



The Right to Food in the CARICOM Region

An Assessment Report





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Foreword

The 2010 Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and the 2011 Action Plan to implement the Policy represent important milestones towards increasing food and nutrition security in the CARICOM Region.

Together, they represent both a vision and a roadmap for moving forward diligently to address ever-pressing food and nutrition security issues. They also represent a strong commitment by CARICOM Member States to put forth their best efforts through appropriate policies and programmes to reduce food and nutrition insecurity significantly, particularly within the segment of the population most affected. Many of the Member States are responding individually to the call, and have formulated—or are in the process of formulating—national food and nutrition security policies and action plans. In the process, they have incorporated the principles of the right to food for all individuals in the Region and in each country. These principles are clearly spelled out in the provisions of the Regional Policy, and are reflected in the priority actions defined in the Regional Action Plan.

These priority actions are to be implemented, at all times, with full regard for good governance practices. At the same time, while the protection and realization of the right to food is a major responsibility of Governments, the participation by non-state actors is essential. This, in turn, calls for strong partnerships between Governments and civil society, while empowering actors at the grassroots level to ensure their active and meaningful participation.

Work on this assessment report, which focuses on the right to food in the CARICOM Region, was initiated when the Right to Food Team at FAO headquarters in Rome, in direct collaboration with the Subregional Office for the Caribbean in Barbados and the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative, provided technical

support in drafting the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan. It was felt, justifiably, that such an action plan needed to be evidence-based if it were to prove effective in strengthening the protection and realization of the right to food in the Region.


The Action Plan itself called for a more in-depth and comprehensive right-to-food assessment as a priority area of action. This report provides a first basis for such an assessment. As a free-standing document, it is hoped that it will prove useful in establishing policy priorities.



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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ACHR	American Convention of Human Rights
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
CAHFSA	Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARISEC	Secretariat of the Caribbean Community
CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency
CBO	Community-based organization
CCAP	CSME Community Agricultural Policy
CCFP	Caribbean Common Fisheries Policy
CCH	Caribbean Cooperation in Health Initiative
CCJ	Caribbean Court of Justice
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEHI	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CFNI	Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute
COFAP	Council for Finance and Planning (CARICOM)
COHSOD	Council for Human and Social Development (CARICOM)
COTED	Council for Trade and Economic Development (CARICOM)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRISIS	Caribbean Invasive Species Intervention Strategy
CRSF	Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework (on HIV/AIDS)
CSME	CARICOM Single Market and Economy

CSO	Civil society organization
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAOSTAT	FAO Statistical Database
FIV	Food-insecure and vulnerable
FNS	Food and nutrition security
GDP	Gross domestic product
HD	Human development
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IAS	Invasive alien species
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
ILO	International Labour Organization
INDECOM	Independent Commission of Investigations (Jamaica)
LB	Live births
LEHR	Law, Ethics and Human Rights
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NAHFSS	National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems
NCD	Non-communicable disease
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PANCAP	Pan Caribbean Partnership
PSS	Protocol of San Salvador
RFNSAP	Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (2011)
RFNSP	Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy (2010)
RPG	Recommended population goal
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US\$	United States Dollar
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization



I. Introduction

The main purpose of this assessment is to provide coherent, systematic information about the current food and nutrition situation, as well as relevant legal, policy and institutional environments with respect to the protection and realization of the right to food in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Region and in CARICOM Member States. The assessment information is expected to translate eventually into concrete follow-up actions, that would serve as a basis for monitoring how right-to-food conditions change over time in the Region and in Member States. This assessment may be seen as a first step in the preparation of a more comprehensive regional right-to-food assessment, one that is to be undertaken to achieve Operational Objective 8.3 of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (“Integration of right to food concepts and principles and good governance practices in national legal and institutional frameworks for food security and nutrition and related programmes [poverty reduction, social development/welfare and social and productive safety nets]”). The Action Plan is designed to implement the 2010 CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy. Both the Policy and the Action Plan contain right-to-food provisions. Individual Member States are also including right-to-food considerations in the formulation of their food and nutrition security policy and action plan.

The assessment consists of four parts: (a) an analysis of the current food and nutrition security (FNS) situation and recent trends, with a focus on identifying inequities related to the right to food; (b) an analysis of the legal environment of the right to food, focusing on legislative provisions that have relevance for the protection and realization of the right to food; (c) an analysis of the regional policies that may have an impact (positive or negative) on the protection and realization of the right to food; and (d) identification of regional governmental institutions and civil society organizations whose mandates and activities relate to the right to food, with a preliminary assessment of the governance practices that

they implement. A more in-depth assessment of institutional governance practices that are currently employed will require a follow-up assessment effort.

The intended uses of the findings and results of this assessment are multiple. These can be summarized as:

- (a)** Identify cross-cutting action areas to strengthen the right-to-food underpinnings of all regional and national actions implemented as part of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan.
- (b)** Lay the groundwork to provide CARICOM Member States with key elements to conduct in-depth right-to-food assessments, as part of the process of formulating national food and nutrition security (FNS) policies and action plans.
- (c)** Provide regional and national civil society organizations with relevant information to aid in increasing strategically their participation in FNS policy formulation, and in contributing actively to the protection and realization of the right to food, and to the adherence to good governance practices.
- (d)** Provide staff of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with knowledge and information, in order to increase the effectiveness and relevance of the policy assistance that FAO provides to the CARICOM Region and to CARICOM Member States.

In keeping with the main purpose of the assessment and the intended uses of the assessment results, the principal intended users are: (a) national high-level policy decision-makers, (b) national planning staff, (c) regional and national civil society organizations (CSOs), (d) Members of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) and the CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), (e) professionals working in areas related to food and nutrition security, (f) staff of the CARICOM Secretariat (CARISEC), and (g) the international technical cooperation community supporting FNS-related activities in the Region.



II. Main Challenges to the Right to Food in the Caribbean Context

The current debate in the Caribbean – on food prices, low economic growth, high levels of debt, together with concerns about the impact of climate change – has served to increase the urgency and focus on the importance of increasing the food and nutrition security in the CARICOM Region.

What are the main challenges to the protection and realization of the right to food in the CARICOM Region? This is a relevant policy question at present, as the Region has rolled out the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy (RFNSP) in 2010, and the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (RFNSAP) in 2011, both of which contain right-to-food provisions and actions. At the same time, some CARICOM Member States are currently in the process of formulating national food and nutrition security policies and action plans, in line with the broad provisions of the RFNSP and RFNSAP.

Two main challenges to the protection and realization of the right to food are as follows. First, a high percent of the food consumed in the CARICOM Region is imported in raw or semi-processed form, underscoring the low food-production capacity – and resulting high dependency – on food imports. The food price volatility arising from the food and financial crises of 2008-2009 and 2011-2012 has forced the Region to confront the serious financial, food security and health-related consequences of such high dependence on food imports. One of the insidious effects of this dependency is the dietary shift in a majority of the CARICOM Region's population, away from locally-grown produce to the consumption of more processed and energy-dense foods, and more foods of animal origin with more added salt, sugars and fats. This shift has led to an increase in the prevalence of obesity, as well as a higher incidence of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, stroke, heart disease and some forms of cancer.

These diseases are a burden on individual budgets and national and regional economies, and constitute the main public health problems in the Region. The situation is exacerbated by the existence of pockets of undernutrition, and socioeconomic inequality (high levels of unemployment, poverty, income inequality and inequitable access to resources).

These negative health and nutrition effects have been compounded by the proliferation of franchises in fast- and convenience- food outlets, and by the emergence of supermarkets as the main source of food purchases in expanding urban centres. Policies, laws and regulations, together with the institutional arrangements governing trade in fresh, processed and prepared foods and franchising (including truth in labelling rules), are inadequate – both in terms of enactment and enforcement. The policy and legal contexts that facilitate the operation of franchises need careful examination, with a view to determining the scope and opportunity for promoting local diets with linkages to domestic agriculture. This will require political will, adequate human and technical resources, and well-functioning institutions at regional and national levels.

Secondly, annual hurricanes, droughts and floods, together with the spectre of climate change, all threaten regional food and nutrition security. The havoc wrought by recent hurricanes demonstrates the lack of preparedness for dealing effectively with the effects and impacts of such adverse natural phenomena. Climate change has increased the frequency and intensity of these cyclical events, thus making the CARICOM Region, and sizable portions of the population, more prone to temporary food insecurity. There is an urgent need to develop innovative risk mitigation and adaptation instruments to improve, and maintain, food security, given the Region's high vulnerability to diverse natural and socioeconomic shocks, which are likely to worsen in the face of climate change and financial and economic uncertainty.

Action is also required at regional and national levels to bring about coherence between climate-compatible food production, processing, health and nutrition, and trade and investment policies, to ensure ultimately positive impacts on individual health and well-being. A thorough assessment must be made of the entitlements accessible under the provisions of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to facilitate the enhancement of regional agricultural production capacity.

In order to promote the protection and realization of the right to food, policy and programme decision-makers must understand clearly the meaning of the right to food concept, and what it means to put it into practice through national policies, laws, regulations and institutions. The specific circumstances in the national context of each member State that inhibit the realization of the right to food for all must be known and understood.

Advocacy and public education should aim at creating a “demand for the right to food” and at providing an understanding of the human rights dimensions of policies,

programmes and other actions related to the right to food. This requires CSOs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and social movements to partner with each other and others, including academia and professional organizations, to participate in dialogue and national debates on the importance of integrating human rights dimensions in public policies and programmes, CSO actions and projects at the grassroots level.



III. Assessment Methodology

An analysis of the food and nutrition security situation is a good starting point for a right to food assessment. Such an analysis should provide an understanding of (a) what the specific problems are, (b) who is most affected by these problems, (c) what explains these problems, and especially (d) what the main structural factors are that produce inequities that contribute to the suffering of different segments of the population, in various degrees, from food and nutrition insecurity. This assessment report therefore includes a chapter on the food and nutrition security situation in the CARICOM Region and its Member States. To produce and synthesize relevant information we relied on statistical data and published reports that were identified through web searches; often the statistical data are limited and quite dated, however.

Any right to food assessment must include a review of the legal environment. For the current assessment, and by means of a document review, legal research covered information on the ratification of key international human rights instruments, on constitutionally protected rights and on human rights-related institutions, and included a more general overview of the legal systems in the CARICOM Member States.

The identification of the relevant policies, plans and programmes as well as public institutions and coordinating bodies is key in the assessment. It is necessary to ascertain which the relevant civil society organizations are, and to assess their mandates, interests, decision-making authority and capacity to partner in efforts to make the right to food a reality for all. In addition, the private sector and labour movements have considerable influence on national policy and programme development and implementation; accordingly, their representative bodies should also be included in the right to food assessment. However, this is deemed beyond the scope of the present assessment, and may have to await a complete, in-depth right to food assessment in the CARICOM Region.

Selection of policies and plans for inclusion in the assessment

The inventory of relevant policies, strategies and actions was developed primarily on the basis of the availability of accessible data and information. In addition, the following criteria were applied:

- relevance to a comprehensive assessment of the food and nutrition security context;
- mechanisms for ensuring coherence at national and regional levels;
- space for CSO/NGO participation in design, review and monitoring and evaluation.

These criteria were discussed with officials of the CARICOM Secretariat who facilitated the identification of appropriate regional policies, strategies and other actions.

Scope of the policy assessment

The realization of the right to food depends to a large extent on the policies, strategies and actions decided upon and implemented by government. However, the actions of other key stakeholders, including the private sector and CSOs (such as academia, trade unions and NGOs) also impact, positively or negatively, on the protection and realization of the right to food. Some relevant questions that guided the analysis include:

- Do the policy initiatives contribute to or enhance the realization of the right to food, or are they counter-productive, for example, by failing to address existing inequities?
- Do they embrace – whether explicitly or implicitly – human rights principles and/or good governance practices, such as transparency, inclusion, non-discrimination, accountability, respect for the rule of law, and participation?
- Do they enhance the capacity of those responsible for certain actions to respond more efficiently and effectively to the identified priorities and needs of the most vulnerable?
- Do they enhance opportunities for individuals, particularly the food insecure and vulnerable, to feed themselves in ways that fully respect human dignity?
- What component(s) of food security is/are being addressed by specific policy actions? How well defined are the issues or problems? Are the policy actions evidence-based?

The policy and planning areas that may be considered to be the most relevant to food and nutrition security, and thus to the protection and realization of the right to food, include:

- poverty reduction and human development
- agriculture (food production) and rural development
- health, water and sanitation

- education
- food intake and nutrition
- food safety
- consumer protection
- social protection and social safety nets
- national food marketing and distribution
- international food trade

In addition, the policy and programme analysis should also address other key issues, such as:

- Policy coherence: across the national-regional divide (vertical coherence) and across sector policies, strategies and actions (horizontal coherence).
- Targeting: Are the needs and concerns of the most vulnerable given high priority in establishing and implementing policy actions?
- Resources: Who decides on the allocation of available public resources in support of policy actions? Do the allocations and actual expenditures of public resources reflect adequacy and a concern for equity in the allocation of available resources?
- Data/Information: What information systems are in place for targeting, monitoring and evaluation, and for developing and implementing early warning actions?
- Capacities to formulate, implement, coordinate and monitor policy actions in participatory and inclusive ways.
- Participation: What arrangements are in place for communities, CSOs and NGOs to participate in design, review and monitoring of policy actions? How effective and empowering are these arrangements? How meaningful in reality is participation, and what is its real impact on decision-making?

This checklist was partially applied in the analysis of the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan. However, it was beyond the scope of this assessment to apply to all relevant regional policies.

Selection of regional institutions and organizations included in the assessment

The regional public institutions listed in Table A.1 of the Annex were identified in consultation with regional development practitioners supplemented by web searches. Their mandates include: (a) regional policy and plan formulation and implementation, spanning the economic and social sectors and the environment; (b) promotion of consumer protection and food safety; (c) advising on and coordination of the regional response to climate change; (d) disaster risk reduction and management; and (e) securing law, justice and human rights.

Scope of the institutional assessment

Each institution selected for inclusion was assessed according to the following criteria:

- Responsibility: Does the institution have a mandate to act? What are its terms of reference? What does the mandate say about human rights and/or the right to food?
- Authority: Can the institution act and speak with authority about a specific topic? What is its standing?
- Access to and control of resources: Does the institution have sufficient resources to fulfil its mandate?
- Capacity: Does the institution have the technical and administrative/managerial capacity to undertake its tasks?
- Governance practices: Does the institution apply good governance practices in implementing activities?¹
- Institutional performance: Are there any performance evaluations available? If so, did the institution's client groups participate in the evaluation? What did the evaluation say about the institution's performance?

1 These include: participation; observance of the rule of law; transparency; responsiveness; being consensus oriented; being equity oriented and inclusive; effectiveness and efficiency; and accountability.



IV. The Food and Nutrition Security Situation in the CARICOM Region

General structural conditions

A number of structural factors in the CARICOM Region can be identified that are likely to have significant impacts on food and nutrition security in the Region. These structural factors demonstrate marked differences among and within CARICOM Member States:

1. **Unequal national income distributions.** These are partly explained by high unemployment and vulnerable employment conditions, and by the existence of marginalized population groups, especially indigenous peoples, such as Carib and Amerindian populations in remote areas. Estimates have shown that for the Mayan people in Belize, the Carib people in the Commonwealth of Dominica and the Amerindian people in the Republic of Guyana, over 70 percent are poor. Data for the period 2000–2011 reported in the 2011 Human Development Report list 10 of 14 CARICOM Member States as having a high level of human development (HD) (Antigua and Barbuda, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago) or even a very high level in one case (Barbados). Two Member States fall in the middle HD category (Guyana and the Republic of Suriname), while the Republic of Haiti falls in the low HD category. Country-specific Gini coefficients (a measure of income inequality)² indicate significant income inequality in some of the countries, as well as income inequality differences between Member States. For example, Gini coefficients reported for Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Belize equal 0.432,

2 A Gini coefficient equal to 0 means perfect equality; equal to 1 means perfect inequality.

0.455, 0.528 and 0.596, respectively. And although recent poverty incidence data do not seem to be available, these skewed income distributions do point to a sizable segment of the population being vulnerable because of low-income levels. Although poverty is still a predominantly rural phenomenon, the incidence of urban poverty is rising quickly along with increasing urbanisation.

