The Bill then becomes an Act after its third reading in the Senate. The Act becomes law when the Governor General assents to it in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, and causes it to be published in the Official Gazette as law. The law then comes into effect. However, Parliament may postpone the coming into effect of such law and may make laws with retrospective effect. It must be noted that a Bill may be passed by the House and not by the Senate, and still sent to the Governor General for his assent.

43. The judiciary performs the third main function of government. This judicial function is entrusted to the courts which are responsible to the people of the nation for maintaining law and order.

The judiciary serves to uphold the laws decided by the Executive body and passed by the legislature. The law of Saint Lucia is, in part, codified on the Customary Law of Paris before the codification of Napoleon 1, and the statute law based on British law.

44. The system of justice has two important features; they are, that all persons are equal before the law and every citizen accused of a crime is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. All levels of the Courts exercise both criminal and civil jurisdictions.

45. There are three levels in the Court system. The highest level is the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which is also the final Court of Appeal for the territories of the Eastern Caribbean, Saint Lucia included.

46. The second level is the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court which consists of a Court of Appeal and the High Court. The Chief Justice heads the Court of Appeal and the High Court. He/She is assisted in the High Court by Puisne judges, any three of whom can form a Court of Appeal. The more serious civil and criminal matters are heard in the High Court. At the lowest level are the District Courts or the Magistrates' Courts. These courts are empowered to deal with summary and civil offenses such as traffic offence and petty theft.

47. For much of the reporting period, there were two dominant political parties, the United Workers Party and the opposition Saint Lucia Labour Party. Third parties have also been formed, but these never made a great impact on the electorates. They have subsequently been dissolved, with some members joining the main opposition party in a desperate attempt to oust the longstanding ruling party. There have also been a few independent candidates. In 1997, the Saint Lucia Labour Party was elected into office after the domination of the United Workers Party for more than twenty. The last Elections were held in 2001 and the next elections are constitutionally due in 2006.

48. The Public Service means "*the service of the Crown in a Civil capacity.*" It is responsible for implementing the policies of the Government. It comprises government departments, ministries and a number of statutory organisations. The role of the Public Service is defined in the "Staff Orders for the Public Service of Saint Lucia."

Evolution of the Women's Movement in Saint Lucia

49. In 1975, the United Nations (UN) declared International Women's Year and the subsequent decade was also dedicated to women worldwide. These declarations provided the ideal support and network systems for embarking upon a full fledged drive to promoting the well-being and interests of women in Saint Lucia.

50. During the decade Saint Lucia participated in various international and regional workshops geared towards promoting awareness of women's concerns. It is commendable to note that representation at these workshops and seminars has been broad and inclusive as participants have been government officials as well as representatives of NGOs and community-based groups.

Similarly the conferences have been broad based and included themes such as Social Legislation, Women and Management, Family Outreach and Women in Agriculture.

51. The Ministry of Women's Affairs has been Government's principal means of promoting and ensuring the full development and advancement of women. Its mission as stated in the National Report on the Status of Women (1994) is to

Create an environment to redress gender imbalances through policies and programmes geared towards maximizing women's participation in, and benefit from, national socioeconomic development initiatives and improve the relationship between men and women.

52. The programmes of the Ministry as stated in the Report are aimed at achieving:

- An enhanced quality of life for women;
- Equality of outcomes for women in all their involvement and areas of interest;
- An improvement in gender relations;
- Improvements in the technical advisory services provided to both government and the private sector agencies, and collaborating with them in implementing programmes which address gender inequalities and women's needs;
- Public awareness in matters concerning gender equity and the contributions of women in national development;
- Responsiveness to the needs and concerns of women by providing technical assistance to NGO's in an endeavour to strengthen their capacity to address such gender issues.

53. With the National Policy came the adoption of the Five-Year Plan of Action (1990-1995). The principle elements of this plan were Research and Data Collection, Education and Training, Policy Development/Monitoring, Income Generation of Women, Networking, Counselling and Advocacy/Outreach. The difficulties faced by the Division of Women's Affairs in implementing the Five Year Plan of Action led to a consultative review of the department, funded by the UNDP. The review highlighted the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of the machinery to influence the macro-developmental framework. The 1994 merger of the Division of Women's Affairs with the Division of Legal Affairs, though short-lived, was seen as a step in the desired direction, particularly in light of the fact that the Ministry was headed by the sole female Government Minister at the time.

54. In 1997, the National Machinery for the advancement of Women was assigned to and became part of the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations. As an indication of the Government's commitment, in that same year, a National Advisory Committee on Gender and Development was appointed to advise the Minister on policy matters related to women.

55. It has been suggested by NGOs and other stakeholders that the continuous shift in focus and nomenclature in the Division through the years, may have been counterproductive both to the cause of women and to the country's commitment to the Convention and its requirements. Evidence of this is seen in the delay in submitting an initial report to the Convention in spite of the preparation of at least two reports over the years.

56. Over the years, there has been renewed and increased commitment to the elimination of discrimination against women in Saint Lucia. With the 1997 general elections during which time a new Labour Party government was voted into office the new government demonstrated its commitment to the cause of women by guaranteeing them equality as part of its political manifesto, "The Contract of Faith". The following provisions were included:

- Ensure that women have equal opportunity and equal pay for jobs performed by them
- Expand and improve maternity and family benefits disbursed by the State
- Encourage and promote women's organizations in order to draft them formally into the national decision-making process
- Review and update legislation relating to sexual harassment of women on the job
- Work with the Crisis Center to provide shelter for battered and abused women
- Assistance in the provision of trained professional counselors to work with battered and abused women
- Provide for easy access to proper and affordable health care facilities
- Remove all barriers which presently impede the incorporation of women at all levels of the decision-making process
- Work towards affordable childcare services for all working mothers, young mothers in particular
- Ensure that facilities are put in place to provide for the continued education of teenage mothers
- Ensure that all women have access to education and training

57. By 2002, after five years of existence as part of the Ministry of Health, the Division of Gender Relations has achieved some degree of continuity and settlement and has come to be seen by the Saint Lucian public as the Government's core unit and authority on women's issues and gender relations in Saint Lucia.

PART TWO

Article 1: Definition of Discrimination Against Women

For the purposes of the present Convention, the term “discrimination against women” shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect of purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

1.1 Section 13 of the Constitution of Saint Lucia nullifies the effect of any law that is discriminatory in itself or in effect. As part of this Section, “discriminatory” is defined as

... affording different treatment to different persons attributable wholly or mainly to their respective descriptions by sex, race, place of origin, political opinions, colour or creed whereby persons of one such description are subjected to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of another such description are not made subject or are afforded privileges or advantages which are not accorded to persons of another such description.

1.2 Every citizen of Saint Lucia is guaranteed fundamental rights and freedoms as part of Section 1 of the Constitution. As far as the legal framework, therefore, provisions are in place to ensure the country’s compliance to the provisions of the Convention. Notwithstanding the legal and constitutional instruments which forbid discrimination against women and recognize equality with men, there is a dire need to transfer this de jure commitment to positive changes in public attitudes, values and behaviours. Public wide sensitization, acceptance and support, are necessary for making equality of women and the elimination of discrimination against women, a reality.

Article 2: Legal Protection and Obligations to Eliminate Discrimination

State parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

- To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in the national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;

-To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;

- *To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;*
- *To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;*
- *To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise;*
- *To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;*
- *To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.*

2.1 With the United Nations International Women's Year in 1975, the foundation was laid for the advancement of women in Saint Lucia. Additionally, from 1975 to 1985, the Women's Decade, the environment became ripe for the Government to take steps towards transforming socio-economic and political conditions for women. The decade allowed for the formation of important support and networking mechanisms. From 1975 and onwards, Saint Lucia participated in various international conferences ranging from the 1975 International Women's Year Conference in Mexico to the 1985 end of decade conference in Nairobi. It is noteworthy that participation in these conferences was not reserved to governmental officials, but NGOs and community representatives were also involved.

2.2 In 1982, when Saint Lucia became party to the Convention, concerns about the role of women in development and as equal partners in the country's development found their place in the election campaigns. The establishment of a Women's Desk to monitor all affairs pertaining to women was outlined as a promise within the ruling party's manifesto. The Women's Desk was assigned to the Ministry of Youth, Community Development, Social Affairs and Sports. However, the full fledged functioning of the Women's Desk was delayed for sometime, primarily because of the inability to meet the specialized staffing needs of such a unit.

2.3 In 1986, the Government at the time established a National Machinery for the Advancement of Women (NWM), in order to promote and ensure full equality of women and to advance the development of women. More specifically the NWM had as its mission: "To promote and facilitate the redistribution of resources and power at all levels, and a redefinition of roles and responsibilities so as to improve the relationship between men and women; the goal of which is to enhance the quality of women's lives and allow both men and women to reach their full potential."

2.4 Since 1986, the NWM has changed its nomenclature, orientation and parent ministry on several occasions, a situation which has undoubtedly affected its stability and effectiveness in

monitoring the country's compliance with the provisions of the CEDAW. The transient nature of the coordinating unit, coupled with limited resources has thus restricted its ability to provide sustained attention to some of the critical issues that affect women in Saint Lucia. The failure of the country to submit a report earlier, in spite of the production and preparation of at least two reports, is perhaps evidence of this.

2.5 From 2000, with the creation of the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations, the Division of Gender Relations has had the responsibility for promoting the status of women in Saint Lucia and improving gender relations. As part of its mandate, the Division is therefore the official machinery with responsibility for implementing the provisions of the Convention.

2.6 Important legislative changes have been effected to promote the equality of women and men in the country. These are mainly laws relating to children, property, divorce, marriage, succession and the dismissal of unmarried pregnant teachers. In 1989, significant changes were made to the Civil Code, Chapter 242 to directly alter the status and rights of women, as embodied by the laws on family and marriage. Some of the amendments are as simple as the insertion of the phrase "or the mother" yet they represent critical milestones for women. In the explanatory memorandum of this Bill (Civil Code Amendment –No.2-Act 1989), it is stated that the objective of the alterations is to eliminate any evidence of an inferior status of women within the Civil Code. For example, Clause 2 now confers upon a woman, co-responsibility with her spouse, in the selection of residence. A general review of the Criminal Code is ongoing and this process is expected to impact women significantly.

2.7 In 1995, after significant pressure from NGOs, particularly the Saint Lucia Crisis Center, the Domestic Violence Act was finally passed. This Act defines Domestic Violence as "any act of violence whether physical or verbal abuse perpetrated by a member of a household upon a member of the same household which causes or is likely to cause physical, mental or emotional injury or harm to the abused party or any other member of the household". While the passing of this Act has been hailed as a much needed legislative advancement in efforts at eliminating discrimination against women, women's groups continue to lament its limitations. The very definition of Domestic Violence suggests that women who may be victims of abuse and in visiting as opposed cohabiting relationships, may not be protected by the Act in its current form.

2.8 The Act contains three specific orders which will afford victims of domestic violence greater protective from their abusers. These orders are:

1. A Protection Order;
2. An Occupation Order; and
3. A Tenancy Order.

Under this Act, the following persons under Section 3 can apply for these orders:

1. Anyone who has been the victim of violence by his or her spouse;
2. Any member of the household (e.g., aunt, uncle, cousin, etc.);

3. A parent of the victim;
4. If the victim is a child or a dependent, then a parent or guardian may apply;
5. If the victim is mentally disabled, then a representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs, a police officer, a probation officer or a social worker, may apply.

The persons included in Section 3 can obtain an order by applying to the Family Court or a Magistrate Court, through their legal representative who completes the relevant form and apply to the court on behalf of the victim (Section 4).

2.9 Section 4 (1) of the Act deals with the function of the Protection Order. It states that “If the respondent has used violence against the victim or has threatened to use violence against the victim, and is likely to do so again then this order may be invoked to protect the victim. A protection order prohibits the respondent from doing things to harass or harm the victim. It will prevent the respondent from:

- entering or remaining in the home of the victim;
- entering or remaining in a specified area where the victim's home is located;
- entering or remaining in a place where the victim happens to be;
- molesting the victim by:
 - i) watching or besetting the victim's home, place of work or study;
 - ii) following or waylaying the victim in any place;
 - iii) making persistent telephone calls to the victim; or
 - iv) using abusive language or behaviour towards a victim in any other manner which is of such nature and degree as to cause annoyance to, or result in ill-treatment of the victim.”

2.10 The Protection Order can be enforced by the police who has the right to intervene in domestic disputes, and arrest the respondent without a warrant in order to protect the victim. The police may even arrest a perpetrator of domestic violence, even if an application order has not been filed, to protect a victim, or suspected victim from further abuse (Section 5).

2.11 In the past, the main difficulty in getting redress for women who were victims of domestic violence, was police and community perceptions that domestic assaults were not as serious and important as other forms of assault. There was a decided reluctance on the part of police officers to intervene in domestic disputes unless they result in serious violence. However, toward the end of the reporting period, the Saint Lucian Police have taken a more "pro-active" approach to domestic assault, and now make arrests under the conditions in Section 5 of the Domestic Violence Act, 1994.

2.12 Sections 7 & 8 of the Act define an Occupation Order. “If the victim shares a home with his or her spouse and the spouse is also the abuser, this order gives the victim the right to occupy the home whilst excluding the abuser. In other words the perpetrator will not be allowed to live in the family home. The court will only make an occupation order only if it is necessary for the protection of the victim or it is in the best interest of a child.”

2.13 The Tenancy Order is explained in Sections 11 and 13. “If a respondent's name is on the tenancy agreement - whether it is a shared agreement between spouses or it is in the respondent's name only - the tenancy will be transferred into the name of the applicant only. This means the abuser's name will no longer be considered a tenant of that home. This is called vesting a tenancy.”

2.14 By the end of 2002 activities to ensure the protection of women against discrimination included an intensive review of the Criminal Code. Laws regarding sexual offences against women and children are dealt with under this Code and some of the recommended changes included issues such as marital rape and legal aid.

2.15 NGOs, specialized governmental agencies and other women's groups have emerged as watchdogs to monitor, and to vocalize concerns on, the legal and actual status of women in Saint Lucia. They also serve as remedial mechanisms for persons whose rights have been violated. These include the Crisis Center, the Women's Support Shelter and the Family Court.

2.16 The island's first ever Family Court was established in 1997, following the passing of the 1994 Family Court Act. Prior to that, victims of various sorts, (families, women, children and juveniles) received limited protection and were subjected to full scrutiny in the same environment as all other criminal matters. A distinctive feature of the Family Court is its Social Support function, which allows for some balance and comprehensiveness in the services of the Court. There is a judicious mix of social and therapeutic techniques with legal services and interventions.

2.17 The Family Court amounts to a specialized agency which offers redress for persons whose rights have been violated. The legal jurisdiction of the agency is as follows:

- Child Maintenance
- Spouse Maintenance
- Domestic Violence
- Attachment of Earnings
- Juvenile (care and protection and juvenile offences)
- Access and Visitation
- Mediation

2.18 A review of the trends in the number of cases lodged with Family Court since its formation reveals a growing demand of the services of the Court. It may also suggest an increase in awareness of the existence of the Court.

Table 1: No. of Cases Lodged with Family Court: 1997 – 2002				
Year	Domestic Violence	Affiliation	Juvenile	Warrants
1997	161	626	67	-
1998	281	713	90	165
1999	385	636	97	412
2000	482	649	91	365
2001	452	644	114	655
2002	414	636	116	489
Source: Saint Lucia Family Court				

In light of the growing demand, the Family Court which has island wide jurisdiction, currently sits at the southern district of Vieux Fort on Thursdays.

2.19 A number of positive changes have also occurred in the legislation on sexual offences. The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 1997 No. 14 makes provisions for increases in penalties for some sexual offences against women and children. The penalty for acts of indecency with or towards a child under the age of fourteen has been increased from two years to ten years on conviction or indictment; from six months to three years on summary conviction, and from a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars. The penalty for unlawful carnal knowledge of a female between the ages of thirteen to sixteen years has been increased from five years to fifteen years. The penalty for unlawful carnal knowledge of a physically or mentally challenged female has been increased from two to ten years. The penalty for incest was increased from seven to fifteen years and that of attempted incest was increased from two to five years.

2.20 Further to these changes, in 1999 the Government of Saint Lucia contracted a Consultant to review the criminal law and criminal procedure of Saint Lucia. A number of deficiencies were identified and recommendations were made with a view to improving some of the legislative provisions relating to sexual offences.

2.21 The Equality of Opportunity and Treatment in Employment and Occupation Act 2000 provides some measure of redress for persons who are discriminated against in relation to employment. One of the provisions relates to sexual harassment, which is defined in the Act as, "... unwanted conduct of a sexual nature in the workplace or in connection with the performance of work which is connected with the performance of work which is threatened or imposed as a condition of employment on the employee or which creates a hostile working environment for the employee." Section 8 of the Act states that "Any act of sexual harassment against an employee committed by an employer, managerial employee or co-employee shall constitute unlawful discrimination based on sex ... and constitutes an offence."

2.22 The issue of sexual harassment is also an area of focus in NWM's public education programme. There is need to continue to inform both employers and employees of the complexities of sexual harassment and what can be done to eradicate it from the workplace. A recommendation is that all employers should develop an internal policy on sexual harassment that provides guidelines on how to detect and address the problem.

Article 3: The Full Development and Advancement of Women

State Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

3.1 Up until the 1980s, women were generally seen as beneficiaries of development initiatives and recipients of welfare packages. With the establishment of the National Machinery, and the deliberate efforts to transform this image through public awareness campaigns, women are now being seen as partners in development. A significant achievement in this regard, was the approval of Cabinet of the national policy for women in 1991.

3.2 This move would serve to encourage the advancement of women in various fields including employment, education and training, agriculture, health, decision making and other basic services. The policy, which specifically seeks to facilitate the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women is predicated upon three main assumptions:

- Saint Lucia's development cannot be appropriately addressed without providing adequate opportunities to enhance women's participation.
- Urgent recognition should be given to women work and skills in order to maximize their contribution to nation building.
- As a major sector of the populace, greater consideration should be given to the role and participation of women in National Development.

3.3 The policy commissions all agencies and government ministries to realize the provisions therein. The following are the broad principles of the National Policy Statement on Women:

- i. Appropriate measures will be instituted to ensure that women's reproductive function does not lead to continued marginalization of their talents and time, and that men are encouraged to share fully the responsibility of parenting;
- ii. Attention will be given to the human and financial supports needed by women to enhance their productive role in society and to place new value on their output;
- iii. Programmes and strategies will be devised to promote a positive image of women in the Saint Lucian society;

- iv. Policies in all sectors should promote access by women to information, opportunity and positions of authority, and to change the conditioning which encourages women to remain at the voluntary level in community development.

3.6 By the end of the reporting period, the National Machinery for the advancement of Women was named the Division of Gender Relations, a move intended to reflect the Division's focus on gender equality. The department was assigned to the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations. The revised mission statement of the NWM was "To promote and facilitate: the redistribution of resources and power at all levels and a redefinition of roles and responsibilities so as to improve the relationship between men and women; the goal of which is to enhance the quality of women's lives and allow both men and women to achieve their full potential.

3.7 During the period under review, there has been a notable increase in the number of new and resurgent non-governmental and community-based organizations with special interest in advancing the status of women. These include the Business and Professional Women's Organization, the National Council of Voluntary Women's Organization (NCVWO), Mothers and Fathers groups.

3.8 The national umbrella organization (NCVWO) has concentrated on capacity building programmes for its member organizations. The organization collaborates with the Division of Gender Relations in some of its programme. However, the impact of this organization may have been limited by its organizational, financial and human resource constraints.

3.9 The Women's Arm of the Saint Lucia Labour Party has also made its mark in preparing and encouraging its members to assume leadership positions into the twenty-first century. Likewise, the Women's Caucus of the Saint Lucia Teachers' Union and Education International have continued to create awareness of gender issues among members.

3.10 Also active and vocal in Saint Lucia, is the local chapter of the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA). This association is committed to promoting gender equity and improving reproductive health in the Caribbean region, through education, public awareness research and advocacy. A major achievement in the advancement of women is the 1991 CAFRA-commissioned report on Women and the Law in Saint Lucia. This research proved critical in demonstrating aspects of the laws in Saint Lucia that have been reformed in order to improve the status of women in the country in areas such as family law, labour law and property rights. Of equal importance are the study's findings on some of the critical areas that required change.

3.11 In spite of these activities and efforts, there is still opportunity for improvement in the level and quality of NGO involvement in the promotion and advancement of women. Their financial and institutional constraints have limited the extent of their impact. In light of this the Division of Gender Relations emphasized as part of its strategic plan in 2000, the need for institutional capacity building among women's organizations. The Government of Saint Lucia has demonstrated its commitment to secure the advancement of women in the economic field by enacting the Equality of Opportunity and Occupation Act in 2000. This Act also repeals the Agricultural Workers Ordinance of 1979 which

secured higher wages for men than for women in certain agricultural activities. This legislative change is of extreme value to women, particularly rural women who actively involved in agriculture.

3.12 The Attachment of Earnings (Maintenance) Act which seeks to ensure that parents provide financial assistance for the care and upkeep of their children was enacted in 1996. As primary caregivers, women, particularly single mothers, can benefit as long as there is enforcement of the Act. At the same time, the very same law seems to penalize married women as such women cannot claim maintenance for their children born to another man, prior to their marriage.

Article 4: Positive Discrimination or Affirmative Action

1. Adoption by State Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

2. Adoption by State Parties of special measures, including those measures contained in the present Convention, aimed at protecting maternity shall not be considered discriminatory.

4.1 There are only a few instances of positive discrimination towards women. Section 7 of the Equality of Opportunity and Treatment in Employment and Occupation Act (2000) makes some provisions for affirmative action as follows:

1. "...special measures of a temporary nature taken by employers to promote equality of opportunity in employment based on the grounds set out in Section 3(1)¹ shall not be considered unlawful discrimination within the meaning of Section (4)² of the Act."

¹ The grounds referred to in subsection (1) are –

- a. Race, sex, religion, colour, ethnic origin, family responsibilities, pregnancy, marital status or age except for purposes of retirement and restrictions on work and employment of minors or for the protection of minors; or
- b. Any characteristic which appertains generally or is generally imputed to persons of a particular race, sex, religion, colour, ethnic origin, social origin, political opinion, disability, family responsibility, pregnant state, marital status, or age except for purposes of retirement and restrictions on work and employment of minors or for the protection of minors.

² (1) The Act applies to all employees and employers in the public and private sectors who are engaged in an employment relationship.

(2) It is unlawful for any person who is an employer or any person acting or purporting to act on behalf of a person who is an employer, in relation to recruitment, selection or employment of any other person for purposes of training, apprenticeship or employment, to discriminate against that other person on the grounds specified under section 3 (2) –

- a. In the advertisement of the job;
- b. In the arrangements made for the purpose of determining who should be offered that employment;
- c. In determining who should be offered employment;
- d. In the terms or conditions on which the employment is offered;
- e. In the creation, classification or abolition of jobs;

2. An employer shall not continue a special measure undertaken under Subsection 1 for a period of more than two years.

4.2 By the end of the 1990s, the Division of Women's Affairs intensified its efforts at enhancing women's participation in development, by providing training programmes for women. Two of the stated objectives of the Ministry's training programmes for 1995 were directly targeted at women:

- a. To provide skills geared towards income generation, particularly for unemployed women to help improve their economic status.
- b. To assist in the building of self-esteem and to promote a more positive image of women.

4.3 The problem of gender-based violence has come to be seen as a serious threat to the development of the country. By undermining the basic human rights of women, it is an impediment to their development, and women are to be seen as partners in development. Furthermore, the country has to bear the economic burden insofar as providing specialized services to victims and because of reduction in productivity levels. In response to the problem, the Division of Gender Relations set up a Women's Support Center in 2000 as part of the Strategy to Combat Gender-based Violence. This is a temporary shelter for women and their children who are in danger and have no alternative place to stay. Clients are provided with food, shelter, information, counselling and general support.

4.4 In 1998 the Government of Saint Lucia founded the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) by an Act of Parliament. The main objective of the Fund is to reduce poverty, build social capital and enhance socio-economic development in a sustainable manner in poor communities in Saint Lucia. In addition to general community based projects, there is the Social Assistance and Innovation Programme which seeks to address the special needs of vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, persons who are homeless, victims of domestic violence and youth at risk including adolescent mothers. Up to 2002, women benefited from 47% of the houses built or refurbished as part of the PRF's housing assistance.

Article 5: Gender Roles, Stereotyping and Family Education

State Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

- *To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;*

- (3) it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an employee on the grounds specified under section (3) (2) –
 - a. In the terms or conditions of employment afforded to that employee by the employer;
 - b. In conditions of work or occupational safety and health measures;
 - c. In the provision of facilities related to or connected with employment
 - d. By denying access, or limiting access to opportunities for advancement, promotion, transfer or training, or to any other benefits, facilities, or services associated with employment;
 - e. By retrenching or dismissing the employee;
 - f. By subjecting the employee to any other disadvantage.

- *To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the up bringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.*

5.1 The task of transforming the cultural patterns and values as regards the role and definition of the sexes in Saint Lucia is a particularly daunting one. It is far easier to undertake the necessary institutional and legal changes to secure the equality of women and eliminate discrimination against women than it is to effect the cultural changes that would result in behavioral and attitudinal shifts. As such gender stereotyping and prejudices against women and girls continue to pervade the cultural value system and this is evident in various spheres of Saint Lucian society including socialization within the home, the education system, the workplace, the arts, politics and the media. Having effected some of the needed legislative changes, the challenge is to reduce the gap between the laws and the factual situation by transforming attitudes and behaviour patterns.

Anti-Violence Legislation

5.2 The legislative objective of the National Policy for women attempts to establish appropriate mechanisms for the protection of women and their children who are victims of sexual violence and abuse. The practice of abuse of women and their children is largely based on the assumption of the inferiority of women, and by extension the superiority of men. Gender-based violence reflects the gender-based stereotypes which underpin male-female relations in Saint Lucia. There were many problems associated with obtaining this redress. They include:

- The parties lived together and may or may not have children. After the case is heard before the court, they still live together despite the ruling of the court.
- When these matters are brought before the court, the women, because they are financially dependent on the men do not wish that the men be sent to jail or be fined. They plead with the magistrate or judge to issue a stern warning or place the men on a bond.
- It takes so long sometimes for the due process of the law to take effect that by the time the matter is ready to be heard in court, the parties have made up.
- The women sometimes choose not to continue to press charges against their partner, and request that the charges be dropped.
- The attitude of the police who are of the view that such matters are between man and wife, and are reluctant to get involved (See below).

Non-Government Organizations' Activity

5.3 For most of the period under review there was a lack of awareness by women of their rights under the law, but this is gradually changing. The NWM and NGOs are increasing their efforts with some measure of success, to create a greater awareness and understanding among women and the public in general on the legal, social, psychological issues surrounding violence against women.

5.4 The Crisis Center, a non-profit, voluntary, non-government organization, was established in 1988 in response to the heightened incidence of gender-based violence. The Crisis Center has played an important advocacy function and has been stirred by the failure of the judicial system to adequately or expeditiously address cases involving gender-based violence, particularly rape and murder cases. The Center has provided a hotline and counselling services as well as temporary shelter for victims of domestic violence while they are in danger. This anti-violence organisation receives some financial assistance from government, but most of its funds are received from other sources such as donations and grants from private individuals and foundations, and from fund raising activities.

