

## MINISTRY PAPER \_\_\_\_/2016

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, GENDER, ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORT

### UPDATE ON DEVELOPEMNT OF A NATIONAL STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN TO ELIMINATE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN JAMAICA 2016-2026

#### 1.0 PURPOSE

Members are asked to note the following information in relation to the development of a National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-based Violence in Jamaica (2016-2026), developed by the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Since the last two decades, the issue of women's safety has gained increasing prominence in the international development arena. The international legislative framework to eliminate gender-based violence (GBV) is enshrined in various conventions and protocols such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention of Belém do Pará, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
- 2.2 In 1993 at the World Conference on Human Rights, it was recommended that all countries develop National Action Plans (NAPs) to end gender-based violence against women and girls. This was followed by a call at the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing, for nations around the world to develop NAPs. Governments are requested to *“enact and/or reinforce penal, civil, labour and administrative sanctions in domestic legislation to punish and redress the wrongs done to women and girls who are subjected to any form of violence, whether in the home, the workplace, the community or society”*. This call to action resulted in several countries creating their own NAP, outlining integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls.
- 2.3 Jamaica, like many states worldwide, has recognized that a coordinated and sustained approach is necessary to address the serious, prevalent and deeply entrenched problem of GBV. Strategic, long-term programmes of activity – addressing the underlying causes of violence against women and strengthening the systems that respond to it – are a feature of recent policy in this field, as opposed to the more reactive approach of earlier work. National Action Plans are essential to this effort, providing comprehensive, multi-sectorial and sustained ‘blueprints’ for ending violence against women. Such plans enable all the sectors involved to coordinate and align their activity.
- 2.4 Eliminating GBV requires change at every level — from State systems and laws through to organizations such as schools, workplaces and support services, local and cultural communities, individual relationships and behaviours. The challenge for the development of Jamaica's National Strategic Action Plan (NSAP) is how to translate this imperative into ‘a blueprint for action’ — to identify, coordinate and prioritize the most effective forms of action in the short, mid and long-term.

## **BACKGROUND (cont'd)**

- 2.5 The Vision 2030, Jamaica National Development Plan, makes a national commitment to redressing long-term systemic discrimination against women, identifying and overcoming the limitations to the empowerment of women and men and ultimately creating a society that values gender balance, equality and equity. This goal is further elaborated in the Gender Sector Plan which was developed to address structural and societal factors that place men and women in unequal positions in various spheres of society. The Plan seeks to draft, develop and implement policies, laws, institutions and approaches that will encourage and support equity between men and women. It is also designed to inculcate wholesome attitudes in society that will prevent gender discrimination and various forms of abuse that are gender-based.
- 2.6 The National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE), 2011 outlines Jamaica's commitment to gender equality. It encapsulates the outcomes expected in order to achieve gender equality in keeping with the objectives of Vision 2030. The NPGE is informed by the guiding principles of gender equality and social justice, political leadership and commitment, a multi-sectoral approach and partnerships and a participatory approach. Its vision is "*a society in which women and men have equal access to socially valued goods and are able to contribute to national development*". The overall purpose of the NPGE is to "mainstream gender, within a human rights based framework, in all state institutions and their apparatuses, in partnership with private sector, non-governmental and civil society organizations, to ensure that females and males have equal access to opportunities, resources, and rewards in order to eliminate discrimination based on gender and to promote sustainable human development".

## **3.0 RATIONALE AND BENEFITS OF THE PLAN**

- 3.1 The findings from Jamaica's Beijing+20 report indicate that the high incidences of gender-based violence and violence against women is a major challenge in the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of women and national development. In this regard, the National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-based Violence in Jamaica (NSAP-GBV) seeks to address the complex nature of GBV as it relates to victims, perpetrators, and witnesses of acts of violence. It encourages stakeholders to consider the root causes of GBV and to identify areas for improvement in access to and delivery of effective and efficient services.
- 3.2 The Plan is designed to prevent GBV, improve the implementation of laws and services aimed at protecting victims of GBV, as well as to provide adequate support services for survivors. It also aims to standardize protocols for effective data collection tools in order to capture the scope, trends and patterns of GBV to improve future planning and programming. The NSAP also notes the need to pay special attention to strategies aimed at the protection of especially vulnerable groups such as women and girls, the majority of whom are victims of GBV. It further seeks to ensure the protection of underserved communities as well as persons with disabilities and other key populations.