2. High unemployment. In spite of some small improvements in 2010, the unemployment rates in the CARICOM Region remain relatively high. CARICOM estimates that in 2007, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago had unemployment rates of 7.9 percent, 7.7 percent, 12.1 percent, 7.8 percent, 9.5 percent and 5.9 percent, respectively. With the exception of Belize, the unemployment rates in the Member States tended to increase during 2008–2009. Current estimates for the Region suggest an average unemployment rate of about 7.0 percent. Rates of under-employment are not available, but if added to the unemployment rates would result in a significant increase. The precarious employment conditions that exist in the Region are further demonstrated by ratios of formal employment to total employment, which for some Member States are reported as being from between 85.6 percent in Barbados to 64.3 percent in Jamaica. Thus, what has been classified as vulnerable employment amounts to 14 percent of total employment in Barbados, and 35.4 percent in Jamaica. Women are most frequently employed in the service sector. Unemployment rates are generally higher for women than for men, and higher for young people compared with the overall population.

3. Differences in national income levels. The economies in the CARICOM Region grew on average by 3.4 percent in 2010, and are estimated to have grown by 4.2 percent in 2011. Growth in 2012 is estimated to be 4.5 percent. Per capita national income levels vary considerably among CARICOM Member States. During 2009–2010, four countries reported per capita income levels above US\$10 000: the Bahamas (US\$20 410), Trinidad and Tobago (US\$15 380), Barbados (US\$13 500) and Antigua and Barbuda (US\$10 610). Nine countries had per capita income levels between US\$9 980 (Saint Kitts and Nevis) and US\$3 270 (Guyana), while Haiti had a per capita income equal to US\$650. Real income levels may have remained the same overall or declined somewhat between 2010 and 2011, as consumer prices generally increased on average by 4.9 percent (range: -0.6 to 13.4 percent among the Member States) in 2010, and were estimated to have risen on average by 6.6 percent (range: 2.0–19.9 percent) in 2011. The average annual increase is estimated to fall to 3.7 percent in 2012. Foreign remittances, which are an important source of income in some of the Member States (24 percent of national income in Guyana, and 15 percent in Jamaica), have recently shown a decreasing trend, most likely due to the overseas recession.

- 4. High public debt.** Recent public debt data are not available for all countries. For the five countries for which data are available for the second part of the last decade, only two showed low levels of public debt as percentage of gross domestic product (GDP): Trinidad and Tobago (15.8 percent) and the Bahamas (34.4 percent). Saint Kitts and Nevis (96.1 percent), Barbados (92.2 percent) and Jamaica (115.2 percent) showed considerably higher levels.³ With the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, all CARICOM Member States are net debtor countries. In most cases they depend on private lending, except for Guyana, Suriname and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which depend in great part on official lending. In general, the relatively high public debt levels in the Region constrain the financial capacity of governments to fund social safety net programmes and other social services, and may even mean future cuts in funding levels. It has been estimated that during 2006–2007, interest payments on the public debt alone absorbed more than 40 percent of fiscal revenues in Jamaica, and more than 20 percent in Belize and Saint Kitts and Nevis.
- 5. Marked gender inequality.** Significant gender differences in access to resources and opportunities are present in the CARICOM Region. This is demonstrated by ratings for some of the CARICOM Member States on the World Bank Gender Inequality Index (GII):⁴ 0.448, 0.600, 0.638, 0.667, and 0.739 for Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, Guyana and Haiti, respectively. Another indicator of gender inequality is the ratio of income earned by women and men. As reported in the 2005 Human Development Report for five Member States, that ratio ranged from 0.24 (Belize) to 0.66 (Jamaica), averaging 0.52, meaning that men earned twice as much income as women.
- 6. Differences in demographic indicators.** Demographic characteristics also vary among CARICOM Member States. Population growth rates averaged 0.9 percent (range: 0.3 to 2.5 percent) during the period 2000–2009. Projections for the period 2010–2015 for Member States for which data are reported estimate annual population growth rates ranging from –0.2 percent (Guyana) to 1.9 percent (Belize). Population growth rates have tended to decrease over the last two decades. The share of urban population averaged 46 percent in 2009 (range: 28 percent [Saint Lucia] to 84 percent [the Bahamas]) and shows a clear increasing trend since 1990. In almost all Member States the urban population growth rate (average for 2000–2009: 1.6 percent) exceeds the total population growth rate. Populations are getting older and median ages are increasing. It has been estimated that in eight Member States the share of the 60+ population will increase on average from

3 Total public debt that amounts to more than 50 percent of GDP may be classified as “high” while more than 90 percent of GDP may be classified as “very high”.

4 A value of 0 on the GII indicates perfect equality between women and men.

8.5 percent in 2000, to 15.3 percent by 2025, and to 26.7 percent by 2050 (ECLAC, 2004). The aging of the population is also reflected in relatively high dependency ratios, which range from 38 in Barbados to 63 in Belize and 68 in Haiti, putting additional strain on old-age entitlement programmes as well as on household earnings.⁵

Food availability

Total food energy availability (kilocalories/capita/day) has been increasing since the 1960s, and is in excess of recommended population goals (RPGs). However, between 1999–2001 and 2005–2007, the un-weighted average of food energy availability for 13 CARICOM Member States only increased fractionally from 2 597 kcals/capita/day to 2 657 kcals/capita/day (FAOSTAT 2007 data; see FAO, various years). Four Member States showed no change, and the remainder only small increases (Haiti: a small decrease).

The supply of fruits and vegetables, though increasing sharply over successive decades, is consistently below RPG. According to the un-weighted average calculated for 13 CARICOM Member States in 2005–2007, fruits contributed 7.6 percent of dietary energy, while vegetable oils and sugar and sweeteners contributed on average 8.0 percent (range: 4.3–12.2 percent) and 15.5 percent (range: 11.7–20.9 percent), respectively. These high levels are a concern in the CARICOM Region given the increasing prevalence of overweight and obesity (see section on Nutritional Adequacy below).

Several countries in the Region still have farming systems that produce significant amounts of food to sustain traditional diets that feature roots, pulses and fruits. However, the processes of globalization and economic reforms are rapidly displacing these traditional diets, and this in turn leads to health problems that impact significantly on health care costs.

Food crop production in the CARICOM Region, except in Belize, Suriname and Guyana, has been a marginal economic activity carried out on a small scale on marginal lands, with scant resources and limited targeted support from public goods, such as food crop research and marketing, transport and distribution infrastructure. Data reported for Barbados indicated that for households engaged in food crop production, access to adequate land was the main constraint. Access to adequate land was also signalled as the main reason for not engaging in food crop production (FAO, 2005). The proportion of the national budget allocated to agricultural development by governments remains below 5 percent, which means a lack of public services. Food crop producers are characterized as having uneconomically small farms, low production and

5 Dependency ratio is calculated as the ratio of the population in age groups 0-14 years and 65+ years to the population in age group 15-64 years: number of dependants per 100 persons in age group 15-64 years.

productivity levels, and limited access to new technologies. A significant percentage of food crop producers are small-scale subsistence farmers.

The strong and continuing national and regional preference for imported agricultural goods and services, and the strong acquired tastes and preferences of consumers for foods that are not produced in the CARICOM Region, have resulted in declining levels of demand for local food commodities, which in turn have constrained the growth of the regional domestic food production, processing and distribution sectors.

There is thus a significant dependence on imported food in the CARICOM Region. Between 1995 and 2004 the current value of regional food imports increased by 47 percent. In 2003–2004 it was estimated that the ratio of regional food imports to total exports averaged 62 percent, ranging from 13 percent (Guyana) to 110 percent (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines). In only 4 out of 13 CARICOM Member States does domestic cereal production contribute to the national cereal supply (Belize, Guyana, Haiti and Suriname). Domestic cereal production exceeds cereal imports in Belize, Guyana and Suriname. In all other Member States only imported cereals are available. Almost half (47 percent on average) of domestically available roots and tubers are imported among 13 Member States, and in 7 of the 13 the imported share exceeds 50 percent.⁶ A similar pattern emerges with respect to meats, where on average 56 percent of available meats are imported, and in 5 of the 13 Member States the imported share equals or exceeds 80 percent. Fully three quarters of agricultural imports in the Member States were made up of food products in 2008.

The greater and increasing share of food products consumed in the CARICOM Region is imported in a raw or semi-processed state for further processing (e.g. wheat, maize, soybeans and grains), to be transformed into flour, animal feed and beverages. This dependency on foreign producers and processors for supplies of the main food staples also accounts for the low priority afforded, so far, to the introduction and enforcement of food safety and quality, health and nutrition standards across the Region.

The erosion in terms of trade, and the possible loss of trade preferences for traditional export crops, mean decreasing export earnings with which to purchase imported food. This in turn may further constrain domestic food supplies. General import capacity in most of the CARICOM Member States is increasingly constrained owing to rising trade deficits. Considering the second half of the last decade, we find that 12 out of 14 Member States had trade deficits that were larger than during the first half of the decade, and in eight of those the trade deficit showed an increasing trend during 2005–2010. Only two Member States (Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago) had trade surpluses, which also tended to grow during 2005–2010.

6 These figures are for 2005–2007 and the percentages are calculated over the sum of production plus imports (and before subtracting any exports).

The decline in productivity of land, labour and management in the agricultural sectors results in a weakened capacity to supply domestic markets with food in a competitive manner. This is indicated, for example, by the generally stagnant or declining per capita agricultural production in the CARICOM Region. On average, the FAOSTAT per capita agricultural production index declined by 6 percent among 13 CARICOM Member States between 1999–2001 and 2008–2009.⁷ The index declined in nine Member States, showed no essential change in three, and only demonstrated an increase (of 20 percent) in Trinidad and Tobago. Vegetable production on average remained largely unchanged in the Region between the years 1999–2001 and 2008–2009; however, five Member States showed a decline in vegetable production, ranging from 3 to 42 percent. There was also a small increase (about 7 percent) in average fruit production between the same two reference periods; however, fruit production declined in four Member States, with decreases ranging from 15 to 48 percent.

Household food access

The major determinants of household access to food are the level of unemployment and the structure of income distribution, as also reflected in levels of poverty. Levels of unemployment and income inequality were discussed in a previous section above. These structural conditions point to a rising number of households being vulnerable to inadequate access to food. In addition, real income levels are declining because of rising market prices, with market prices of foods in particular being seriously affected. Market price data for nine of the CARICOM Member States show that between 2000 and 2008–2009, consumer prices increased on average by 88 percent (66 percent when excluding Haiti), whereas food prices more than doubled (average increase: 125 percent, or 105 percent, again when excluding Haiti). General increases in food prices exceeded increases in total consumer prices in all nine of these Member States for this period. This may lead to low-income consumers having to switch to cheaper foods, which in turn may have negative dietary consequences. Household income levels are also reduced in some of the Member States owing to lower levels of foreign remittances.

As productivity in traditional crop production and market opportunities for traditional food crops decline, so do the earnings from traditional crops. This in turn results in reduced capacity for these households to produce and purchase food. Data reported for Barbados showed that by far the most frequently grown food crops were fruits (84 percent), followed by starchy fruits (22 percent), vegetables other than dark-green and yellow ones (22 percent), and legumes (16 percent) (FAO, 2005). In this survey, 32 percent of households engaged in food crop production, and 11 percent in livestock rearing, most frequently poultry. Supermarkets were most frequently relied upon for the

7 This index combines all agricultural products (not just food crops).

purchase of fruits and vegetables, as well as other groceries. This means that a large percentage of the final consumer prices are due to food processing and distribution, elsewhere estimated to be upwards of 50 percent of the final consumer price. Fish was reported to be obtained most frequently in fish markets. In the absence of data for other Member States, however, it is difficult to assess how representative these data are at the regional level.

Nutritional adequacy

Under-one mortality rates, estimated around 2010, differ significantly among CARICOM Member States, and range from 7 per 1 000 live births (LB) (Antigua and Barbuda and Saint Kitts and Nevis) to 27 per 1 000 LB (Suriname), except for Haiti: 70 per 1 000 LB. Recent nutritional status data do not seem to be available for most Member States. The prevalence of stunting in under-five children reported in five Member States for the period 2006–2010 suggest that there are pockets of poverty where young children are kept from growing well. The prevalence of stunting and underweight in under-five children in those five Member States are presented in Table 1, and show marked inter-country differences. Income levels play a definite role. Comparing the prevalence of underweight among under-five children in the lowest quintile to prevalence among children from the highest quintile of the income distribution, the ratios in Guyana, Suriname and Haiti were 2.7, 1.8 and 3.6, respectively. Thus under-five children from families at the lowest income levels are much more likely to be underweight compared with children from high-income families.

TABLE 1: **Prevalence of stunting and underweight in under-five children 2006–2010**

SELECTED COUNTRIES	PREVALENCE	
	Stunting	Underweight
Belize	22%	04%
Guyana	18%	11%
Haiti	29%	18%
Jamaica	04%	02%
Suriname	11%	07%

Source: UNICEF, 2012

The high prevalence of overweight and obesity among adults as well as children was already signalled as a serious public health problem in the Region in the 1980s and 1990s. And it seems that, although no recent prevalence data are available, this problem persists even today, being linked to food consumption patterns as well as changes in lifestyles, which may generally be characterized as sedentary. In this respect it is important to stress that the presence of obesity also reflects a situation in which the right to adequate food is not realized.

According to data for the first part of the last decade, prevalence rates among young children in CARICOM Member States ranged from 3.9 percent to 6 percent, and higher percentages were reported for adolescents. Evidence shows that the prevalence of obesity is considerably higher in adult populations, and that there is a distinct gender bias: adult women are much more likely to be overweight or obese than adult men. Figures reported by the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) about twenty years ago for four Member States already indicated a male obesity prevalence ranging from 7 to 14 percent, compared with a female obesity prevalence ranging from 22 to 34 percent. Data from Jamaica showed an obesity prevalence of 30.7 percent among women, but only 6.7 percent among men (Jackson et al., 2003). Data reported for Barbados indicate that the probability of being overweight or obese increases with factors such as: lower educational attainment, being employed, lower per capita food expenditures, increasing age (up to 65+), low food diversity in the daily diet, and being a woman (FAO, 2005). Prevalence rates of hypertension reported for several Member States also show a gender bias: 18.1 percent, 13.3 percent and 14.1 percent for men in Barbados, Jamaica and Saint Lucia, respectively; for women, the rates were 23.9 percent, 20.8 percent and 21.7 percent, respectively (FAO, 2005).

Iron-deficiency anaemia is the most prevalent nutritional disorder. Again, recent data on prevalence do not seem to be available. But data reported early in the last decade indicate that women in particular – especially pregnant women – are the most affected, as are young children. Data on pregnant women in several CARICOM Member States, published by the CFNI for 1997–1998, indicated a prevalence that ranged from 17 to over 50 percent. Data cited in FAO's Nutrition Country Profiles of 2003 indicated that during the 1990s, prevalence rates of iron deficiency among under-five children ranged from 31 percent to 56 percent. Data reported for Barbados indicated that: (a) women had significantly lower mean micronutrient adequacy scores than men, (b) mean micronutrient adequacy scores among women increased with age up to 65+ years, and (c) the lowest scores were found among women under 30 years of age (FAO, 2003).

Vitamin A deficiency appears not to be highly prevalent in any of the CARICOM Member States, but it may be present in sub-clinical forms in particular locations. The same may be said for iodine deficiency. No data are available to indicate whether Vitamin A supplementation takes place in any of the Member States, and if so, what the coverage

rates are for the under-five population, for example. For the few Member States for which data are available, it appears that well over 90 percent of households consume iodized salt.