5.5 The Crisis Centre's Mission Statement is “to strive to eliminate ... all forms of domestic violence and abuse in the society, by providing psychological, physical and emotional support through general education, specific referral, refuge counselling and networking with agencies that have similar objectives”. The Center provides support for victims of various forms of domestic violence including rape, incest, domestic assault and child abuse, most of whom are women and children.

5.6 In 1993, the Crisis Center received complaints from three hundred and ninety-eight (398) females and thirty-one (31) males. By 1996, the number of complainants increased to four hundred and sixty (460) females and ninety-nine (99) males. Spousal abuse is the most common reported case of domestic violence.

5.7 The Upton Gardens Girls' Centre also helps young girls with multi-problem cases. These cases include sexual abuse, abandonment, school dropouts, victims of incest and dysfunctional families and teenage pregnancy. The Legal Aid Clinic has been in operation since 1989. A large proportion of the case load involves child abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence and child maintenance.

5.8 Counselling services are provided to victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse and child abuse at the Department Social Services, Pastoral Care Clinics at the two main hospitals and the Crisis Centre. Support counselling is also provided by the Upton Gardens Girls' Centre. The purpose of the counselling is to help the victims to re-establish their lives by readjusting into the home and into society, and to avoid the common trend for survivors of violence and abuse to commit suicide, crimes, abuse drugs, experience relationship problems and become mentally unstable.

5.9 There is a great demand for services of this nature. Results of interviews conducted with persons associated with these services indicate that the funding and resources available for these services are insufficient and therefore do not meet the current demand.

The Role of the National Women's Machinery (NWM)

5.10 In 1999, a study conducted by PAHO to examine the situation of domestic violence in Saint Lucia highlighted the attitudes, values and cultural beliefs of men, women and the society in general as constraints to the effective management of gender-based violence. The following are some of the deficiencies revealed:

- Inadequate data on domestic violence
- Absence of temporary emergency safe houses for victims of domestic violence
- Lack of programs for child witnesses to domestic violence
- Inadequate/ineffective response by the Law Enforcement and Justice Systems

5.11 Recognizing the need to change cultural attitudes, values and behaviours in order to realize the goals of the Convention, in 1999 the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations, developed a strategy to combat gender-based violence on the island. This strategy involved, *inter alia*, public education and skills training as a preventative approach to transforming the ingrained beliefs regarding the inferiority of women. This broad endeavor, which involves multi-methods and varied partnerships, amounts to the re-socialization of persons about gender roles and gender-based behaviours in society.

5.12 The Division of Gender Relations, through its discussions and other sensitization programmes has sought to encourage men to take on their familial responsibilities seriously, to reconfigure their gender-based assumptions and to discourage the strict sexual division of labour among family members. The Division has acknowledged the need to include men as part of the process of eliminating discrimination against women, and as its title suggests, its activities are certainly not limited to women. In fact, the Division of Gender Relations has been actively pursuing a goal of establishing a Men's Resource Center.

5.13 As part of its continued efforts to address violence against women and children, the NWM implemented a one-year project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency CIDA/Gender Equity Fund in 1999. The project involved public education and sensitization on gender-based violence, training of members of the Police Force and community volunteers in counselling and crisis intervention skills, establishment of community response teams to provide support in cases of gender-based violence at the local level. Sensitization and awareness building of the judiciary and the media, was also included. Recognizing that the attitudes which perpetuate gender violence is developed during the socialization process, schools and the education system as institutions of socialization, have been specifically targeted in the education and sensitization programme. The project was generally successful in enhancing public sensitization and vigilance on issues of gender-based violence and the community response teams have been established. Nonetheless, there is a clear need for ongoing programmes such as these in order to ensure sustainability of the intended project outcomes.

5.14 Between 1995 and 1999, action was taken to assist Police Officers in responding appropriately to cases of domestic violence. A training workshop on domestic for Police Officers was conducted by the NWM as part of the activities under the Gender Equity Fund project. The Royal Saint Lucia Police Force has since included a module on domestic violence in a Conflict Management Seminar for its officers. Further, Police recruits are being educated on domestic violence at the local Police Training School through the use of a manual for Police Officers developed by the United Nations Fund for Women. During the period under review, several Police Officers have attended local and foreign training on gender-based violence. As a means of addressing within its ranks, a protocol to deal with perpetrators within the Police Force has been developed.

Family Life Education Programmes

5.15 Family Life Education programmes of the Ministry of Health for community members are seeking to encourage the fathers to take a more positive part in child rearing and household responsibilities. It should be noted that more fathers can now be seen taking their children to child welfare clinics, something which was hardly visible in the past.

5.16 Health and Family Life Education is included in both the primary and secondary school curriculum. It was last revised in 1999 to include a broader focus on health and environmental issues. The syllabus includes a wide range of topics such as family relationships, teenage pregnancy, self esteem, relationships and responsibilities, sexually transmitted diseases and career guidance.

5.17 Teachers, social workers and development workers have benefited from a Certificate Course in Family Life Education organised by the University of the West Indies. However, trained educators attached to the Ministry of Health also assist the schools where possible. These Family Life Educators also provide family Life Education to communities and government organizations.

<p>Article 6: Trafficking and Exploitation of Women</p>

<p><i>State Parties shall take appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.</i></p>
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6.1 While prostitution exists in Saint Lucia, it is a hidden enterprise. Prostitution remains illegal although it is known to be on the increase as a response to growing economic difficulties experienced by some families. However, because of the cultural and legal system which, do not support the trade, it is difficult to determine the precise rate or nature of the phenomenon.

6.2 Notwithstanding its illegality, it appears to be the moral indignation towards this phenomenon that affects it most as it has effectively remained an expanding, yet clandestine industry. In recent times the commercial sex industry has been on the increase, and it is evident that the trade is affecting the well-being of families and society in general, through the transmission of the HIV/AIDS virus. As, such there is need to ensure that women involved in prostitution are not exploited because of the illegality and the clandestine nature of their activities.

6.3 At present, there is no law in Saint Lucia which specifically addresses trafficking in women. Instead, there are various laws which confirm basic human rights, and indirectly suggest that the trafficking of humans is unacceptable. Slavery of any kind is illegal. Section 4 (1 & 2) of the Constitution of Saint Lucia clearly states that "*No person shall be held in slavery or servitude*" and "*No person shall be required to perform forced labour.*"

6.4 By 2002, Saint Lucia had not signed or ratified the 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. However, the country has ratified or

signed other international conventions with specific provisions against trafficking and/or exploitation of women.

6.5 In February 1990, Saint Lucia ratified the 1965 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. Article 5 of this convention affirms the individual right to freedom of movement and residence within the State; the right to employment and choice of employment, as well as the rights to just and favorable conditions of work and remuneration.

6.6 As a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the State declares its support for the elimination of all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation of children including child prostitution and pornography. Further, Article 35 of the 1989 Convention calls for the commitment of State parties in preventing the abduction, sale or trafficking of children for any purpose or in any form.

6.7 Some of the other relevant Convention to which Saint Lucia is party, are Abolition of Forced Labor Convention, Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, Convention on the Status of Refugees and the Inter-American Convention on the Protection, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women.

6.8 While there is data on trafficking per se, it is well known that there is major problem as far as child sexual abuse and exploitation. Similar to the phenomenon of prostitution, it is difficult to determine the actual extent of the problem as discussion of such issues appears to be forbidden. As a result, there is inadequate research and documentation of the problem of child exploitation. Of the few reports that exist, a very clear correlation is made between the impoverishment of families and the increased vulnerability of children and others to abuse. The incidence of sexual abuse cannot be separated from the issue of trafficking.

Article 7: Participation in Political and Public Life

State Parties shall take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

- (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;*
- (b) To participate in the formulation of Government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform al public functions at all levels of Government;*
- (c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.*

Women, Politics and the Cultural Context

7.1 Universal Adult Suffrage was granted in 1951 in Saint Lucia. Therefore, all persons 18 years and over have the right to vote. The data which represent the proportion of eligible females who were registered to vote and those who actually voted in the four General Elections during the period under review were not available. Efforts are currently ongoing to have statistics on electoral and voting behaviour disaggregated by gender.

7.2 Women in Saint Lucia have the right to stand as candidates in general elections. They are eligible to be candidates on the same terms as men, but women do not fully utilise or exercise these rights. The political arena continues to be dominated by men. Some of the misconceptions and reasons cited for the limited number of women involved in politics include:

- the poor quality of political campaigning women do not want to subject themselves to slander and abuse on political platforms;
- women's skills and experience are not recognised as being "suitable" for a political career;
- women underestimate themselves and their ability to become good parliamentarians;
- women will not be able to withstand the pressures of combined family responsibilities with the demands of a political career.

Notwithstanding these deterrents, the first and only woman candidate stood in 1964, and she was also the only female Member of Parliament to be elected in 1974. Also, history was created in Saint Lucia in 2002 when as many as nine (9) women out of a total of fifty-one (51) candidates were nominated to contest the general elections.

7.3 It has been suggested that significant achievements in any of the areas of the Beijing Platform for Action, is predicated on an increase in women's participation at the power and decision-making level. However, it is important to understand that the issue of gender equity in power and decision-making must, as a matter of necessity, include not merely an increase in numbers, but also an improvement in the quality of participation, in terms of using the position to influence the achievement of desired changes. As part of their preparation for the Beijing Conference in 1995, Caribbean nations identified power and decision-making as a key area for action. The aim was to improve women's participation in decision-making to thirty (30) percent by 2005.

7.4 While information on the female participation at the polls is unavailable, it has been observed that women are mainly involved in the organization of activities which support political candidates rather than being occupying the key decision-making positions themselves.

7.5 Prior to the general elections of 1997, the NWM organized numerous consultations and sessions on women in Politics and Leadership. These activities were targeted at women at all levels, including business executives; and the sessions evoked a high level of participation and interest. Unlike any other period in the history of Saint Lucia, four females contested the general elections, two of whom were successful. One of these women was then assigned the role as Minister responsible for

the advancement of women's affairs. The other successful female candidate became the youngest person ever to become an elected Member of Parliament. During the 2002 elections which followed, there was a slight increase in the number of female candidates. More recently, women's organizations, particularly the Women's Arm of the Saint Lucia Labour Party, have been conducting leadership seminars to encourage and prepare women to assume leadership positions in society.

7.6 The gender inequity which is characteristic of power and decision making structures, has little to do with women's intellectual capacity. Women are reluctant to enter politics because of gender-based cultural norms, beliefs and attitudes. The societal perception is that leadership and managerial positions are the domain of men and women should only be concerned with their reproductive roles. These cultural stereotypes serve as a covert barrier to the successful performance and participation in political and public life. The promotion of sharing of family responsibilities as undertaken by the NWM is one way of addressing the issues arising from the woman's dual roles of family and career responsibilities.

Women's Participation in the Parliamentary Assembly

7.7 For all of the election years from 1974 to 2001, only three women were successful at the polls and became elected Ministers.

Year	Women	Men	% Sex Distribution	
	No.	No.	Women	Men
1974	1	15	6	94
1979	0	17	0	100
1982	0	17	0	100
1987	0	17	0	100
1992	0	17	0	100
1997	2	15	12	88
2001	2	15	12	88

Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

In more recent times, there has been a slight improvement in the situation, with the election of two females to office, one of whom being the youngest Parliamentarian ever. There are seventeen (17) seats in the Lower House and eleven (11) seats in the Upper House or Senate. The presence of women in both the senate and the House of Assembly has been minimal throughout the reporting period. All members of the Senate are appointed members of the House of the Assembly. The Speaker of the House has always been a male.

Position	1980			1993			2001		
	W	M	Total	W	M	Total	W	M	Total
House of Assembly (Lower House)									
	0	17	17	0	17	17	2	15	17
Government	0	12	12	0	11	11	2	12	14
Opposition/Independent	0	5	5	0	6	6	0	3	3
Senate (Upper House)									
	2	9	11	4	7	11	4	7	11
Government	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	4	6
Opposition	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	3
Independent	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
Total	2	26	28	4	24	28	6	22	28
Source: National Report on the Status of Women									

Women in Public Life

7.8 In 1997, Saint Lucia scored a high point with the appointments of the first female Governor General (Head of State) and a Parliamentary Commissioner or Ombudsman. These have been seen as very significant milestones in the cause of gender equality as the appointment of women in such high posts are viewed not only as achievements for the respective women but more so, as opportunities for the promotion of the rights of women by women in strategic positions.

7.9 The Senior Management posts in the Public Service are at grades nineteen (19) to twenty-one (21). In 1995 and up to 1999, there were no women occupying the grade 21 post. This is in spite of the fact that women occupy most other rank and file positions within the service and that the majority of persons within the public service are women. The occupation of women at grade twenty (20) increased from seven (7) percent in 1995 to twenty-six (26) percent in 1999. By the end of 1999, out of eleven (11) Permanent Secretaries employed in the Public Service, four (4) of these were women.

7.10 There was a decrease in the proportion of females employed at grade 19 from thirty (30) percent in 1995 to twenty-five (25) percent in 1999. Further, women constituted about forty (40) percent of workers at the middle management level in the Public Service. At grades 17 to 20 in 1999, the average ratio of men to women was two men to every woman. At grade 16, there were forty-three men and forty-five women. It is important to note that in 1999, women secured as much as eighty-one percent of the positions at grade 15.

7.11 The table below shows the number of men and women occupying key positions within the public order and safety arena. While there was slight improvement in the representation of women in these occupations (from thirty-eight [38] percent in 1980 to fifty-four [54] percent in 1993), by 2001, the proportion of women serving as judges, magistrates, registrars etc, was reduced to twenty-nine (29) percent. An examination of the composition of other positions within the judicial system also reveals a greater dominance by men. However, the greatest advancement has been among the

Barristers at Law. The proportion of women in this occupation increased from nine (9) percent in 1980 to forty-two (42) percent in 1997.

Position	1980			1993			2001		
	W	M	Total	W	M	Total	W	M	Total
Judges	0	4	4	1	4	5	1	4	5
Court of Appeal	0	3	3	0	3	3	0	3	3
High Court	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2
Magistrates	2	1	3	4	0	4	1	5	6
Solicitor General	...	...	...	0	1	1	...	...	...
Director of Public Prosecution	...	...	...	0	1	1	0	1	1
Registrars	1	0	1	2	0	2	2	0	2
Court of Appeal	...	...	...	1	0	1	1	0	1
High Court	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Total	3	5	8	7	6	13	4	10	14

Source: National Report on the Status of Women, Saint Lucia

7.12 The table below highlights the progress made by women in increasing their presence among other public positions such as legislators, senior officials and managers. In 1980, women occupied thirty-seven (37) percent of these offices and by 2001 it had increased to forty-six (46) percent.

Position	1980		1993		2001	
	W	M	W	M	W	M
Legislators/ Senior Officials and Managers	17	83	47	53	49	51
Other	37	63	41	59	46	54
Total	37	63	41	59	46	54

Source: Women & Men in CARICOM Member States: Power & Decision Making, 1980-2002

Women in Local Government

7.13 The local government system in Saint Lucia has been undergoing an intensive review with the aim of reforming it and strengthening the power and functions of the local councils. Presently, members of the local town and village councils are nominated by Central Government. During the three year under review in Table 7.5 below, women's involvement in the local government experienced a dramatic increase and decreased slightly thereafter. Overall, there has been a greater involvement of women in the local government than at the central government level. In 2001, thirty-five percent of the positions in the local government were occupied by women, whereas within the central government, women occupied twenty-one (21) percent of the seats. During the period 1992 to 1997, a female served as Mayor of the capital city of Castries. This was the first time that a female had occupied such a position in Saint Lucia.

Table 7.5 :Percentage Distribution of Persons Holding Local/District/Regional Government Positions, 1980, 1993, 2001						
Position	1980		1993		2001	
	W	M	W	M	W	M
Mayor/City Council Chairperson	0	100	100	0	0	100
Town Council Chairperson	0	100	0	100	0	100
City Council Members	0	100	22	78	33	67
Town Council Members	0	100	38	62	38	62
Village Council Chairpersons	17	83	40	60	33	67
Village Council Members	36	64	47	53	37	63
Total	22	78	40	60	35	65
Source: National Report on the Status of Women, Saint Lucia						

Participation in Non-Governmental Organizations

7.14 There is an important history of women's involvement in NGOs in attempting to influence the public and political life of Saint Lucia. The Saint Lucia Women's Association established in 1951 was the first known NGO aimed at promoting women's interests. This organization emerged out of the recognition of the need to mount programmes for the development of women. The Saint Lucia Women's Organization functioned only at the local level and did not have an islandwide reach.

7.15 Following regional women's conferences in Mexico and Cuba in 1975, a mandate was given to organize women's groups within the member States and to sensitize these on the status of women in the fields of work, health, enterprise development, rural development and employment. As a result,

the National Council of Voluntary Women's Organizations (NCVWO) was established in 1975 and formally launched two years later. This "non-political" organization has as its mission, "to promote equality between men and women in regards to their human rights as it remains committed to improving the "Quality of Life" of women and their families without distinction as to race, gender or creed."

7.16 Further, the NCVWO has nine (9) specific objectives which demonstrate the Council's commitment to promote the welfare of women directl and through the strengthening of solidarity among women's organizations in Saint Lucia and beyond. The objectives are:

1. To promote a common forum for the women's organizations of the State.
2. To promote, foster, encourage and institute measures for the development of the women in the State.
3. To aim at higher standards of service through education and training for all women, irrespective of profession or employment.
4. To disseminate friendly relations and understanding among all women and to build solidarity, peace and goodwill through the State, the Caribbean region and subsequently throughout the world.
5. To encourage all women, irrespective of status or grouping, to discover their true worth and responsibility to the Saint Lucian society, by promoting a fuller understanding of their rights.
6. To encourage the establishment of support mechanisms for women and their families in difficult circumstances.
7. To promote the welfare of all women by encouraging equality of status, employment, training and opportunities for taking their places on an equal basis with men in the affairs of the State.
8. To encourage the recognition of women at the national level by promoting their significant contributions made to the society.
9. To influence the process of development at the national, community and household levels by promoting and implementing, where feasible, measures oriented towards the empowerment of women, thereby ensuring equitable and sustainable development within the State.

7.17 The Council is the umbrella body for women's groups on the island; as such its membership comprises various groups which promote the advancement of women including Mothers' Groups, Women's Leagues, and church-based women's clubs. In order to meet its objectives, the NCVWO has adopted the following strategies:

1. Establish special committees and sub-committees to pursue specific tasks and undertake certain projects. These committees include: Education and Continued Development Committee, Research and Action Committee, Social and Fundraising Committee, Ethics and Standards Committee, and the Public Relations and Promotions Committee.
2. To establish and provide an updated directory of support services available in Saint Lucia that are able to respond to the needs of women in the country.
3. Networking with relevant local, regional and international bodies in a bid to derive the necessary support and avenues for the promotion of the Council's objectives, as well as resources for the implementation of its programmes and projects.

4. Engage in public awareness and sensitization efforts, so as to encourage the society at large to better understand the mission of the Council.
5. Encourage women to join and actively participate in organizations and groups that seek to advance the cause of women.

7.18 From its inception, the NCVWO has been extremely successful in working towards some of its stated objectives. Some of the major accomplishments include:

- Lobbying for and succeeding in getting the Government's support in establishing a Women's Desk
- Establishment of the Saint Lucia Crisis Center
- Getting rape cases to be held in camera
- Lobbying for and succeeding in getting the Government to establish the Upton Gardens Girls Center, a rehabilitation center for girls at risk
- Raising funds to provide scholarships for girls in difficult economic circumstances
- Establishment of Day Care center at Gros Islet, in the north of Saint Lucia
- Training of women at local, regional and international workshops on key areas of priority to women including skills training in areas such as flower arranging, electrical installation and sewing.
- Annual recognition and honouring of outstanding mothers and fathers at the community level, particularly through local Mothers and Fathers' Groups

7.19 Notwithstanding these significant achievements made in the early days, there is still much work to be done. In 1999, the Council had twelve women's organizations as part of its membership, but by 2002, there was some measure of inactivity and internal struggle which resulted in a split in the membership. This divide in the activities of the women's organizations has resulted uncoordinated and disjointed efforts in the mission for the advancement of women.

Positive Action

7.20 In 1993, a two-year assistance project was developed for the Ministry of Women's Affairs by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This project made provision for gender planning and analysis training for senior planners and decision-makers in both the public and private sector. It was implemented in that same year (1993). The Ministry of Women's Affairs also held a series of gender sensitization workshops for women in senior management positions in both the public and private sectors.

7.21 Career development courses, workshops and seminars have been organised for both men and women. However, the Trade Unions (Saint Lucia Teachers Union and the Civil Service Association) planned and conducted workshops for their female membership on a range of topics relating to their self advancement and development.

7.22 In 1991/92, the Women's Advisory Committee (WAC) of the Civil Service Association (CSA) implemented activities oriented toward *the mobilisation of positive change and growth in women within the CSA as well as the public service as a whole* (Paul, 1991/92). One of the main activities was the Civil Service Technical Assistance Programme, an initiative which was targeted specifically to meet the needs of the female membership within the association. The primary purpose of the programme was to:

Facilitate a greater degree of self reliance, by providing an opportunity for the working woman to become efficient in areas such as home appliance, repair, auto mechanics, painting, plumbing and woodwork (Paul, 1991/92).

7.23 In 1991, the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) initiated the **Women and the Law Project** in an endeavour to educate women on laws which impact on their daily lives. Activities included:

- national consultations;
- appointment of steering committees and task force;
- networking with community development workers and women from different social and political background;
- a 13-week para-legal course which began in October 1992 to provide basic information on legal issues pertaining to women. Twenty-eight women representing a wide cross section of job occupations participated.
- A coordinating team was put in place to prepare legal educational material for population in all communities. The intention was to acquaint women with their rights and responsibilities

7.24 Political parties have recognised the need to increase the number of women in active politics, and they too have conducted workshops and seminars for their "women's caucus". In addition to the Trade Unions and Political Parties, other Non-governmental organisations such as the National Council of Women and the National Youth Council have sponsored workshops in an endeavour to contribute towards the advancement and development of their female membership. However, in recent times, the National Council of Women has not been able to sustain its effectiveness in positively influencing the lives of Saint Lucia women. A review of its mission and direction needs urgent attention if it is to impact on the advancement and development of Saint Lucian women.

The Way Forward

7.25 The Government of Saint Lucia is committed to the achievement of gender equality in power structures and decision-making at all levels. This has been clearly demonstrated in the increased number of females contesting elections and the success of two women in two consecutive elections and their appointment as Ministers of Government. To this end, action is being pursued at both the national and community levels. The level of participation of women is likely to increase as women become more vocal on social, political and economic issues which affect them and society in general.

To facilitate this, more emphasis has been placed on training of women in leadership and confidence building.

7.26 The 1999 three year work plan of the NWM included specific activities which were geared to help build capacity for leadership and participation I decision-making among women. Further, gender equality has been included as one of the basic principles upon which Local Government will be established in the Local Government Reform initiative which is ongoing. It is important to note that the NWM is a member of the National Task Force on Local Government Reform.

7.27 The following recommendations have been submitted to the Task Force by the NWM in order to ensure de facto gender equality.

- Clear statements to enunciate the incorporation of gender equality as a basic principle underlying Local Government.
- Documented statements to indicate that all efforts will be made to ensure gender equality in compositions of all local government structures.
- Provision of safety for female candidates, and establishment of policies to accommodate candidates with family or parental responsibilities.
- Training and gender sensitization of all Councilors.
- Quotas/ Affirmative Action to increase women's participation.
- Wording of press releases to announce and mobilize candidates must be seen to encourage women to present themselves for election.

7.28 In general, the influence of women's organizations on government and policies is limited, partly because of their own inertia, and partly because their participation is not being actively sought by decision makers. The NWM has placed particular focus on helping to improve the capability of women's NGOs in this regard.

Article 8: International Representation and Participation

State Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their government at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

8.1 By law, Saint Lucian women have an equal right to as men to represent the country and participate in international organizations, but not many women have held important posts at the international level.

8.2 The positions of Ambassadors to Washington and New York, and representatives to the United Nations during the reporting period had generally been held by men. However, in 1997 the first woman was appointed to the position of Ambassador to the United States and the Organisation of

American States (OAS). The foreign missions in Brussels, Canada and London have also been headed by men.

8.3 The Embassy of Saint Lucia to the United States and the (OAS) was established in 1984. From its inception, a woman was appointed to the rank of Counsellor at that Embassy in Washington. In New York, one female has served as Counsellor to the Permanent Mission of Saint Lucia to the United Nations during the period under review.

By 1995, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at its Headquarters in Saint Lucia had appointed five female Foreign Diplomats. UNESCO established an office in Saint Lucia which operated under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour. This local National Commission to UNESCO has also been headed by a female.

Article 9: Nationality

1. State Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.

2. State Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

9.1 The laws governing citizenship in Saint Lucia are found in the Constitution of Saint Lucia hereinafter referred to as the Constitution and The Citizenship of Saint Lucia Act of 1979. The laws of Saint Lucia make provisions for citizenship by place of birth and descent. Section 100 of the Constitution and Section 4 of the Citizenship Act 1979 stipulates that *"every person born in Saint Lucia after the commencement of the Constitution shall become a citizen at the date of his birth . . ."* This statement is qualified by two provisos. Firstly, if neither parent is a citizen of Saint Lucia and the father possesses diplomatic immunity, then the offspring cannot be a citizen of Saint Lucia. Secondly, if the father is a citizen of a country which is at war with Saint Lucia, and the child is born at the time that Saint Lucia is under occupation by that country, then citizenship by birth cannot be acquired.

9.2 The citizen of Saint Lucia Act provides for automatic citizenship for a foreign woman who marries a national of Saint Lucia. However, a foreign man who marries a Saint Lucian woman is not guaranteed automatic citizenship. This Act is discriminatory towards a Saint Lucian woman who chooses to marry a foreigner. Unlike the case of the woman, the man's application may not be accepted for reasons which include poor character, convictions for criminal and drug offence and non-residency. It is recommended that the same level or degree of scrutiny should be applied to both men and women who are married to Saint Lucian citizens.

9.3 The Constitution allows a person born outside of Saint Lucia to become a citizen of Saint Lucia, if at the time of birth either parent is a citizen of Saint Lucia. **Section 102** of the Constitution provides for a woman married to a citizen or a man who later becomes a citizen, to register as a citizen. In like manner, a man who is married to a citizen or a woman who later becomes a citizen can make application for registration as a citizen of Saint Lucia.

9.4 Provision is made in the Constitution only for a woman who,

... before the commencement of the Constitution, was married to a person entitled to citizenship under Section 99 of the Constitution, or, a person who but having died before the commencement would have been a citizen - even if the marriage had terminated by death or dissolution before such commencement.

No such provision was made in the Constitution entitling a man to citizenship.