## **RATIONALE AND BENEFITS OF THE PLAN**

- 3.3 GBV is a cross-cutting issue, spanning key indicators such as access to justice, health, economic growth, citizen security, education, child protection, and social stability. The NSAP is therefore essential to bring together the work of these sectors. It clearly outlines the responsibilities of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies of government, civil society organisations, private sector interests and other stakeholders in implementing the Plan. Additionally, the Plan will serve to link issues related to gender based violence and gender equality directly with socio-economic development planning and policies to increase opportunities for increased political commitment and sustained action.
- 3.4 The NSAP-GBV will provide a guide to the implementation of a coordinated programme, to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence. The NSAP-GBV is organised around five (5) strategic priority areas, namely; Prevention; Protection; Investigation, Prosecution and Enforcement of Court Orders; Compensation, Reparation and Redress & Protocols for Coordination and Data Management Systems.

## **4.0 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The NSAP is designed to provide an integrated, multi-sectoral and structured approach to addressing the key issues and challenges in GBV, as it relates to victims, perpetrators, and witnesses of acts of violence. It therefore acknowledges the need to incorporate a socially inclusive, human rights-centred, diverse approach to tackling this endemic problem and it leverages linkages and synergies with national policies and programmes.
- 4.2 Gender based violence is structural and complex, its nature and root causes demanding effective multi-sectoral responses. Already, there are several stakeholders and agencies involved in and contributing to reducing and eliminating GBV. However, a strategic approach is needed to resolve critical challenges and arguably demand that agencies, from both the public and private sector and civil society, apply urgency in their participation and in tackling the types of GBV. Coordination will be required of all stakeholders in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NSAP, and stakeholders are expected to contribute to the strategic setting of priorities, implementation and the tracking of goals, objectives and actions.
- 4.3 The approach adopted by the NSAP on GBV enables better coordination and management of state resources in addressing the multi-faceted nature of GBV. It improves the efficiency of resource allocation and utilisation through clearly defined objectives, activities and outputs in one integrated programme, The NSAP also aims to build the monitoring and evaluation of the multiple national and local efforts targeting the eradication of GBV. This is designed to coordinate the actions around GBV into an overarching and comprehensive programme. The NSAP will be supported through key stakeholders and international development partners through the various ministries. It will also contribute to a common

understanding, knowledge, awareness and appreciation of gender based violence and its impact for all relevant stakeholders.

## **5.0 CONSULTATIONS**

The consultation process has been intensive and extensive, in keeping with the Government's Consultation Code and has included the involvement of numerous stakeholders such as the public and private sectors, civic groups including women's groups and special interest groups including persons with disabilities, the elderly, male and female youth groups and other key populations.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Work is scheduled to begin on a costing and implementation plan for the National Strategic Action Plan during the week of July 12, and upon completion the Ministry will have a comprehensive assessment of the resources which will need to be mobilized for roll out of the Plan.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

Utilising a multi-sectoral approach centred on human rights principles, the NSAP-GBV will guide stakeholders in understanding and fulfilling their obligations under international instruments which preserve non-discrimination and protect against human rights violations. The NSAP will also guide stakeholders in regard to other local legal instruments - current and to be reformed - that will prohibit, prevent, and respond to all forms of GBV, and treat all victims equally and respectfully, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, geographical location, religious affiliation, ability and class. The Ministry will place the Plan before Cabinet for approval in October 2016.

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Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport

July 8, 2016