Stability of food supplies and food access

A report prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2006) raises a particularly worrisome issue, namely, that changes in consumption patterns in the Caribbean have increased the dependency on imported foods. The substitution of the traditional diet, based on domestic produce, for a diet more intensive in cereals – like wheat and other staples that are mostly produced outside the region – reinforces the vulnerability of the Caribbean Region to escalations in world food prices. This, coupled with rising trade deficits in most of the CARICOM Member States, may mean fluctuations and a general decrease in domestic food availability in most of the Member States, unless domestic food production is significantly improved.

The recurring exposure to natural hazards, particularly in the East Caribbean, increases the vulnerability of specific population groups, adversely impacts their living conditions, and imposes considerable economic costs. For example, Hurricane Emily (in 2005) and Hurricane Dean (in 2007) jointly inflicted damages that are estimated to have totalled US\$230 million, affecting six CARICOM Member States. Damages from floods in Guyana in 2005 amounted to US\$2.6 billion, affecting 275 000 people (over one-third of the total population). The recently released WorldRiskIndex (2011) ranks 173 countries from high to low risk, combining the probability of exposure to natural disasters with the countries' vulnerability (UNU-EHS, 2011).⁸ Nine of the Member States are included in the relative ranking with the results as follows: Haiti (32), Suriname (47), Guyana (52), Trinidad and Tobago (90), Belize (102), the Bahamas (118), Jamaica (121), Barbados (161), and Grenada (163). Thus, Member States differ markedly in the relative ranking of risks to natural disasters.

Summary of inequities in the CARICOM Region

Table 2 provides a brief summary of existing inequities that are identified in the preceding assessment and that have relevance for food and nutrition security, and indeed to the protection and realization of the right to food. This inventory of inequities should serve as a guide to assess the intended and actual impacts of policies, action plans, and legislation. The question is whether, and to what extent, policy and legal instruments and measures are intended to address one or more of these inequities, and whether these in effect

⁸ Vulnerability has three components: susceptibility, coping capacity and adaptive capacity. Exposure to natural disasters refers to: earthquakes, storms, floods, droughts, and rise in sea levels.

(intentionally or not) do modify existing inequities (by either decreasing or increasing them). These are questions that will be addressed in subsequent sections that deal with the relevant policy and legislative environment in the Region.

TABLE 2: **Inequities in the CARICOM Region**

INEQUITIES				
Between Member States	Within Member States	Between women and men	Among age groups	Between generations
Wide range in median per capita national income levels	Highly skewed national income distributions	Higher unemployment rates for women	Higher youth unemployment rates than those of the general population	High current national public debts shifting greater financial burdens towards future generations
Different degrees of income inequality	Disproportionately high incidence of poverty among indigenous groups	Lower earnings for women	Higher prevalence of iron-deficiency anaemia among young children	
Differences in gender inequality	Higher poverty incidence in rural areas; urban poverty growing faster than rural poverty	Higher prevalence of obesity and hypertension among women	Lower micronutrient adequacy scores for women <30 years old	
Differences in exposure and vulnerability to natural disasters	Steadily rising food prices affecting low-income households more than higher-income households	Higher prevalence of iron-deficiency anaemia among women		
	Under-five children of low-income households more likely to be underweight than children from higher-income households			
	Low levels of investment and technological development in small-scale food crop production compared with large-scale production			

Macroeconomic projections

What does the immediate economic future look like for the CARICOM Member States? Table 3 presents some macroeconomic indicators, including projections for 2012 and 2013, which are compared with the previous two years. Overall the current projections indicate that modest growth in real gross domestic product (GDP) may be expected in 2012–2013, compared with the previous two years that saw contractions or no growth in many of the Member States. (In fact in 2010, 6 out of 14 Member States suffered a contraction in real GDP.) Some of the Member States showed real growth in 2011. This is projected to continue during the current period, when none of the Member States are thought to be experiencing any contraction, while some Member States (Barbados, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago) should experience accelerated economic growth. Even Haiti should experience accelerated growth. Inflationary pressures are expected to taper off to some degree in most Member States this year and next, compared with the previous two years. Nevertheless, several Member States (Barbados, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica and Suriname) are expected to experience relatively high levels of price inflation this year and next.

TABLE 3: **Macroeconomic indicators and projections**

CARICOM Member States	Annual change (%) real gross domestic product				Annual change (%) consumer prices			
	2010	2011	2012 ⁹	2013	2010	2011	2012	2013
Antigua and Barbuda	-8.9	-0.5	1.0	2.5	3.4	3.3	4.5	2.8
Bahamas	1.0	2.0	2.5	2.7	1.0	2.5	2.0	2.0
Barbados	0.2	0.5	0.9	1.5	5.8	9.4	6.4	5.6
Belize	2.7	2.5	2.8	2.5	-0.2	1.9	3.2	2.5
Dominica	0.3	0.5	1.5	1.7	3.2	2.3	2.5	2.5
Grenada	-1.3	1.1	1.5	2.0	3.4	3.0	3.2	2.2
Guyana	4.4	4.2	3.9	6.3	3.7	5.7	5.5	5.6
Haiti	-5.4	5.6	7.8	6.9	4.1	7.4	7.7	7.0
Jamaica	-1.4	1.5	1.0	1.0	12.6	7.5	6.9	6.8
Saint Kitts and Nevis	-2.7	-2.0	1.0	1.8	1.0	5.4	2.8	1.8

9 Data for 2012 and 2013 are projections.

TABLE 3: **Macroeconomic indicators and projections** (cont.)

CARICOM Member States	Annual change (%) real gross domestic product				Annual change (%) consumer prices			
	2010	2011	2012 ⁹	2013	2010	2011	2012	2013
Saint Lucia	3.4	0.2	1.9	2.4	3.3	2.8	3.2	2.3
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	-1.8	-0.4	2.0	2.0	0.8	3.2	2.7	1.6
Suriname	4.5	4.5	4.9	5.4	6.9	17.7	6.3	5.5
Trinidad and Tobago	0.0	-1.3	1.7	2.4	10.5	5.1	5.4	4.0

Source: IMF, 2012; Tables A4 and A7



V. The Legal Environment for the Right to Food

In order to assess how the right to adequate food is protected by law, this chapter provides a brief general overview of CARICOM Member States' international human rights obligations, constitutional and human rights law, and human rights institutions. For a list of documents consulted for this assessment, please see the section titled: Legislation and Legal Instruments Consulted, which may be found after the References at the end of this report.

CARICOM human rights instruments and associations

The Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community

The Charter was endorsed by CARICOM as a regional benchmark for the rights, freedoms and obligations of the Caribbean people, by a resolution adopted 19 February 1997. It recognizes civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights such as the right to work and the right to education. The Charter demonstrates the commitment of CARICOM Member States to the fundamental principles of human rights and freedoms, and the importance of this commitment in the regional integration process. Although the Charter is legally non-binding, the leaders in adopting the Charter declared that it is an important element of the Community's structure of unity to deal with matters such as: free press; a fair and open democratic process; the effective functioning of the parliamentary system; morality in public affairs; respect for fundamental civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights; the rights of women and children; respect for religious diversity; and greater accountability and transparency in government (B. Narinesingh, personal communication, 2011).

PANCAP HIV/AIDS Law, Ethics and Human Rights in the Caribbean (LEHR) Project

The Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework on HIV/AIDS (CRSF) is a regional effort against discrimination and social exclusion suffered by persons living with HIV/AIDS. Priority Area 1, “*Advocacy, Policy development and Legislation*”, of the CRSF aims at achieving an enabling environment that fosters universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services. In this area of work, reducing stigma and discrimination through support for the development of policies, programmes and legislation that affirm human rights, and counter deep underlying social barriers, is an essential aspect.

The PANCAP HIV/AIDS Law, Ethics and Human Rights in the Caribbean (LEHR) Project (2003–2008) was implemented by the Pan Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS of the CARICOM Secretariat, with a mandate to respond to the legal, ethical and human rights challenges posed by HIV and AIDS in the Caribbean. The project aimed at improving policy and legal frameworks, at regional and national levels, to help reduce stigma and discrimination against persons living with HIV/AIDS. To achieve this outcome, assessments of legal frameworks were conducted from 2003 to 2008, in Grenada, Guyana, Dominica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia and Saint Kitts and Nevis. Regional guidelines for HIV and AIDS law and policy reform were drafted in order to formulate a common policy and regional model legislation. Six civil society organizations were provided with funding and technical assistance to improve the access to and the availability of quality legal, health and human rights-related services.

The Caribbean Court of Justice

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), based in Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago), was established in 2001, as an institution of the Caribbean Community. The CCJ is a unique institution. Exercising both an appellate and an original jurisdiction, the institution functions as a *domestic* final court of appeal *shared by several sovereign states* (appellate jurisdiction), and as an *international* tribunal responsible for interpreting and applying the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community, including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (original jurisdiction).

In its appellate jurisdiction, the CCJ applies the national laws and rules of common law of the CARICOM Member States from which it is hearing appeals, and which have replaced the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council with the CCJ. In the exercise of its original jurisdiction, the CCJ performs the role of an international court, applying rules of international law in interpreting and applying the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. This means that the CCJ judges are both international and domestic judges, and are more likely to be influenced by both international and domestic legal orders, while increasing the likelihood that international law be relied upon in their rulings.

Barbados, Guyana and Belize are currently the only CARICOM Member States that allow the CCJ to function as an appellate court, hearing appeals and making determinations in both civil and criminal cases that it receives from common law courts. An appellate jurisdiction has the scope of reviewing decisions, and thus ensures a higher level of human rights protection. The Prime Minister of Jamaica has expressed her intention to establish the CCJ as the appellate court. Should Haiti or Suriname wish to participate in the appellate jurisdiction of the CCJ, there might be the need for some changes in the regulations, since both have civil law jurisdictions.

Legal systems

Most CARICOM Member States follow the common law system in the English tradition (see Box 1). This has implications for the application of international law, for the constitutional structure and protections, and for human rights institutions. The latter vary somewhat between common law and civil law countries. But despite the differences, over the years the two systems have exerted reciprocal influences on each other, as characteristics of one legal tradition have been utilized or emulated by the other. Thus, for example, written legislation is today an important source of law also in the common law countries, while the influence of previous judicial decisions is acknowledged in civil law systems. Therefore, legal tools such as framework laws are equally feasible for countries following either common law or civil law traditions.¹⁰

CARICOM Member States that do not follow a purely common law system are Guyana (pluralistic common law and civil law), Saint Lucia (based on English common law, but also strongly influenced by French civil law). In addition, two Member States belong to the civil law tradition: Haiti (French system) and Suriname (Dutch system).

10 FAO promotes framework laws on the right to food. See FAO, 2009.

BOX 1: Common Law versus Civil Law Systems

The common law tradition evolved chiefly from three English Crown courts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: the Exchequer, the King's Bench, and the Common Pleas. Today, it applies (with some exceptions) in all English-speaking countries and in the Commonwealth. One of the essential characteristics of common law is the structure and development of its legal rules, which appear, for the most part, in reported judgements and are often referred to as "judge-made law". This phenomenon resulted in a doctrine called judicial precedent, whereby a judge analyses previous court decisions to find a general principle in each of them and to transfer these principles to a current dispute that needs to be decided.

The civil or Romano-Germanic legal tradition has its origins in continental Europe, and is also followed in Latin America, large parts of Africa, the countries of the Near East, Japan and Indonesia. The most fundamental and distinguishing feature of the civil law tradition is its reliance on statute, in the form of a code, as the ultimate legal source and technique.

Ratification and application of human rights instruments

CARICOM Member States have generally ratified the human rights instruments most relevant to the right to food (see Table 4). All of them have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)¹¹ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).¹² However, five CARICOM countries are not yet legally bound by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)¹³ and three Member States have not ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).¹⁴

At the regional level, all CARICOM Member States belong to the Organization of American States, which has its own regional system of human rights protection. Seven countries have ratified the American Convention of Human Rights (ACHR),¹⁵ and four of those also recognize the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights for the investigation of human rights violations at the national level. As for the Additional

11 Recognizes the right of pregnant and lactating women to special protection with regard to nutrition in Article 12, and rural women's access to land, water and services in Article 14.

12 Recognizes the right to health, including nutrition in Article 25 and the right to an adequate standard of living, including nutrition in Article 27.

13 Recognizes the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, and the fundamental right to be free from hunger in Article 11.

14 Recognizes the right to life in Article 6, and the right to be free from torture, inhumane and degrading treatment in Article 7.

15 Contains a general provision on economic, social and cultural rights in Article 26.

Protocol to the American Convention in the area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights – “Protocol of San Salvador” (PSS)¹⁶ – only Suriname ratified this regional instrument in 1990. Table 4 provides additional details.

TABLE 4: Ratification of human rights instruments

	ICESCR	CEDAW	CRC	ICCPR	ACHR	PSS
Antigua and Barbuda	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Bahamas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Barbados	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ J ¹⁷	✗
Belize	S ¹⁸	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Dominica	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Grenada	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Guyana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Haiti	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓ J	✗
Jamaica	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Saint Kitts and Nevis	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Saint Lucia	✗	✓	✓	S	✗	✗
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Suriname	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ J	✓
Trinidad and Tobago	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ J	✗

The legal tradition of the anglophone countries of the Caribbean (and Saint Lucia) represents a dualist system, which means that conventions are not automatically incorporated into domestic legislation upon ratification. Before courts can apply the treaty provisions, national legislation has to take them up. This does not necessarily mean that the treaties have no effect as can be seen in Box 2, and as reported by Gonsalves, C. in Eide and Kracht (2007).

16 Recognizes the right to food in Article 12.

17 J stands for having recognized the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

18 Signed but not ratified.

BOX 2: Supreme Court in India

In India, a common law country, the Supreme Court regards human rights treaties to be important tools for the interpretation of national legislation. The Court will choose the interpretation of national law that is most consistent with the international treaty, and apply international treaty provisions as long as they are not in direct conflict with domestic law. In the past, the Court even took a step further and held that international treaties that add to the rights of citizens are automatically enforceable, while international conventions that take away existing human rights require domestic legislation to be enforceable.

It is also noteworthy that in Belize, although it is a common law country, the United Nations Resolutions and Convention (Enforcement) Act No. 32 of 2006 provides generally for the enforcement of UN resolutions and conventions.

Article 154(A) (1) of the Constitution of Guyana provides that every person, as contemplated by the respective international treaties to which the country has acceded, is entitled to the human rights enshrined in those international treaties. The treaties are listed in the Fourth Schedule to the Constitution and include ICESCR, CEDAW and CRC.

In Haiti, which follows the French civil law tradition, the direct applicability of international law is provided for in Article 276.2, which states that international law has primacy over national legislation.

In Suriname, which follows the Dutch civil law tradition, Article 105 of the Constitution provides for direct applicability of international agreements, and Article 106 provides that provisions of national legislation that contravene such agreements shall not be applied.

Constitutional protection

The CARICOM countries that follow the common law system generally have similar constitutional protections, as seen in Table 5. The countries that have different legal systems, namely Haiti and Suriname, tend to structure their human rights provisions differently and also focus to some extent on different rights (see Table 4). While Saint Lucia is influenced by civil law, its constitution follows the common law model. Guyana, which has a pluralistic system, has a very different constitution as discussed below.

Thus, the common law countries protect the right to life, freedom from torture and inhuman treatment, non-discrimination and protection of property rights; they also provide for allegations of violations of constitutional rights to be brought directly to a higher court (the High Court or Supreme Court, depending). With the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, the constitutions are similarly structured: some even have the same numbering of provisions.