Article 10: Women and Education

State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in preschool, general, technical, professional and higher technical education; as well as all types of vocational training;

(b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;

(c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;

(d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;

(e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;

(f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;

(g) The same opportunities to participate in sports and physical education;

(h) Access to specific information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

The Right to an Education

10.1 The right of all persons to education is enshrined in the Education Act 1999. Part 2, Section 14 of the Act states, “Subject to available resources, all persons are entitled to receive an educational programme, appropriate to their needs in accordance with this Act.” While the right to an education is guaranteed to *all persons*, there is no specific provision to suggest that persons are to receive equal quality education regardless of the gender, race and other such qualities.

10.2 One of the specific goals and objectives of the Education Act 1999, demonstrates some measure of consciousness for positive gender relations as part of the educational system. Some of the specific goals of the Education Act, 1999 are as follows:

- (i.) To encourage the development of basic knowledge and skills in all persons, including the skills of literacy, listening, speaking, reading, writing, numeracy, mathematics, analysis, problem solving, information processing, computing.
- (ii.) To develop self-worth through a positive educational environment
- (iii.) To promote the importance of the family and the community
- (iv.) To develop an understanding of the principles of gender equality.

10.3 Through the existence of a national curriculum there is the assurance that females have access to the same curricula and examinations as males. With respect to the curriculum assessment of students, Part 8, Section 142 of the Education Act, 1999 states: “1. The Minister shall establish a national curriculum for public and assisted schools. 2. A curriculum established under subsection (1) shall be balanced and broadly based and shall, in addition to the goals and objectives specified in section 3(3) –

- (a) promote the spiritual, moral, cultural intellectual and physical development of students and of society; and
- (b) prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.”

10.4 Indeed, a “balanced and broadly based” curriculum can be expected to achieve the objective of developing “an understanding of the principles of gender equality”. However a specific proclamation to provide the same curricula and equal access to male and female students may prove to be a more resolute and direct commitment to eliminating discrimination against women in the field of education.

Early Childhood Education Centers and Pre-Schools

10.5 The Ministry of Education and Culture oversees the running of Pre-Schools in Saint Lucia, while the Ministry of Social Transformation (previously Ministry of Community Development, Youth, Social Affairs and Sports) supervises the management of Day-care Services. Both Ministries recognise the importance of child development and the need to make available to parents, and mothers in particular, the services which will provide proper care of their children during their working hours.

10.6 In 1979 a Day Care Service was established by the Government under the Early Childhood Education programme of the Ministry of Education. This service provides care for young children between the ages of 0 - 5 years. However, the Day Care Unit of the Ministry of Youth and Community Development was given the responsibility to coordinate the administration of all Day Care Centres for children under 2 1/2 years. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education and Culture oversees the running of all Pre-Schools that are not owned by government, for children 2 1/2 to five years. Non-Government Day Care/Pre-School Centres in Saint Lucia are maintained from subsidies from the Ministries, which are also responsible for the provision of training for the staff of the Centres.

10.7 Many of the Centres, (Government and Non-Government) perform dual functions by operating as both Day Care and Pre-School Centres. As a result of this duality, in some cases Day Care Centers may be monitored by and registered with the Pre-School Services Unit of the Ministry of Education. These dual roles of Centres ensure continuity of care and emotional and psychological stability of children.

Table 10.1a : Average Size, Child/Teacher Ratio and Number of Teachers per Day Care Centre, 1999/00 to 2001/02

Year	No. of Day Care Centres	Enrolment	No. of Care Givers	Average size	Child/Care Giver Ratio	Average No. of Teachers per Center
1999/00	33	1325	107	40	12	3
2000/01	38	1417	130	37	11	3
2001/02	40	1306	131	33	10	3

Table 10.1b : Percentage Share of Females in Day Care Centers, 1999/00 to 2001/02

Year	Enrolment	Females	% Females
1999/00	1325	656	49.5
2000/01	1417	698	49.3
2001/02	1306	648	49.6

Table 10.1c: Number and Percentage of Children Enrolled in Day Care Centres by Gender and Age, 2001/02

Age in Years	# of Boys	# of Girls	% of Boys	% of Girls	Total
0 - 2	167	183	47.7	52.3	350
2	152	139	52.2	47.8	291
3	137	164	45.5	54.5	301
4	192	153	55.7	44.3	345
5 and over	10	9	52.6	47.4	19
Total	658	648	50.4	49.6	1306

Source: Ministry of Education Statistical Digest, 2002

10.8 The tables above show that there has not been a significant difference in enrolment between males and females at the day care centers. In fact, based on the figures in Table 10.3 which represents the enrolment by age group, there was a higher representation of girls than boys in two of the age groups. Therefore, at the level of Day-Care system, there is no clear evidence to suggest that girls do not have equal access to school as boys. The main determining factor in a child's ability to attend school at that level is the parents' economic well-being as some parents cannot afford to pay the compulsory school fees. In such cases, parents may opt to defer their child's education and attempt to enroll the child directly into a primary school at age five (5), thus forfeiting the critical early developmental stages. At this level, there is no evidence to suggest that the decision to defer the start of a child's education is influenced by the gender of that child, though it is known that certain gender-based perceptions may influence such actions.

10.9 At the level of the pre-schools, there is also a minimal difference in the enrolment patterns of boys and girls. The total number of children in pre-schools from 1993 to 2002 has decreased significantly from almost five thousand (5000) to just over four thousand, two hundred (4200). This is partially due to the reduction in the number of pre-schools during the period.

Table 10.2a : Average Size, Child/Teacher Ratio and Number of Teachers per Pre-School Centre, 1993/94 - 2001/02

Year	No. of Pre-School Centres	Enrolment	No. of Teachers	Average size	Child/Teacher Ratio	Average No. of Teachers per Centre
1993/94	115	4956	327	43	15	3
1994/95	109	4826	322	44	15	3
1995/96	134	5759	399	43	14	3
1996/97	137	5396	423	39	13	3

1997/98	136	5539	434	41	13	3
1998/99	158	5582	467	35	12	3
1999/00	105	4288	325	41	13	3
2000/01	106	4275	359	40	12	3
2001/02	113	4201	362	37	12	3

Note: From 1999/00, Day Care Figures were excluded from totals

Source: Education Statistical Digest, 2002

Table 10.2b : Percentage Share of Females in Pre-School Centres,1999/00 to 2001/02			
Year	Enrolment	Females	% Females
1999/00	4288	2146	50
2000/01	4275	2148	50
2001/02	4201	2058	49

Table 10.2c: Total Number of Children enrolled in Pre-School Centres by Gender and Age, 2001/02			
Age in Years	Boys	Girls	Total
0 - 2	92	104	196
2	348	315	663
3	711	738	1449
4	911	842	1753
5 and over	81	59	140
Total	2143	2058	4201

Table 10.2d: Percentage Share of Boys and Girls Enrolled in Pre-School Centres by Age, 2001/02			
Age in Years	Enrolment	% of Boys	% of Girls
0 - 2	196	47	53
2	663	52	48
3	1449	49	51
4	1753	52	48
5 and over	140	58	42
Total	4201	51	49

Primary Schools

Table 10.3: Average Size, Pupil/Teacher Ratio, No. of Teachers Per Primary School, Unit Expenditure per Pupil, 1992/93 to 2001/02

Academic Year	No. of Schools	Enrolment	No. of Teachers	Total Expenditure in Million EC\$	Average School Size	Pupil/Teacher Ratio	Av. No. of Teachers Per School	Expenditure Per Pupil in EC\$
1992/93	85	31928	1174	30.0	376	27	14	940
1993/94	82	30486	1142	31.7	372	27	14	1040
1994/95	84	31194	1180	35.1	371	26	14	1125
1995/96	86	31372	1139	37.8	365	28	13	1205
1996/97	84	31548	1175	37.3	376	27	14	1182
1997/98	84	31437	1168	38.2	374	27	14	1215
1998/99	82	29631	1135	38.4	361	26	14	1296
1999/00	82	28975	1081	39.7	353	27	13	1370
2000/01	82	28618	1052	43.7	349	27	13	1527
2001/02	82	27955	1062	46.0	341	26	13	1644

Source: Education Statistical Digest, 2002

10.10 The general details for the primary school system are presented in Table 10.3 above. Over the ten year period, there was a decline in the number of primary schools from eighty-five (85) to eighty-two (82) and in the number of pupils enrolled from thirty-one thousand, nine hundred and twenty-eight (31, 928) to twenty-seven thousand, nine hundred and fifty-five (27,955). This reduction has been due to a policy of amalgamating schools which are in close proximity.

10.11 The State guarantees freedom of education. All Saint Lucians between the ages of six and 19 years are entitled to free primary and secondary education. However, due to the limited number of secondary school places not many students can obtain a secondary education. The hallmark of the primary school experience is the Common Entrance Examination (CEE). This is a standardized examination administered nationally to students between ages 11 and 13. This exam is important in determining the pupils' future in terms of secondary education. It is of particular importance in light of the fact that the demand for secondary school places far surpasses the supply. In this regard, in the earlier years, less than half of the children who sat the exam were awarded a place in a secondary school.

Table 10. 4: Percentage of Primary School Pupils Assigned to Secondary Schools in Relation to Number Who Sat CEE

Year	Number of Candidates	Number Assigned	Percentage Assigned
1987	5003	1385	28
1988	5061	1391	27
1989	5128	1627	32
1990	5151	1648	32
1991	4950	1972	40
1992	4799	2793	58
1993	4867	2025	42
1994	4870	2135	44
1995	5088	2030	40
1996	5102	2208	43
1997	5113	2582	50
1998	4933	2225	45
1999	4798	2560	53
2000	4476	2427	54
2001	4508	2482	55
2002	4532	2520	56

Source: Education Statistical Digest, 2002

10.12 The percentage intake into secondary schools was as low as twenty-seven (27) percent in 1988. With the increase in the number of secondary schools over the years (from 14 in 1992 to 18 in 2002), the percentage of students assigned has been on the increase. The following table shows the number of male and female students assigned to secondary schools. For the years 1994 and 1995, the females have fared better than the males in the Common Entrance Examination.

Table 10.5a: No. of CEE Candidates Assigned to Secondary Schools, by Sex

Year	No. of Examination Candidates		No. Assigned to Secondary Schools	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1994	2424	2446	927	1208
1995	2486	2602	879	1151

Table 10.6 : Percentage Share of Girls in Total Enrolment in Primary Schools, 1994/95 to 2001/02

Year	Enrolment	# of Girls	% of Girls
1994/95	31194	15208	49
1995/96	31372	15129	48
1996/97	31548	15161	48
1997/98	31437	14892	47
1998/99	29631	14232	48
1999/00	28975	13984	48
2000/01	28618	13627	48
2001/02	27955	13367	48

10.13 Primary education begins at the age of five, and continues until the age of 11 years when students write the Common Entrance Examination. Success at this examination qualifies students for admission to the secondary school places. The unsuccessful students remain at the primary school until they attain the compulsory school leaving age of 15 years. From 1994 to 2002, the percentage of girls enrolled in primary schools varied slightly and remained just below fifty (50) percent.

Secondary Schools

Table 10.7 : Percentage Share of Girls in Total Enrolment in Secondary Schools, 1994/95 to 2001/02

Year	Enrolment (Forms 1 to 5)	No. of Girls	Percentage of Girls
1994/95	10190	5755	56
1995/96	10314	5883	57
1996/97	11082	6212	56
1997/98	11540	6490	56
1998/99	11847	6441	54
1999/00	12530	7172	57
2000/01	12738	7194	56
2001/02	12743	7255	57

Table 10.8 : Secondary Schools Ranked According to Percentage Share of Girls, 2001/02

Secondary School	Total Enrolment	Girls	Percentage of Girls
St. Joseph's Convent	700	700	100
Castries Comprehensive	825	550	67
Piaye Secondary	491	299	61
Choiseul Secondary	560	336	60
Vieux-Fort Comprehensive - Campus A	590	352	60
Corinth Secondary	783	466	60
Anse Ger	481	283	59
Leon Hess Comprehensive	772	453	59
Clendon Mason Memorial	579	333	58
Vieux-Fort Comprehensive - Campus B	941	538	57
Soufriere Comprehensive	741	421	57
Micoud Secondary	767	427	56
Entrepot Secondary	709	393	55
Vide Bouteille Secondary	669	370	55
Babonneau	537	289	54
Sir Ira Simmons	696	373	54
Bocage Secondary	589	312	53
George Charles Secondary	702	360	51
St. Mary's College	611	0	0
All Schools	12743	7255	57

10.14 During the academic year 2001/02, girls made up the larger share of the secondary school population. The percentage of girls in the mixed or coeducational schools ranged from fifty-one (51) percent in the George Charles Secondary School to sixty-seven (67) percent in the Castries Comprehensive Secondary School. The Saint Mary's College is an all-boys school and the Saint Joseph's Convent is an all-girls school, hence their records of zero and one hundred percent of girls respectively. Overall, by the end of the reporting period, girls accounted for fifty-seven (57) percent of the secondary school students. From 1994 to 2002, the proportion of girls in the secondary school system has varied only slightly from fifty-four (54) to fifty-seven (57) percent.

10.15 Given the fact that admittance into the secondary schools is determined solely by performance at the Common Entrance Examinations, the results of Table 10.7 and Table 10.8 demonstrate that girls are performing better than boys at the C.E.E. While this speaks well of the quality of instruction and accessibility of opportunities for girls, this growing phenomenon must be monitored as it certainly has implications for boys, men, and indeed for society in general.

10.16 In the absence of gender disaggregated data on the performance of students within the secondary school system, the table below is presented here as it provides some measure of comparison. As stated before, the Saint Joseph's Convent is an all-girls secondary school and the Saint Mary's College is an all-boys secondary school. All other public secondary schools are coeducational. From 1992 to 2002, the girls of the Saint Joseph's Convent have performed better than the students of all other secondary schools including the boys of the Saint Mary's College. The difference in percentage pass rates between the Saint Joseph's Convent and its closest competitor (Saint Mary's College) has ranged from five (5) to twenty-nine (29) percent over the eleven years.

Table 10.9 : Percentage Pass Rates of Public Secondary Schools at the CXC Examinations, General and Technical Proficiency, 1992 to 2002

Secondary School	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
St. Joseph's Convent	84	85	86	87	90	87	93	92	93	96	98
St. Mary's College	73	76	72	77	79	70	88	78	79	73	84
Leon Hess Comprehensive	47	59	62	56	64	53	73	71	75	82	86
Castries Comprehensive	60	59	75	72	77	65	77	72	74	78	81
Vieux-Fort Comprehensive	51	50	45	53	66	54	68	69	72	80	80
Clendon Mason Memorial	----	47	55	47	60	34	57	62	63	69	75
Soufriere Comprehensive	39	50	46	51	64	55	63	57	63	72	68
Choiseul Secondary	54	71	61	68	67	53	65	60	69	79	83
Piaye Secondary School	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	60	53
Sir Ira Simmons	----	----	37	36	4634	41	55	48	59	54	58
Corinth Secondary	30	45	47	47	51	40	68	62	55	63	61
Entrepot Secondary	42	44	57	52	50	46	60	59	63	63	68
Micoud Secondary	38	49	46	68	57	55	63	53	51	57	68
Vide Bouteille Secondary	26	18	34	36	43	39	44	46	41	56	60
George Charles Secondary	----	----	----	32	43	28	46	40	44	49	56
Babonneau Secondary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
Anse Ger Secondary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43
Bocage Secondary	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	44	65	54	54

Source: Education Statistical Digest, 2002

10.17 Notwithstanding the absence of data on the performance of girls and boys within the coeducational schools, the data from the above table suggest:

- The single-sex schools demonstrate superior performance to coeducational schools, though it is not certain whether the separation of the sexes contributes to this superior performance.
- The students of the all-girls' school have not been disadvantaged in terms of the quality of instruction received, and so they have performed better than all other students, at the coeducational schools and the all-boys' school.

Tertiary Education

10.18 Tertiary education has become an increasingly important aspect of education in Saint Lucia. For much of the earlier part of the period, the provision for education at that level has been dominated by the only tertiary institution in the country, the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (SALCC). The Community College was not in existence at the beginning of the period under review. Three post-secondary institutions namely the A'Level College, The Saint Lucia Teachers' College and the Technical College were in operation. All three institutions were located on Morne Fortune about five miles from the capital city of Castries. In 1985, the decision was taken to amalgamate these institutions into a Community College with three main Divisions namely: the Division of Technical Education and Management Studies, the Division of Arts, Science and General Studies and the Division of Teacher Education and Educational Administration.

10.19 Three other Divisions also form part of the Community College they are the Division of Agriculture (Established in 1993), Department of Nursing and Education and Department of Continuing Education. The Department of Continuing Education was established in 1988 as a complement to the College's regular programme. A number of part-time evening courses were offered within that Department. The University of the West Indies (UWI) also functions in the provision of tertiary education through the Department of Continuing Education. The College is managed by a Board of Governors appointed by Government. By 1996, the Vieux Fort Comprehensive School Post-Secondary department was established in the south of the island as an extension of the SALCC.

10.20 In 1987, the Division of Teacher Education and Educational Administration focused for the first time on the training of teachers with a minimum of 10 years service who did not have the entry requirements to pursue the regular programme offered to primary and secondary school teachers. It was mainly female teachers of Primary schools who took advantage of this training opportunity.

Table 10.10a : Enrolment by Main Divisions of Specialization at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, 1993/94 to 2001/02

Year	Division/Department								Total
	DASGS	DTEMS	Teacher Education	UWI	Health Sciences	Agriculture	Home Economics	Continuing Education	
1996/97	359	442	197	126	88	45	15	3277	4549
1997/98	426	451	176	135	86	49	14	3154	4491
1998/99	480	440	188	124	87	34	9	2227	3589
1999/00	520	492	247	78	80	32	9	2422	3880
2000/01	467	519	221	71	72	39	14	2371	3774
2001/02	472	555	146	139	42	28	13	1291	2686

Table 10.10b : Male Enrolment by Main Divisions of Specialization at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, 1996/97 to 2001/02

Year	Division/Department							Total
	DASGS	DTEMS	Teacher Education	UWI	Health Sciences	Agriculture	Home Economics	
1996/97	100	239	41	37	7	31	1	456
1997/98	140	244	37	29	7	24	0	481
1998/99	180	254	38	24	8	22	0	526
1999/00	249	297	52	21	8	16	0	643
2000/01	167	284	46	22	5	22	0	546
2001/02	165	297	34	48	4	17	0	565

Table 10.10c: Female Enrolment by Main Divisions of Specialization at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, 1996/97 to 2001/02

Year	Division/Department							Total
	DASGS	DTEMS	Teacher Education	UWI	Health Sciences	Agriculture	Home Economics	
1996/97	259	203	156	89	81	14	14	816
1997/98	286	207	139	106	79	25	14	856
1998/99	300	186	150	100	79	12	9	836
1999/00	271	195	195	57	72	16	9	815
2000/01	300	235	170	49	67	17	14	852
2001/02	307	258	112	91	38	11	13	830

Note : Enrolment by gender is not available for department of Continuing Education
Source: Education Statistical Digest, 2002

Table 10.10d: Percentage Share of Female Enrolment in the Main Divisions/Department of Specialization at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, 1996/97 to 2001/02

Year	Division/Department							Total
	DASGS	DTEMS	Teacher Education	UWI	Health Sciences	Agriculture	Home Economics	
1996/97	72	46	79	71	92	31	93	64
1997/98	67	46	79	79	92	51	100	64
1998/99	63	42	80	81	91	35	100	61
1999/00	52	40	79	73	90	50	100	56
2000/01	64	45	77	69	93	44	100	61
2001/02	65	46	77	65	90	39	100	59

Table 10.10e : Percentage Share of Male Enrolment in the Main Divisions/Department of Specialization at Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, 1996/97 to 2001/02

Year	Division/Department							Total
	DASGS	DTEMS	Teacher Education	UWI	Health Sciences	Agriculture	Home Economics	
1996/97	28	54	21	29	8	69	7	36
1997/98	33	54	21	21	8	49	0	36
1998/99	37	58	20	19	9	65	0	39
1999/00	48	60	21	27	10	50	0	44
2000/01	36	55	21	31	7	56	0	39
2001/02	35	54	23	35	10	61	0	41

Source: Education Statistical Digest, 2002

10.21 Overall, it is the females who represent the higher proportion of students within the tertiary institution. It is only in the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Technical Education and Management Studies (DTEMS) that there is a higher enrolment among males than females. The Department of Technical Education and Management Studies offers some of the subject areas that are traditionally male-oriented. These include carpentry and joinery, electrical installation and building technology. The table below provides further details on male and female enrolment within the specialized fields in the Department of Technical Education and Management Studies for three academic years between 1990 and 1994.

Table 10.11: Enrolment at the Division of Technical Education and Management Studies

Field of Study	1990/91		1991/92		1993/94	
	Females	Total	Females	Total	Females	Total
Building Technology	7	25	8	35	14	67
Building Trades	1	11	1	12	2	13
Carpentry and Joinery	0	13	0	23	2	25
Electronics	0	3	0	12	0	7
Refrigeration & Air Conditioning	0	4	2	8	0	11
Motor Vehicle Mechanics	0	18	0	18	0	12
Secretarial	26	26	34	34	49	49
Plumbing	0	4	0	10	0	6
Electrical Installation	1	20	1	25	2	17
Business Studies	35	47	41	56	61	97
Hotel & Catering	7	8	13	17	17	22
Industrial Arts	0	11	0	10	n. a.	n. a.
Para-Legal	3	5	9	12	6	15

Special Education

10.22 By the end of the reporting period, there were five (5) special education centers on the island with a combined enrolment of 233 students. Forty-eight (48) per cent of the students enrolled in special education centers are girls.

Elimination of gender-based stereotypes in education system

10.23 Up to the end of the reporting period, there were 82 primary and infant schools on the island; of these, 3 were exclusively girls' schools and 3 were boys' schools. All other primary schools in Saint Lucia are co-educational. The table below compares the percentage of trained teachers at the single sex schools with that of coeducational schools. For the selected co-educational schools, the percentage of trained teachers varies from forty-three (43) per cent to one hundred (100) per cent. There are no single sex primary schools with one hundred (100) per cent trained teachers, nonetheless, the range of trained teachers among these schools is favorable; the figures range from sixty (60) to eighty-eight (88) per cent. There has been success in reducing the number of single sex schools to just about seven per cent of the primary school stock, and these schools do not appear to be disadvantaged in terms of the quality of teaching staff available to the students.

District	School	Type of School	Total No. of Teachers	Total No. of Trained Teachers	Percentage of Trained Teachers
1	Gros Islet Infant	Co-ed	6	5	83
	Gros Islet Primary	Co-ed	12	7	58
2	Anglican Infant	Co-ed	19	17	89
	Anglican Primary	Co-ed	19	19	100
3	Ave Maria Girls' Infant	All Girls	19	14	74
	Ave Maria Girls' Primary	All Girls	29	24	83
	R.C. Boys' Infant	All Boys	15	9	60
	R.C. Boys' Primary	All Boys	27	20	74
4	Anse-La-Raye Infant	Co-ed	7	3	43
	Anse-La-Raye Primary	Co-ed	9	8	89
5	Micoud Infant	Co-ed	14	12	86
	Micoud Primary	Co-ed	12	9	75

6	Vieux-Fort Infant	Co-ed	14	9	64
	Vieux-Fort Primary	Co-ed	24	18	75
7	Laborie Infant	Co-ed	7	7	100
	Laborie Boys' Primary	All Boys	8	7	88
	Laborie Girls' Primary	All Girls	7	6	86
8	Fond St. Jacques Primary	Co-ed	9	6	67
	Fond St. Jacques Infant	Co-ed	6	3	50
Data Adapted from Ministry of Education, Statistical Digest, 2002					

10.24 In the secondary school system, in the case of the two single-sex schools, there is no evidence of disadvantage in the quality of education provided to the students neither is there the perception of discrimination because these schools have historically been the preferred choices of parents and students alike. They are known for the high quality of education that they provide, and the superior performance of their students at the Caribbean Examinations Council exams which follow the five year programme.

10.25 Notwithstanding the above, a review of the subjects offered at the single sex, secondary schools provides evidence of some measure of gender-based curricula. Within the primary and secondary school system, there are core subjects that are taught at *all* schools. However, at the secondary school level, and among the technical/vocational subjects, there are different subjects offered at the all-male and all-female schools. For example, Typing and Food and Nutrition are available to the girls of the St. Joseph's Convent and those of the small, privately owned Corpus Christi Girls' Vocational School, but these subjects are not offered at the island's only all-male government assisted school (Saint Mary's College). Similarly, Woodwork, Agriculture, Technical Drawing and Electricity are not offered at the exclusively female schools. On the other hand, these subjects are generally offered at co-educational institutions.

10.26 During the reporting period, there was a gradual but slow change away from the traditional patterns of subject choice. There is little opportunity for subject choice at the primary level; subjects are standard irrespective of the schools or the gender of the pupils. However, at the secondary level girls continue to choose traditionally female dominated subjects such as Food and Nutrition, Home Management, Typing and Office Procedures. The pattern of subject choices continued at the tertiary institution (SALCC) with female students maintaining their dominance in some subjects and programmes like the languages (French and Spanish), literature, History, Secretarial Studies, Business Studies and Hotel & Catering.

10.27 The table below compares enrolment figures for males and females at the Post-Secondary department (college level) of the Vieux Fort Secondary School. The enrolment patterns suggest that there is some degree of gender-based selection of subject areas, resulting in a male dominated

Carpentry and Joinery programme and a female dominated Secretarial Studies programme. Within the Business Studies programme, there is a more even distribution among the sexes.

Table 10.13 :Enrolment at Sixth Form and Post Secondary Department at Vieux-Fort Comprehensive Secondary School, 1996 to 2002

Year	Arts and General Studies		Business Studies		Secretarial Studies		Carpentry and Joinery		Total
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	
1996/97	31	55	4	12	0	15	13	0	130
1997/98	34	77	10	29	0	15	13	0	178
1998/99	32	91	25	44	0	23	10	0	225
1999/00	45	77	37	57	0	47	22	0	285
2000/01	63	64	36	67	0	31	23	0	284
2001/02	40	104	37	65	0	24	26	1	297

Drop-Out Rates and Continuing Education Programmes for Girls

Table 10.14 : Number of Dropouts at Secondary and Primary School Level by Sex, 1998/99 to 2001/02

Secondary School Level					Primary School Level				
Year	Boys	Girls	Total	% Girls	Year	Boys	Girls	Total	% Girls
1998/99	99	85	184	46	1998/99	193	96	289	33
1999/00	59	44	103	43	1999/00	196	69	265	26
2000/01	47	71	118	60	2000/01	141	70	211	33
2001/02	63	69	132	52	2001/02	116	52	168	31

10.28 The government of Saint Lucia has identified continuing education for teen mothers as a priority area for action. It is known that a significant number of girls who drop out of school do so because of pregnancy. However no records of the precise numbers are available. At both the Primary and Secondary School levels, the drop-out rates are generally higher among boys than girls. While the available statistics at the Ministry of Education do not indicate the reasons for school dropouts, the Vital Statistics report of the Government Statistics Department shows that births to teenage mothers contributed to 16.1% of all live births in 1998. Further, the data reveal that 36.9% of births among all teenagers were among girls fifteen to seventeen years, 2.7% of the births were to girls below age fifteen and teenagers aged 18 and nineteen accounted for forty percent (60%) of teenage births.