Table 5 demonstrates the typical constitutional protections found in the common law countries, as well as differences from civil law countries. For example, the common law countries do not tend to have provisions protecting socio-economic rights. However, the protections that are afforded may be interpreted as being relevant to the right to food. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) recognizes the right to life. The Human Rights Committee, which issues authoritative interpretations of the ICCPR, states in General Comment 6 that

“the right to life has been too often narrowly interpreted. The expression ‘inherent right to life’ cannot properly be understood in a restrictive manner, and the protection of this right requires that States adopt positive measures. In this connection, the Committee considers that it would be desirable for States parties to take all possible measures to reduce infant mortality and to increase life expectancy, especially in adopting measures to eliminate malnutrition and epidemics.”
(Human Rights Committee, 1994)

TABLE 5: **Constitutional human rights provisions**

	Right to life	Freedom from torture and inhuman treatment	Non-discrimination	Protection from deprivation of property	Recourse directly to high / supreme court
Antigua and Barbuda Constitutional Order of 1981	Art. 4	Art. 7	Art. 14	Art. 9	Art. 17
Bahamas Constitution of 1973	Art. 16	Art. 17	Art. 27	Art. 27	Art. 28
Barbados Independence Order, 1966	Art. 12	Art. 15	Art. 23 ¹⁹	Art. 16	Art. 24
Belize Constitution of 1981	Art. 4	Art. 7	Art. 3	Art. 17	Art. 20
Dominica Constitution of 1978	Art.2	Art. 5	Art. 1	Art. 6	Art. 16
Grenada Constitutional Order of 1973	Art. 2	Art. 5	Art. 13	Art. 6	Art. 16

19 General protection against discrimination.

TABLE 5: **Constitutional human rights provisions** (cont.)

	Right to life	Freedom from torture and inhuman treatment	Non-discrimination	Protection from deprivation of property	Recourse directly to high / supreme court
Guyana Act No. 2 of 1980	Art. 138	Art. 141	Art. 149	Art. 19	Art. 153
Haiti Constitution of 1987	Art. 19 ²⁰	—	Art. 19 ²¹	Art. 36 (Section H)	—
Jamaica (Constitution) Order in Council 1962	Art. 14	Art. 17	Art. 24 ²²	Art. 18	Art. 25
Saint Kitts and Nevis Constitutional Order 1983	Art. 4	Art. 7	Art. 15	Art. 8	Art. 18
Saint Lucia Constitutional Order 1978	Art. 2	Art. 5	Art. 13	Art. 6	Art. 16
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Constitutional Order 1979	Art. 2	Art. 5	Art. 13	Art. 6	Art. 16
Suriname Constitution of 1987	Art. 14	Art. 9	Art. 8	Art. 34	x ²³
Trinidad and Tobago Constitution of 1976	Art. 4a	Art. 5.2.b ²⁴	Art. 4	—	Art. 14

20 Right to life, health and respect of the human person.

21 Article 19 protection “without distinction”.

22 In 2010, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations reiterated the absence of sex as a prohibited ground of discrimination in Article 24 of the Constitution, and requested Jamaica to provide information on the status of the Constitutional Amendment Bill.

23 Article 10: “Everyone shall have, in case of infringement of one’s rights and freedoms, a claim to an honest and public treatment of his complaint within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial judge.”

24 Parliament may not impose or authorize the imposition of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment.

All constitutions in the CARICOM Region, except for the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago, protect the right to property, and prescribe that individual property can only be taken away under certain conditions, including the payment of compensation. This is important for the right to food of those who rely on their assets (including food) for their livelihoods, such as farmers. The principle of non-discrimination has a broader application than constitutionally recognized human rights. Discrimination on the basis of race, sex, language, or religion with regard to access to any goods or services is generally considered illegal in itself.

Guyana's Constitution provides in Article 40(1) for a basic right to "a happy, creative and productive life, free from hunger, disease, ignorance and want", as well as recognizing the right to work (Article 22); the right to free education (Article 27) and medical care (Article 24); the right to property (Article 19); and equal pay for women (Article 29).²⁵

Article 22 of the Haitian Constitution recognizes the right to adequate housing, education, food and social security.

Article 6 of the Constitution of Suriname sets out the social objectives of the State as including the guarantee of a government policy aimed at raising the standard of living and of well-being of the society, based upon social justice and the integral and balanced development of State and society. Furthermore, in Chapter VI on social, cultural and economic rights and obligations, Article 24 provides that the State shall take care of the creation of conditions in which an optimal satisfaction of the basic needs for work, food, health care, education, energy, clothing and communication is obtained.

Human rights institutions

No CARICOM Member State has a human rights institution as understood by the Paris Principles on national human rights institutions.²⁶ However, almost all countries in the CARICOM Region have Ombudsman offices that deal with cases of bad administration. Their names and mandates, however, differ from each other (see Table 6). In Saint Lucia the Ombudsman is called Parliamentary Commissioner, while in Jamaica there are two institutions which enhance the promotion and protection of human rights: the Independent Commission of Investigations (INDECOM), which was created in 2010; and the office of Public Defender, which was created in 1999, and defends the constitutional rights of citizens.²⁷ There is also a Political Ombudsman,

25 On the other hand, some political rights are limited – notably freedom of expression, by national interest and the state's duty to ensure fairness in the dissemination of information.

26 See <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r134.htm>

27 The INDECOM was established to conduct investigations on the "actions of the Security Forces and other agents of the State that result in death or injury to persons or the abuse of the rights of persons; and for connected matters." (The Independent Commission of Investigations Act, 2010).

established in 2002, who deals mainly with problems arising between political parties – close to election time, in particular – but this is not a regular ombudsperson office, nor a human rights commission. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines there is a Parliamentary Commission on human rights, but this is not an independent human rights institution as normally understood.

TABLE 6: Human rights institutions

	Ombudsman	Public Defender	Human rights commission(s)
Antigua and Barbuda	Ombudsman Act, 1994	—	—
Bahamas	—	—	—
Barbados	Ombudsman Act, 1980	—	—
Belize	Ombudsman Act, 1994	—	—
Dominica	—	—	—
Grenada	Ombudsman Act, 2007	—	—
Guyana	Constitutional Arts. 191–196, Ombudsman Act, 1967 ²⁸	—	Constitutional Articles 212N and 212O ²⁹
Haiti	Office de la protection du citoyen, Constitutional Art. 207	—	—
Jamaica	—	Public Defender Act 1999 ³⁰	The Independent Commission of Investigations Act, 2010 ³¹
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Established in 2008	—	—
Saint Lucia	Parliamentary Commissioner, Constitutional Chapter IX	—	—
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	—	—	—
Suriname	—	—	—
Trinidad and Tobago	Constitutional Art. 93(1)	—	—

28 Post vacant since 2005.

29 This office is, however, yet to be established.

30 To investigate allegations of violations of constitutional rights.

31 Note that the mandate is limited to acts of the security forces resulting in death or injury.

The Ombudsman office can be established either by the constitution or by law. Guyana was the first country in the CARICOM Region that established an Ombudsman office. Created through constitutional provisions, it was subsequently enacted by the Ombudsman Act of 1967. Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Lucia and Antigua and Barbuda also established their Ombudsman offices by constitution, while Jamaica, Barbados and Belize created the Ombudsman or Public Defender office by law (see Table 5).

CARICOM Commonwealth Ombudsman offices have similar mandates. In Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Saint Lucia, the Ombudsman has discretion to investigate a complaint duly made by any person alleging that the complainant has sustained an injustice as a result of an administrative action.

The discretionary powers of investigation are limited, however, in Trinidad and Tobago as well as in Saint Lucia. In the latter, when investigating any matter leading to, resulting from, or connected with a decision of a Minister, “the Ombudsman shall not inquire into or question the policy of the Minister in accordance with which his decision was made.” In Belize, the Ombudsman’s power to investigate extends to “injury or abuse” which is defined as any act of discourtesy or refusal to act, and any act motivated by discrimination based on religion, language, race, sex, colour or creed.

The Public Defender in Jamaica on his or her own initiative, or after receiving a written complaint, may proceed to investigate any action where s/he is of the opinion that any person or body of persons:

- (a) has sustained injustice as a result of any action taken by an authority, or an officer or member of such authority, in the exercise of the administrative functions of that authority; or
- (b) has suffered, is suffering or is likely to suffer an infringement of his constitutional rights as a result of any action taken by an authority, or an officer or member of that authority.

According to Article 13 of the Public Defender (Interim) Act of 1999, after the investigation is completed, the Public Defender of Jamaica may provide recommendations such as:

- (a) that the action which was the subject matter of the complaint be reviewed;
- (b) that an enactment, rule or regulation, which causes or may cause injustice or infringement of constitutional rights, be altered;
- (c) that compensation be made to the complainant.

While the constitutional and legal mandate of the Ombudsman offices in the CARICOM Region do not explicitly mention the investigation of human rights violations, many of the cases in the past involved violations of a civil, political, economic, social or cultural right.

The majority of complaints received by the Ombudsman of Trinidad and Tobago in 2000 were against Prisons Authorities and they were mainly with respect to prison accommodations, provision of food and medical attention (Edoo, 2002). The Ombudsman offices investigate the complaints and provide recommendations to public officers involved in the allegations. However, their decisions are limited, as Ombudsman offices do not have the mandate to reverse any administrative action. Their function is considered as an alternative mechanism for the resolution of conflicts between individuals and bureaucracy and, unlike the judicial system, it represents an accessible mechanism for vulnerable people who find in the Ombudsman office free legal advice and orientation.

Guyana's Constitution foresees the establishment of five human rights-related commissions, which include the Women and Gender Equality Commission, the Indigenous Peoples' Commission, the Rights of the Child Commission and the Ethnic Relations Commission. These commissions are fully operational. A more general Human Rights Commission is yet to be established.

Recognition and application of human rights-based approaches

While constitutional and legal protection of the right to food is somewhat limited in most CARICOM Member States, many have expressed in their Universal Periodic Review reports to the UN Human Rights Council (or, formerly, the Commission on Human Rights) that they embrace a human rights-based approach to social services, and recognize certain socio-economic rights. For example, Belize's Ministry of Human Development and Social Transformation, and Dominica's Ministry of Community Development, Information, Gender Affairs and Culture, are tasked with employing a rights-based approach to the delivery of social services and the protection of vulnerable groups (UN General Assembly, 2009, 2009a). The Government of Grenada accepts that access to proper housing is a basic human right (UN General Assembly, 2010). The Government of Guyana adopts a rights-based approach to social security that includes the application of principles of comprehensiveness, accessibility, universality, adequacy, appropriateness and non-discrimination. It also recognizes, and puts significant emphasis on, the right to food (UN General Assembly, 2010a).

Conclusions on the justiciability of the right to food in CARICOM Member States

Based on the preceding analysis, it can be concluded that the judicial branch remains the most adequate mechanism to claim redress and remedies for the violation of fundamental rights. However, when violations are linked to bad administration of particular programmes that are meant to address food and nutrition insecurity, the offices of Ombudsman can play a significant role.

While courts in Guyana, Haiti and Suriname should be able to hear cases on the right to food, courts in common law countries are not likely to do so unless the cases are presented as right to food violations in conjunction with other rights, namely, the right to life, the right to be free from torture, property rights or non-discrimination.

The large majority of the constitutions in the Caribbean countries contain a general provision enabling individuals to claim the protection of their constitutional rights before the Supreme Court or High Court of the country. In practice, however, legal costs and lack of adequate knowledge and understanding of human rights at different levels may constitute a significant obstacle for people to successfully bring right to food grievances to court.



VI. The Policy Environment for the Right to Food

This section provides an inventory of the regional overarching policy framework, as well as of regional policy initiatives relevant to food security and nutrition in the CARICOM Region. The assessment of the potential impacts of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan on the protection and realization of the right to food is guided by the general inequities previously identified in Chapter IV. With respect to other regional policy initiatives, an assessment of their impacts on the protection and realization of the right to food is still to be undertaken.

Inequities and policy responses for the protection and realization of the right to food

The main message that is provided by the assessment of the food and nutrition security situation in the CARICOM Region is that, in general, there exist considerable inequities between and within Member States. We refer to Table 2: Inequities in the CARICOM Region.

The summary of the existing inequities provides us with a useful guide for the assessment of regional and national policies from a right to food perspective. In general, we would expect the impact of those policies to be a reduction in these inequities. Regional policies should have the effect of reducing the differences between CARICOM Member States, which means that regionally coordinated and implemented efforts should prioritize Member States that are the worst-off. To the extent that these effects depend on national policy measures, the regional policies should provide support to those national efforts in the Member States that aim to reduce inequities. In other words, regional efforts should be more than the sum of the efforts undertaken in each Member State.

The CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan

The CARICOM Secretariat led a highly consultative process that culminated in the formulation, with support from FAO, and approval of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy (RFNSP) in October 2010, and the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (RFNSAP) in October 2011. This represented the Region's response to high and rising food prices during 2007–2008 and the economic crisis of 2008–2009, together with already unacceptably high levels of poverty and inequality of income and access to resources, as well as an increasing prevalence of chronic nutrition-related diseases. Aware of these problems, CARICOM Member States requested action to ensure that the regional food production, processing, distribution, marketing, trade, food safety and agricultural public health systems be capable of providing safe, adequate, nutritious and affordable food for the Region's inhabitants at all times.

The Policy was based on an understanding that food and nutrition insecurity is a multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral issue, requiring an integrated set of concrete actions aimed at achieving the following: adequate food availability; food access; proper food utilization for good health, nutrition and wellbeing; and stable and sustainable food supplies. Moreover, attainment of food and nutrition security entails actions falling within the remit of many ministries and institutions at the national level and across regional institutions. It should also benefit from strategic alliances and partnerships with the international community. A holistic and coordinated approach is thus required.

A key principle underlying the Policy and Action Plan is the protection and realization of the right to food. Taking the inequities identified in Table 2 as a reference, we examine here the Policy and Action Plan in terms of the policy responses and actions that are included to address these inequities. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7: **Inequities, policy responses and actions**

Where are inequities found?	Identified inequities in the CARICOM Region	Policy responses/actions of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and/or Action Plan	Conditions to strengthen policy impact on the protection and realization of the right to food
Between Member States	Wide range in median per capita national income levels	No evidence that the intent of the RFNSP and RFNSAP is to prioritize Member States with the lowest per capita income levels. Diversity in economic conditions among Member States is recognized. The RFNSP contains a political reaffirmation of solidarity with Member States in situations of fragility characterized by high vulnerability to natural and socio-economic shocks.	RFNSP/RFNSAP need to be linked with national poverty reduction and economic development policies and action plans.
	Different degrees of income inequality	No specific regional policy response/action included to decrease income inequality in Member States where it is most pronounced.	RFNSP/RFNSAP need to be linked with regional and national social protection policies and action plans.
	Differences in gender inequality	No specific policy response/action included to prioritize Member States with greatest degree of gender inequality.	RFNSP/RFNSAP need to be linked with regional and/or national gender policies, particularly in Member States where gender inequality is most pronounced.
	Differences in exposure and vulnerability to natural disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the regional capacity for food crisis prevention and risk management through non-distorting intra-regional trade policies. • Develop regional food security reserve initiatives and mechanisms. • Develop insurance schemes for farmers. • Improve the regional capacity to forecast, plan, and monitor basic food supplies, nutrition, and inter- and intra-regional food trade, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) establishing an Integrated Regional Food and Nutrition Security Information and Early Warning System, and (b) developing a Regional Disaster Management and Mitigation Plan. 	Requires clear rules that give highest priority to the most vulnerable Member States to benefit from these regional initiatives.

TABLE 7: **Inequities, policy responses and actions** (cont.)

Where are inequities found?	Identified inequities in the CARICOM Region	Policy responses/actions of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and/or Action Plan	Conditions to strengthen policy impact on the protection and realization of the right to food
Within Member States	Highly skewed national income distributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement social safety programmes. • Create specific food distribution programmes for persons with disabilities. • Include relevant provisions in national legislation. according to state obligations of the right to food. • Promote equitable access to resources for all. 	<p>Clear targeting criteria need to be established for each group identified as food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity.</p> <p>Both legislative amendments and new legislation may be needed; in some cases, the regulatory route may be quicker.</p>
	Disproportionately high incidence of poverty among indigenous groups	No specific policy response targeted at indigenous peoples who are, however, identified as a vulnerable group.	<p>A better understanding of the causes of poverty, and of food insecurity among diverse indigenous peoples, needs to be obtained so that well-targeted measures can be implemented.</p> <p>Targeted action plans need to be developed with the full and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples.</p>
	Higher poverty incidence in rural areas; urban poverty growing faster than rural poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase earnings from food production and improve rural livelihoods (small producers), and livelihoods of marginalized urban dwellers. • Reduce the incidence of rural poverty through income diversification. 	Geographic targeting requires establishing criteria to identify areas with high concentration of food-insecure and vulnerable (FIV) households and small-scale producers.
	Steadily rising food prices affecting low-income households more than higher-income households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove non-tariff trade barriers (SPS-TBT barriers) to lower food marketing costs and to facilitate access and distribution of food within the Region. • Improve terms of trade between traditional crop exports and food imports. • Promote efficient food marketing and trade systems to increase the availability of safe and nutritious food in areas where FIV people reside. • Improve agricultural infrastructure, minimize post-harvest losses and reduce transaction costs. • Promote efficient utilization of land and water resources in areas with concentrations of small-scale producers. 	<p>Policy responses should target food commodities that have a significant share in the food consumption basket of low-income households.</p> <p>Geographic targeting requires establishing criteria to identify areas with high concentration of FIV households and small-scale producers.</p>

TABLE 7: **Inequities, policy responses and actions** (cont.)

Where are inequities found?	Identified inequities in the CARICOM Region	Policy responses/actions of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and/or Action Plan	Conditions to strengthen policy impact on the protection and realization of the right to food
Within Member States	Under-five children of low-income households more likely to be underweight than children from higher-income households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and support appropriate infant and young child-feeding practices at public/private hospitals, clinics, health centres and schools. Design and implement communication strategies to promote breastfeeding. Train health workers in breastfeeding practices. 	<p>Feeding practices to be promoted need to consider both nutrition and cultural aspects.</p> <p>The constraints to breastfeeding faced by mothers of low-income households need to be understood and addressed.</p>
	Low levels of investment and technological development in small-scale food crop production compared with large-scale production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote closer collaboration to accelerate the transfer and adoption of new technologies by small-scale farmers. 	<p>Technologies to be developed need to be appropriate and take full account of production constraints faced by small-scale farmers.</p> <p>Development process should fully involve small-scale farmers and capitalize on their indigenous knowledge.</p>
Between women and men	Higher unemployment rates for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase employment among the most vulnerable through microcredit schemes to diversify rural and urban activities, and through vocational training programmes, including those for women and youth, to improve skills and employability. 	RFNSP/RFNSAP need to be linked with regional and/or national employment and gender policies.
	Lower earnings for women	No particular policy response included to raise relative earnings of women.	RFNSP/RFNSAP need to be linked with regional and/or national employment and gender policies.
	Higher prevalence of obesity and hypertension among women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop regional population dietary goals in line with international standards. Establish public education programmes for physical activity in line with WHO recommendations. 	<p>Assessments needed of food consumption patterns of women from low-income households, in order to understand how women access, prepare and consume foods.</p> <p>Public education programmes should be culturally sensitive.</p> <p>Physical activity programmes should be adapted to take into account constraints that women from low-income households face.</p>

TABLE 7: **Inequities, policy responses and actions** (cont.)

Where are inequities found?	Identified inequities in the CARICOM Region	Policy responses/actions of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and/or Action Plan	Conditions to strengthen policy impact on the protection and realization of the right to food
Between women and men	Higher prevalence of iron-deficiency anaemia among women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop regional population dietary goals in line with international standards. • Establish public education programmes for physical activity in line with WHO recommendations. 	<p>Assessments needed of food consumption patterns of women from low-income households, in order to understand how women access, prepare and consume foods.</p> <p>Public education programmes should be culturally sensitive.</p> <p>Physical activity programmes should be adapted to take into account constraints that women from low-income households face.</p>
Among age groups	Higher youth unemployment rates than those of the general population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase employment among the most vulnerable through microcredit schemes to diversify rural and urban activities, and through vocational training programmes, including those for women and youth, to improve skills and employability. 	
	Higher prevalence of iron-deficiency anaemia among young children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence food tastes and preferences, starting in early childhood, in the education sector at Early Childhood Centres and primary and secondary schools. 	In Member States where the most nutrition-insecure children do not regularly attend educational facilities, alternative programmes are needed to reach them.
	Lower micronutrient adequacy scores for women <30 years old	No specific policy response targeted at women < 30 years old to address inadequacy of micronutrient status.	Policy responses to address higher micronutrient inadequacy among women need to specifically target women < 30 years old.
Between generations	High current national public debts shifting greater financial burdens towards future generations	No specific fiscal measures included.	<p>An impact study should be undertaken to examine how current fiscal policies and budget deficits affect FIV households.</p> <p>Based on the findings and results of the study, a dialogue needs to be established with fiscal authorities to advocate for fiscal reforms to lessen the impacts on FIV households.</p>

Other relevant regional policy initiatives

a. CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME)

The Grand Anse Declaration of July 1989 signalled a shift by CARICOM towards comprehensive market integration and a commitment to move towards a CSME. This led to the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community, including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy on 5 July 2001. The CSME is the legal institutional framework for collective regional policy and strategy, and the overarching framework for the elaboration of the regional agricultural development policy. A Single Development Vision was approved in 2007 to address the development of common economic, social and environmental policies as instruments to implement the CSME. Agriculture, fisheries and forestry were identified among the five priority economic drivers of the CSME.

Chapter Four, Part Two, Article 56 of the Revised Treaty defines the vision, goals, community agriculture policy and elements of an implementation strategy. It provides a framework for transforming regional agriculture into an internationally competitive, environmentally sound and sustainable sector contributing to *“improved income and employment opportunities, food and nutrition security, and poverty alleviation in the Community ...”*

The Treaty also addresses issues of human resources development, research and development, intellectual property rights, environmental protection, and standards and investment policies, which are all relevant, and indeed critical, to agricultural development.

b. CSME Community Agricultural Policy (CCAP)

Prior to the Revised Treaty of 2001, regional agricultural development was guided by the 1996 Regional Transformation Programme for Agriculture, which focused more narrowly on promoting enhanced productivity and competitiveness of identified commodities for regional and external markets. The latter gave way to the conceptualization of a CCAP at a time when the regional agrifood system was being buffeted by a range of issues, including preference erosion, volatility of energy prices, a global food crisis and global health concerns associated with chronic non-communicable diseases.

The CCAP was founded on the agricultural development goals indicated in the Revised Treaty. Its further articulation led to the specification in 2004 of the following nine key binding constraints as the basis for defining sector strategies, programmes and projects:

- limited financing and inadequate investment levels;
- outmoded/inefficient agricultural health and food safety systems;
- inadequate research and development systems;
- fragmented, disorganized private sector;
- weak distribution and management of land and water;

- deficient, uncoordinated risk management;
- inadequate transportation systems, particularly for perishables;
- weak, non-integrated information and intelligence systems and linkages and participation in growth markets;
- lack of skilled, quality human resources.

The Jagdeo Initiative³² focuses on addressing these key-binding constraints by implementing appropriate intervention strategies aimed at transforming regional agriculture into a market-oriented and internationally competitive sector. However, the slow pace of implementation of the Initiative is a source of major concern, despite the fact that mechanisms were put in place in 2008 with the establishment of a technical management advisory committee for each of the constraints. The Initiative would significantly contribute to alleviating the adverse impacts on agriculture of the binding constraints. Nevertheless, this only constitutes a necessary but not a sufficient condition for dealing with food and nutrition security in the CARICOM Region. The right to food is not mentioned anywhere.

c. Draft Regional Strategy for Agricultural Research and Development

For some time now a draft framework for improving the delivery of agricultural research and development services has been prepared. Yet to be finalized and formally presented, this regional strategy seeks to guide, direct and provide more effective coordination in the generation, adoption, adaptation and application of knowledge, science and innovation for agricultural development to the benefit of the Caribbean Region.

Efforts at increasing productivity and efficiency, thereby enhancing competitiveness along the entire value chain, were deemed as strategic to achieving the agricultural development goals of the region. The framework is grounded in the vision of the Jagdeo Initiative. The Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) has been recommended to take the lead role, with support from the CARICOM Secretariat, in articulating the strategy and accompanying action plans for approval by COTED.

d. Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Plan of Action 2012–2017

In light of the new challenges facing agriculture, OECS Member States mandated an update of the 2003–2004 OECS Agricultural Policy Framework and Plan. A final draft OECS Plan of Action 2012–2017 has been prepared, based on the goal to:

“transform the agricultural sector ... by taking a value chain approach to diversifying agricultural production and exports, intensifying a market led agro-industrial development, deepening institutional reform, expanding agribusiness and management

32 This thrust was spearheaded by the former President of Guyana, the Hon. Jagdeo.

and generally conducting agricultural production on a competitive market- oriented, internationally integrated and environmentally sustainable basis; and reducing poverty and promoting food and nutrition security.”

Programme Priority 2 of the Plan of Action focuses on alleviating poverty and food insecurity. Programme Priority 4 speaks to developing synergies with the CSME. This suggests scope and opportunity for coherence and coordination between CARICOM and OECS in the elaboration of national food and nutrition security policies and action plans in CARICOM Member States.

e. Caribbean Common Fisheries Policy (CCFP)

As mandated by the Heads of Government in 2003, a CCFP has been finalized to guide the conservation, management, sustainable utilization and development of the fisheries resources and related ecosystems, and the promotion of competitive trade for the present and future economic and social benefit of the people of CARICOM Member States.

The CCFP seeks, *inter alia*, to:

- promote the prudent use of fisheries resources for improving income and employment opportunities, alleviating poverty and contributing to food and nutrition security in participating states;
- transform the fisheries sector into being market oriented, competitive and environmentally sustainable;
- improve the welfare and livelihood of fishers and fishing communities;
- set out harmonized measures and procedures for fisheries management, trade in fish and fish products, fish quality assurance and the administration of the fishing industry consistent with the Revised Treaty and other relevant international agreements;
- build institutional capability to conduct research; facilitate the provision of technical assistance to participating states;
- safeguard the integrated coastal and marine ecosystems to enhance conservation.

The Policy is grounded in a number of fundamental principles, three of which are underscored: inclusiveness and stakeholder participation in all aspects of fisheries management, planning and development; equity in terms of rights, obligations, responsibility and benefits; good governance. Much now depends on the development of the plans and programmes to give effect to the policy.

f. Regional Strategy for the Management of Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

In 2003–2004, a Caribbean Invasive Species Working Group was established to focus on preventing the introduction of IAS, particularly given the threat to agriculture and trade.

A draft Caribbean Invasive Species Intervention Strategy (CRISIS) developed in 2004 was accepted by CARICOM as a working framework for enhanced regional cooperation on activities to safeguard agriculture, fisheries, human health and natural resources against IAS threats. CRISIS provides a basis for developing a Regional IAS Strategy, which envisages action in terrestrial, fresh water and marine ecosystems.

g. Regional Strategic Development Plan

The Heads of Government approved in July 2007 a report entitled “Towards a Single Development Vision and the Role of the Single Economy”, noting that it would “set the framework for the formulation of a regional strategic development plan which would elaborate on the Vision for the future socio-economic development of the Community.” The Vision proposed the following dimensions:

- Economic: to feature a regional development strategy containing indicative targets for economic growth, exports and investment in order to refine scenarios for growth of the regional economy; such a strategy would be useful as a guide to common policies and support measures, and in negotiations with external stakeholders.
- Social: to be characterized by adoption of a Regional Human Rights Convention; preparation of a Human Resource Development Strategy; adoption of a model of Corporate Social Responsibility as a common standard; establishing a community Social Compact among social partners – government, labour, business and civil society.
- Environment: main facet of which is the adoption of a common Environmental Regulatory Regime that protects, preserves, enhances and manages the productive potential of the natural environment, to ensure sustainable development. Consequently, investors and other economic actors operate across the entire space of the CSME on the basis of the same policies and regulations – publicly known, and applied in a predictable and transparent manner.
- Governance: with proposals including automatic application of decisions made by the Conference of Heads of Government at the national level in certain defined areas; creation of a CARICOM Commission with executive authority to implement decisions in certain defined areas; automatic generation of resources to fund regional institutions; strengthening the role of the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians; and extending the regional structure to give official recognition to the following mechanisms of particular relevance to the CSME – the Caribbean Business Council, the Caribbean Corporate Governance Forum, and the Civil Society Forum.

The Plan is intended to give strategic focus to the achievement of the Community goals through the five sectoral economic drivers (inclusive of agriculture), and through the provision of identified regional public goods to facilitate regional production integration,

development and economic transformation. The planning process is continuing with the preparation of a number of background documents to assist development of the Strategic Plan. For agriculture, these are a Caribbean Agro-Tourism Policy and an Intra-regional Agricultural Production and Trade Policy.

This overarching strategic enterprise is meant to lend coherence to the disparate regional initiatives currently in progress, and to others proposed. It is also intended to set the course for the future socio-economic development of the Community. Accordingly, it is critical that the Plan adequately addresses food and nutrition issues and challenges, and that a human rights perspective informs the studies and analyses upon which the strategy will be elaborated.

h. Caribbean Cooperation in Health Initiative – Phase III (CCH III)

The Caribbean Cooperation in Health Initiative (CCH) is a regional strategy, approved in 1986, to solve critical health problems through collaborative action to optimize resource utilization, promote technical cooperation among member countries, and secure funding for priority health projects. CCH III builds on two previous regional health strategies (CCH and CCH II), setting the strategy for the period 2009–2015. CCH III has reoriented the approach to public health in the CARICOM Region in order to focus on the following:

- people-centred development
- user involvement and participation
- leadership in public health coordinated across the Region
- outcome-oriented planning, delivery and evaluation
- stable funding for health and social protection

Priority areas include:

- communicable diseases
- non-communicable diseases (NCDs)
- health systems strengthening
- environmental health
- food and nutrition
- mental health
- family and child health
- human resource development

In the pursuit of food and nutrition security and a right to food approach, health and food and agriculture sectoral linkages are critical. Accordingly, it is important to examine the coherence between the CCH III and the RFNSP/RFNSAP. Both are regional initiatives with significant public health orientation and a genesis in participatory planning.

They focus, *inter alia*, on improving the nutrition and health status of the Caribbean population with respect to NCDs including diabetes, hypertension, overweight and obesity, and on the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices. The CCH III identification of both food and nutrition and family and child health as priority areas complements the RFNSP/RFNSAP promotion of healthy Caribbean diets and optimal nutrition to reduce NCDs, especially at early stages of the education system.

Institutional strengthening is prioritized under both, and is seen as critical in underpinning efforts aimed at ensuring the nutritious content and wholesomeness of food along the supply chain. The RFNSP/RFNSAP is concerned about sensitizing and educating relevant governmental stakeholders, regional and national CSOs and commercial food sectors about: the health consequences of current food consumption patterns among resource-poor households; the importance of good nutrition; and the maximal use of locally grown, nutritious foods to significantly reduce the incidence of NCDs. This resonates with the emphasis in CCH III on linking food, nutrition and health.

i. Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), 2010

The primary objective of this agreement is to provide regional and national support to the CARICOM in the establishment, management and operations of their National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems (NAHFSS), as they relate to the measures of the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. The latter forms part of the 1994 Accord that established the WTO, and intends to execute on behalf of member countries such actions and activities that can be more effectively and efficiently executed through a regional approach.

j. Draft Regional Industrial Policy

In accordance with Article 51 of the Revised Treaty, the goal of the Community industrial policy shall be to promote market-led, internationally competitive and sustainable production of goods and services for the promotion of the CARICOM Region's economic and social development.

A draft Regional Industrial Policy has been developed with the following aims:

- Promote cross-border employment of natural resources along with human resources, capital, technology and management capabilities for the production of goods and services on a sustainable basis.
- Establish linkages between economic sectors within and among member states of the CSME.
- Promote regional economic enterprises capable of achieving levels of production that are competitive in domestic and extra-regional markets.

- Establish a viable micro- and small economic enterprise sector.
- Enhance and diversify production of goods and services for both export and domestic markets.
- Promote sustained public-private collaboration to secure market-led production.
- Enhance industrial production on an environmentally sustainable basis.
- Establish a stable industrial relations climate to foster higher levels of productivity.