10.29 Various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) lament the fact that there is no specific policy to ensure that school aged mothers are allowed to continue their education within the formal school system. At the same time, there is no legislation preventing a teenage mother from continuing her formal education. It appears to be the stereotypical beliefs and attitudes that are most powerful in determining the fate of a teenage mother with respect to education subsequent to her pregnancy. Presently, the unwritten policy of allowing the school-aged mother to continue her education at another school is subject to the discretion of the school's Principal. The transfer to another school is

an incurred cost which can prevent the young mother from making use of the opportunity. The option also has a disadvantageous effect on the mother through the stigma associated with experience. Moreover, the father of the child who may also be a teenager and a student does not experience this inconvenience but is allowed to continue his education without interruption.

10.30 In 1998, the St. Jude Teen Pregnancy Programme (an NGO initiative) was implemented with the specific objective of providing continuing education for teen mothers. Although it is affordable and provides childcare facilities, the Programme is unable to provide academic education because of financial constraints. There are other similar programmes conducted by NGOs, which can provide both formal and informal education. However, an assessment of these services reveals that the high costs, the absence of adequate childcare facilities and the limited number of subject areas offered are obstacles to young mothers wishing to pursue their education. Paragraph 11.39 below as part of Article 11 on employment, outlines the ongoing efforts of the National Skills Development Center (NSDC) in providing daycare services alongside skills training. This service enables young mothers in particular, to pursue training in areas of interest without having their disrupted by their childcare responsibilities.

10.31 The NWM has developed an Action Plan for increasing the access of teenage mothers to continuing education. It has been found that societal pressures particularly among school peers affect the ability of the teen mother to return to or function effectively within, the formal school system even if she is allowed to do so. As a result, a major component of the Plan involves education and sensitization.

10.32 In 1980, the Upton Gardens Girls' Center was officially opened as a result of efforts by the Saint Lucia National Council of Women to rehabilitate underprivileged, abused, neglected or abandoned teenage girls who may be on the verge of delinquency. The rehabilitation of clients would be undertaken through high community involvement, timely and appropriate interventions and effective case management. The center aims to provide "Alternative Education" to its clients in light of the fact that most of them, by virtue of their individual difficulties, are unable to function effectively in the mainstream education system.

10.33 The Upton Gardens Girls' Center caters specifically to girls ages 12 to 15 who are:

- (i) Displaying Acting-out behaviours as a result of being neglected or abandoned by parents/guardians or living in families struggling with issues of Domestic Violence, Alcoholism, Drug Abuse and inappropriate Parenting Skills;
- (ii) Experiencing prolonged or severe behavioural problems from traumatic or stressful situations such as death, poor parenting, peer pressure etc.;
- (iii) Victims of rape, incest and abuse;
- (iv) Displaying Maladjustment Behaviours at home and school arising from one or more Behavioural Disorders such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Conduct Disorder (CD).

10.34 The Center is managed by the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations. For some time now, efforts have been ongoing to change the services and structure of the center so that clients could be accommodated on a fulltime basis. However, the Center continues to provide a limited service to its clients, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekdays. While there is a similar facility in the country which provides fulltime accommodation to delinquent and troubled boys, no such facility exists for girls. In this regard, clients continue to dwell in the very same households which may have triggered their problems.

10.35 The intervention activities of the Upton Gardens Girls' Center include:

- (i) A day care Self Development Programme which involves training in areas such as computer literacy; counseling, life skills and social skills training; physical fitness activities; home management and hospitality services and horticulture/agriculture.
- (ii) Family support and counseling: counselors visit family homes for observation and there is counseling among members to enable them to better cope with life situations. The involvement of parents and family members is encouraged as part of the holistic development of the clients.
- (iii) Community outreach /support: the girls are encouraged to participate in youth and community activities. The Job Placement component of the skills training is seen as part of this process which seeks to prepare clients to become reintegrated into the wider community and society.

10.36 The Upton Gardens Girls' Center has been extremely successful in effecting positive changes on the lives of hundreds of vulnerable and at risk girls in the community. Many of the participants have succeeded in obtaining employment in enviable positions in various sectors in the country and breaking the cycle of their dysfunctional family patterns. The main shortcoming experienced by the Center is its inability to address the need which exists for housing of clients on a full-time basis.

Educational Qualifications

10.37 A comparison of the educational qualifications of men and women in Saint Lucia is also critical in assessing the extent to which discrimination against women in the field of education has been eliminated. According a comparative analysis undertaken by the Department of Statistics, by the end of December 1997, thirty-one (31) percent of all women above age 15 claimed to have attained no level of education, while the figure stood at thirty-seven (37) percent for men. Among all persons who claimed to have "complete secondary" as their highest level of education, fifty-eight (58) percent are women and forty-two (42) percent are men.

Teachers

10.38 For the reporting period, women have dominated the education sector, particularly the teaching profession. The table below compares the proportion of male and female teachers within the primary school system for almost twenty years.

Table 10.15: Number and Percentage of Trained of Teachers in Primary Schools by Gender, 1983-2002

Years	# of schools	Trained teachers		Untrained teachers		Total			%	
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	M/F	Males	Females
1983/84	80	97	344	146	497	243	841	1084	22	78
1984/85	80	99	364	180	464	279	828	1107	25	75
1985/86	79	151	419	71	443	222	862	1084	20	80
1986/87	78	124	446	136	397	260	843	1103	24	76
1987/88	80	126	430	117	411	243	841	1084	22	78
1988/89	81	120	455	102	391	222	846	1068	21	79
1989/90	84	144	535	82	351	226	886	1112	20	80
1990/91	83	92	539	74	392	166	931	1097	15	85
1991/92	84	134	593	80	374	214	967	1181	18	82
1992/93	85	125	518	78	453	203	971	1174	17	83
1993/94	82	126	543	43	426	169	969	1138	15	85
1994/95	84	111	608	84	377	195	985	1180	17	83
1995/96	86	114	576	81	368	195	944	1139	17	83
1996/97	84	124	692	89	270	213	962	1175	18	82
1997/98	84	126	681	94	267	220	948	1168	19	81
1998/99	82	120	625	72	334	192	959	1151	17	83
1999/00	82	111	650	60	263	171	913	1084	16	84
2000/01	82	116	643	64	229	180	872	1052	17	83
2001/02	82	120	706	50	186	170	892	1062	16	84

Source: Ministry of Education

The proportion of female teachers over the years has varied from seventy-five (75) to eighty-five (85) per cent. This situation undoubtedly demonstrates some measure of success for women as they are able to directly influence the education system. Nonetheless, there have been concerns raised by NGO groups that the limited presence of male teachers within the primary schools may have a negative influence particularly on the male students, and the school environment in general. During the reporting period, there have been some schools with no male teachers. Teachers and women's groups recognize the positive functions played by male teachers in the school system, which include among other things, providing positive male role models particularly for the male students, managing discipline in the schools and coordinating sports and physical education in the schools. Although there is a need to undertake a study of the actual impact of this trend in the gender distribution of teachers, the view is that it may partially account for the increased levels of violence and indiscipline in the schools. Additionally, in the absence of male teachers in some of the schools, the sporting curricula have received less than adequate attention.

10.39 The table is also useful in comparing the number of trained teachers with the number of primary schools on the island. The result is favorable as there are far more trained teachers than there are schools or untrained teachers. This result undoubtedly increases the probability of female students having access to trained/qualified teachers. Additionally, the comparison of trained male and female teachers as outlined in Table 10. 15 provides evidence that females do not have unequal access to higher learning educational programmes. Over the nineteen year period, there was on average one hundred and twenty (120) trained male teachers and five hundred and forty-six (546) trained female teachers. This result is not unexpected in light of the fact that teaching continues to be a profession most associated with and attractive to women.

Scholarships and study grants

10.40 Over the years, there has been an increase in the number of scholarships and study grants provided to women. In fact, many of the international donor agencies which fund the scholarships offered by the Government of Saint Lucia demonstrate some degree of positive discrimination as they specifically indicate that preference may be given to females in the award of scholarships. The table below confirms that females have enjoyed a larger share of the scholarships offered both locally and internationally for the year 2001.

Table 10.16a: Recipients of Scholarships/Economic Cost, 2001

Type of Scholarship	Number of Recipients			%	%
	Total	Male	Female	Males	Females
Economic Cost Awards	31	10	21	32	68
Cuban-Saint Lucia Bilateral	27	16	11	59	41
New Zealand	2	1	1	50	50
OAS	4	3	1	75	25
Island Scholarships	2	1	1	50	50
SALCC-Division of Technical Education and Management Studies	1	1	0	100	0
India	1	0	1	0	100
Simone Bolivar	1	1	0	100	0
Venezuela	2	1	1	50	50
Austria	1	0	1	0	100
National Insurance Scholarships -Secondary Schools & SALCC	88	29	59	33	67
Cable and Wireless Scholarships -Secondary Schools & SALCC	19	9	10	47	53
JQ Charles Sports Scholarships - Primary Schools	3	1	2	33	67
Total	182	73	109	40	60

Table 10.16b: Recipients of National Insurance Scholarships in Secondary Schools and SALCC in Saint Lucia, 2001

School	Number of Recipients			%	%
	Total	Male	Female	Males	Females
Castries Comprehensive Secondary School	15	2	13	13	87
St. Joseph's Convent Secondary School	17	0	17	0	100
St. Mary's College Secondary School	9	9	0	100	0
Choiseul Secondary School	9	2	7	22	78
Vieux-Fort Comprehensive - Campus B	6	1	5	17	83
Entrepot Secondary School	6	2	4	33	67
Corinth Secondary School	4	3	1	75	25
Vieux-Fort Comprehensive - Campus A	2	2	0	100	0
Sir Arthur Lewis Community College	4	2	2	50	50
Clendon Mason Memorial Secondary School	2	1	1	50	50
Soufriere Comprehensive Secondary School	3	3	0	100	0
Micoud Secondary School	3	0	3	0	100
Leon Hess Secondary School	1	0	1	0	100
Sir Ira Simmons Secondary School	2	0	2	0	100
Piaye Secondary School	2	0	2	0	100
Vide Boutieille Secondary School	1	0	1	0	100
George Charles Secondary School	1	1	0	100	0
Vieux-Fort Campus B - A' Level Department	1	1	0	100	0
Total	88	29	59	33	67

Physical Education

10.41 Within the secondary school system, physical education is compulsory from forms one to three. Thereafter, participation in sports is determined mainly by individual interest and the type of foundation laid in the earlier years. While physical education is generally supported in all schools, the quality of the programme provided varies as it is largely dependent on the individual schools' human and material resources. The result is that certain sports may receive greater attention than others, some schools will consistently perform better in sports and some sports may be dominated by a particular sex.

Sport	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02
Football - Under 16	Leon Hess Comprehensive	Micoud Secondary	Piaye Secondary
Football - Under 19	Vieux Fort Comprehensive	Vieux Fort Comprehensive	Clendon Mason Secondary
Basketball - Under 16	St. Mary's College	St. Mary's College	Soufriere Comprehensive
Basketball - Under 19	SALCC	Entrepot Secondary	St. Mary's College
Netball - Under 16	Leon Hess Comprehensive	Sir Ira Simmons and St. Joseph's Covent	Sir Ira Simmons
Netball - Under 19	Soufriere Comprehensive	Sir Ira Simmons	Sir Ira Simmons
Cricket - Under 16	--	St. Mary's College	Grande Riviere Senior Primary
Cricket - Under 19	St. Mary's College	Vide Boutieille Secondary	Soufriere Comprehensive
Track and Field -Under 19	Vieux Fort Comprehensive	Leon Hess- Females Entrepot Secondary - Males	Vieux Fort Comprehensive
Volleyball -Under 16 Male	--	--	Leon Hess Comprehensive
Volleyball -Under 16 Female	--	--	Leon Hess Comprehensive
Volleyball -Under 20 Female	--	--	Leon Hess Comprehensive
Volleyball -Under 20 Male	--	--	St. Mary's College

10.42 The table gives an indication of the range of sporting events coordinated by the Ministry of Education's Department of Youth and Sports among the Secondary Schools in Saint Lucia. It is

critical that the Saint Joseph's Convent, has only succeeded in winning in the game of netball, the only sport that is exclusive to females. Additionally, there are three sports that involve males only, and four other sporting activities are open to males and females separately.

Family Life Education and Guidance and Counselling

10.43 In response to the growing social and personal issues manifested in the increased incidence of HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse, domestic violence and family breakdown, the Ministry of Education introduced the curriculum guide for Family Life Education and Guidance and Counselling in schools in 1989. This course was designed to enable students to make the best possible decisions about their lives and to solve their problems. It also enables students to develop personal, social and moral values, positive attitudes and good habits. The programme is intended to promote the growth, development and maturity of individuals, and to help students cope with the stressful situations which they sometimes encounter as they prepare for adulthood.

10.44 The curriculum covers topics outlined by Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), Caribbean Family Planning Association (CFPA) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) on various aspects of family life, for inclusion in all Family Life Education Programme. These include: Family Structures in the Caribbean, Population Education, Human Sexuality, Teenage Pregnancy, Values and Values Clarification, Counselling, and Adolescent Growth and Development to Adulthood. The main theme of the programme is "**Building the Family Unit in Our Nation.**" Several important sub-topics are developed. These include: Self-esteem, self-control, human dignity, building strong family units, decision making, personality and self concept, family needs, using leisure time purposefully, and laws and regulations. This provides a focus for family relationships and responsibilities.

10.45 Initially the programme was not well received by some school Principals and even parents. However, by its tenth year, its relevance was appreciated. This change is reflected in the increase number of counsellors attached to secondary schools, and the number of Primary School teachers who have received training in Guidance and Counselling. The programme, which is now referred to as the Health and Family Life Education programme, has also undergone some changes since it was first introduced.

10.46 The specific goals of the Health and Family Life Education Curriculum are to help students to:

- Display a secure sense of personal identity guided by a worthwhile code of ethics.
- Demonstrate the capacity to introspect and understand that every human being is valuable.
- Make appropriate adjustments in their behaviours.
- Demonstrate a willingness/commitment to the creation of supportive environments for social interaction.
- Appreciate the importance of the development of interpersonal relationships.
- Value the importance of mental well-being in human interaction.

- Demonstrate the ability to combine appropriate eating and fitness that will contribute to wellness.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the inter-dependence among all living things and the non living environment.
- Display a commitment to the conservation and preservation of the environment.
- Appreciate the positive impacts the individual, family and community can have on environmental health.
- Understand the personal responsibilities that are attached to sexual expression.
- Understand and appreciate their physiology as it relates to reproduction.
- Understand and practise the maintenance of sexual health.
- Develop an understanding of the values, mores, norms which influence human sexuality.
- Value and respect health.
- Make lifestyle choices that are in harmony with the environment.
- Practise behaviours which promote and maintain intellectual, physical, spiritual, emotional and social well-being.
- Appreciate that health is an individual and community responsibility.
- Understand that most health problems are preventable.
- Practise behaviours of disease prevention and healthful.

Adult Literacy

10.47 The importance of a literate population must be underscored. Thus, the Ministry of Education was committed in its drive to eradicate illiteracy in Saint Lucia by the year 2000, a goal which was in line with that of the United Nations Education and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) as far as illiteracy. From its inception in 1984, the Adult Literacy Programme has experienced a number of problems including limited financial and human resources. Despite these constraints, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour at the time offered a range of courses in areas such as English Language, Numeracy, Skill Training, Agricultural Science and Civics. Up to 1994, the Adult Literacy Programme was being conducted in 30 communities. It is important to note that the majority of learning centres were located in the rural areas.

10.48 Illiteracy became highlighted as a significant social, economic and cultural problem in Saint Lucia, through various consultative activities and research initiatives which occurred at both the national and regional level from 1977 to 1984. These reports all pointed to the prevalence of illiteracy and the need to address the problem in a timely and effective manner. The relevant reports and events include:

- Report of the Committee on Educational Priorities (1977)
- Feasibility Study of the National Literacy Programme for Saint Lucia (1980)
- National Consultation on Education (1980)
- UNESCO Major Project on Education
- Seminar on an Orthography for Saint Lucian Creole (1980)
- A Masters Thesis on Adult Education in Saint Lucia (1983)

10.49 Generally, the studies underscore the need to determine through acceptable scientific investigation, the precise level of illiteracy in the country. This was the background for the 1991 Adult Literacy Survey conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour. A total number of 49,600 adults were covered by the island-wide Census (See Table 10.18). It must be noted that with the exception of Castries the other regions are considered as rural. It is evident that illiteracy rates are significantly higher in what is deemed to be rural regions, such as Dennery, Anse La Raye/Canaries and Soufriere/Choiseul.

REGION	Illiterate	Functionally Illiterate	Literate	Total
Gros Islet	22.2	17.2	60.6	3678
Babonneau	25.7	21.9	52.4	4189
Dennery	39.1	22.1	38.8	4103
Micoud	26.5	19.5	54.0	5852
Vieux Fort/Laborie	27.2	19.4	53.4	8414
Soufriere/Choiseul	31.9	17.8	50.3	6037
Anse La Raye/Canaries	38.1	24.1	37.7	3076
Castries	21.3	15.7	62.9	14264

Source: Adult Literacy Survey 1991, Ministry of Education, Culture and Labour

10.50 The Adult Literacy Survey (1991) utilized self assessment and direct assessment methods to determine the literacy levels of the respondents. From the sample, fifty-four (54) percent were found to be literate, nineteen (19) percent functionally illiterate and twenty-seven (27) percent of the sample was not literate. Among the “not literate” group, twenty-nine (29) percent were occupied with elementary work (labourers, street vendors, domestic workers and stevedores). Housewives made up twenty (20) percent of those deemed functionally illiterate.

10.51 Up to the end of the reporting period, the business of Adult Literacy was managed and coordinated by the National Enrichment and Learning Programme (NELP) which falls under the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development and Youth and Sports. In 1990/91, the total number of registered learners was 911. Out of this total, 58% were adult females between the ages of 30 to 49 years. In that same year, there were 70 facilitators/tutors 86% of whom were females. This

trend which is characterized by a higher proportion of female learners has continued throughout the years. By 1999, more than 3,000 learners had benefited from the programme.

Table 10.19 : Percentage of Leavers by Gender in NELP Centres, 1998/99 to 2001/02						
a.	Number of All Leavers				Total Enrolment	% All Leavers
Year	Graduates	Dropouts	Others	Total		
1998/99	14	66	16	96	766	13
1999/00	0	37	0	37	662	6
2001/02	527	5	0	532	1490	36
b.	Number of Male Leavers				Male Enrolment	% Male Leavers
Year	Graduates	Dropouts	Others	Total		
1998/99	2	33	7	42	244	17
1999/00	0	18	0	18	199	9
2001/02	61	5	0	66	222	30
c.	Number of Female Leavers				Female Enrolment	% Female Leavers
Year	Graduates	Dropouts	Others	Total		
1998/99	12	33	9	54	522	10
1999/00	0	19	0	19	463	4
2001/02	466	1	0	467	1268	37

Note: The number of leavers in 2001/02 are only those for phase one of the program.

Leavers for 2000/01 are not available.

Table 10.19d : Percentage Share of Females in Adult Education Centres, 1998/99 to 2001/02			
Year	Enrolment	No. of Females	% of Females
1998/99	766	522	68
1999/00	662	463	70
2000/01	729	500	69
2001/02	1490	1268	85

Note: The enrolment in 2001/02 is for both phases of the program

:

Phase 1 - October 2001 to February 2001

Phase 2 - March to June 2002

10.52 In sum, the preceding tables reveal that more women have enrolled in the adult literacy programme than men. The proportion of women in the program has increased, almost consistently, over the years, from sixty-eight (68) percent in 1998 to eighty-five (85) percent in 2002. The numbers

of male and female dropouts from 1998 to 2002 have been fairly similar, while the number of female graduates has far surpassed the number of male graduates.

Table 10.20 : Enrolment of Learners by Program in Phase 2, March to June, 2002					
Programme	Male	Female	Total	% Male	% Female
Electrical Installation	35	5	40	88	12
Carpentry	8	2	10	80	20
Music	3	7	10	30	70
Pre-CXC Mathematics	17	55	72	24	76
Basic Literacy	24	81	105	23	77
CXC Mathematics	28	102	130	22	78
CXC Language	13	76	89	15	85
Information Technology	23	148	171	13	87
Pre-CXC Language	6	65	71	8	92
Garment Construction	0	115	115	0	100
Cake Decorating	0	87	87	0	100
Flower Arranging	0	47	47	0	100
Human Relations	0	11	11	0	100
Total	157	801	958	16	84

10.53 Table 10.20 outlines the enrolment of men and women by subject choices. It is significant that more women are enrolled in the Basic Literacy and the English language programmes. In the absence of gender disaggregated data on literacy rates in Saint Lucia, the subject choices of the females may suggest a higher rate of illiteracy among women. However, the cultural and attitudinal dimensions of the illiteracy and adult learning must be considered before drawing such conclusions. Adult males are perhaps less amenable to attend classes, particularly literacy classes because of the implications of this on their self and socially-ascribed images of a man. At the same time there is a general fear among men and women, to attend literacy classes because of feelings of embarrassment and hopelessness. This may explain the similarity in the dropout rates of men and women. Table 10.20 also corroborates an earlier observation regarding gender based selection of subject choices in the broader education system. Some of the subjects which stand out are Garment Construction (Sewing), Flower Arranging and Electrical Installation.

Article 11: Employment

1. State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

- a) The right to work as an unalienable right of all human beings;*
- b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;*
- c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;*
- d) The right to equal remuneration including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;*
- e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;*
- f) The right to protection of health and safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.*

2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, State Parties shall take appropriate measures:

- a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;*
- b) To introduce maternity benefits with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;*
- c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and network of child-care facilities;*
- d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.*

History of Employment Legislation

11.1 In 1987, the country's Labour Code was drafted and submitted to Parliament. By 1999, the Code had not been enacted. This meant that for all of this time, no legislation existed to guarantee workers, and indeed women, the modern and current rights to employment, including some of the

details relating to the right to the collective bargaining process which is the most common form of negotiation between employers and employees today.

11.2 In the year 2000, the Labour Code of 1987 was under revision by a Government appointed Task Force. The Terms of Reference of this Task Force are important in demonstrating the country's priorities as far as employment matters. These include:

- Review the existing Labour Legislation with a view to modernization;
- Consider all Conventions of the International Labour Organization and provisions which must be specifically enacted;
- Consider comparative Legislation particularly Labour Codes of other jurisdictions and also the Labour Code drafted in 1977 by Professor Cronin;
- Consider the common-law, judicial decisions and existing custom and practice as it relates to the interpretation of Labour Law;
- Seek public opinion on the draft Labour Code.

11.3 The Task Force consisted of a Legal Consultant and representatives from:

- Employers Organizations
- Trade Unions
- Government's Legal and Labour Departments
- International Labour Organization

The inclusion of the National Women's Machinery (NWM) on the Task Force would have greatly increased the possibility of incorporating gender equality principles in the development of the employment policies embodied in the Labour Code. By April, 2001, the Draft Saint Lucia Labour Code was in place.

The Right to Work

11.4 In principle, women are guaranteed equal rights as men in employment matters and discrimination against women in employment is prohibited. More specifically, the 2000 Equality of Opportunity and Treatment in Employment and Occupation Act states that it is unlawful for an employer to discriminate against an employee on the grounds of race, sex, religion, colour, ethnic or social origin, political opinion, disability, family responsibility, marital status and other such distinctions.

11.5 Chapter E of the Saint Lucia Labour Code (2001) addresses "Equality Provisions and Employment of Women". Section E3 (1) highlights the specific work related activities which should be free from discrimination. They are as follows:

- in the advertisement of the job;
- in the arrangements made for the purpose of determining who should be offered that employment;

- in determining who should be offered employment;
- in the terms or conditions on which employment is offered;
- in the creation, classification or abolition of jobs.

Further, Section E3 (2) states that discrimination by an employer against an employee is unlawful:

- in terms or conditions of employment afforded to that employee by the employer;
- in conditions of work or occupational safety and health measures;
- in the provision of facilities related to or connected with employment;
- by denying access, or limiting access to opportunities for advancement, promotion, transfer or training, or to any other benefits, facilities or services associated with employment;
- by retrenching or dismissing the employee;
- by subjecting the employee to any other disadvantage.

11.6 Notwithstanding these provisions, Section E4 of the Saint Lucia Labour Code (2001) identifies various situations in which the genuine occupational qualifications necessitate a measure of discrimination, for example, where “the essential nature of the job calls for a particular sex, ethnic origin, race, non-disability, for reasons of physiology excluding physical strength or stamina.

11.7 For many years, there was widespread discontent with Section 23 (3) of the Teaching Service Commission regulations of 1977. According to this section “An unmarried teacher who becomes pregnant shall be dismissed on a second pregnancy if still unmarried.” This regulation was clearly discriminatory against women, as no such regulation existed for unmarried male teachers with two or more children. This regulation, which was vehemently challenged by the Saint Lucia Teachers Union in court and attracted international attention, was repealed in 1995. The 2001 Saint Lucia Labour Code demonstrates this. Chapter E25 which addresses marital status under Pregnancy and Maternity Benefits and Protection states “No employer may deny a female employee maternity leave or entitlements, or any of the protections afforded under this Part by reason that she is not married to the father of the child carried during a pregnancy term or relevant to the period to which she is entitled to maternity or pregnancy benefits.”

The Right to Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value

11.8 Up until 2000, women involved in agriculture, received less pay than their male counterparts. The Equality of Opportunity and Treatment in Employment and Occupation Act (2000) has repealed the Agricultural Workers Ordinance (Minimum Wage) Order 1970, No.12 and the Agricultural Workers Ordinance (Minimum Wage) Amendment Order 1979, No. 35 which had previously allowed for higher wages among men.

11.9 The Saint Lucia Labour Code Chapter E 5(1) states, “Employers and persons acting on behalf of employers shall pay equal remuneration to men and women for performing work of equal value.” Equal remuneration refers to the established remunerative rates which do not differentiate on the basis of gender.

11.10 The "**Reclassification**" pay scheme of 1992 for public servants provided for the removal of discrimination in rates of remuneration based on the sex of employees. The "**Reclassification**" provided for incremental implementation over a three year period, a process which was completed by 1995. This salary scheme has been interpreted by some as providing for equal pay rates for both men and women with the same qualifications and years of experience for work of the same efficiency and nature. Prior to 1992, there was disparity in earnings with members of the Teaching Service (who are predominantly females) and the Nurses Association earning less than other persons in the public sector.

Social Security Benefits

11.11 Social Security for employees in Saint Lucia is funded largely by taxes. The National Insurance Scheme (N.I.S.) is the primary agency responsible for social security on the island. The National Insurance Scheme has the following as its Mission Statement:

“To ensure that every Saint Lucian enjoys social and financial protection and to assist in the development of our nation through the efficient collection of contributions, payment of relevant benefits, prudent management of assets, use of cutting edge technology, and a cadre of highly skilled staff.”

11.12 National Insurance Scheme provides both short term and long term benefits. They areas follows:

Short Term Benefits:

- Maternity grant
- Maternity allowance
- Funeral grant
- Employment injury benefits
- Sickness benefits
- Medical expenses

Long Term Benefits:

- Invalidity benefits
- Retirement benefits
- Survivors' benefits
- Disablement benefits

It is useful to note that in the case of the Survivors' benefits, the Scheme recognizes common-law unions. In order to benefit, the union must have existed for at least five years before the death of the partner.

11.13 The 2000 Annual Report for the N.I.S. records an increase of 5.36 percent in new entrants for the year 1999 to 2000. There was a total of 4,736 new contributors to the N.I.S., of which 2499 were

men and 2237 women. In terms of active contributors, the report indicates that 20, 546 women and 20, 458 men paid at least one month's contribution for the year. During the financial year, the N.I.S. reported an overall increase in short-term benefits by 14.8 percent. This increase is attributed to the increases in sickness allowances and maternity allowances and grants, which account 88.24 percent of the total growth in short-term benefit expenses.

Pregnancy and Maternity Benefits and Protection

11.14 As part of the Saint Lucia Labour Code (2001), maternity benefits and protection are ensured to employees who have been continuously employed for at least eighteen (18) months. Maternity leave with pay is granted for a period of 13 weeks, usually with six (6) weeks prior to delivery date and seven (7) weeks following the delivery date. The option is also available for one to work for the six (6) weeks before delivery and claim for the full thirteen (13) weeks subsequent to confinement. Many women prefer this option because of the maternal and child needs during the period and to allow for an extended period for bonding with the child. However, in many cases, it is the employer who makes the final decision in this regard. In the case of persons who have been employed for less than eighteen (18) months, maternity leave is granted for a period of six (6) weeks without pay.

11.15 The employee is guaranteed by law, the right to return to her job following maternity leave. The Saint Lucia Labour Code E22 states:

“An employee shall exercise her right to return to work after maternity leave by notifying her employer at least two weeks before the day on which she proposes to return, of her intention to return on that day, referred to as the “notified day of return”.”

The right of return is granted irrespective of the length of employment. The law prohibits any form of prejudice against the woman who has exercised her right to maternity benefits.

11.16 For most of the reporting period, unmarried teachers were suspended without pay during their first pregnancy, and were required to reapply to the Teaching Service Commission seeking to be reinstated one month after confinement. It was only in 199, that this discriminatory practiced became illegal.

11.17 No provision has been made in the laws of Saint Lucia for paternity leave. However special leave may be granted to attend to urgent private matters. This deficiency in the law reflects the persistence of assumptions that parenting and child care are the reserve of the mother. It also reflects a failure to recognize the mother's need for emotional and practical support following delivery and the importance of bonding between the father and the child in the immediate period after birth.

11.18 The NIS provides Maternity Benefits under the following terms:

- A claimant must have contributed for at least 7 in the last 10 months immediately preceding the month her baby is due and be certified as being pregnant by a doctor or registered midwife.

- The benefit is calculated by taking the average of the best seven months in the last ten and it is 65% of these insurable earnings.
- The period of payment for a maternity benefit is (3)three months, only in cases where earnings are not paid during the period. There is also a maternity grant of \$600.00 paid to the mother or to a husband / common-law husband if the wife is not a contributor, but her partner/spouse is.
- National Insurance also pays a fee of \$100 to the hospital in respect of every contributor who delivers a baby there. In addition all hospitalization /medical costs associated with an inpatient are met by National Insurance.

11.19 It is worth examining the performance of maternity benefits as this is the scope of assistance which directly impact women. From 1995 to 1999, the N.I.S. recorded continuous declines in the number and cost of maternity benefits. During the financial year 1999 to 2000, the number of allowances increased by more than 25% and the total amount paid maternity grants and allowances was just over EC\$2.2 million dollars. The table below provides further details.

Table 11.1: Maternity Benefits by Number and Expenditure						
Financial Year						
Benefits	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	Total
Maternity Grants	1118	1019	963	878	1050	5028
Maternity Allowance	965	899	857	757	949	4427
Total	2083	1918	1820	1635	1999	9455
Maternity Grants	\$503,100	\$459,900	\$438,750	\$458,850	\$637,400	\$2,498,000
Maternity Allowance	\$1,438,476	\$1,411,019	\$1,389,148	\$1,287,147	\$1,654,696	\$7,180,486
Total	\$1,941,576	\$1,870,919	\$1,827,898	\$1,745,997	\$2,292,096	\$9,678,486
Source: National Insurance Scheme Annual Report 2002						

Occupational Health and Safety

11.20 Legislation governing health and safety in places of employment is consolidated into the Employees Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 10 of 1985. The Act contains the general duties of the employer and employees, as well as the conditions of the workplace and the basic amenities to be provided there. The Act aims to promote employers excellence in health and safety management and the prevention of accident or injury and illness. Issues relating to the responsibility for health and safety are placed with the employers. Both male and female workers are affected by the regulations within the Act.

11.21 The duties of the employer are covered in Section 3 of the Act which reads as follows; the employer will: -

- (a) *provide and maintain places of employment equipment and systems of work, that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risk of injury to health;*
- (b) *provide and maintain safe means of access to and egress from any place of work;*
- (c) *ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that risks of accident and injury to health do not arise as a result of the handling, storage, transport, use and disposal of dangerous substances;*
- (d) *provide information, training and supervision necessary to ensure the protection of his employees against risk of accident and injury to health arising from their employment;*
- (e) *provide his employees with personal protective clothing and equipment where adequate protection against risks of accident and injury to health cannot be provided by other means; and*
- (f) *provide and maintain adequate first aid facilities in places of employment under his control.*

11.22 Section 4 of the Act outlines the responsibilities of every employee in protecting his/her health and safety and also that of co-workers and others on the job. The Employee shall: -

- (a) *take reasonable care of his safety and health at all times and also that of any other persons who may be affected by his acts or omissions at work;*
- (b) *cooperate with his employer in carrying out of all duties and requirements imposed by this Act;*
- (c) *not deliberately misuse or interfere with the operation of any safety device or other appliance provided for his protection or that of others;*
- (d) *ensure, so far as is within his control, that risks to himself, to others and to the environment do not arise as a result of the handling, storage, transport, use and disposal of dangerous substances;*
- (e) *make proper use and take care of personal protective clothing and any other equipment provided for his own protection;*
- (f) *report forthwith to his immediate supervisor any defect which he may discover and which, in his opinion, may be a cause of accident or of injury to health; and*
- (g) *report forthwith to his immediate supervisor any accident or injury to health that he has suffered.*

11.23 The Act (Section 8) makes provision for the workplace to be "*kept clean and free from effluvia from any drain, privy or other nuisance.*" Section 10 of the Act provides for the maintenance of proper ventilation "*to prevent injury to the health of employees.*" The Act, under Section 11 prohibits overcrowding in any place of employment that may be injurious to the health of employees working therein. Effective arrangements will be made in every place of employment to ensure that a sufficient supply of wholesome drinking water be provided and maintained at suitable and convenient locations for all employees. This regulation is contained in Section 12 of the Employees Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 10 of 1985.

11.24 Section 13 of the Act makes provisions for all premises used as places of employment to establish proper toilet facilities in convenient locations for both sexes. It states that these facilities be properly ventilated, clean and sanitary. Section 15 of the Act makes provision for the workplace to be equipped with first aid boxes or storage places with the prescribed contents, and these must be conveniently located and readily accessible during working hours. In Section 16 of the Act provision is made for trained personnel in resuscitation techniques to be readily available at the workplace during all working. This is necessary particularly in working environments which involve a risk of asphyxiation or electric shock.

11.25 The Act (Section 17) provides for adequate arrangements to be made in every place of employment for the medical examination and supervision of the employees where cases of occupational diseases, injuries or health disorders occur as a direct consequence of a process, substances used in a process or conditions of work. The employer shall meet the cost of any medical examination carried out.

11.26 The Act also contains regulations which deal with machines that are considered to be dangerous. It makes provisions for the safety operations and use of heavy duty equipment and power driven machines (e.g., tractors, trucks, cranes), electrical installation, toxic and flammable substances. The Act also provides for protective clothing, lifting and handling of loads and repair and maintenance of machines.

11.27 The Employees Occupational Health and Safety Act No. 10 of 1985 does not contain specific regulations for women however, its contents are applicable to women and should provide them with a significant measure of protection and safety at their place of employment. It was only in 2001 with the Saint Lucia Labour Code, 2001 that very specific provisions were made for the health and safety of women in the workplace. The Code prohibits exposure of pregnant women to conditions and/or chemicals which may put their lives or that of their unborn children at risk.

11.28 The effectiveness of the existing labour legislation is limited by employees' ignorance of their rights as well as by the fear of losing their jobs in what is known to be a competitive labour market. In this regard, employees may choose to accept or tolerate unhealthy working conditions in an effort to keep their jobs. Education of workers on health and safety issues is an area that must be addressed as a matter of urgency. Furthermore, the extent to which employers adhere to and implement the provisions within the existing legislation is questionable and needs to be closely monitored.

Women in the Work Force

11.29 Indeed the country has come a long way by instituting many of the necessary legislative provisions to promote equality of women in the field of employment. An examination of the statistics, however seems to suggest that some measure of inequity continues to exist though in a more subtle form. A comparison of employment figures of men and women demonstrates that women are more affected by unemployment than men, more men are part of the labour force than women, women generally receive less pay than men, and there is also the persistence of gender-based division of labour or occupational segregation.

Year	Count			Proportion (%)	
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
1994	33,390	30,130	63,520	53	47
1995	37,080	30,000	67,080	55	45
1996	37,070	31,380	68,450	54	46
1997	38,960	32,460	71,420	55	45
1998	40,930	32,730	73,660	56	44
1999	38,040	34,960	73,000	52	48
2000	41,130	36,860	77,990	53	47
2002	38,930	34,370	73,300	53	47

Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

11.30 The proportion of men and women in the labour force was most similar in 1999 where women accounted for forty-eight (48) percent of the labour force. Notwithstanding the slight changes in the proportion of women in the labour force throughout the years, after eight years, women's composition in the labour force remains at forty-seven (47) percent.

11.31 The following table which captures the number of persons employed in the labour force by age and sex, shows that employed women are outnumbered by employed men in all age groups. It is important to note that among persons above age 65, women are far less represented; this is in spite of the fact that population figures for the country reveal that in this age group there is higher population of women than men. Furthermore, the life expectancy for women has been consistently higher than that of men. For example, in 1999, the life expectancy of newborn males was 70 years while newborn females were expected to live for 73 years.

Age	1997		1998		1999		2000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
15-19 Years	1,620	880	1,890	1,240	2,010	1,400	1,990	1,410
20-24 "	4,490	3,600	5,020	2,480	4,090	3,810	4,450	3,540
25-34 "	9,650	7,950	8,590	6,810	9,180	7,900	8,760	7,860
35-44 "	6,530	6,190	7,190	6,060	7,820	8,610	9,420	7,640
45-54 "	4,130	2,930	5,300	4,550	5,380	4,070	5,930	4,440
55-64 "	2,320	1,640	2,810	1,660	2,220	1,700	2,260	2,300
65+	2,690	1,080	2,770	930	2,210	1,110	2,810	1,560
Sub-Total	31,430	24,270	33,570	23,730	32,910	28,600	35,620	28,750
Total	55,700		57,300		61,510		64,370	
Proportion	56	44	59	41	54	46	55	45

Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

11.32 A comparison of the industrial activity of employed men and women is insightful as it reveals the extent to which some of the traditional male-oriented jobs continue to be dominated by men, with minimal participation from women. These include construction, fishing and electricity, gas and water supply. On the other hand, there are those industries that predominantly employ women namely, manufacturing, health and social work and education.

TABLE 11.4: EMPLOYED PERSONS BY INDUSTRY GROUP AND SEX

Industry Group	1994		1996		1998		2000		2002	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry	9,110	4,330	8,420	4,690	8,790	3,910	7,890	3,770	4,220	2,240
Fishing	1,300	40	630	30	740	40	900	0	370	0
Manufacturing	1,910	4,650	2,530	4,150	2,130	3,220	2,620	3,990	1,750	2,460
Electricity, Gas, Water Supply	630	100	770	110	690	180	490	40	440	160
Construction	3,300	210	5,270	300	4,320	280	6,060	400	4,870	130
Wholesale & Retail Trade	2,890	4,100	3,460	4,540	4,190	5,800	4,020	7,070	3,420	4,930
Hotels & Restaurants	2,650	2,220	2,310	2,590	2,900	2,080	2,840	3,300	2,500	3,340
Transport, Storage, Communications	1,970	300	2,750	720	2,940	780	3,560	980	2,600	650
Financial Intermediation	750	540	850	950	550	710	130	740	230	480
Real Estate, Renting, Business Activities	560	310	790	390	850	360	860	590	1,070	540
Public Administration & Social Security	3,080	4,420	2,740	3,450	3,820	3,780	1,590	4,590	3,360	3,690
Education	0	370	30	550	280	400	410	980	240	1,470
Health & Social Work	30	140	250	570	80	200	200	250	0	220
Other community, social & personal service activities	160	150	310	620	450	800	510	620	580	320
Private households with employed persons	850	1,760	580	1,590	680	1,150	460	930	440	1,310
Other community, social & personal service activities	750	450	70	40	120	40	210	0	110	0
Not Stated	0	0	0	0	40	0	870	500	4,260	3,210

Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

11.33 Table 11.5 illustrates the rate of unemployment among men and women in various age groups. From 1994 to 2002, the unemployment rate has generally been higher among women than men. In a few instances however, there was a higher rate of unemployment among men, for example in the 65+ age group.

Table 11.5: Unemployment Rates by Age and Sex (Percentage Distribution)

Age	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998		1999		2000		2002	
	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M
15-19	57	37	68	47	63	47	66	47	67	53	55	40	57	47	72	66
20-24	26	17	31	16	28	22	38	28	47	30	32	26	30	25	43	31
25-34	18	6	18	5	18	9	25	17	25	14	16	10	21	10	27	19
35-44	10	6	9	8	11	8	15	16	16	9	8	7	18	7	18	14
45-54	8	4	7	6	5	7	14	12	10	4	7	7	9	5	20	11
55-64	4	5	12	9	4	5	2	12	18	12	10	8	9	5	23	11
65+	13	3	8	1	11	15	9	11	4	12	9	8	10	4	24	20
Overall	20	10	21	12	20	15	25	19	28	18	18	14	22	13	28	21

Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

Throughout the period, the group most affected by unemployment, is females age 15 to 19 years. Between 1998 and 1999, the unemployment rate among women was reduced by ten (10) percent, but by 2002, the figure was restored. From 1994 to 2002, there was an overall increase in unemployment among women by eight (8) percent while unemployment among men increased by eleven (11) percent.

11.34 The integral relationship between education and employment is presented in a comparative analysis by the Saint Lucia Department of Statistics in the report, “Saint Lucian Men Versus Saint Lucian Women...Statistically Speaking: Analysis and Figures” (1999). According to the report “the need to equip members of the labour force with the skills necessary to meaningfully augment their employment opportunities is strongly apparent in the fact that in 1999, twenty (20) percent of unemployed women claimed to have attained no kind of education.” Persons with no education, together with those whose highest level of education is Standard Six, account for fifty (50) percent of the unemployed women and fifty-five (55) percent of unemployed men.

11.35 A common job entry level requirement in the Saint Lucia is five (5) or more CXC's. The Department of Statistics reports that among the unemployed who possess this requirement, sixty-one (61) percent are women, and thirty-nine (39) percent are men. This gender discrepancy becomes even more acute with a review of the category of persons who possess one or two Advanced Level subjects. Within this academic grouping, seventy-nine (79) percent of the unemployed are women. This suggests that to some extent, women are not guaranteed employment by virtue of their higher level education, but men with equal levels of education are less likely to face unemployment.

11.36 It is worth comparing the wages of men and women involved in various industries in Saint Lucia. Information from the Department of Statistics uses the following International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (ISIC), Third Revision codes:

Code	Description
A	Agriculture, Hunting and Forestry
B	Fishing
C	Mining and Quarrying
D	Manufacturing
E	Electricity, Gas and Water Supply
F	Construction
G	Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles, Motorcycles and Personal and Household Goods
H	Hotels and Restaurants
I	Transport, Storage and Communications
J	Financial Intermediation
K	Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities
L	Public Administration and Defense, Compulsory Social Security
M	Education
N	Health and Social Work
O	Other Community, Social and Personnel Services
P	Private Households with Employed Persons
Q	Extra-Territorial Organizations and Bodies

11.37 The below table shows that for the year 1999, the average monthly earning for men is higher than that of women in all but 2 of the major industrial categories, viz. health and social work and other community, social and personnel services which, from the discussion above, have already been established as predominantly female oriented activities. No men are employed in the area of community and social services.

Table 11.6: Average Earnings of Monthly Salaried Persons by Major Industry (ISIC), 1999

ISIC Category	Women		Men		% Sex Distribution	
	\$	%	\$	%	Women	Men
A, B	1200	5	2350	8	34	66
C	1875	8	2383	8	44	56
D	1930	8	2442	8	44	56
F	1695	7	4650	15	27	73
G	1915	8	2127	7	47	53
H	1835	8	2456	8	43	57
I	3342	14	4732	15	41	59
J	2780	12	3270	11	46	54
K	1782	7	2302	7	44	56
M	1833	8	2145	7	46	54
N	2600	11	2006	6	56	44
O	1006	4	0	0	100	0
Total		100		100		

Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

11.38 As far as weekly wage earners, men earned their highest wages in mining and quarrying and construction, while the highest paying industries for women are hotel and restaurant and education. The most significant differences in the average minimum wages earned by men and women are evident in the Financial Intermediation, Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing and Manufacturing industries. In the case of Financial Intermediation, the average minimum wage is EC\$119.00 for females and EC\$263.00 for males.

Table 11.7: Average Wages of Wage Earners by Major Industry (ISIC), 1999

CATEGORY	Average Hours of Work Per Week	MEN		WOMEN	
		Average Minimum Weekly Wage (ECD)	Average Maximum Weekly Wage (ECD)	Average Minimum Weekly Wage (ECD)	Average Maximum Weekly Wage (ECD)
WHOLESALE & RETAIL TRADE	52.46	258.30	356.00	218.02	245.66
MANUFACTURING	41.58	287.58	356.62	160.85	229.75
HOTEL & RESTAURANTS	40.27	263.04	339.69	246.48	324.69
AGRICULTURE, HUNTING & FORESTRY	34.89	255.47	257.04	135.24	183.35
CONSTRUCTION	49.50	356.13	552.44	151.50	211.50
MINING & QUARRYING	46.00	414.67	494.04	-	-
TRANSPORT, STORAGE & COMMUNICATION	42.97	285.30	426.00	193.50	341.50
FINANCIAL INTERMEDIATION	25.81	262.75	401.75	118.50	120.83
REAL ESTATE, RENTING & BUSINESS ACTIVITIES	40.08	147.33	240.00	135.67	240.00
EDUCATION	42.00	287.50	293.33	225.00	225.00
HEALTH & SOCIAL WORK	42.00	-	-	162.00	-
OTHER COMMUNITY, SOCIAL & PERSONNEL SERVICES	41.87	186.28	325.00	135.00	154.75

Source: Earnings and Hours of Work Report, Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

N.B. The data contained in this table is an average of the number of cases reported by the Survey of Employment, Earnings and Hours of Work, and may therefore depend on the extent to which the earnings and wages of the employees within the respective occupations (titles) vary.

In industry or occupation classes where the cases reported are not as diverse as or characteristic of the population,

average earnings may differ considerably from the true population estimates of average earnings for that particular class.

A more accurate estimate of earnings and hours of work is obtained where the number of cases reported

are representative of what exist in the population.

Special Projects

11.39 The National Research and Development Foundation Ltd. (NRDF) is a service oriented, non-governmental organization established in 1983. According to its mission statement, the organization seeks to improve socio-economic conditions among persons, particularly marginalized groups, through promotion and implementation of developmental activities. The NRDF's 2002 Annual Report demonstrates that the proportion of loans disbursed to women increased from 12% in 2001 to 23% in 2002. While this increase is commendable, there is significant room for improvement in the share of loans afforded to women. The figures should be utilized cautiously as they do not reveal the extent to which women contribute, single-handedly, or in partnership, to the repayment of loans awarded to men. In 2002, the ratio of jobs created for females to males was 1: 1.68.

11.40 The Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU) established in 1994 is a development project that has opened up opportunities to women and persons in general, through the provision of entrepreneurial training in micro and small business management. This training equips individuals with the ability to establish and manage their own businesses, by providing technical support in developing business plans, registering business names, etc. The Small Enterprise Development Unit has provided assistance to just over 2000 males and 1200 females, thus enhancing their potential to improve their economic well-being.

12: Health

State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, State Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connexion with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

Administration and Delivery of the Health Care System

12.1 Health care in Saint Lucia is provided at both the private and public sector. However, the overall administration, delivery and maintenance of the health care system in Saint Lucia fall under the ambit of the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations. The Ministry is responsible for organizing the resources and services relevant to the country's health. Medical, dental and pharmaceutical services are largely provided within the private sector. The work of the Ministry of Health is organized at two levels. At the central level, the Ministry is responsible for the development, management and financing of policies, projects and programmes. At the district level, there are the primary, secondary and tertiary institutions which provide the services and are overseen by the Ministry.

Table 12. 1 : Health Facilities by Type, Number in Country and Services Provided, 2002

Type of Facility	No.	Services Offered
Acute General Hospitals	3	a) Out-patient services for casualty, obstetrics, gynaecology, ophthalmology
		b) In-patient care for medicine, surgery, ophthalmology, pulmonary diseases (292 beds)
		c) X-ray, ultra-sound, physiotherapy, pharmacy, laboratory services.
Psychiatric Hospitals	1	a) In-patient care for psychiatric patients (162 beds)
		b) Out-patient psychiatric clinics
Drug Rehabilitation Centers	1	a) In-patient care for alcoholic and drug-abuse patients (20 beds)
		b) Out-patient clinics
District Hospitals	2	a) In-patient care for medicine, surgery, paediatrics and maternity (53 beds)
		b) Intermediate-level care for chronic/non-acute case
		c) Primary health care services
Health Centers	33	Primary health care services including:
		a) Maternal and child health (MCH) services including antenatal, intranatal and postnatal care, family planning, childhood vaccinations, health and nutrition education
		b) Out-patient medical clinics for general morbidity
		c) Specialist clinics for psychiatry, obstetrics/gynaecology, paediatrics, dental services and other disciplines.

Source: Report of Chief Medical Officer, Saint Lucia 2001-2002

12.2 There are two acute general hospitals on the island namely, the Victoria hospital which is situated in the capital, Castries, and the St. Jude's Hospital which is located in Vieux Fort in the south of the island. These facilities generally provide secondary care on an in-patient basis, but primary

care is also offered to out-patients at medical clinics and at the accident and emergency departments of the general hospitals. The acute general hospitals offer services for obstetrics and gynaecology, accident and emergency, paediatrics, cardiology, general and orthopedic surgery, dermatology, ear, nose and throat, internal medicine and psychiatry, medical and nursing services and other ancillary services.

12.3 There are two district hospitals on the island (Dennery and Soufriere) which deliver primary care services and also accommodate in-patients for minor medical, surgical and paediatric problems. They also facilitate maternity care for low risk cases and some basic care to in-patients suffering with chronic diseases. While the public is not restricted to the services of any facility, the administration and delivery of health care services in the public sector are based on the specific catchment area and population therein. As far as tertiary health care institutions, there is one psychiatric hospital and one rehabilitation center which facilitates drug and alcohol detoxification. The two tables which follow represent the number of personnel involved in public health sector and the rate of these to the population.

Table 12.2 :Health Personnel for Public Sector by Category and Rate per 100,000 Population, 2001 and 2002

Category	2001		2002	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
Nurses	298	188	302	190
Nursing Assistants	50	31	52	33
Doctors	72	46	70	44
Laboratory technicians	28	17	27	17
Pharmacists/Dispensers	23	15	23	14
Environmental Health Officers	13	8.2	15	9.4
Health/Family Life Educators	10	6.3	10	6.3
Radiographers	8	5.1	8	5.0
Dentists	7	4.4	7	4.4
Dental Auxiliaries	17	10	17	11
Physiotherapists	5	3.2	7	4.4
Engineers	2	1.3	2	1.3
Nutritionists/Dieticians	3	1.9	3	1.9
Social Workers	12	7.6	11	6.9
Other Health Workers	124	79	124	78
Administrative Personnel	59	37	64	40

Source: Report of Chief Medical Officer, Saint Lucia 2001-2002

Table 12.3 :Medical Personnel in Public Sector by Specialty and Rate per 100,000 Population, 2001 and 2002

Specialty	2001		2002	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
General Practitioners	60	8.8	60	8.8
General Surgeons	4	2.5	4	2.5
Anaesthetists	5	3.2	5	3.2
Paediatricians	3	1.9	3	1.9
Obstetricians/Gynaecologists	4	0.06	5	3.1
Psychiatrists	5	0.06	5	3.1
Physicians	7	0.06	8	5.0
Accident & Emergency	3	0.06	4	2.5
Epidemiologists	1	0.06	1	0.06
Cardiologists	1	0.06	1	0.06
Dermatologists	1	0.06	1	0.06
Internists	1	0.06	2	1.3
Ophthalmologists	1	0.06	1	0.06
Pathologists	1	0.06	1	0.06
Radiologists	2	1.3	2	1.3
Orthopedic Surgeons	3	1.9	3	1.9

Source: Report of Chief Medical Officer, Saint Lucia 2001-2002

12.4 The Ministry of Health is also responsible for coordinating community health services and disease prevention and control programs. These are provided through medical clinics at health centers and district hospitals. One of the most critical services provided at the community level is the immunization of children under age 5 against diseases as part of the expanded program of immunization (EPI). Screening is also provided for pregnant women for anaemia, syphilis and to monitor haemoglobin levels. Screening is now readily available for cervical, breast and prostate cancer. The Ministry's preventive services are available to the public at no charge except in cases of contraceptive supplies, yellow fever and for the compulsory vaccination for entry into colleges.

12.5 As part of the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), immunizations are provided for the prevention of the following diseases:

- Poliomyelitis (OPV vaccine)
- Tuberculosis (BCG vaccine)
- Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus (DPT vaccine)
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR vaccine)

The principal objective of the programme is to ensure that all children are fully immunized before starting school. Authorities are required to provide reports on these diseases even where the incidence is zero. The immunization programme has been very successful evident in the maintenance of high vaccination coverage rates and a reduction in the incidence of vaccine preventable diseases.