Although a work in progress, the draft policy document is in a considerably advanced stage to be analysed in order to determine whether there is coherence with the food and nutrition security policy.

k. Consumer Protection

Article 30 (v) of Protocol VII which amends the Treaty establishing the Caribbean Community make provisions for Member States to:

- Promote the interest of consumers by providing services, *inter alia*, to encourage and ensure: protection of life, health and safety of consumers; satisfaction of safety regulations, standards and codes; provision of adequate information to consumers to enable the making of informed choices; development of independent consumer organizations; adequate and effective redress for consumers.
- Protect the interest of consumers by enacting harmonized legislation to provide, *inter alia*, for: prohibition of production and supply of harmful defective goods, including measures for removal of such goods from the market; goods supplied to be labelled in accordance with standards and specifications prescribed by the competent authorities; provision of services to comply with applicable regulations, standards and codes; violations of consumer safety standards by producers/suppliers to be appropriately sanctioned, and the relevant civil or criminal defences to such violations to be available to defendants.

Article 30 (c) of the Protocol provides for the establishment of a Commission, which shall, *inter alia*, provide support to Member States in promoting and protecting consumer welfare. In this regard, the Commission shall assist Member States in the enhancement of consumer education and welfare by:

- taking such measures as necessary to ensure that unfair trade practices are discouraged and eliminated;
- promoting product safety standards as part of programmes of consumer education to assist consumers to make informed choices in purchasing goods;
- reviewing the conduct of commercial practices to mitigate adverse impacts on consumer interests;

- conferring with consumer organizations at their request, offering such advice and information as needed;
- coordinating with government agencies and departments for effective education and guidance of consumers;
- conducting research and collecting and collating information on matters affecting the interest of consumers;
- compiling, evaluating and publicizing enactments for the protection of consumers, and recommending to COTED legislation considered necessary or desirable for consumer protection;
- promoting and monitoring, after consultations with relevant government agencies, enforcement of legislation affecting consumer interests;
- making recommendations to COTED for the enactment of legislation by Member States for the effective enforcement of the rights of consumers.

Model Consumer Protection Bill. The Legal Affairs Committee of CARICOM (made up of the Attorneys General of the Member States) is presently reviewing the latest draft of the Model Consumer Protection Bill. This Bill is being prepared pursuant to Article 185 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, which requires that Member States enact harmonized legislation to provide for the protection of consumer interests in the CARICOM. The main objective of the Bill is to provide for, *inter alia*, the promotion and protection of consumer interests in relation to the supply of goods and the provision of services, and to ensure protection of life, health and safety of consumers. It includes the establishment of a Consumer Affairs Commission in each Member State. The policy behind this Bill was approved by the Council for Trade and Economic Development in May 2011.

CARICOM has recently launched an online system, the CARICOM Rapid Exchange System for Dangerous Non-food Consumer Goods, allowing consumers in 14 Member States to alert authorities on dangerous products that they detect in the market. It was developed in response to concerns voiced by consumer bodies of the need to strengthen the CARICOM Region's market surveillance for unsafe consumer goods. The notification system covers non-food consumer products. This intervention is worth examining to ascertain the feasibility of its extension to agricultural commodities and food products.

I. Social Policies

Social protection is an aspect of social policy, and should be an integral part of overall development strategy. The shared commonality in risks and vulnerabilities across the CARICOM Region, together with the common issues and concerns, suggest that there are economies and synergies to be had from adopting a regional approach to social protection. Indeed, there has been much discussion on the issue over the years, especially given the following: the similarity in the main social protection instruments deployed

across countries; the scope for an integrated, more effective and comprehensive social protection system; the opportunity for better targeting to reduce costs and increase efficiency in service delivery; the enhanced capacity for data capture and use, for research to provide the evidence to facilitate programme design, and for monitoring and evaluation.

The CARICOM Agreement on Social Security was signed in Georgetown, Guyana on 1 March 1996 and entered into force on 1 April 1997. It is not in effect in Haiti and Suriname. The Agreement is meant to protect CARICOM nationals' entitlements to benefits, and provides for equality of treatment when they move from one CARICOM Member State to another. It is seen as key in facilitating the free movement of labour within the CARICOM single market. It applies to all persons who have worked in two or more countries that have implemented the Agreement. The Agreement covers contributory workers' protection in the form of invalidity pensions, disability pensions, old age and retirement pensions, survivors' pensions and death benefits.

With respect to child development, the CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) has reviewed specific issues of relevance including access to water, nutrition, food security, and health and safety, acknowledging the importance of designing child-centred interventions. It has also been made aware of the issue of childhood obesity by CFNI, noting the critical role that schools, community and parents should play in helping to prevent this phenomenon. It agrees that school feeding programmes form an integral part of a country's contribution to supplying children with safe and proper nutrition.

More diligent and rigorous data searches and analysis are required to ferret out reports and documents not referenced or readily available for review. These would be invaluable in providing insights, particularly in respect of progress made in social sector policy development at regional and national levels, and in finding out what important decisions were taken, and what initiatives were approved and adopted for implementation.

A qualitative analysis of these regional policy initiatives, undertaken in Table 8, indicates that they all contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the food and nutrition security context in the CARICOM Region, and speak to arrangements for effecting better coordination and coherence between regional and national levels. It is much less clear, except for the RFNSP/RFNSAP, how much opportunity has been provided for CSO/NGO participation in the development of these regional policies, and in their implementation. CSO/NGO participation does not seem to be anticipated in monitoring policy impacts. Additionally, considerations of the rights-based approach do not seem to have influenced development of the other policy initiatives.

The limited analysis here suggests that the motivation for the development of regional food and nutrition policy, strategy, and action in the Caribbean may not be directly linked

to the obligations of the State to effectively respect, protect and fulfil the right to food, particularly of the neediest and most vulnerable.

TABLE 8: Qualitative assessment of regional policy initiatives

Regional policy initiatives	Relevance to food and nutrition security context	Regional and national coherence	Participation of CSOs/NGOs
CARICOM Single Market and Economy	✓	✓	Limited
CSME Community Agricultural Policy	✓	✓	Limited
RFNSP/RFNSAP	✓	✓	Good
Draft Regional Strategy for Agricultural Research and Development	✓	✓	Negligible
OECS Plan Of Action	✓	✓	Limited
Caribbean Common Fisheries Policy	✓	✓	Some
Regional Strategy for Management of Invasive Alien Species	✓	✓	Some
Regional Strategic Development Plan	✓	✓	Some
CCH III	✓	✓	More information needed
Draft Regional Industrial Policy	✓	✓	More information needed
Consumer Protection Policy	✓	✓	Some
Social Policy	✓	✓	Some



VII. The Institutional Environment for the Right to Food

This section provides an inventory of selected regional institutions with mandates and activities related to food and nutrition security in the CARICOM Region. Some of these institutions have a coordination role, either among sectors or among country-level actors. Others are more directly involved in the implementation of policy measures, or in providing financial, technical and regulatory services. Some are public institutions, while others belong to the civil society sector. An expanded version of Table 9 below can be found in Annex 1 (Table A.1).

TABLE 9: **Regional institutions – CARICOM Region**

Institution/ Organization	Location(s)	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities
CARICOM Secretariat	Georgetown, Guyana (Delmas, Haiti)	<p>Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD): Promote improvement of health and education; establish policies to promote youth and women's development; promote and develop coordinated policies to improve living and working conditions; promote and establish sports and cultural programmes; promote programmes for a healthy human environment.</p> <p>Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED): Promote development and oversee operations of the CSME; evaluate, promote and establish measures to enhance production, quality control and marketing of industrial and agricultural commodities; establish and promote measures for structural diversification of industrial and agricultural production, and for marketing of services; promote and establish policies and measures to facilitate transportation, development of energy and natural resources, and development of science and technology; promote and develop policies for the protection and preservation of the environment, and for enhancement of external trade relations.</p>

TABLE 9: **Regional institutions – CARICOM Region** (cont.)

Institution/ Organization	Location(s)	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities
Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute	Kingston, Jamaica (St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago)	Food safety and food security: planning and policy analysis; health and nutrition surveillance; promotion and dissemination; human resources development.
Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute	St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago (10 country offices)	Improve quality of life of people in the Region through agricultural research and innovation, without compromising biodiversity, bio-safety, environmental sustainability and human health.
Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency	St Michael, Barbados	Reduce the risk and loss due to natural and technological hazards and the effects of climate change, in order to enhance regional sustainable development. Strengthen regional, national and community capacity to manage and coordinate responses to natural and technological hazards, and to the effects of climate change.
CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality	Bridgetown, Barbados	Establish and harmonize standards to enhance efficiency and improve quality in the production of goods and services; protect the consumer and the environment; improve trade.
Caribbean Public Health Agency	Trinidad and Tobago	Building knowledge and expertise in public health in the Region.
Caribbean Development Bank	St Michael, Barbados	Be a leading catalyst for development resources towards systematic poverty reduction through social and economic development. Functions are: to promote private and public investment; to mobilize resources for development; to assist member countries with optimal resource use for trade and production; to support regional and national financial institutions; to support a regional market for credit and savings.
Caribbean Human Rights Network (NGO)	St Michael, Barbados	Establish and maintain systematic communication between local, regional and international human rights agencies, and provide regional perspective on political and civil human rights issues. Activities: monitoring; information dissemination; coordination of regional human rights action programmes; promotion of human rights campaigns and fact-finding missions; facilitation of exchange visits.
Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (NGO)	St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago	Promote and advance the process of rural transformation, with focus on women and youth. Programme areas: information and communication technology; entrepreneurial development; trade; land; food security and the environment.

TABLE 9: **Regional institutions – CARICOM Region** (cont.)

Institution/ Organization	Location(s)	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities
Caribbean Policy Development Centre (Coalition of Caribbean NGOs)	Bridgetown, Barbados	Create awareness of, and influence decision-making on, key policy issues in development context. Thematic areas covered are: capacity building; governance; participation; sustainable livelihoods; climate change; trade liberalization.
Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples (NGO- Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago)	Trinidad and Tobago (Santa Rosa Karina Community)	Provide news and updates from the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean Region.
University of the West Indies	Mona, Jamaica (Cave Hill, Barbados; St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago)	Propel the economic, social, political and cultural development of Caribbean society through teaching, research, innovation, advisory and community services, and intellectual leadership.
ECLAC Sub-Regional Headquarters for the Caribbean	Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago	Foster economic integration; promote implementation of internationally agreed development goals; support sustainable development; help bridge economic, social and environmental gaps in Caribbean countries.
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture	San José, Costa Rica (14 country offices in the Caribbean Region)	Provide countries with timely, pertinent and comprehensive analysis and information on the global and regional food security situation and outlook, as an input in decision-making; increase availability of food produced by small-scale farmers; improve incomes of small-scale farmers to increase their food access.
Commonwealth Secretariat	London, United Kingdom (Country Offices)	Thematic areas: democracy and consensus building; economic development; education; environmentally sustainable development; gender; good offices for peace; health; human development; human rights; rule of law; public sector development; sport; youth.

At the apex are three overarching coordinating bodies, serviced by the CARICOM Secretariat, with a mandate to oversee implementation of the regional development agenda. They distil and determine development issues prior to decision-making by the Heads of Governments. These are:

- the Council for Finance and Planning (COFAP) which, *inter alia*, promotes and oversees coordination and convergence of macroeconomic policies of CARICOM Member States; execution of a harmonized policy on foreign investment; and adoption of measures for fiscal and monetary cooperation;
- the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) which oversees social sector development matters, promoting, *inter alia*, improvement of health and education, youth and women's development, and coordinated policies to improve living and working conditions; and
- the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) which promotes development and oversees the following: operations of the CSME, industry and agriculture, structural diversification, transportation, energy and natural resources, science and technology, and protection and preservation of the environment.

The decision has been taken to consolidate and integrate the functions and administration of two key regional health-related institutions – CFNI (food safety, food and nutrition security policy analysis and planning) and CEHI (pesticide residue analysis, food quality testing) – together with three other similar institutions into a Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA). The rationale appears to be that the continuing public health challenges demand rationalization of the functions of the regional health institutions to enhance synergies, provide more efficient and effective services, and better address new and emerging public health issues.

Key international and hemispheric institutions actively support regional and national development in strategic areas relevant to the right to food. These include organizations of the UN and Inter-American systems and of the Commonwealth, and are listed in Table A.2 (Annex 2). The key partners identified are FAO and IICA for food and nutrition security and agricultural and rural development issues, UNDP and ECLAC for overall national development planning, PAHO/WHO for food and nutrition security and public health issues, and the Commonwealth Secretariat for human development and governance issues.

Regional CSOs, NGOs and private sector bodies

CSOs and NGOs are key partners in the conduct of a right to food assessment because they represent the interests of the food insecure, empowering vulnerable groups to claim their rights and improve their access to food. It is important to know which ones are more

relevant and to ascertain what roles they play in the design of the food and nutrition security policy and plan, and what roles they can potentially fill in the implementation and monitoring that lie ahead. Other social partners from the trade union movement and the private sector also influence regional and national policy and action. Accordingly, they must also be identified for inclusion in the assessment.

Table A.3 (Annex 3) provides an initial list of regional CSOs, NGOs and private sector bodies that should be considered for inclusion in a right to food assessment in the CARICOM Region. These organizations cover areas that include: agriculture, fisheries, small farmers and rural development; labour and commerce; agribusiness; human rights; consumer protection; education, health, youth and gender; and environment and sustainable development. To complete the inventory and to add information for each of these organizations will require time and extended consultations across the Region.



VIII. Synthesis of Principal Findings

The principal findings of this assessment are highlighted here, following the same order in which the chapters are presented in the body of the report.

Main challenges to the right to food in the Caribbean context

Several main and interrelated challenges to the protection and realization of the right to food in the Caribbean can be identified:

- Chronically inadequate access to affordable and nutritious food for a segment of the population due high and rising food prices, low economic growth and high unemployment.
- Generally low local food production capacity.
- High dependency on food imports reflecting a low availability of locally grown foods making local food supplies subject to significant volatility in domestic food prices.
- Daily diets that shift consistently away from locally-grown produce to raw and semi-processed foods that are energy-dense, of animal origin and with high salt, sugar and fat content. The result is a higher prevalence of obesity and higher incidence of non-communicable diseases (diabetes, hypertension, stroke and heart disease).
- Frequently-occurring hurricanes, droughts and floods make sizable portions of the Region's population prone to temporary food insecurity. The havoc wrought by recent hurricanes demonstrates the lack of preparedness to deal effectively with their effects and impacts.

Food and nutrition security situation in the CARICOM Region

A number of structural inequities were identified in the FNS situation analysis. These inequities have relevance for food and nutrition security and for the protection and realization of the right to food.

Regional inequities consist of:

- a wide range in median per capita national income levels;
- different degrees of income inequality;
- inter-country differences in gender inequality;
- inter-country differences in exposure and vulnerability to natural disasters.

The following domestic inequities were identified:

- significantly skewed income distributions;
- disproportionately-high incidence of poverty among indigenous populations;
- higher poverty incidence in rural areas (but urban poverty incidence growing faster);
- steadily rising food prices with greater relative impacts on low-income households;
- children under the age of five in low-income households more likely to be underweight;
- low investment and little technological development for small-scale producers;
- higher unemployment rates for women compared with men;
- lower relative earnings of women compared with men;
- higher prevalence of obesity and hypertension among women;
- higher prevalence of iron-deficiency anaemia among women;
- higher prevalence of iron-deficiency anaemia in young children;
- higher youth unemployment rates than those of the general population;
- relatively low micronutrient scores for women < 30 years old;
- greater financial burden on future generations because of currently high levels of public indebtedness.

Population growth rates have tended to decrease over the last two decades, and the urban population share has shown a clearly increasing trend since 1990. Populations are getting older, resulting in increasing dependency ratios. Current projections indicate that modest growth in real gross domestic product (GDP) may be expected in 2012–2013, compared with the previous two years that saw contractions, or no growth, in many CARICOM Member States. Inflationary pressures are expected to taper off somewhat during 2013 and 2014, but several Member States are still expected to experience relatively high levels of price inflation.