Health Indicators

Table 12.4: Selected Demographic Indicators, 1992 to 2002											
	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	1995	1994	1993	1992
Estimated Mid-year Population	159,133	157,898	155,996	153,703	151,952	149,666	147,062	145,437	142,689	139,908	138,151
Population Growth Rate	0.78	1.22	1.49	1.15	1.53	1.77	1.12	1.93	1.99	1.27	1.6
Live Births	2,529	2,788	2,904	2,997	2,950	3,444	3,299	3,705	3,684	3,556	3,761
Illegitimate Birth	2,176	2,369	2,493	2,543	2,532	2,994	2,839	3,166	3,150	3,101	3,314
Teen Births	455	564	483	474	474	560	552	662	647	685	739
Deaths	957	998	941	981	976	981	950	940	915	907	919
Infant Deaths	36	37	38	42	48	60	55	43	41	59	84
Still Births	51	32	41	46	39	53	57	62	44	30	60
Birth Rate	15.9	17.7	18.6	19.5	19.4	23	22.4	25.5	25.4	24.5	26.1
Death Rate	6	6.3	6	6.4	6.4	6.6	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.4	6.4
Infant Mortality Rate	14.2	13.3	13.1	14	16.3	17.4	16.7	11.6	11.1	17	23
Rate of Natural Increase	9.9	11.3	12.6	13.1	13	16.5	16	19	19.1	18.2	19.7
Total Fertility Rate	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.6	2.5	2.9	2.8	2.8	3
Net Reproductive Rate	1.1	1.1	1	1	1	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4
Age Dependency Ratio	60.6	63.4	62.5	62.5	64.4	66.1	68	69.4	71.1	72.4	76.3
Male Life Expectancy at Age 0	72	72.5	68.7	69.5	70.6	70.6	69.5	68.8	69.7	68.9	68.7
Female life Expectancy at Age 0	76.7	75.5	73.6	73.2	72.4	73	73.7	74.2	74.8	74.5	74.6

Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department

12.6 An examination of the standard demographic indicators for the country demonstrates an overall improvement in the quality of health of women. Some of the indicators such as infant mortality rates and fertility rates are direct reflectors of the state of health among women, and in the case of the life expectancy rates it is possible to compare the rates of men and women. The ratio of women to men in 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1991 was one man to 1.06 women. In 1994 women accounted for 51.4 percent of the total population of 142,689. These figures represent a slight tendency for women to have a longer life expectancy than men.

12.7 For the period under review, the life expectancy rates for women were higher than that of men by 1.8 to 5.9 years. The infant mortality rate has decreased from 23 percent in 1992 to 14.2 percent in 2002. This is useful as the health of the child is a direct consequence and reflection of the health of the mother. The main causes of death in women during the reporting period were hypertension, cervical cancer and diabetes.

Morbidity and Mortality

12.8 Generally, women face a higher risk of death from cardiovascular disease especially hypertension and cerebrovascular disease. The table below compares the rate of three cardiovascular diseases among men and women of the various age groups. Mortality rates for cardiovascular disease are highest in the 65 plus age group.

Table 12.5 : Sex specific mortality rates (per 100,000 population) for cardiovascular diseases by disease and broad age groups, 1996-2000						
Age Group	Sex	Total	Rates per 100,000 population			
			Total	Heart Disease	Cerebrovascular Disease	Hypertension
Under 15	M	7	1.8	1.6	0.3	-
	F	4	1.0	7.5	0.3	-
15-44	M	44	11	8.5	1.6	1.0
	F	32	8.0	4.8	2.3	1.0
45-64	M	142	37	23	13	1.6
	F	100	25	11	12	1.8
65 or older	M	526	138	73	52	14
	F	651	164	81	61	22
All Ages	M	719	189	106	67	16
	F	789	198	98	75	24

Source: Report of the Chief Medical Officer, 2001-2002

12.9 Malignant neoplasms or cancer-related tumors are also a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in Saint Lucia. Between 1998 and 2002, sixteen (16) percent of all deaths were cancer-related. The gender-related distribution of the incidence of malignant neoplasms is worth noting. Forty-four (44) percent of all deaths due to malignant neoplasms were among women. Additionally, among men, it is cancer of the prostate and the stomach which is most common, while more women are affected by cancer of the cervix and of the breast. Among persons aged sixty-five (65) and over, cancer-related mortality is twice as high among men (except in the case of colon cancer). This trend may be due to the fact that the cancers which affect men most, become common with age and there is generally a higher mortality rate among these e.g. prostate cancer. Additionally, in the case of the cancers that affect women most, cervical and breast cancer, they appear earlier and can be treated and controlled with early detection.

Table 12.6 : Age/Sex Specific Mortality Rates (per 100,000) for Common Malignant Neoplasms, 1996 to 2000

Site	Sex	Rates per 100,000 population				
		<15	15-44	45-64	65+	All Ages
Malignant Neoplasms	Male	0.8	7.9	34	69	111
	Female	0.5	11	30	44	100
Colon & rectosegmoid junction	Male	-	0.3	1.3	2.4	3.9
	Female	-	0.5	1.8	3.7	5.8
Esophagus	Male	-	0.3	1.6	3.1	4.9
	Female	-	0.3	1.3	1.8	3.3
Lip, oral cavity & pharynx	Male	-	-	3.1	1.3	4.5
	Female	-	-	0.5	0.3	0.8
Leukemia	Male	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.5	2.6
	Female	0.3	0.3	0.3	3.9	3.0
Stomach	Male	-	0.8	3.7	7.6	12
	Female	-	0.75	2.0	4.8	7.5
Trachea, bronchus & lung	Male	-	0.5	3.4	4.9	8.9
	Female	-	-	1.8	2.0	3.8
Cervix uteri	Female	-	3.8	6.0	4.2	14
Female breast	Female	-	3.5	4.3	6.5	14
Prostate	Male	-	0.3	4.7	35	40

Source: Report of Chief Medical Officer, Saint Lucia 2001-2002

12.10 Cervical Cancer is gradually becoming one of the major causes of death particularly among young Saint Lucian women. Consequently, cervical cancer screening or the "pap smear" test became one of the most important issues of women's health in the recent decade. The "pap smear" test can be done at hospitals and in Family Planning Clinics at Health Centres around the island. Women are encouraged to take a test at least once a year.

12.11 The success of the cervical screening programme will depend on the functioning of an effective information system which can produce data for epidemiological purposes, and provide a mechanism which will ensure appropriate recall and follow up of tested women. This system should also serve as a device to monitor the quality of smear taking. The success of the programme would also mean a reduction in the death rate from, and the incidence of cervical cancer as early detection would allow for early treatment and control of the disease.

12.12 Efforts to control the incidence of breast cancer are also ongoing. Women who attend Family Planning clinics and Post-Natal clinics are taught how to personally examine their breasts for possible signs of cancer. Mammography screening is also available at the laboratories in the island, but the charges may be beyond the reach of women of low socio-economic status.

12.13 The Saint Lucia Cancer Society plays an integral in early detection of cancers by conducting cervical screening and breast examinations at their clinics which are held by professional physicians. With regards to breast cancer, if there is need for further examination to ascertain the possibility of malignancy, the physician recommends that the client undergo a mammography screening at a laboratory. The Society is also involved in an ongoing drive to educate both men and women on cancer issues, and hold Health Talks on a regular basis in schools. In 1993, the Society, in collaboration with the Bureau of Health and Family Life Educators within the Ministry of Health conducted Cancer workshops island-wide with teachers of Health and Family Life Education and Guidance and Counselling.

12.14 Diabetes is a major disease affecting women in Saint Lucia. From the years 1998 to 2002, diabetes accounted for five hundred and eighteen (518) deaths on the island and among these, sixty-two (62) percent were women. From the conclusions of the report of the Chief Medical Officer for the year 2002 it is evident that there is a dire need for changes in lifestyle activities (diet, exercise, improved foot care and better metabolic control) in order to prevent and control mortality rates associated with diabetes. Also, improved diagnosis and surveillance of Type I and Type II diabetes would be useful.

12.15 The table below highlights external cause of mortality such as accidents and violence. Among such causes of death, the mortality rate is higher among men. Eighty (80) percent of all deaths by accident and violence were among males.

Table 12.7: Mortality by Accidents and Violence among Males and Females, 1998 to 2002							
Item	Sex	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Total
Accidental drowning and submission	Male	12	4	15	5	3	39
	Female	3	-	-	1	1	5
Accidental poisoning by & exposure to noxious substances	Male	2	2	-	-	-	4
	Female	-	1	-	-	-	1
Accidental deaths to breathing	Male	2	-	1	-	1	4
	Female	4	-	-	-	1	5
Accidents caused by firearm discharge	Male	1	-	-	-	-	1
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	0
All other accidents	Male	13	23	8	8	9	61
	Female	5	6	1	2	2	16
Assault (homicide)	Male	12	14	25	25	32	108
	Female	2	2	4	3	6	17
Exposure to electric current	Male	-	1	-	2	-	3
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	0
Exposure to smoke, fire and flame	Male	-	3	1	3	3	10
	Female	1	6	-	3	-	10
Falls	Male	-	-	-	-	-	0
	Female	-	-	-	1	1	2
Intentional self-harm (suicide)	Male	5	7	14	7	8	41
	Female	3	1	4	-	4	12
Land transport accidents	Male	20	13	24	18	22	97
	Female	3	2	7	4	11	27
Other external causes	Male	-	-	2	-	-	2
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	0
Other transport accidents	Male	-	-	-	1	-	1
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	0
All Causes	Male	67	67	90	69	78	371
	Female	21	18	16	14	26	95
Total		88	85	106	83	104	466

12.16 Gender-based violence has been recognized internationally as a public health issue and as a violation of human rights. The associated stress, chronic ill health and physical disabilities are real issues and justify the high priority given to it by the Government of Saint Lucia, in particular by the Division of Gender Relations. A comprehensive review of the situation of gender-based violence has been presented in Article 5 which addresses continued practices and attitudes that are based on the assumption of the inferiority of women.

HIV/AIDS

12.17 A very critical threat to the health and general well-being of women in Saint Lucia is the problem of HIV/AIDS. The first case of AIDS was diagnosed in Saint Lucia in 1985. By the end of 2002, there were 203 reported cases, forty-one percent of which were women. About ninety-one (1) percent of all the reported cases had died by the end of the reporting period. Heterosexual contact accounts for thirty-eight (38) percent of all reported cases. Three (3) percent of all reported HIV cases occurred through vertical transmission (mother-to-child). Persons within the age group 15 to 40 years are those most affected and the incidence of HIV/AIDS among women has increased. Women of child-bearing age (15-44) represented seventy-four (74) percent of all reported cases among women, with women aged 25 to 29 being the most affected group (twenty percent).

12.18 In December 1993, there were 99 reported cases of HIV infected persons, of these 55 were men and 44 women. Also in 1993, thirty (30) percent of newly infected persons were women, while fifty (50) percent of the new cases of AIDS registered were women. According to the National HIV/AIDS register, 254 HIV cases were reported from 1985 to 1999; of that number, one hundred and thirty-six (136) persons developed AIDS. Women make up forty-four (44) percent of all reported cases of HIV infections and forty-two (42) percent of AIDS cases.

Table 12.8: HIV/AIDS and Deaths by Sex, 1985 to 2002

Status	Female			Male			Unknown		Total
	Adult	Child	Unknown	Adult	Child	Unknown	Adult	Child	
AIDS	72	9	-	111	8	2	1	-	203
HIV	72	7	3	51	4	2	18	7	164
Unknown	7	-	-	4	-	2	-	-	13
Total	151	16	3	166	12	6	19	7	380
Deaths	65	8	-	103	7	1	1	-	185

Source: Report of Chief Medical Officer, Saint Lucia 2001-2002

12.19 Over time, more females have become affected. There is especially a greater spread of the virus among young females; the spread is 2.2 times higher in the 15 to 24 age group. The incidence rates of HIV/AIDS have been on the rise. From 1985 to 1989 the incidence rate was 3.7 per 100, 000 of the population; it was 6.9 in 1990 to 1994 and 8.6 from 1995 to 1999. The first paediatric case was recorded in 1990; since then more than thirty cases have been reported and just under twenty have died. The table below which shows the number and proportion of deaths as a result of HIV/AIDS among men and women, demonstrates that by the last four years (1996 to 1999) there was a more even distribution in HIV/AIDS related deaths among men and women.

Table 12.9: Deaths due to HIV/AIDS, 1988 to 1999				
Year	Females	Males	% Sex Distribution	
	No.	No.	Females	Males
1988	3	2	60	40
1989	1	9	10	90
1990	3	1	75	25
1991	2	3	40	60
1992	3	4	43	57
1993	5	4	56	44
1994	6	10	38	63
1995	4	7	36	64
1996	5	6	45	55
1997	5	6	45	55
1998	4	3	57	43
1999	9	10	47	53
Source: Saint Lucia Government Statistics Department				

12.20 There has been an ongoing educational campaign to inform Saint Lucians about HIV and AIDS, and how to take preventive measures. The Department of Health has published leaflets, flyers and posters and these can be found in Health Centres and Hospitals island-wide. HIV/AIDS is also a topic included in the Health and Family Life Education Curriculum in Primary and Secondary Schools. A 24-hour AIDS Hotline has also been established.

12.21 Public education on HIV/AIDS has become intensified in recent times. The Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations has conducted several workshops and coordinated programmes on Health and Sexuality in communities throughout the country. Recognizing the unique and increasing risks faced by women and girls, the Division of Gender Relations has produced a booklet on Women and Sexually Transmitted Diseases, which has been widely disseminated throughout the island.

12.22 The National STD, HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Programme was established in 1987. The Government-appointed AIDS Action Committees, and the Saint Lucia Association for the Prevention of AIDS, which was established in 1999, also form part of the national effort to address the problem of HIV/AIDS. Some of the major achievements of the STD/HIV/AIDS Programme include:

- Maintenance of safety and integrity of the national blood transmission service
- Introduction of the Mother to Child Transmission Prevention Programme
- Continued support for HIV positive individuals and their families through the HIV Positive Support Account and Non-Government Organizations
- Continuous Public Education on HIV/AIDS
- Annual observation of World AIDS Day

12.23 Consideration has also been given to the role of legislation in the fight against AIDS and discrimination against persons living with HIV/AIDS. One of the recommendations made as part of the review of the Saint Lucia Criminal Code in 1999, relates to making illegal the practice an HIV positive person who knowingly engages in any sexual act with another person without informing that person of his/her status.

Other Sexually Transmitted Infections

12.24 In its efforts to improve the health services in the country, the Ministry of Health established Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinics and Health Centres island-wide. All clinics are staffed with professionally trained personnel who deal specifically with STI/HIV cases. They provide services such as STI/HIV tests to all Saint Lucians. Statistics from the Ministry of Health indicate that the number of STI cases seen at the Health Clinics is on the increase, and the majority of clients who attend these STI clinics are women.

12.25 In 1993, the data revealed that 70 percent of persons attending STI clinics were female (Annual Report 1993 HIV/STI Prevention and Control Programme). In 1994, the number of clients seen at these clinics was 3,248. About 48 percent of these clients were diagnosed with an STI. A total of 1161 cases of STIs were reported from the clinics for 2001 and 790 in 2002.

Table 12.9 : Reported Cases of STIs and Rate per 100, 000 population, 2002						
Disease	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
Candida	1	0.1	183	23	184	11.6
Gardnerella	3	0.4	396	49	399	25.1
Trichomonas	-	0.5	50	6.2	50	3.1
Syphilis	20	6.4	58	7.1	78	3.9
Gonorrhoea	20	6.4	11	1.4	31	1.9
Genital Warts	4	0.5	4	0.5	8	0.5
Non-gonococcal urethritis	21	2.7	12	1.5	33	2.1
Herpes	6	0.8	-	-	6	0.4
Scabies/Phythyriase	-	-	1	0.1	1	0.1
HTLV-1	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Report of Chief Medical Officer, Saint Lucia 2001-2002

12.26 In 1995, five thousand and seventy-one (5,071) clients were seen at STI clinics, 1,823 more than was seen in 1994. From those, 52 percent were diagnosed with an STI. According to statistics from the Ministry of Health, about 44 percent of all STIs diagnosed in 1995 were made up of Gardnerella, Moniliasis, Trichomonas and Syphilis. HIV/AIDS continues to be the deadliest of all STIs and make up about .03 percent of diagnoses in 1995 (Springer, 1996). The other common types of STIs in Saint Lucia are Chlamydia, Scabies, Public Lice, Genital Warts, Herpes and Gonorrhoea.

12.27 The majority of the clients seen from 1993 to 1995 were women within the 15-44 age group. Fifty percent of all new cases diagnosed in 1994 and 1995 were less than 30 years old (the age group 15-29). Females accounted for ninety-two (92) percent of reported cases in 2001 and ninety (90) percent in 2002. The higher proportion of women clients does not necessarily suggest that more women are affected by STDs than men. It is not surprising that more women make up the majority of new clients, because more women than men attend these clinics. Most male contacts of these women do not seek treatment at these clinics and continue to infect others. This may suggest a greater resistance by men to deal proactively and expeditiously to their health problems.

Psychosis

12.28 The Golden Hope Hospital is the only mental institution in Saint Lucia. At Golden Hope, the patients are treated for two types of mental diseases - Neuroses and Psychosis. Patients who suffer from Neuroses are usually treated and sent home. In contrast, patients with psychosis are usually admitted because they are frequently schizophrenic or suffer from manic depression.

12.29 Psychosis is common in both men and women, but a larger proportion of the patients are women. In 1985 and 1993, 75 percent (120) and 68 percent (130), respectively, of the patients admitted were women (*Fletcher-Paul, 1994*). In more recent times, there have been a higher proportion of male patients/clients due perhaps to the increased incidence of drug-related mental disorders.

Year	First Admissions		Re-Admissions	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
2000	55	21	600	132
2001	82	25	757	150
2002	62	25	824	121

Source: Ministry of Health

12.30 Alcohol is the most commonly used drug in Saint Lucia. Generally, women drink less than men and seem to report fewer alcohol related problems than men. Tobacco is also commonly used in Saint Lucia, but men smoke more than women. Both alcohol and tobacco are legal substances.

12.31 Illegal drugs such as marijuana, crack and cocaine are being used by an increased number of young people. Persons severely affected from drug abuse are treated at Turning Point. This institution was established in 1989 to treat persons suffering from substance abuse. Turning Point has 22 beds and patients are usually admitted for a minimum period of 28 days. No more than four women are admitted at any one time.

Efforts at improving access to quality health care services

12.32 Since the Beijing Conference in 1995 the Government of Saint Lucia has placed emphasis on increasing access to health care, improving reproductive health services and mental health. Major refurbishment and reorganization has take place at the main public hospital, in an effort to improve the quality of care provided by the institution. The removal of user fees for certain health care services and the establishment of a Polyclinic in a highly populated northern section of the country, have been part of the action taken to increase access to health care. These activities are particularly beneficial to women as the major users of health services.

12.33 The Government of Saint Lucia has embarked upon a Health Sector Reform initiative which is currently ongoing. An important principle in the reform initiative is Equity. Included in the proposal is the recommendation of the use of a gender analysis framework for policy/programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in the health sector. This approach is expected to ensure gender equity in measures adopted to address the health needs of women and men in Saint Lucia.

12.34 Decentralization of health services is also a major strategy in the Health Reform Initiative.

Some of the specific objectives of the National Health Policy are stated below:

- Improve the health care system utilizing the primary health care/preventive approach while simultaneously increasing the availability and quality of secondary and tertiary services.
- Review and strengthen regulatory functions within health sector in order to improve the nature and standards of medical health practice, as well as the management of health resources.
- Apply the principles of human rights to HIV/AIDS cases, and to collaborate with other governments/organizations in coordinated efforts consistent with the strategies of World Health Organization (WHO), and to work towards the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS through the mobilization of resources.
- Give priority to the provision of health services to specific vulnerable and at-risk groups like the poor, expectant and nursing mothers, the elderly, chronically ill and disabled persons, and people infected with communicable diseases.

Special health services and programmes for women

12.35 The issue of reproductive health is being addressed by both government and non-government organizations (NGOs). Particular emphasis has been placed on breast and cervical cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, adolescent health and sexuality, Family Life Education and counselling, family planning and contraceptive usage. All of these services are provided under the Maternal and Child Health Programme of the Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations. The programme is also augmented by the supportive activities of other NGOs such as the Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association (SLPPA), and the Saint Lucia Cancer Society.

12.36 A programme of the SLPPA has resulted in a number of community facilitators trained in reproductive health and family life issues. The agency is also providing sterilization at a more affordable cost. This initiative is particularly targeted at poor or low income women who, because of the economic deprivation are unable to afford family planning services and products. An added feature of the SLPPA's programme is the introduction of a male clinic where issues of male responsibility in family planning and family life are being promoted. Although there has been some male resistance to the idea, the attendance continues to be encouraging. This is an initiative which will be pursued aggressively because of the need to improve male responsibility and agency in parenting and family life.

12.37 The success of these programmes has been hampered by the social, cultural and spiritual beliefs and practices of persons in Saint Lucia. For much of its history, Saint Lucia has been a predominantly Catholic nation, and today it continues to be predominantly Christian. The impact of this religious context has been the non-support of family planning methods, particularly the use of contraceptives, by various religious institutions, and resistance to or clandestine acceptance of family planning methods by women and other individuals.

12.38 The Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association (SLPPA) has as its stated mission, "to reduce the incidence of unwanted pregnancies, particularly among adolescents, through a strengthened Family Life Education programme and quality Reproductive Health Care services, complementing the national effort". The following table represents the frequency in the variety of services provided by the SLPPA for the last three years of the reporting period.

Table 12.11 :Frequency of Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association's Family Planning Clinic Services by Type, 2000 to 2002			
Service Category	2000	2001	2002
Sexual and Reproductive Health Services			
Pap Smears	614	335	249
Pregnancy Tests	516	730	670
Gynaecological examinations	1,904	1,810	1,478
Breast examinations	190	354	265
Prostate examinations	-	6	18
Counseling			
Infertility counseling	24	111	114
STD/HIV/AIDS counseling	550	321	374
Counseling on sexuality issues	13,312	15,481	15,014
Counseling on pap smear results	640	18	200
Youth counseling	1,719	1,903	2,122
Counseling to new acceptors	2,733	3,702	3,534
General/marriage counseling	143	6,079	6,960
Source: Report of Chief Medical Officer, Saint Lucia 2001-2002			

12.39 Reduction in the level of teenage/adolescent pregnancy has been a goal of the Government. The statistics in 1998 reveal that there was a reduction in fertility rate among teenagers to sixteen (16) percent following a rate of twenty-one (21) percent in 1995. It must also be noted that the total fertility rate has also decreased from 2.9 percent in 1995 to 2.5 percent in 1998. The reduction in the birth rate is attributed to the aggressive preventive programme being implemented, including special sessions for schools and use of the media to place the issue on the public's agenda. The programme has also involved training of peer counselors, activities for parents, teenagers and males in particular.

12.40 Another area of women's health which has received serious attention is the cancer of the breast and cervix. The number of deaths due to cervical cancer decreased from thirty-five (35) percent in 1995 to seventeen (17) percent in 1998. This has been seen as the result of screening and educational programmes as well as the improvement of the data collection system. Every effort is being made to ensure that similar or superior strides are made in the area of breast cancer.

12.41 Pre-Natal and Post-Natal services are provided under the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) programme of the Ministry of Health. These services are available to all Saint Lucian women at child health clinics conducted at Health Centres and district hospitals islandwide. However, the level of care prior to and during confinement varies according to socio-geographical area, since treatment may be administered by professional physicians or obstetricians or, professionally trained midwives or, in villages and rural communities, by district nurses or midwives with no formal training.

12.42 During these Post-Natal clinics children of up to five years are immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases. The main target group for vaccination against Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) diseases is that of children under one year. They are vaccinated against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tuberculosis, measles, pertussis, rubella, tetanus and mumps. With regards to rubella, it must be noted that adolescent girls and female adults are immunized against it at schools, hospital post delivery and Post-Natal clinics.

12.43 The data on child health care generated from the Annual Health Reports (1985, 1990, 1991) and the National Survey (1996) indicated a gradual improvement in immunization coverage rates in the review period. Prior to 1985, the immunization coverage rates were between 75 percent and 85 percent. The 1985 Annual Health Report recorded 43 percent coverage of the target group, and indicated that this significant drop was due to "*an acute shortage of vaccines.*" The 1990 and 1991 Reports recorded 80 percent and 91 percent coverage in those respective years. The Maternal and Child Health Unit of the Ministry of Health reported a coverage of 95 percent for BCG, 97 percent for polio and DPT for children under one year in 1993. Children one year and over recorded a coverage of 9.4 percent in MR/MMR. The data on child immunization were not disaggregated by sex.

12.44 To improve the immunization coverage thereby reducing vaccine-preventable diseases, children must be fully immunized before they can be admitted into the Primary School system. Upon registration, all children must submit a Health Passport showing complete coverage against the Expanded Programme of Immunization diseases.

In the National Report for Women Fletcher-Paul (1994) noted that

... 42% of all pregnant women were immunized against tetanus (TT2 or Booster) in 1990 and 34% in 1991. These expectant mothers are usually given tetanus toxoid after the first trimester of pregnancy.

12.45 Childbirth services are provided in all hospitals and district health centres, but a few women have been delivered at home by qualified midwives. However, in a few circumstances, particular in the rural areas, an insignificant number of deliveries have been performed by midwives with no formal training. Deliveries performed at hospitals by obstetricians and/or nurse midwives have to be paid for, but the cost varies according to the room and services given. At the health centres and even "at home" deliveries a fee is charged for the service.

12.46 Public Health provision for childbirth services is still inadequate. As regards hospital infrastructure, for example, at the main hospital located in the capital and to a lesser extent the Hospital located in the Vieux Fort, results of interviews indicate that there are more women near confinement being admitted than there are beds in the maternity wards. This situation was most prevalent in the earlier years of the reporting period, but persists on a smaller extent. As a consequence, some mothers are discharged within a few hours of giving birth.

12.47 Up to the end of the reporting period (2002) abortion, whether as a means of family planning or otherwise, was illegal in Saint Lucia. Except for one year (1991) in which the Ministry of Health's statistics recorded one case of abortion, no other official abortion statistics exist. The issue of the legalization of abortion has received significant attention and discussion from various pressure groups. In the interim, it is known that backstreet/illegal abortions do take place; a situation which puts the women concerned at risk, and with little legal recourse.

12.48 Family Planning Services are offered at most post-natal clinics in Health Centres island-wide. The Maternal and Child Care Unit of the Ministry of Health, Information and Broadcasting is responsible for the administration of these services. Nevertheless, these family planning services seem to be better provided by the Planned Parenthood Association (SLPPA). The SLPPA is a nonprofit, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), which is under the administration of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). It receives most of its funding from the IPPF, and the rest from client fees which are lower than those of general practitioners. In addition to providing contraceptives and conception information, the SLPPA provides other sexuality related services, counselling, and family life education to its 26,000 registered women between the ages of 18 and 44 years. It has a team of educators who are trained to teach about healthy and positive sexuality to teachers and students in schools.

12.49 In spite of the many achievements of the Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association (SLPPA) and the Maternal and Child Care Unit, there are many institutional constraints and weaknesses in the social infrastructure which hinder the attainment of maximum efficiency and effectiveness of the family planning services.

12.50 Some of the most pressing constraints identified in the 1996 Poverty Assessment Report are *"the lack of a database on target groups, the prevailing attitudes, and a lack of capacity to monitor change"*. The unwillingness among the youth and their negative attitude toward accepting and using family planning services, result in a high population growth rate which places a strain on the limited social infra structural services available. Besides, the problem is further compounded due to a lack of communication between parents and their sexually active daughters with respect to contraceptive use. In addition, there is evidently a lack of coordination and integration between the SLPPA and the Maternal and Child Care Unit in effecting Family Planning Services. At present both the Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association and the Ministry of Health supply the contraceptives to the Health Centres for distribution among women of childbearing age. The table which follows indicates the number of contraceptives distributed by the Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association by type of method for the years 1998 to 2002.