Food crop production in CARICOM Member States, with the exception of Belize, Suriname and Guyana, has become a marginal economic activity carried out on a small scale, on marginal lands. Investment in food crop research, and in marketing, transport and distribution infrastructure to support food crop production, is limited. Domestic cereal production contributes to the national cereal supply in only four out of thirteen Member States, while domestic cereal production exceeds cereal imports in only three. Eroding terms of trade and the loss of trade preferences for traditional export crops mean decreasing export earnings, thus constraining general import capacity in most Member States.

High unemployment, income inequality and declining real income levels (due to rising market prices) point to an increasing number of households being vulnerable to inadequate access to affordable, nutritionally-adequate food. As productivity of traditional food crop production and market opportunities for these crops decline, so do food crop earnings, thus contributing to lower household income levels.

The high prevalence of child and adult overweight and obesity signals a serious public health problem, and is found side-by-side with child stunting and underweight. Iron deficiency anaemia is the most prevalent nutritional disorder, particularly affecting women (especially pregnant women) and young children.

Cereals like wheat, corn and other staples are produced mostly outside the CARICOM Region, which increases the Region's vulnerability to the escalation in world food prices. This, in turn, coupled with rising trade deficits in most CARICOM Member States, may mean fluctuating—and generally decreasing—domestic food availability in the future, unless significant improvements in domestic food production take place. Recurring exposure to natural hazards increases the vulnerability of specific population groups, reduces their living conditions and imposes considerable economic costs.

Legal environment for the right to food

Two important human rights instruments endorsed by CARICOM that have relevance for the right to food are: (a) the Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community, and (b) the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework on HIV/AIDS (CRSF). The legally non-binding Charter recognizes civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to work and the right to education. The Charter establishes that States shall endeavour to: (a) provide adequate social services and benefits for the population at large, and (b) ensure that the neediest persons have access to food, housing and other basic necessities (Article 21). Access to food is thus a political goal to be reached progressively, rather than a legally-enforceable human right. The CRSF on HIV/AIDS is a regional effort against discrimination and social exclusion suffered by persons living with HIV/AIDS.

The Caribbean Court of Justice exercises an appellate and an original jurisdiction. In its appellate jurisdiction, the Court applies national laws and rules of common law of CARICOM Member States. In the exercise of its original jurisdiction, the Court performs the role of an international court, applying rules of international law in interpreting and applying the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. Only three Member States allow the Court to function as an appellate court in both civil and criminal matters from common law courts.

The legal system in most CARICOM Member States consists of a common law system in the English tradition, while in four Member States it consists of a civil law system. The constitutional structure and protections and the human rights institutions vary somewhat between common law and civil law countries, as does the application of international law. Countries that follow the common law system generally have similar constitutional protections, while countries that have different legal systems tend to structure their human rights provisions differently, and to focus on different rights, to some extent. The common law countries protect the right to life, non-discrimination, and freedom from torture and inhumane treatment, while allegations of violations of constitutional rights can be brought directly to a higher court. Common law countries tend not to have provisions protecting socioeconomic rights. However, the protections that are afforded may be interpreted as being relevant to the right to food. Constitutional and legal protection of the right to food is generally limited in most Member States. However, many of the countries have indicated to the United Nations Human Rights Council a willingness to embrace a human rights-based approach to social services, and to recognize certain socioeconomic rights.

CARICOM Member States have generally ratified the international human rights instruments most relevant to the right to food. However, five CARICOM Member States are not yet legally bound by the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. As far as regional instruments are concerned, seven Member States have ratified the American Convention of Human Rights, of which four also recognize the investigative jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights for human rights violations. Only one member State has ratified the Additional Protocol to the American Convention in the area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (“Protocol of San Salvador”).

None of the CARICOM Member States has a human rights institution as understood by the Paris Principles, but many have Offices of the Ombudsman, established either by the constitution or by law, with a mandate to investigate complaints of bad administration on behalf of aggrieved citizens. The constitutional and legal mandates of the Office of the Ombudsman in the CARICOM Region do not mention explicitly the investigation of human rights violations. Nevertheless, many past cases have dealt with violations of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Policy environment for the right to food

In analysing the extent to which the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan addresses the structural inequities that were identified in the FNS situation analysis, a number of conclusions can be drawn. No specific policy response is included in the RFNSP and/or the RFNSAP in relation to seven of the identified inequities in the CARICOM Region, listed here:

- wide range of median per capita income levels among CARICOM Member States;
- different degrees of income inequality among Member States;
- differences in gender inequality among Member States;
- disproportionately high poverty incidence among indigenous peoples;
- lower relative earnings of women;
- lower micronutrient adequacy scores for women < 30 years old;
- high current public debts shifting greater financial burden towards future generations.

One might have expected that a regional policy and action plan would prioritize some measures that would target specific CARICOM Member States with lower median per capita income levels, and with higher degrees of income and gender inequality. These measures would need to be designed to stimulate income growth, and to reduce income and gender inequality. Some policy responses to the remaining 11 inequities can be found in the RFNSP and RFNSAP. In most cases, however, these policy responses need to be implemented with clear targeting criteria to ensure that they address the inequities effectively. Policy responses included in the RFNSP and RFNSAP need to link up closely with appropriate regional and national sector policies and action plans.

The inventory of the overarching regional policy framework demonstrates the relevance of various policy initiatives to food and nutrition security in the CARICOM Region. As such, these initiatives should contribute to policy coherence among national sector policies. However, the proposed interventions may be insufficiently evidence-based, and allow very limited participation by civil society in the implementation and monitoring of policy measures. The policy initiatives all contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the food and nutrition security context in the Region, and refer to arrangements for better policy coordination and coherence between regional and national levels. Coherence across sector policies and actions remains an issue of concern. The extent to which these regional policy initiatives address the identified structural inequities effectively still needs to be assessed.

Future right to food work would need, inter alia, to examine, assess, and (where applicable) make proposals for: (a) bridging gaps in policies, strategies and actions;

(b) effecting coherence of interventions across the national-regional and sectoral divides; (c) ensuring that the neediest and most vulnerable are targeted and their priorities addressed explicitly; (d) enhancing data/information systems for policy and programme targeting and monitoring, and for developing early-warning actions; (e) upgrading institutional capacity to deliver, (f) improving adequacy and coherence in the allocation of resources; and (g) effective participation and empowerment of communities, CSOs and NGOs in the design, review and monitoring of policy measures and initiatives.

Institutional environment for the right to food

The following are three overarching coordinating bodies, serviced by the CARICOM Secretariat, each with a mandate to oversee implementation of the regional development agenda: the Council for Finance and Planning (COFAP), the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), and the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED). COTED approved the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy in 2010 and the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan in 2011.

In order to enhance synergies, provide more efficient and effective services and address new and emerging public health threats better, the decision has been taken to consolidate and integrate the functions and administration of five regional health-related institutions into a Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA).

An initial list of regional CSOs, NGOs and private sector bodies shows that these organizations undertake actions in areas relevant to the protection and realization of the right to food that include: agriculture, fisheries, small farmers and rural development, labour and commerce, agribusiness, human rights, consumer protection, education, health, youth and gender, and environment and sustainable development.

Little information appears available in the public domain that might assist with the assessment of the institutional performance of regional organizations, particularly with regard to the degree to which they apply good governance practices that are based on human rights principles. Yet, in light of the intent of the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan with respect to the right to food and good governance, such assessments should be carried out periodically in transparent ways at the regional level.



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- ◆ American Convention of Human Rights, 22 November 1969.
- ◆ Antigua and Barbuda Constitutional Order, 1981.
- ◆ Antigua and Barbuda Ombudsman Act, 1994.
- ◆ Bahamas Constitution, 1973.
- ◆ Barbados Independence Order, 1966.
- ◆ Barbados Ombudsman Act, 1980.
- ◆ Belize Constitution, 1981.
- ◆ Belize Ombudsman Act, 1994.
- ◆ Belize United Nations Resolutions and Convention (Enforcement) Act No. 32, 2006.
- ◆ Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework on HIV/AIDS (CRSF), 2002.
- ◆ Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community, 19 February 1997.
- ◆ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 18 December 1979.
- ◆ Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 20 November 1989.
- ◆ Dominica Constitution, 1978.

- ◆ Grenada Constitutional Order, 1973.
- ◆ Guyana Act No. 2, 1980 (Constitution of Guyana).
- ◆ Guyana Ombudsman Act, 1967.
- ◆ Haiti Constitution, 1987.
- ◆ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 16 December 1966.
- ◆ International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 16 December 1966.
- ◆ Jamaica (Constitution) Order in Council, 1962.
- ◆ Jamaica Public Defender Act, 1999.
- ◆ Jamaica The Independent Commission of Investigations Act, 2010.
- ◆ Saint Kitts and Nevis Constitutional Order, 1983.
- ◆ Saint Lucia Constitutional Order, 1978.
- ◆ Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Constitutional Order, 1979.
- ◆ Suriname Constitution, 1987.
- ◆ Trinidad and Tobago Constitution, 1976.
- ◆ UN General Assembly, 1993. Resolution 48/134. Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (The Paris Principles).
- ◆ UN General Assembly, 85th Plenary Meeting, 1993. National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights. UN Doc. A/RES/48/134.



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ANNEX 1 – Table A.1: Regional institutions

Institution/ Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Principal Clients	Inter-institutional Linkages	Assessment
Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)	St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago (10 country offices) Dr Arlington Chesney, Executive Director	Improve quality of life of people in the Region through agricultural research and innovation, without compromising biodiversity, bio-safety, environmental sustainability and human health.	CARICOM Member States; Ministries of Agriculture; national agricultural institutions; farmers/producers	CEHI, CFNI, CGIAR, CIMH, CTA, FAO, IICA, OECS	Periodic evaluations commissioned by Board of Governors for internal use only. Continual technical assistance/donor funding by CTA and CFC implies positive performance assessment.
Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC)	Belize City, Belize	Key node for information on climate change issues, and on the region's response to managing and adapting to climate change in the Caribbean. Coordinates the Caribbean response to climate change, and is the official repository and clearing house for regional climate change data, providing climate change-related policy advice and guidelines to the CARICOM Member States through the CARICOM Secretariat. Is recognized by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and other international agencies as the focal point for climate change issues in the Caribbean; also recognized by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) as one of an elite few Centres of Excellence.	CARICOM Member States	CARDI, CDEMA, CIMH, PAHO/WHO, UNFCCC, UNEP	N/A
Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ)	Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago Rt. Hon. Sir Charles Michael Dennis Byron, President	The supreme judicial organ of CARICOM. Ensures uniform interpretation and application of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, underpinning and advancing the CSME. The final court of appeal of CARICOM.	CARICOM Member States	CARICOM Secretariat	N/A

ANNEX 1 – Table A.1: Regional institutions (cont.)

Institution/ Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Principal Clients	Inter-Institutional Linkages	Assessment
Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)	St Michael, Barbados Dr Warren Smith, President Manager, Information Services Unit Dr Denny Lewis Bynoe, Director of Economics	Be a leading catalyst for development resources towards systematic poverty reduction through social and economic development. Functions are: to promote private and public investment; to mobilize resources for development; to assist member countries with optimal resource use for trade and production; to support regional and national financial institutions; to support a regional market for credit and savings.	CARICOM Member States; Ministries of Finance and Planning, Sectoral Ministries	IADB, IMF, World Bank	N/A
Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)	St Michael, Barbados Mr Jeremy Collymore, Executive Director	Reduce the risk and loss due to natural and technological hazards and the effects of climate change, in order to enhance regional sustainable development. Strengthen regional, national and community capacity to manage and coordinate responses to natural and technological hazards, and to the effects of climate change.	CARICOM Member States; Ministries of National Security; national disaster / emergency management agencies; national meteorological organizations	CCCCC, CEHI, CIMIH, PAHO/WHO, UNEP	N/A
Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI)	Castries, Saint Lucia Ms Patricia Aquino, Executive Director	Analytical laboratory services: drinking and recreational water analysis, heavy metal testing and pesticide residue analysis; detection and quantification of heavy metals in water, plant and animal tissues and sediment; determination of pesticide types and levels in food/commodities (e.g. fruits and vegetables) and water.	CARICOM Member States; public and private sectors	FAO; Inter-American Water Resources Network; IWCAM (Integrating Watershed and Coastal Area Management in Caribbean SIDS); NOAA; PAHO/WHO; US National Centre for Environmental Health; US National Institute of Environmental Health Services.	N/A
Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI)	Kingston, Jamaica (St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago) Dr Fitzroy J. Henry Director	Food safety and security: planning and policy analysis; health and nutrition surveillance; promotion and dissemination; human resources development.	CARICOM Member States; Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Education, Trade, Social and Community Development	CEHI, FAO, IICA, OECS, PAHO/WHO	N/A

ANNEX 1 – Table A.1: Regional institutions (cont.)

Institution/ Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Principal Clients	Inter-Institutional Linkages	Assessment
Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)	Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago Dr Jerome Walcott, Project Manager	Consolidate and integrate functions and administration of existing five Caribbean Regional Health Institutions, including CFNI and CEHI, provide strategic direction in analysing, defining and responding to public health priorities of CARICOM in order to prevent disease, promote health and respond to public health emergencies; coordinate health response to disasters, in collaboration with CDEMA; functions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health emergency preparedness and response; • public health leadership; • information, education and communication; • research and policy development; • laboratory services; • surveillance and health analysis; • strategic planning and resource mobilization; • human resources development and training. 	CARICOM Member States; Ministries of Health; public and private sectors	PAHO, PHAC (Public Health Agency of Canada), UK Dept of Public Health, WHO	N/A
Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)	Belize City, Belize (Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) Mr Milton Haughton, Executive Director	Promote and facilitate the responsible utilization of the region's fisheries and other aquatic resources, for the economic and social benefits of the current and future population of the region.	CARICOM Member States, plus Anguilla and Turks and Caicos Islands; Ministries responsible for fisheries; national fisheries institutions; fisherfolk	CTA, EU, FAO, ICCAT, IDRC, JICA, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)	Funded by CIDA for many years and subject to performance assessments (not externally accessible, however).
CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ)	Bridgetown, Barbados Mr Winston Bennett, Chief Executive Officer	Regional centre for promoting efficiency and competitive production in goods and services, through standardization and verification of quality. Mandated to represent the interest of the CARICOM Region in international hemispheric standards work, to promote the harmonization of metrology systems and standards, and to increase the pace of development of regional standards, both for the sustainable production of goods and services in the CSME, and for the enhancement of social and economic development. Other objectives: protecting the consumer and the environment; improving trade.	CARICOM Member States	N/A	N/A

ANNEX 1 – Table A.1: **Regional institutions** (cont.)

Institution/ Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Principal Clients	Inter-Institutional Linkages	Assessment
Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat	Castries, Saint Lucia Dr Len Ishmael, Director General	Promote cooperation among OECS Member States at regional and international levels; promote unity and solidarity among Member States and defend their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence; assist Member States in the realization of their obligations and responsibilities to the international community; seek harmonization of foreign policy and (as far as possible) common positions on international issues and arrangements for joint representation; promote economic integration.	OECS Member States: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Associate Members: Anguilla and British Virgin Islands	CARICOM Secretariat, CDB, Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, ECCB (Eastern Caribbean Central Bank)	N/A
University of the West Indies	Mona, Jamaica (Cave Hill, Barbados; St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago) Office of the Vice Chancellor	Propel the economic, social, political and cultural development of Caribbean society through teaching, research, innovation, advisory community services, and intellectual leadership.	CARICOM Member States; Ministries of Education	CARICOM, CXC, national tertiary level institutions, UNESCO	N/A

ANNEX 2 – Table A.2: Key international and hemispheric institutions

Institution/Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Principal Clients	Inter-Institutional Linkages
Commonwealth Secretariat	London, United Kingdom Caribbean Region	Democracy and consensus building; economic development; education; environment; sustainable development; gender; good offices for peace; health; human development; human rights; rule of law; public sector development; sport; youth.	N/A	N/A
ECLAC Sub-Regional Headquarters for the Caribbean	Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago Chief	Foster economic integration; promote implementation of internationally agreed development goals; support sustainable development; help bridge economic, social and environmental gaps in Caribbean countries.	Member States	CARICOM Secretariat
FAO Sub-Regional Office	Bridgetown, Barbados Mrs Florita Kentish, Sub-Regional Coordinator	Achieving food security for all is at the heart of FAO's efforts – to make sure people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. FAO's mandate is to raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy.	Member States; CSOs/ NGOs; private sector	CARICOM, CDB, EU, IDB, IICA, ILO, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF, WB
Inter-American Commission on Human Rights	Washington, DC, USA Mr Santiago Canton, Executive Secretary	Promote and protect human rights in the American hemisphere.	N/A	N/A
Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)	Washington, DC, USA Luis Alberto Moreno, President Gerard Johnson, Manager Caribbean Country Department	Main source of multilateral financing and expertise for sustainable economic, social and institutional development in Latin America and the Caribbean.	Member States; Ministries of Finance; CARICOM	CDB, UN Agencies
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)	San José, Costa Rica (14 country offices in the Caribbean Region) Mr Gregg Rawlins, IICA Representative, Trinidad and Tobago and Coordinator, Regional Integration, Caribbean Region	Provide countries with timely, pertinent and comprehensive analysis and information on the global and regional food security situation and outlook, as an input in decision-making; increase availability of food produced by small-scale farmers; improve incomes of small-scale farmers to increase their food access.	Member States; Ministries of Agriculture; farmers/ agribusiness organizations	EU, FAO, IDB, UN Agencies

ANNEX 2 – Table A.2: Key international and hemispheric institutions (cont.)				
Institution/Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Principal Clients	Inter-Institutional Linkages
Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)	Washington, DC, USA (Present in 6 CARICOM countries) Mirta Roses Periago, Director	International public health agency working to improve health and living standards of the countries of the Americas; serves as the specialized organization for health of the Inter-American System; also serves as the Regional Office for the Americas of the WHO, and enjoys international recognition as part of the United Nations system; committed to providing technical support and leadership to Member States as they pursue their goal of health for all and the values therein.	Member States; Ministries of Health	CEHI, CFNI, ECLAC, FAO, IICA, UN Agencies
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	New York, USA (7 country offices in CARICOM)	UNDP is the United Nations' global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life; working and partnering with countries on their own solutions to global and national development challenges, and to their local development capacity.	Member States; CARICOM	ECLAC, FAO, PAHO/WHO, UNEP, UNICEF

ANNEX 3 – Table A.3: Regional organizations – CSOs, NGOs and private sector bodies

Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Comment
Caribbean Agribusiness Associations (CABA)	Trinidad and Tobago Mr Vassell Stewart, President	Founded as a non-profit company, CABA's membership is drawn from regional thematic food chain associations (agroprocessors, restaurants, hotels etc.), regional commodity associations (poultry, rice <i>et al.</i>), Caribbean diaspora agribusiness associations, and national chapters in each Member State. It is mandated to serve agribusiness interests by being an effective advocate before regional governments. It is also charged with facilitating coordinated planning and development of the regional agribusiness sector, by providing technical support services in agricultural contract production, agroprocessing, marketing, investment facilitation and information.	Chambers of Commerce/Chambers of Agriculture; large producers and products associations
Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY)	Mr Greg Rawlins, IICA Representative, Trinidad and Tobago	CAFY is an agricultural forum for youth supported by the IICA. It is open to all Caribbean nationals, youth groups and associations with an interest in agriculture and related fields. CAFY was formed in 2011 in response to a perceived lack of organized youth engaged in agriculture, and the need to address the aging farming population, among other concerns.	Youth development
Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)	Castries, Saint Lucia Ms Flavia Cherry, Interim Coordinator c/o CAFRA Saint Lucia PO Box 1599 Castries, Saint Lucia	A regional network of feminists, individual researchers, activists and women's organizations that define feminist politics as a matter of both consciousness and action. Committed to understanding the relationship between the oppression of women and other forms of oppression in the society, and working actively for change.	Women's organization/gender
Caribbean Association of Home Economists (CAHE)	Antigua and Barbuda D. Earla Musgrave-Esdaille, Home Economist; Education Officer – Early Childhood Development, Ministry of Education St. Michael, Barbados W.I. c/o Division of Human Ecology, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, Wilkey	A non-governmental organisation affiliated to the International Federation for Home Economics that is over one hundred year old. The association works in close alliance with the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) formerly the American Home Economics Association (AHEA), and is twinned with the Toronto Home Economics Association (THEA). CAHE has also worked closely with Ministries of Education, Health and Agriculture around the region as well as with the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI). As professionals and educators alike we share a common vision for the improvement of the quality of life for Caribbean citizens and also for the development of Home Economics in the region. CAHE offers a system professional certification for its members. In 2014 the Caribbean Association of Home Economists (CAHE) will be a highly- recognized regional organisation that influences regional policy making and Home Economics curricula towards improving the quality of life of families in the Caribbean.	Nutrition

Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Comment
Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC)	Trinidad and Tobago Carol Young, Chief Executive Officer 143 Abercromby Street (Cor Abercromby & Gordon Streets) P.O. Box 6541 TT Post, Maraval	An umbrella organization which represents the interests of the Caribbean private sector at a variety of regional and international meetings on economic, social and environmental policy. In the rapidly changing global economy, the Caribbean private sector must wrestle with many challenges at a regional level, underscoring the need for one voice to articulate and seek support for members' views on a variety of issues, through advocacy and interaction with major international and regional economic and governmental agencies.	Chambers of Commerce/Chambers of Agriculture; large producers and products associations
Caribbean Association of Nutritionists and Dietitians (CANDi)	Trinidad and Tobago Ms Dianne Charles, President Jamaica Mrs Sharmaine Edwards, Director Nutrition Services, Ministry of Health; VP CANDi 2009-2011 Antigua and Barbuda Ms Juanita James, National Coordinator Zero Hunger Challenge, Initiative; Chair, Education Committee, CANDi: 2011-2013	CANDi, is the professional organization of Nutritionists and Dietitians in the English-speaking Caribbean and will work with CARPHA and the CARICOM Secretariat to contribute to the improvement of the nutritional status and overall health of the peoples of the Caribbean Region. CANDi collaborates with governments and civil society organizations in the execution of its mandate working through national associations. The organization takes a lead in setting standards for professional development of its members and is actively involved in advancing the Food and Nutrition Security Agenda in the Region. Its members have participated in the development and implementation of Food Based Dietary Guidelines, Protocols for the Management of Non-communicable Chronic Diseases, Guidelines for Infant and Young Child Feeding, Regional and National Food and Nutrition Security Policies and Action Plans and the drafting of CCHIII.	Nutrition, Health
Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC)	Mr Gerard Granado, General Secretary #2B Warren Street, St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago Postal Address: P.O. Box 876, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago	Recognized as the Regional Ecumenical Organization, CCC is also a major development player in the region today. As the first regional development NGO, it has had many signal achievements in the social, economic and theological spheres. These endeavours have been characterized by sound collaborative relationships with other ecumenical and developmental organizations, including UN Agencies, CIDA, DFID, and Regional Governmental and State Bodies, including CARICOM. More recently, CCC has been partnering with UNICEF regarding the respect, protection and fulfillment of the Rights of Children in Central America and the Caribbean. It is also very proactive in advocating for Human Rights and Justice issues on behalf of its church membership.	Faith-based organizations/social development
Caribbean Congress of Labour (CCL)	National Union of Public Workers (NUPW) Complex Dalkeith Road, St Michael, Barbados Mr Lincoln Lewis, General Secretary	CCL, <i>inter alia</i> , promotes the welfare and interest of their affiliates in order to achieve the organization of all workers in the Caribbean Region; fights for the recognition of the Trade Union Movement; works to achieve economic, social, educational, cultural and other aspirations of the regional workers; builds and strengthens the ties between the Free Trade Unions of the Caribbean and the world; supports the accepted principles of the Free and Democratic Trade Union Movement.	Labour

ANNEX 3 – Table A.3: Regional organizations – CSOs, NGOs and private sector bodies (cont.)	Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Comment
Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA)	Barbados Mr Atherton Martin, President Chelford Bush Hill St Michael, Barbados	The Caribbean Conservation Association “exists to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations of the Caribbean by facilitating the development and implementation of policies, programmes and practices, which contribute to the sustainable management of the region’s natural and cultural resources.”	Environment/ sustainable development	
Caribbean Consumer Council (CCC)	Jamaica Mrs Dolisie Allen, President Jamaica, Chief Executive Officer of the Consumer Affairs Commission	A regional advocacy body with membership open to all independent national consumer groups and state-run consumer protection agencies of CARICOM. Primary focus is to lobby CARICOM on consumer interests involving its Single Market and Economy (CSME). The Council will also (a) act as an advisory body to consumer groups in the region; (b) advise on and recommend consumer legislation; and (c) provide CARICOM consumers with information on fraud, rackets, false advertising, harmful products, unsafe machines and equipment. It is vested with the responsibility to advocate, influence, protect, defend and harmonize efforts to the benefit of all Caribbean peoples and for the inclusion of consumer protection provisions in trade agreements throughout the Community.	Consumer protection	
Caribbean Employers’ Confederation (CEC)	Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago Ms Linda Besson, Chief Executive Officer c/o Employers’ Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago 23 Chacon Street, P. O. Box 911, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago	A regional grouping of employers’ organizations committed to achieving productivity and prosperity for member countries and the region as a whole. Promotes the interests of employers in the Caribbean; provides for consultations with Employers’ Organizations to ascertain views on matters of common concern.	Chambers of Commerce/Chambers of Agriculture, large producers and products associations	
Caribbean Farmers Network (CaFAN)	Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Mr Jethro Greene, Chief Coordinator Caribbean Farmers Network (CaFAN) c/o ECTAD, PO Box 827, Kingstown, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	Formed in 2004 as a regional network of Farmers’ Associations and NGOs. Focuses on fostering linkages, training and information sharing amongst Caribbean farmers to better enable them to respond to the key challenges facing the agricultural sector. Organizes training workshops, advocacy, study tours, regional planning sessions, and produces a variety of publications.	Small-scale farmer development	
Caribbean Human Rights Network	c/o CCC, St Michael, Barbados Regional Liaison Office Regional Coordinator	Establish and maintain systematic communication between local, regional and international human rights agencies, and provide regional perspective on political and civil human rights issues. Activities: monitoring; information dissemination; coordination of regional human rights action programmes; promotion of human rights campaigns and fact-finding missions; facilitation of exchange visits.	Human rights-based approach	

ANNEX 3 – Table A.3: Regional organizations – CSOs, NGOs and private sector bodies (cont.)			
Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Comment
Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)	Trinidad and Tobago Nicole Leotaud, Executive Director Building 7, Units 4-11, Fernandes Industrial Centre Eastern Main Road, Laventille, Trinidad, West Indies Web: http://www.canari.org E-mail: info@canari.org	A non-profit organization with a geographic focus on the islands of the Caribbean; however, its research findings are often relevant and disseminated to the wider region. Promotes equitable participation and effective collaboration in managing the natural resources critical to development, through applied action and research, sharing and dissemination of lessons learned, and fostering partnerships.	Environment/ sustainable development
Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD)	3 St John's Road Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago Mr Calvin James, Director	Promote and advance the process of rural transformation, with focus on women and youth. Programme areas: information and communication technology; entrepreneurial development; trade; land; food security and the environment.	Rural development & policy
Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO)	Antigua and Barbuda Fisherfolk Alliance Inc Mr Mitchell Lay, Coordinator	A network of primary, national and regional fisherfolk organizations located in CREFM Member States. The CNFO envisions knowledgeable members collaborating to sustain fishing industries (primarily owned and governed by fisherfolk who enjoy a good quality of life), through the ecosystem-based management of fisheries resources. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for fisherfolk, and to develop a sustainable and profitable industry through networking, representation and capacity building. A Coordinating Unit, made up of fisherfolk leaders from various member states, was established to implement an action plan leading to the development and launching of the regional network.	Fisheries development
Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP)	Saint Lucia Ms Kisee Wilson, Coordinator c/o Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) P.O. Box 1223, Castries	The mission of CANROP is to empower rural women to improve their standard of living. This is done through training, cultural exchanges, networking and promoting inter- and intra-regional trade. It facilitates access to specialized credit, seeks to create sustainable employment opportunities and undertakes advocacy to sensitize society to the needs and contributions of women in agriculture.	Rural women and gender development

ANNEX 3 – Table A.3: Regional organizations – CSOs, NGOs and private sector bodies (cont.)	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Comment
Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Comment
Caribbean Nurses Organization (CNO)	Aruba Mr Richard Alexander Maxwell, President Paradera 175 F, apr:5 P.O.Box 3034 Santa Cruz, Aruba	Health The CNO is the umbrella professional organization of the national Nurses Associations in the Caribbean and Caribbean nurses living abroad. It is a self-governing nurses' organization formed by nurses, for nurses of the Caribbean and adjoining islands and countries. The CNO works towards improving the health of all Caribbean people by improving the standard of nursing care and advancing the educational, economic and professional welfare of all nurses. The Organization seeks to influence health and nursing policy regionally, and to empower the national Nurses Associations in the Caribbean to work on behalf of nurses, nursing, and the peoples of the Caribbean. It also aims to ensure the adequacy of well-trained, skilled nurses in the region.
Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples (COIP)	Santa Rosa Karina Community, Trinidad and Tobago Chief Ricardo Bharath Hernandez (Current Chair)	Indigenous groups Provide news and updates from the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean Region.
Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC)	St Michael, Barbados Ms Cecilia Babb, Executive Coordinator	Rural development & policy The leading umbrella body representing major national and regional NGO networks in the Caribbean, the CPDC has served as the voice of the regional NGO community on a variety of policy issues and concerns. Fundamentally, it is a coalition of Caribbean Non-governmental Organizations established to sensitize NGOs and the general public on key policy issues and impact policy makers on decisions, putting the interests of the Caribbean people at the centre of regional development strategy. Its activities include capacity building, governance, participation, sustainable livelihoods, climate change, and trade liberalization.
Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT)	Kingston, Jamaica Mr Adolph Cameron, General Secretary 97 Church Street Kingston, Jamaica Email: infor@caribbeanteachers.com	Teachers associations/ education CUT is the umbrella organization for teachers in the Caribbean and is dedicated to the efforts to further the cause of teachers' unions: to promote the status, interest and welfare of teachers; to improve the quality of education in the Caribbean; and to unite the peoples of the region. CUT focuses on professional development for its member units; it developed a policy on health and safety, which has been endorsed by its affiliate members. It is now in the process of developing a policy on school safety and security to include measures to minimize violence and indiscipline in schools.

ANNEX 3 – Table A.3: Regional organizations – CSOs, NGOs and private sector bodies (cont.)

Organization	Location(s)/Contacts	Mission/Objectives/Areas of activities	Comment
Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN)	Barbados Mr Reginald Burke Caribbean Youth Environment Network c/o CPDC PO Box 284, Bridgetown Barbados	A non-profit, charitable civil society organization that focuses on empowering young people and their communities to develop programmes and actions aimed at addressing socio-economic and environmental issues, such as: poverty alleviation and youth employment; health and HIV/AIDS; climatic changes and global warming; impact of natural disasters/hazards; improvement in potable water; conservation and waste management; and other natural resource management issues. It is dedicated to developing strategies to engage and facilitate youth participation in the development process.	Environment/ sustainable development and youth development
Windward Islands Farmers' Association (WINFA)	Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Mr Renwick Rose, Coordinator P O Box 817, Kingstown, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	A people-centred umbrella organization representing farmers' associations in all four Windward Islands. Protects and promotes the interests of thousands of farmers in the Windward Islands and Martinique in a continued struggle to improve the farm, family, community, and national situation. Involved in the challenge of sustaining incomes and livelihoods of banana farmers and the banana industry in general, resulting from the WTO ruling and other trade regimes that threaten the socio-economic stability of the region.	Small-scale farmer development

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