Method	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Oral	36,457	32,751	32,948	30,315	24,307
Injectable	3,383	2,616	4,982	2,564	2,566
Condom	11,515	84,079	19,928	15,595	15,668
Vaginal tablets	794	39	-	600	756
IUD	254	286	385	377	223
Source: Report of Chief Medical Officer, Saint Lucia 2001-2002					

12.51 Women in Saint Lucia are presented with a variety of forms of contraception. The more commonly used methods are the oral contraceptive pill; Long-acting Injectable Contraceptives; Intra-Uterine Conceptive Devices (IUCDs); female barrier methods such as spermicide, diaphragms and sponges; condoms; natural methods and sterilization, involving tubal ligation. The choice of a particular method depends largely on the woman's socio-economic background, her religious beliefs, her marital status and in some cases, the preference of her mate. The most commonly used form of contraception practiced by Saint Lucian women are the oral contraceptive pills. Tubal ligation is a method favoured particularly by married women and single mothers following the delivery of their desired number of children. Results of interviews reveal that many women still employ the traditional method of "withdrawal" during intercourse.

12.52 The result of interviews conducted with Family Life Educators revealed that the proportions of women from urban and rural communities who do not use contraceptives differ significantly. More urban women use contraceptives. Needless to say, the level of educational attainment is also a contributing factor and has a major effect on use.

12.53 A large number of Saint Lucian women, particularly those in the lowest quintile, are indifferent in their approach to sexuality and family planning. For most of these women, Primary Education was their highest level of educational attainment (Poverty Assessment Report, 1996).

Consequently, family planning services, although available in most communities island-wide, are under-utilised. The 1996 Poverty Assessment Survey noted that

... the indifferent use by poor households of available family planning services resulted in larger households in the lowest quintile. Additional demands were placed on the already limited resources available, therefore maintaining and generating conditions of poverty.

12.54 In this regard, a number of the educational and sensitisation campaigns facilitated by relevant NGOs and agencies interested in issues of family planning, tend to target women in lower income households. The relative “indifference” of lower income households to family planning services must be understood in the context of the economic decisions that the families face which result in a greater proportion of their limited income being expended on food items and the costs attached to some of the family planning options.

Health Promotion through Information and Education Campaigns

12.55 Health prevention and promotion activities are being promoted by both Government and non-governmental organizations. The Bureau of Health and the Division of Gender Relations continue to promote health issues for women using various media. Posters, brochures, T-shirts with messages on different health issues also form part of the preventive programme. The use of Popular Theatre presentations by the Division of Gender Relations in community and school meetings has proven to be a very useful strategy in public education. A regular radio programme “Facing Reality” hosted by the Health Information Unit of the Ministry of Health is frequently used to promote women’s health issues.

12.56 The importance of data and information to the development of policies and programmes for improved health status cannot be underestimated. The Ministry of Health has taken steps to strengthen its Statistics and Epidemiology Unit to improve the quality of information generated. Further, the appointment of a Research Officer in the Division of Gender Relations in 1997 has greatly improved the quality and quantity of gender-related information generated. In addition, the as part of the Health Reform Initiative, the development of the Ministry’s Management Information System will allow for an increased level of gender sensitivity.

Article 13: Economic and Social Life

State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights in particular:

- (a) The right to family benefits*
- (b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit*
- (c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life*

Social Life and Family benefits

13.1 The Division of Social Services within the Ministry of Community Development is the agency through which the government gives financial assistance to needy persons and families. Provision for such assistance is made in the "**Public Assistance**" vote in the annual estimates of expenditure.

13.2 Financial assistance (after assessing applications) may be given to persons who qualify under the **Public Assistance Act**. These include:

- the "*lone person*," that is, one who lives alone and is usually an adult male or female;
- the "*couple*, usually referred to as two persons, a man and a woman who are united by marriage or by common-law union";
- "*parents and children*"; this group does not necessarily refer to people who are advanced in years but also those who are middle aged and the young.
- a "*specified person in a home*" such as an orphan, a foster child, a handicapped or ailing member of the home, an outpatient of the mental hospital or the Tuberculosis Sanatorium or an aged parent or relative.

Social assistance policies are structured on the basis of persons, who, by reason of old age, illness, disease, bodily infirmity or mental incapacity and infancy are unable to maintain themselves. There is no gender discrimination.

13.3 Government has facilitated increases in social security benefits which provides some financial assistance to needy persons. Monthly welfare assistance to a single person has increased from EC\$40.00 to EC\$60.00, and the amount for a three person household has increased from EC\$120.00 to EC\$150.00. Although these increases are still considered inadequate, women as the principle caregivers have benefited. In 1999, Maternity Benefit Grant disbursed through the National Insurance Scheme increased from EC\$450.00 to EC\$600.00.

13.4 In 1999, the Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL) commissioned a Study on the Care of the Elderly to focus attention on aging issues, and to develop policies and guidelines for older persons. The overall aim of the study was to help determine the most appropriate policies and practical measures that would enhance the status and quality of life of older persons in the country. Assistance to older persons includes Home Repair and Rehabilitation Programme directed at assisting elderly needy persons. The Poverty Reduction (PRF) is also involved in providing direct assistance to the elderly and women in particular, through its Housing Assistance programme. Women have benefited from these activities as in 1999, they accounted for over fifty-eight (58) percent of the elderly population over age 65.

13.5 Another initiative has had a positive impact on the disadvantaged in the society is the Programme for the Regularization of Unplanned Development (PROUD). This programme was designed to give persons or families who have been public squatters, the opportunity to own the property that they live on. Most beneficiaries of this programme have been women with children.

Economic Life: Loans, Mortgages and Credit

13.6 Generally women in St. Lucia have equal access to loans, mortgages and credit facilities. In order to obtain a mortgage for land and/or house, a married couple living together must both sign the mortgage document. However, if the couple signed a separate property contract before the marriage, then this must be submitted to the Loans Officer for verification. Upon verification, the married woman or married man can obtain the mortgage solely. Alternatively, a woman living in a common-law union does not necessarily need her partner to act as a guarantor in order to obtain credit. The same procedure applies for the man. In other words, both the man and the woman are entitled to apply separately for a home mortgage or loan.

13.7 The National Housing Policy of St. Lucia which came into effect in 1992, demonstrates the Government's commitment to providing affordable housing to all St. Lucians. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, a statutory body.

13.8 In December 1999 the James Belgrave Micro-Enterprise Development Fund Inc.(BELfund) was registered under the Companies Act of St. Lucia. The Fund was established to provide financial credit, training and technical assistance in the establishment of small businesses, to individuals, families and groups. The services of the BELfund, which are particularly targeted at the unemployed and less privileged, have benefited rural and urban communities alike. From inception to 2002, the BELfund has issued loans to a total of 180 micro-entrepreneurs, 58% of whom are women.

13.9 The St. Lucia Mortgage and Finance Company Limited, a quasi-state agency involved in the financing of housing, operates two loan schemes for persons of low income who would like to build a house at a value of EC\$80, 000 to EC\$100.000. It is encouraging to note from interview reports, that more women (particularly single women) took advantage of these loan schemes during the period under review than men.

Recreation, Sports and Culture

13.10 The Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports has been incorporating cultural heritage and sporting activities within school programmes to help develop the mental and physical health of young persons. Celebration of traditional Flower Festivals and other aspects of the folklore have been integrated into the academic year, and these activities have involved children of both sexes. Sports Councils and Youth and Sports Officers are in place in different regions around the island, to implement the programmes outlined by the Ministry. National Sports Associations were also established to help promote each sport on a national level.

13.11 The Folk Research Centre also plays a pivotal role in the production of educational and audiovisual materials on the way of life of Saint Lucian people. The Centre presents a cultural calendar annually. In 1992, themes relating to the people and five central areas in their culture were presented in the form of a "**Cultural Education Resource Kit.**" These areas were Religion, Language, Oral Literature, Work and Social Events. Teachers and educators of both sexes from communities island-wide, participated in the conceptualisation, planning, research, writing and editing

of resource materials. Other cultural groups (e.g., The Helenites Folk Group, Hewannorra Voices) headed by women, also helped to promote the Saint Lucian culture through dance and music.

13.12 With the establishment of the Cultural Development Foundation, which now falls under the purview of the Ministry of Social Transformation, there is a more centralized, at the same time, local coordination of cultural activities and policies in Saint Lucia. The role of women has been promoted and the achievements of female cultural icons and activities have not gone without due honour and recognition.

13.13 With the relative dormancy of the local government structures, there was a noticeable vacuum in community organizational structures. As such a number of Mothers and Fathers Groups began to emerge, first, naturally to deal with immediate community problems, and subsequently in a manner of replicating the success stories of other communities. The Ministry of Social Transformation, formerly the Ministry of Community Development Culture, Local Government and Cooperatives has encouraged and embraced this growth as bottom up approach to solving community problems such as the need for bus shelters, and proper roads. The Mothers and Fathers Groups were also concerned at first with honouring outstanding mothers. There are more than 40 active Mothers and Fathers Groups in the island.

Article 14: Rural Women and Development

1. *State Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of this Convention to women in rural areas.*
2. *State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:*
 - (a) *To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;*
 - (b) *To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;*
 - (c) *To benefit directly from social security programmes;*
 - (d) *To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;*
 - (e) *To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self employment;*
 - (f) *To participate in all community activities;*
 - (g) *To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes;*
 - (h) *To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.*

General Background

14.1 For much of the reporting period, more than fifty (50) percent of Saint Lucia's population lived in the rural areas. Of the total female population rural women constitute a significant proportion. Traditionally, St. Lucian rural women have not been well organised. There has been a need for women's organizations and community-based organisations to help cement social bonds, to mobilise women into influencing the direction of rural development and economic activities, and to function as lobby groups for rural women within governmental organisations. In recent times, however, there has been the emergence of a few community-based groups such as the Mothers and Fathers Groups, sports clubs, parents groups, community development organizations, women's league and the establishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, now termed the Division of Gender Relations. These have inspired greater involvement of women at the community level, in planning and directing their communities' development. However the limited networking among these groups and limited membership and community support have restricted their effective mobilization of women.

14.2 The development of the rural communities has featured in several budget addresses. The realisation is, Saint. Lucia's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, and as such, efforts have been made during the reporting period to provide access to basic infrastructural services and utilities in these communities. These services include schools, roads, electricity, water and enterprise. The establishment of such infrastructure was necessary to combat the problem of geographical isolation and rural poverty and to facilitate the enhancement of economic activities. The Poverty Assessment Report of 1995 has established that there is a higher level of poverty in rural communities than in the more urban settings.

Living Conditions

14.3 The Poverty Assessment Survey which was conducted in 1995 revealed that poverty was more pronounced in rural communities than in urban areas. According to the Survey Report (1996) *"In the lowest expenditure quintile, 75.9 percent lived in rural areas, as compared to a population average of 64.3 percent."* It further stated that the unemployment rate for the lowest quintile was 26.0 percent, of these 27 percent were females and 24 percent males. Also, the highest level of self-perceived poverty was found in the remote and isolated rural communities. The poverty gap for the rural poor is 9.9 percent compared with 6.1 percent for the urban poor.

14.4 Many women living in the rural areas are disadvantaged, a situation which was particularly evident during the first decade of the reporting period. Their living conditions (particularly those who live in isolated areas) are very deplorable. Many live in poor sanitary and substandard dwellings in the absence of the key determinants of proper living standards. They lack the basic physical infrastructural services of proper roads, communication systems, pipe-borne water and electricity. The basic social services such as education, health/sanitation (foremost are garbage and waste disposal and toilet facilities), sports and recreational facilities are either unavailable or inaccessible. The lack of these facilities and services has made it impossible for rural women to appropriately respond to, or take advantage of the opportunities which may become available. Such limitations also hinder the possibilities for non-agricultural activities in certain rural communities.

14.5 There are, however, many women who have overcome their disadvantageous or economically deprived status, worked within or away from their homes and were able to live and maintain houses of a high standard. It must be noted that State-owned rental housing is not available in the rural areas, although some of rural communities have been identified as having serious housing needs.

14.6 A large number of households headed by women are poverty stricken. The Poverty Assessment Survey (1995) confirmed that and also revealed that the problem with the rural poor can be related "to landlessness or the size and productivity of farms." The survey also identified rural poverty "in ecologically sensitive areas," and noted that agricultural production for economic survival was often at the expense of sustaining proper management of the environment. Quite evident is the extensive erosion which takes place particularly during the wet season. This is a consequence of the indiscriminate cultivation of the hillsides.

Participation in Development Planning and Opportunities for Poverty Reduction

14.7 It is important that in planning the development of a country its people, irrespective of geographical location, socio-economic status and gender, need to have access to, and be able to participate at all levels of the decision-making process. To achieve this objective, certain structures or mechanisms have to be put in place. But for most of the period under review, people from the rural areas have been omitted from the participation process.

14.8 In St. Lucia, rural women are under-represented in organisations at both the community and national levels responsible for development planning. For example, women are under-represented in rural local government and on Statutory Boards, particularly those overseeing the marketing of Saint Lucia's primary produce.

14.9 Where women are present at the deliberation and decision making levels, their presence does not necessarily imply total participation or equality relative to their male counterparts in the group. In the Report on the Status of Women in St. Lucia Fletcher-Paul (1994: p. 42) stated that studies here have indicated

... that although the national economy is premised on the rural women's continued support through their contribution to their families, communities and, of course agricultural production they are frequently marginalised from the benefits of development.

Fletcher-Paul is of the view that the gender dimension is extremely important in discussion relating to issues of rural development.

14.10 Notwithstanding these observations, in recent years, the establishment of various projects have assured an increased the role of rural women in development planning and improved their quality of life and standards of living. These projects and programmes have directly and in some cases exclusively benefited rural communities including women. These include the Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU), the Saint Lucia Rural Development Project (SLREP), the James Belgrave

Micro Enterprise Development Fund Inc. (BelfUND), the Saint Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme (SLHTP), the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) and the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF).

14.11 The Saint Lucia Rural Development Project (SLREP) is estimated to cost US\$4.75 million or EC\$12.7 million over a six-year period. The project is co-financed by the Government of St. Lucia (GOSL) thirty-three (33) percent; and from Loan funds from the Caribbean Development (CDB) twenty (20) percent and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IAFD) forty-six (46). The beneficiaries are to contribute one (1) percent of the cost of the project.

14.12 The rationale of the project involved an attempt to address the constraints faced by resource-poor rural households in Saint Lucia. The direct beneficiaries of the project are poor households in the southwest and southeast of Saint Lucia. An estimate of 6,858 families (44 percent women headed) from communities in the Laborie, Choiseul, Soufriere, Canaries, Vieux Fort and Micoud areas have been targeted by the project. The Project activities include:-

- Farm families on marginal lands not exceeding 5 acres. At least 50% of the income of these families should be derived from agriculture or related activities;
- Landless families who rear livestock;
- Rural women-headed households and/or women farmers;
- Unemployed /underemployed youth;
- Rural-households whose annual per capita income falls below EC\$3,000
- Small-scale fisher folk who are either full time in fishing or have at least two years fishing experience; persons who do not already own boats.

14.13 The Saint Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme (SLHTP) is a community based initiative of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of Saint Lucia, funded by the European Union, and aimed at making Saint Lucia the most diversified and sustainable tourism destination in the Caribbean. The SLHTP promotes the sustainable use of natural and cultural sites, attractions and activities in host communities to enhance the tourism product through the provision of goods and services to visitors. This project has benefited numerous rural communities and families by integrating them into the tourist industry and providing direct economic benefit them.

14.14 The Rural Economic Diversification Incentives Project (REDIP) which began in 1998 is an agricultural and business development project which seeks to facilitate Agricultural Diversification through investment in the Agricultural Sector. REDIP aims at addressing the problem of unavailability of capital and the shortage entrepreneurial skills in the rural sector. The project is co-funded by the European Union (Stabex Funds) and the Government of St. Lucia. Its main purpose is to facilitate increased investment in the rural sector. Project Beneficiaries are identified as:

- (a) Skilled unemployed youth
- (b) Female heads of household (rural)
- (c) Farmers who are being marginalized as a result of changes occurring in the banana industry.
- (d) Banana farmers presently producing on land considered unsuitable for other forms of agriculture.
- (e) Farmers and fishermen existing at the poverty line, estimated at between \$156.40 and \$468.00 per month.

- (f) Farmers and Fishermen organizations.
 (g) Small/micro enterprises which assist in expanding the market outlets for agricultural produce or which employ rural labour.
 (h) Small/micro enterprises in the rural sector.
 (i) Farmers who are desirous of diversifying around bananas.

14.15 The Small Enterprise Development Project (SEDP) is a multifaceted economic development project designed to provide a comprehensive community based support package to stimulate and facilitate small enterprise creation and development. SEDP is estimated to cost EC\$4.838 million of which ninety-five (95) percent is funded by The European Union via the STABEX Funds while the remaining five (5) percent will be financed by The Government of St. Lucia. The Beneficiaries of the SEDP are:

- Women heads of households
- Unemployed and under employed Youth and Rural Women
- Graduates of the Skill Training Programme
- Members of households leaving the Banana Industry
- Constituents of the Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU)
- Other persons with the business ideas and motivation but do not have wherewithal to establish a business.

14.16 The Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF), through its grant funding from the European Union and a loan by the World Bank has since its establishment in 1998, utilized a multi-method approach in providing assistance to poor and rural communities, families and individuals. Community based projects such as water systems and access roads have directly benefited rural communities and improved the quality of life of residents. As regards the water projects, in addition to the obvious benefits of water, research into the impact of these interventions has revealed that there is an added benefit to women and children as they are usually left with the task of walking long distances to fetch water for the household. Other community interventions which have directly assisted rural women include the establishment of daycare facilities, school feeding facilities and Information Technology Centers in schools. The activities of the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) also encourage and foster institutional capacity building and strengthening of community-based organizations with a development focus. Women's membership and leadership among these groups is higher than that of men. Finally, through the work of the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF), residents, and women in particular, have been afforded opportunities for training in marketable skills.

14.17 Women working in the Banana Industry who have been adversely affected by the falling banana prices on the world market have benefited significantly from the European Union (EU) funded Social Recovery Programme which began in 1999. The programme aims to prevent the worsening of poverty situation of banana workers by improving their living conditions. It focuses on adult education, housing and sanitation, reproductive health care, recreation and sporting activities, child protection measures, care of the elderly, skills training, land reform and community empowerment. This project is implemented through the activities of various agencies and Government Ministries on the island. The PRF, for example has been involved in this programme, by implementing community-

based projects through the provision of short-term employment for residents of banana communities, that is, banana farmers, farm labourers and their families. One of the initiatives developed in response to the 1995 Poverty Assessment Survey is the creation of Human Resource Development Centres (HRDCs) throughout the island. The survey indicated that poverty is mainly concentrated in rural areas and in communities where there is a lack of organization and an inability to take collective actions to solve problems. The creation of HRDCs is a strategy of the Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Local Government and Cooperatives to provide a broad range of facilities and services such as basic health care, pre-schools, skills training centres (including access to computers) libraries and recreational facilities. The objective of the Human Resource Development Centre Programme “is to help produce communities with a pool of management and vocational skills, which will enable them to play a major role in controlling their own future, thereby decentralizing much of the planning and implementation of development activities to the local level”. Another objective “is to e-establish the role of community development cultural activities in youth development and in building relations between different sectors of society”. The HRDCs are managed by committees made up of persons of the local communities. The programme has provided rural women with the opportunity to better participate in community as well as personal development activities.

Community Organization

14.18 This Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Local Government and Cooperatives, now known as the Ministry of Social Transformation, has also been responsible for the creation of Community Development Committees and Mothers and Fathers Groups throughout the local communities. These processes first started by the late 1970s into the early 1980s and have succeeded in drawing women to the core of community based development activities and revitalizing community life in rural Saint Lucia. Mothers and Fathers Groups have been given financial assistance to construct or extend their meeting halls or community centres, or to implement other infrastructural projects such as footbridges, running pipes and road repairs.

14.19 Rural women and men continue to come together to address the needs of their communities. In 1998, the Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL), through the Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Local Government and Cooperatives developed a project entitled “Community Mobilization for the New Millennium”. This programme which is known as COMFORT 2000, was conceived to build community consciousness among all communities in Saint Lucia, by increasing the level of awareness and the capacity of communities to utilize available resources to meet their needs. The project has provided individuals, including women, the opportunity to participate in decision-making at the community level and to contribute to the enhancement of the community.

14.20 From the earlier years and to date, the NWM and the National Council of Voluntary Women’s Organization (NCVWO) have had numerous activities geared towards integrating rural women into the development process and empowering rural women. One example of this is the training workshop coordinated by the NCVWO and funded by UNESCO. The workshop came out of the recognition of the important role played by Mothers and Fathers’ Groups in the development of communities and the country, and the need to equip leaders of these groups with the requisite skills and knowledge for effective leadership. This workshop trained leaders from about twenty-five communities and groups throughout the island.

Access to Adequate Health Care

14.21 Access to health care in the two main hospitals is more difficult for rural women due to their urban location. Rural women must travel to the capital Castries or the first town of Vieux Fort to seek treatment for serious complaints and ailments. However, there are a total of twenty-five (25) health centres located in almost all of the towns and villages island-wide, and in many rural communities as well. There are also two district hospitals. The Ministry of Health has ensured the availability of primary health care in these communities. These include clinics by medical practitioners and/or nurse practitioners, pre- and post-natal clinics, and family planning. Counselling services and pastoral care are available at the hospitals. Also, available are anti-natal clinics for high risk cases.

14.22 Maternity services in health centres in the rural areas have been scaled down at times, because health centres are not fully equipped to handle complications at birth. Rural women now have to travel to the nearest hospital to give birth to their babies. However, there are still a few at home and health centre deliveries by nurse mid-wives.

14.23 Senior women too form part of the rural population and some attention must be paid to them. Many of them live alone, are bed-ridden and are not able to visit health centres and hospitals when they need medical attention. The Department of Health has made available health care services whereby a number of health aides visit these homes to provide assistance and such services to the elderly. These include checking and monitoring high blood pressure and diabetes, ensuring that medication is taken, arrange for hospitalisation or doctor's visit whenever the need arises.

14.24 A major issue in accessing health services for women is the difficulty in harmonizing women's work and family responsibilities with the need for medical attention, whether preventative or curative. Very often, women would neglect their health because they would have to forfeit a day's pay in order to attend a health clinic. There is need to establish policies to provide paid time off for working women/mothers to attend to their health needs and that of those children, especially when the services required are not available at the community health centres. On the other hand, it may be useful for the Ministry of Health to provide its services and clinics beyond the normal hours of work and even on weekends.

Social Security Programmes

14.25 There is no distinction between rural and non-rural women as far as access to public assistance and social welfare programmes. The same application forms are completed by all, and the methods of assessment to determine who qualifies to participate in the programme are also standard. There may be a need however to ensure that rural women have access to the information regarding social security programmes and services, as they can be disadvantaged by their remote locations.

14.26 Financial assistance (after assessing applications) may be given to persons who qualify under the **Public Assistance Act**. These include:

- the "*lone person*," that is, one who lives alone and is usually an adult male or female;
- the "*couple*, usually referred to as two persons, a man and a woman who are united by marriage or by common-law union";
- "*parents and children*"; this group does not necessarily refer to people who are advanced in years but also those who are middle aged and the young.
- a "*specified person in a home*" such as an orphan, a foster child, a handicapped or ailing member of the home, an outpatient of the mental hospital or the Tuberculosis Sanatorium or an aged parent or relative.

Social assistance policies are structured on the basis of persons, who, by reason of old age, illness, disease, bodily infirmity or mental incapacity and infancy are unable to maintain themselves. There is no discrimination against women in the issuance of Public Assistance. In fact, more women have benefited from the programme.

Training and Education

14.27 The 1980 census revealed that of the 32,459 females 15 years and over censored, 25,222 or 78 percent of them had received no school certificates. By comparison, 28,234 men or 81% in the same category had received no certificates. In 1993, available statistics indicate that out of a total female population of 46,967, 8 percent attained no education (as compared with 5.5 percent men), and 5,173 or 10.8 percent did not complete primary education (men: 5,181 or 12.4%). Of the 49,445 females surveyed in 1994, the number that did not receive education declined to 2,438 or 4.9 percent (men: 2,411 or 5.5 percent) and the number of females who did not complete primary education also declined to 7.8 percent as compared with 11.2 percent of men.

14.28 In 1993, 8469 or 17.7% females completed secondary education, 2,559 or 5.3% completed tertiary education and 445 or .9% completed university education. By comparison, 5,732 men or 13.7% completed secondary education, 2,147 or 5.1% tertiary and 1,264 university. Unfortunately, the above data were not disaggregated by geographical location. However, it is known that a greater proportion of rural females have fewer educational and vocational qualifications than their urban counterparts (male and female), but they are more likely than rural men to have completed secondary and post-secondary education.

14.29 In Saint Lucia rural education facilities, particularly primary schools, are to be found in most communities and are equally available to both male and female. However, there are fewer secondary schools based in the communities and villages. After attaining the compulsory and post-compulsory school levels at age 15 and 18 years respectively, the main obstacles to female participation in continuing education and training have been a lack of such rural educational facilities, travel costs to the nearest location where these facilities are available, a lack of self-motivation and time. Furthermore, a lack of Daycare and Preschool centres within their financial means and geographical location prevent rural females from participating in continuing education and training.

14.30 In an effort to improve and make education more accessible the Ministry of Education has instituted a scheme of zoning for admission and transfer of students. This scheme links the place of

residence with the location of the school of attendance. This procedure has helped in easing the financial burden on rural parents as they no longer have to bear the cost of transporting their children to schools located in other districts.

14.31 One of the most significant improvements is the education system has been the formal establishment of the southern branch of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (SALCC) in 1998. This facility gives rural students in the south of the island the opportunity to obtain tertiary education. Since females continue to be better represented than their male counterparts at all levels, it is the females who have benefited most from this new opportunity. In this regard, there is need to improve the quantity and quality of rural day care services and other programmes to make education more accessible.

14.32 With regard to Adult Education and Literacy programmes which began in 1984, the Ministry of Education has continued its efforts to eradicate illiteracy in Saint Lucia by the year 2000, an educational goal which is consistent with that of UNESCO. Up to 1994, the programme was being conducted in 30 communities. It is important to note that the majority of the learning centres are located in the rural areas. The Adult Education and Literacy Programme has provided many persons in rural communities with a newfound confidence and the ability to better control their lives and livelihoods. The number of learners in the programme did decrease from 1062 in 1995 to 766 in 1999, however the Ministry of Education has since reorganized the programme to improve its academic and technical content. In 1999, as many as sixty-eight (68) percent of learners were women, and women have continued to dominate the programme throughout the years.

Cooperatives

14.33 By the end of the first decade of the reporting period, the cooperative movement was made up of forty (40) societies. These include seventeen (17) credit unions, ten (10) fisheries cooperatives, eight (8) farm cooperatives, three (3) consumer societies and two (2) taxi cooperatives. These societies have reached various levels of development. The most advanced and financially viable societies are the credit unions which include the Saint Lucia Teachers' Union (SLTU) Credit Union established in 1984 and the Laborie Credit Union. Overall, the numbers have increased, and there has been a noticeable growth in the taxi cooperatives, due mainly to the increased importance of tourism to the economy of Saint Lucia.

14.34 Total membership of the Cooperative Movement as at December 1993 was approximately 18,300 with a share capital of approximately EC\$33 million. The value of its assets was approximately EC\$38 million. (Annual Report, Ministry of Cooperatives). The Movement is principally voluntary and the leadership is part-time. In spite of its achievements, the Cooperative Movement needs to be marketed so that its full potential can be realised.

14.35 For most of the period under review, limited effort was made by the authorities to restructure the rural economy. However the rural women, particularly those living on the western coast, have actively pursued cooperative employment ventures such as in the production and sale of handicraft

items to both the local people and to tourists. They have also produced and sold plants and flowers. Unfortunately, there is no available data to help determine the extent to which this has been effective.

14.36 The membership of the Agricultural Association comprises small, medium and large-scale farmers and also small holders. There are no legal restrictions to women's membership in this Association. However, the general membership is male dominated. The Agricultural Association is also a business entity which specialises in the sale of housing and agricultural commodities. Its members benefit tremendously from this enterprise, as they can purchase items at fairly high discount rates.

14.37 Many of the farmers and small holders also belong to savings and loans cooperatives or Credit Unions. Their members also include skilled workers and white-collar employees. These structures are very well established and effectively operational in a number of rural communities. In fact, the two most effective and productive credit unions provide services to and are based in the rural communities of Laborie and Choiseul. These facilities give loans and mortgages to their members at very low interest rates. But generally, the development of cooperative enterprises and in particular agricultural cooperatives was limited in the reporting period.

14.38 Schools are also involved in the Cooperatives programme. What is quite evident is that the majority of these schools are in the rural communities (See Table 14.1). The estimated Primary School enrolment involved with Cooperatives was 11,148; the estimated membership was 4851. Secondary School estimated enrolment was 3814, with an estimated membership of 818. Amount held in fixed deposit or other high interest account was EC\$347,069.00; total savings amounted to EC\$98,767.00.

Table 14.1: Schools Involved in the Cooperative Programme by Urban/Rural Distinction: 1993/94				
TYPE OF SCHOOL	URBAN		RURAL	
	Number of Schools	Number of Schools with Cooperative	Number of Schools	Number of Schools with Cooperative
Primary	15	2	70	37
Secondary	9	2	5	4
Total	24	4	75	41
Source: Statistical Digest, Ministry of Education & Culture				

Role and Functions of Women in Community Activities

14.39 Participation in rural community activities is not strictly along sex stereotyped lines. Women as well as men temporarily or permanently engage in vegetable garden cultivation, livestock-raising

and other forms of agricultural activities on their own premises, or they are in regular employment away from home either in the service or manufacturing industry, agriculture or commerce. It is noteworthy that in the case of poor women, the manufacturing industry has been the most important employment sector. However in recent times, a number of the factories which have employed rural women have suddenly shut down, leaving the women unemployed and with very little if any compensation.

14.40 Women's level of participation in agricultural labour depends largely on the socio-demographic composition of the household, the family's main source of income, the type of crop and technology used. In households where vegetable cultivation or subsistence farming is essentially the main activity, rural women participate in a series of tasks. The tending of farmyard animals such as chickens, pigs, goats, cows, sheep, etc. is generally the responsibility of both women and men.

14.41 Rural women do not limit their contribution to vegetable-cultivation, farming and livestock-raising. They also perform a number of other activities both within and outside the home. Some of the activities in which they were engaged within the home included:

- Domestic work;
- The preparation of food items for sale;
- Selling produce from the vegetable garden or farm;
- Selling flowers and plants;
- Handicrafts;
- Home-processed commodities such as farine and wines;
- Tending farmyard animals such as chickens;
- Needlework.

14.42 The following are some of the activities performed by the women outside the home:

- Teaching;
- Community Nursing;
- Community work;
- Paid and unpaid agricultural labour;
- Factory work;
- Domestic service;
- Selling farm and garden produce;
- Selling handicraft work and home-processed commodities
- Street vending.
- Wholesale and retail activities

It must be noted that the shortage of organisations and local government in some rural communities have resulted in the inability of residents in these areas to mobilise their efforts and take a united stance in addressing some of the many problems which confront them. Where Mothers and Fathers Groups exist, they are restricted to the social development of their members.

Rural Credit and Ownership of Agricultural Land

14.43 Access to credit is one of the major problems facing families in rural communities. The women for the most part do not own much collateral or property which can be used as security to be able to obtain a loan at the bank, or other lending institutions, neither do they have a high enough income to be able to service the loan. Some of the Projects and Programmes highlighted above have succeeded in addressing these issues.

14.44 Generally, rural women seldom own the land on which they live; although the Agricultural Census of 1986 did indicate that of the 11,504 farm holdings women between the ages of 30 and 60 years own 2834 or 25 percent of them. The title deeds are normally in their husbands or common law partner's name. Hence, some of the women have to rely on their spouses in order to access credit.

14.45 Available data on loans disbursed by foreign and locally owned commercial banks in St. Lucia are not disaggregated by sex. Also, statistics on the allocation of loans disbursed between the rural and urban areas are not available. Nevertheless, data could be obtained from both the Saint Lucia Development Bank (SLDB) and the National Research and Development Foundation (NRDF).

14.46 Although both men and women have equal access to credit, yet the formal credit to women particularly rural women involved in agriculture and farming seems grossly inadequate. During the period under review, the SLDB approved more housing and student loans for women than men, but substantially less agricultural loans were approved for women than men over the same reporting period. The majority of the agricultural loans (also housing loans) approved were for joint applicants.

14.47 Data available from the NRDF revealed that for the period 1984 to 1992, the Foundation disbursed 722 loans, 209 or 29% of which were obtained by women. The proportion of loans disbursed to women during the period 1990 to 1993 increased from twenty-five (25) percent in 1990 to forty-one (41) percent in 1991. After 1991, the percentage of loans to females declined to twenty-five (25) in 1992 and eighteen (18) in 1993 (Fletcher-Paul, 1994). The total value of loans disbursed to men in 1993 was \$1,344,230 while women borrowed \$217,187.

14.48 As mentioned above under "Cooperatives," rural women can also access credit for small-scale operations from the Credit Unions. At present, there are some programmes aimed at rural women which take account of their productive role and set out to improve their level of productivity through the provision of loans and technical assistance. At the same time, there is very little incentive for women to engage in agricultural production, in light of the general difficulties faced by the industry.

Article 15: Equality before the Law

- 1. State Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law*
- 2. State Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.*
- 3. State Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.*
- 4. State Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.*

The Legal Status of Women

15.1 In Saint Lucia, women are accorded equality with men before the law and access to the administration of justice. These rights are assured in Section 13 of the Constitution of Saint Lucia enacted in 1979. These fundamental rights and freedoms are guaranteed to all irrespective of sex.

15.2 The provisions of the criminal law as stipulated in the Criminal Code are the same for both sexes except where necessary in sexual offence. The range of punishments and sentences provided in the Code for criminal offences is the same for men and women.

15.3 Women are eligible to serve on juries (except where they are rendered physically incapable of serving). They are competent to give evidence in Court, and their testimony carries the same weight as that of men. However, they are not obliged to testify against their spouses.

15.4 Women are also eligible to qualify and practise as lawyers and to participate in the Judicial System of Saint Lucia, but many did not enter the legal profession to any significant degree until the late 1980's.

15.5 Currently, there is a relatively high level of participation of women in the justice system, though not equal to men's participation. During the period 1985 to 1993 female representation in the Judicial System increased by more than fifty (50) percent: seventeen (17) percent in 1985 and thirty-nine (39) percent in 1993. This increase can be attributed to the increased number of female lawyers, most evident in 1993. In 1988, Saint Lucia appointed its first female Solicitor General. It is interesting to note that for some time during the early reporting period, female magistrates have outnumbered their male counterparts. For a few years in the 1990s Saint Lucia's Attorney General was a woman, the first female to be appointed in that position since 1992. The first female judge was appointed in 1990, and in 1996 the Chief Judge was a woman. Also in 1996 all the District Court magistrates were women.

15.6 Although women have acquired equality before the law in all aspects, yet the mechanisms available to make the law operative and to enable women to assert their rights are very limited. The stipulated laws declare general principles but deficiencies with regard to their implementation still remain. In many cases women do not exercise their rights because they are not aware of these rights. The onus is on the NWM, the trade unions and the various NGOs with female membership and interest to acquaint women in Saint Lucia of their rights before the law.

Civil law and Contracts

15.7 Women have access on the same basis as men, to legal services. They are given the same rights as men to conclude any type of civil, commercial, administrative or labour contracts. They also have the right to acquire and administer their own property. There are no legal limitations placed on women, therefore they are free to engage in legal transactions. The provisions of the Matrimonial Property Act will be discussed in Article 16 of this document.

15.8 As already discussed, the laws of Saint Lucia generally outlaws discrimination against women particularly in relation to employment, the acquisition of real estate, access to credit, contractual arrangements, and also discrimination in educational institutions.

15.9 There is no doubt of the equal rights accorded to Saint Lucian women by the law. However, the mechanisms and adoption of measures that would guarantee women the equality of opportunities enshrined in the Constitution and the full exercise of their rights are yet to be accomplished. As a consequence, women are sometimes excluded or have a reduced role in the decision-making process with regard to national development planning.

15.10 In Saint Lucia, there is no formal discrimination against women or any legal inequality on grounds of sex. However, although the Constitution provides for both sexes with regard to their rights to citizenship, yet it is discriminatory against foreign born husbands of Saint Lucian nationals (The Rights to Citizenship is discussed in Article 9 of this document).

15.11 The Civil Code, Chapter 242, Third Book, Art. 48 to 51 deals specifically with Domicile and states that: -

Art. 48 The domicile of a person, for all civil purposes, is at the place where he has his principal residence.

Art. 49 A person holding a temporary or revocable public appointment retains his former domicile unless he manifests a contrary intention.

Art. 50 A married woman, not separated from bed and board, has no other domicile than that of her husband.

The domicile of an unmarried minor is with his father and mother, or with his tutor...

Art. 51 The domicile of persons of the age of majority, who serve or work continuously for others, is at the residence of those whom they serve or for whom they work, if they reside in the same house.

15.12 The Constitution of Saint Lucia(Chapter 1, Section 12) makes provision for a person to have,

“... the right to move freely throughout Saint Lucia, the right to reside in any part of Saint Lucia, the right to enter Saint Lucia, the right to leave Saint Lucia and immunity from expulsion from Saint Lucia.”

The Constitution also states that -

Any restriction on a person's freedom of movement that is involved in his lawful detention shall not be held to be inconsistent with or in contravention of this section.

Article 16: Marriage and Family

1. State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

- a) The same right to enter into marriage;*
- b) The same right freely to chose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;*
- c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;*
- d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;*
- e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;*
- f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar situations where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;*
- g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation;*
- h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.*

2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

The Right to Entry into Marriage

16.1 Women have the same right as men to enter into marriage. The Civil Code, Book Fifth, Chapter First, Articles 81 to 93 relate to conditions necessary to make entry into marriage valid. Parties will not have the capacity to marry if -

1. either of the two parties is under the age of 16 years;
2. there is no consent by either party. Consent in relation to minors until the age of 18 is given by -
 - both parents if they are living together;
 - the parent who has custody of the minor if parents are separated or divorce;
 - the deserted parent, i.e., if one parent has been deserted by the other parent;
 - the surviving parent if one parent is dead;
 - guardians, tutors or tutor appointed by deceased parents or by the Court;
3. apparent and manifest impotency caused by natural or accidental means exists at the time of the marriage;
4. the first marriage has not been dissolved;
5. the parties fall within the prohibited degree of consanguinity and affinity proscribed by Articles 90, 91 and 93 for example brother and sister (legitimate or natural, or those connected in the same degree by alliance), uncle and niece, aunt and nephew, and persons connected in the same degree by marriage.
6. the parties are of the same sex, although there are no provisions made to that effect.

Rights and Responsibilities During and at Dissolution of Marriage

16.2 The Civil Code, Book First, Chapter Sixth, Articles 143 to 154 A recognise the respective rights of husband and wife. It states that "*Husband and wife owe each other fidelity, succour and assistance.*" That a husband owes his wife protection, while the wife has to be obedient to her husband.

16.3 Article 145 of the Code indicates that a wife is obligated to live with her husband, and to follow him wherever he chooses to reside. But the husband is not to use force or keep his wife in confinement to compel her to live with him. It is the husband's responsibility to receive her and provide for her according to his means and condition. This rule applies even when the parties have mutually agreed to separate.

16.4 In Article 146 provision is made for a married woman separate as to property to alone sue or be sued or appear in judicial proceedings, as if she were single. Provision is also made for a wife married in community to alone ,

"... sue or be sued or appear in judicial proceedings in respect of her separate property, rights or liabilities, ... as if she were not married."

16.5 In the case of litigation where third parties are involved with regard to community property, rights and liabilities, it is the husband's responsibility to represent the community and his wife unless stated or provided otherwise. For example, the wife may have to represent the community in the absence of or the refusal of the husband to do so.

16.6 Article 147 of the Civil Code declares that the separate property of a wife *"... is no longer subject to the administration of her husband which is wholly abolished."* It means also that a married woman no longer needs the consent or authorisation of her husband in order to engage in any act or contract with respect to her separate property.

16.7 Each spouse is entitled to own property in his or her right during marriage and to deal with it as he or she wishes. Furthermore, a married woman can alone, without seeking her husband's consent or authorisation, *"accept, receive, administer, use, alienate and dispose of her property"* (Article 148) as if she were single. She can capably use her initiative to alone enter into contracts, incur obligations and thereby binding her separate property as if she were not married. She can also execute any deed or writing with respect to her separate property and prepare a will without the authorisation of her husband.

16.8 A person shall not be discriminated against regardless of sex or marriage from participating in -

... any public function or from being appointed to or holding any civil or judicial office or post, or from entering or assuming or carrying on any civil profession or vocation, or for admission to any incorporated society . . .

16.9 With respect to the dissolution of marriage, the Civil Code, Book First, Chapter Seventh, Article 155 indicates that *"marriage can only be dissolved by the death of one of the parties; while both live, it is indissoluble."* But after 1988, this clause was amended by omitting the last six words and to include *"or by divorce legally granted."*

16.10 Section 3 of the Divorce Act 1973 states the only ground for divorce as being that the marriage has irretrievably broken down and this is established if one of the parties can prove one of the following four facts to the High Court

- (a) the respondent committed adultery and the petitioner finds it intolerable to live with the respondent;
- (b) the petitioner cannot reasonably be expected to live with the respondent as a result of the respondent's behaviour patterns;
- (c) the petitioner was deserted for a continuous period of two years by the respondent immediately preceding the application for dissolution by the petitioner;
- (d) the couple lived apart and have done so for a continuous period of five years immediately preceding the application for dissolution by the petitioner.

After a marriage has been dissolved, maintenance obligations continue between spouses, and this also extends to custody and child maintenance.

16.11 In the Civil Code of Saint Lucia, prior to the Amendment in 1989, the duty of maintenance of both wife and children was placed solely on the husband. However, Article 145 of the Code (Amendment Number 2 of 1989) now states that "*either spouse is bound to supply the other with the necessaries of life according to his or her means.*" This provision is also included in the Divorce Act 1973 Section 26 (1). It also provides for either of the parties to plead wilful neglect and gives the Court the power to grant an order for maintenance by means of periodical or lump sum payments. However, such maintenance is granted in proportion to the wants of the party who claims it and the fortune of the party by whom it is due (Civil Code, Art. 139).

16.12 The Divorce Act 1973, Section 26 (1) makes provision for a reciprocal obligation on the part of the wife to provide maintenance in situations where the applicant's earning capacity is impaired because of age, illness or physical or mental disability.

Parental Rights and Responsibilities

16.13 There is a difference in the legal status between children born to married parents and those born to unmarried parents. The laws of Saint Lucia make the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children. The presumptions in the laws also favour legitimacy and any reference in deeds, statutes and the Code refer to the legitimate issues. For example, when a Will is being interpreted, the presumption can be rebutted to favour the illegitimate child but only where it is specifically stated that illegitimate children are to be included in the Will. Where a reference in a Will is made "*to my children*" when there are legitimate children, this automatically excludes illegitimate children.

16.14 The Affiliation Ordinance made provision by its Amendment Number 16 of 1983 for an unmarried mother to apply to the Court for maintenance of an illegitimate child. This Amendment also changed the weekly sum of EC\$25.00 a week. This figure was grossly inadequate by any standards of living. However, an Amendment to the Ordinance in 1993 increased the amount to EC\$50.00 weekly. No reference is made in the Order from the Court to the upkeep of the standard of living to which the illegitimate child is accustomed.

16.15 By contrast, the Divorce Act of Saint Lucia 1973, Section 25 (2) gives due consideration to the financial needs of the legitimate child. The Act did indicate that maintenance for the legitimate child

is determined by the income earning capacity, property and other financial resources of the child, the physical or mental disability of the child, the standard of living enjoyed by the family before the breakdown of the marriage and the manner in which the child was being educated or trained, and the manner in which the parents expected the child to be educated and trained. The amount of maintenance payable to a legitimate child is unlimited.

16.16 Where a child is born to married parents, the father's name is put on the birth certificate. Conversely, where the parents are unmarried the father's name may be put on the birth certificate with the consent of both parents.

16.17 The primary parental right which influences all other rights that concern the child is the right to the custody of that child. As emphasised in the Civil Code Article 210 A, the welfare of the child is paramount in custody decisions and should therefore be given first consideration. Where a dispute arises between the parents, custody of the child is determined by the Court. In addition to the child's welfare, the need to maintain stability for the child is also given due consideration by the Court.

16.18 A parent who has custody of a child can apply for maintenance from the other parent by making application to the Family Court. The payment of maintenance is then enforced after an assessment of the wants and fortune of both parties are made.

16.19 A parent who does not have custody may apply to the Court for access or visitation rights. After separation, the Court encourages both parents to continue their relationship with their child. It is common for the Court to rule for joint care arrangements or custody or access arrangements whereby each parent can spend time with the child or children.

16.20 Where parents are married to each other, both are contracted to be guardians of their children, and both parents are also entitled to custody of their children. In cases where parents are not married or living together in common-law union when the child is born, both parents will have guardianship rights and responsibilities.

Access to Family Planning Information

16.21 In Saint Lucia both men and women have equal access to family planning information and education, but the statistics show that more women than men are registered with the Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association. Forms of contraception and approaches to sexuality and family planning are discussed in Article 12 of this document.

Rights and Responsibilities with Regard to Guardianship, Wardship, Trusteeship and Adoption

16.22 Both parents living together are considered to be guardians to their children. As such, they are responsible for the control and upbringing of their children. Guardianship is not lost even when parents are separated.

16.23 It must be noted that persons other than parents can submit an application to the Court seeking to be appointed as guardian of a child, as well as or in place of the child's parents. However, a parent cannot be deprived of guardianship unless there is sufficient reason to believe that the parent is unfit to provide proper child care or is unwilling to take on that responsibility. Step-parents and foster-parents may apply to become guardians to a child, and thus try to establish a legal relationship with him or her.

16.24 There is no discrimination against women becoming trustees. Both sexes are eligible to become trustees in respect of the property of children, and are authorised to invest any trust funds whether or not they are, at the time, in a state of investment. The Civil Code Chapter Second Art. 2151 (1) makes provision for trustees to sell or concur with other persons to sell all or any part of the property invested in them, by public auction or private contract.

16.25 The rules which govern the laws of succession in both cases of intestate and testamentary succession require that the deceased person be represented by a personal representative or a trustee. In cases of testamentary succession, the Will appoints an Executor to handle the affairs of the Testator on death. In cases of intestate succession a personal representative will be appointed by the Court. There is no rule of law which discriminates against a woman acting in either situation.

16.26 Article 2189 of the Civil Code (Chapter Fourth) vested orders in relation to minor's beneficial interests. It states that

Where a minor is beneficially entitled to any property, the Court may, with a view to the application of the capital or income thereof for the maintenance, education, or benefit of the minor, make an order

- (a) appointing a person to convey such property; or*
- (b) in the case of stock, or a thing in action, vesting in any person the right to transfer or call for a transfer of such stock, or to receive the dividends or income thereof, or to sue for and recover such thing in action, upon such terms as the Court may think fit.*

16.27 The law governing adoption was passed in 1954. The Adoption Ordinance Chapter 19 makes provisions for the Court, upon an application made in the prescribed manner by a person domiciled in Saint Lucia, to make an adoption order authorising the applicant to adopt a child. An adoption order may authorise two spouses to jointly adopt an infant, or the mother or father of the infant, either alone or jointly with his or her spouse.

16.28 The Court will not make an adoption order in respect of the infant unless the applicant (or in the case of a joint application) -

- has attained the age of 25 years and is at least 21 years older than the infant;
- is a relative of the infant who has attained the age of 21 years;
- is a parent of the infant.

16.29 An adoption order will not be made without the consent of a parent or tutor of the infant, and unless the applicant and the infant reside in the country. However, the Court may dispense with the consent of parent (spouse) or tutor if either cannot be found or is incapable of giving the consent. Also, the order will not be made unless the infant has lived continuously with the applicant for at least three months immediately preceding the date of the order.

16.30 A sole male applicant may not adopt a female child unless the Court is satisfied that he is the child's father, or "*that there are special circumstances which justify as an exceptional measure the making of an adoption order.*"

The Right to Choose a Family Name, Profession and Occupation

16.31 There is no law in Saint Lucia which specifically requires a woman to use a particular name. It is customary for a woman to take her husband's surname on marriage, but she can retain her family name and/or use it before her husband's family name. In recent years, a growing number of professional women have chosen to retain their family name and not take that of the husband on marriage; particularly if all important documents and certificates bear their family names. When a marriage is dissolved, a wife who has taken her husband's surname is free to retain it or revert through legal procedure to her family name if she wishes.

16.32 As far as legitimate children are concerned, the present law states that they can automatically take the family name of the father. In the case of illegitimate children, they can take the mother's family name or the father's surname if the mother consents. Whatever the situation, parents have the right to decide which family name they wish to give to their children, that is, the family name of the mother or the father. There are no legal differences between spouses with respect to their choice of profession and occupation.

Property Rights Upon Marriage (Matrimonial Property)

16.33 Matrimonial property in Saint Lucia is regulated by the Civil Law principal of "Community of Property." Community is defined in the Code as "*the common interest of a man and his wife in certain of their property.*" Separate property is also recognised in the Civil Code. Generally all property acquired by husband and wife during marriage can be considered as community property. Under Article 1192 (1) of the Civil Code the property of persons married in community is divided into two categories, separate property and the property of the community.

16.34 In accordance with the law of Saint Lucia, a couple domiciled in Saint Lucia are married in community. However, if a contract was prepared prior to marriage to establish separation of property, then the law of Saint Lucia will recognise that right to separate ownership.

16.35 Separate property, which in effect establishes the separate ownership of property, is also recognised in the Civil Code. Separate property owned by either husband or wife is not available for division between the spouses. The provisions of Article 1192 (2) of the Civil Code define separate property to include all movable and immovable property acquired before the marriage, and any

property which is inherited, earned or given to one spouse during the marriage which has not been intermingled with community property to such an extent that it cannot be traced. Article 1194 of the Code also referred to income and salaries to be separate property subject to *"liability of the spouse to contribute towards the education and support of the children and expenses of marriage."*

16.36 Prior to 1989 administration of the community property by Civil Code was the sole responsibility of the husband. The Civil Code Amendment No. 2 of 1989 gave that responsibility to both husband and wife. Under the provisions of the Code neither spouse can dispose of the property without reaching a mutual agreement, and both spouses must affix their signature on any conveyance or mortgage.

16.37 Under Article 1228 the community of property can be dissolved by

1. dissolution of marriage;
2. separation from bed and board;
3. separation of property by judicial Act; and
4. the absence of one of the parties.

The separation of property can only be done through the judicial system.

16.38 Article 1229 makes provisions for the protection of the wife and states that the separation of property may be obtained

... when the interests of the wife are imperiled or the disordered state of the husband's affairs gives reason to fear that his property will not be sufficient to satisfy what the wife has a right to receive from it.

Article 1233 also provides for further protection of the wife by stipulating that only the wife can demand the separation of property.

Property of Spouses and Family Provision on Death, Intestacy, and De facto Marriage Relationships and Property Sharing

16.39 The laws of Succession and Inheritance contained in the Civil Code (Chapter 242 Revised Laws of Saint Lucia) make provision for spouses to succeed each other in the event of one dying intestate and leaving no issue. It must be noted that common-law relationship is not recognised in terms of legal solutions in Saint Lucia in the laws of Succession. Hence, there are no property rights arising out of this situation; so the woman has no legal right to inherit an intestate succession.

16.40 The laws give surviving children of married parents the right automatically to inherit the property of their deceased parents. However, prior to 1944 no illegitimate child had the legal right to inherit any property from either father or mother, except by will. As a consequence, the illegitimate child of the parent who dies intestate was therefore deprived of the parents property. The Civil Code was amended in 1944 to allow illegitimate children to inherit from their mothers only providing that

there are no surviving relatives, husbands or legitimate children upon death. Under this Amendment a mother was not entitled to inherit from her child who died intestate, who was survived by his wife, lawful children and relatives.

16.41 In effect, the legitimate children and/or relatives of a woman who died intestate have a legal right to claim her property. Illegitimate children can only inherit if specifically named in the will, which is one way by which property can be passed and beneficiaries named. They cannot automatically claim the inheritance from a putative father who dies intestate, even if there are no legitimate children with a claim to be heirs.

16.42 An Amendment in the Legislation Section 579 by Number 4 of 1988 was made with the intention of removing the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children with respect to the intestacy of a single woman; (a single woman in this case can be a woman separated from her husband who has other children with a different person or a divorced woman). The property of a single mother devolves to her children, and in the case where an illegitimate son or daughter dies leaving no children but leaving a mother, then the estate devolves on the mother alone. Section 579 (1) now reads "*If the deceased being a single woman dies leaving children her succession falls to them in equal shares.*" In this Amendment, a single woman includes a widow, a married woman leaving apart and separated from her husband, and also a divorced woman.

16.43 The position now is that an unmarried woman who owns property and who is the mother of illegitimate children, can dispose of that property by will to her children. In the event that she has failed to make a will her property passes on to all her children upon her death. If the deceased leaves no children but her mother, then her succession devolves upon her mother.

16.44 There is no statutory law in Saint Lucia to govern the property relationship of women and men living in de facto marriage relationships. In many situations where de facto couples purchase property jointly, both names will appear on the deed or relevant title documents. In situations where one partner is the sole legal owner of the property, the law relating to the entitlement of separate property will apply unless the other partner can prove an equitable interest in the property owned by the other.

Minimum Age of Marriage

16.45 As discussed under "the right to entry into marriage" in Article 16 of this document, a marriage solemnized between individuals both of whom are under the age of 16 years is null and void. The Marriage Act also requires that where the marriage of a minor is intended to be solemnized the consent of parents or guardians must be obtained. There can be no marriage where there is no consent.

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