



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

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

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

**Sixth periodic report of States parties**

**Addendum**

**United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
(Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom)\***

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\* The present report is being issued without formal editing.

For the initial report submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, see CEDAW/C/5/Add.52 and Amend.1-4 which was considered by the Committee at its ninth session. For the second periodic report submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, see CEDAW/C/UK/2 which was considered by the Committee at its twelfth session. For the third periodic report submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, see CEDAW/C/UK/3 and its addenda (Add.1 and Add.2) which were considered by the Committee at its twenty-first session. For the fourth periodic report submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, see CEDAW/C/UK/4 and its addenda (Add.1, Add.2, Add.3 and Add.4) which were considered by the Committee at its twenty-fourth session. For the fifth periodic report submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, see CEDAW/C/UK/5 and its addenda (Add.1 and Add.2).

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE  
ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION  
AGAINST WOMEN

6TH PERIODIC REPORT OF THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

**May 2007**

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## I. Introduction

1. This part of the present report contains, in its various Annexes, the United Kingdom's 6<sup>th</sup> periodic reports under the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in respect of its Overseas Territories. These reports are set out below as follows:

Annex A	British Virgin Islands
Annex B	Falkland Islands
Annex C	Turks and Caicos Islands

2. As requested by the Committee, the reports in these Annexes are updating reports.

## II. General

3. There is a general matter on which the Committee may welcome information.

### Realisation of Human Rights

The Committee will be aware that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development (DFID) launched a Realisation of Human Rights project in 2001 and which reported in 2003.

The UK Government consulted with Territory Governments on the issues that were highlighted by the report and are working in partnership with them in taking forward the agenda that resulted from those discussions. There is an ongoing four-year strategy funded by DFID to help the Territories to raise standards of child protection in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

## Annex A - British Virgin Islands

### General information

	2000e	2001	2002e	2003e	2004e	2005e
<b>Population</b>	20,254	23,161	23,689	24,296	24,997	25,802
Population Density	132.37	150.4	153.82	161.86	162.32	167.55
Male Population	10,429	11,442	11,721	12,041	12,424	12,861
Female Population	9,825	11,724	11,967	12,248	12,572	12,940
Births	325	314	253	269	316	283
Crude Birth Rate	16.04	13.56	10.68	10.79	12.64	10.97
Total Fertility Rate[3]	2.07	1.51	1.26	1.31	1.56	1.36
Teenage Deliveries	37	26	29	28	36	27
Teenage Deliveries as % of all Deliveries	11.24	12.23	8.1	10.4	11.32	9.5

Life Expectancy at Birth[4] (Total)	77.1	78.82	78.59	78.67	76.88	79.42
Male	75.3	75.55	78.18	75.67	73.01	76.43
Female	80.1	83.88	79.49	82.57	81.91	83
Adult Literacy Rates[5]	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2	98.2
Male	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8	97.8
Female	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7
Enrollment Rates: Primary[6] (Gross)	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	110	104.3	109.1	105.6	...	...

Male	111.1	105.6	...	107.6	...	...
Female	109.1	103	...	100.1	...	...
<b>Enrollment Rates: Secondary[7] (Gross)</b>						
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...
Male	...	...	...	...	...	...
Female						
<b>Unemployment Rate[8] (Total)</b>	3.56	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1
Male	3.84	3.42	3.42	3.42	3.42	3.42
Female	3.38	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8

**Notes:**

[1] Number of males per 100 females.

[2] Number of nationals per 100 non-nationals.

[3] Number of children a woman was expected to have during her child-bearing years for the specific year. Rate is understated due to the inability to capture births that occur outside of the Virgin Islands to BVI women.

[4] Number of years a person is expected to live at birth. The fluctuations in these numbers are not due to fluctuations in the quality of the health care system but rather to the small magnitude of the numbers that are used in the calculations.

[5] These rates are stable and long term and are not opt to change significantly from year to year.

[6] The ages used in the calculation of these rates are not exclusive to this education level - i.e. there is an element of age overlap from level to level.

[7] The ages used in the calculation of these rates are not exclusive to this education level - i.e. there is an element of age overlap from level to level.

[8] This rate is not opt to change significantly from year to year unless there occurs a dramatic change in the economic conditions of the country.

[9] Averages are based on Social Security Records.

### **Human Rights**

4. In its 2005 report, a locally appointed Constitutional Review Committee recommended the inclusion of a Human Rights Chapter into the Constitution specifically, in addition to other amendments. This recommendation was whole-heartedly supported by the local Human Rights Reporting Co-ordinating Committee (HRRCC), which, in its 2000 report, also recommended that a human rights chapter be inserted in the Virgin Islands Constitution as a matter of priority. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was extended to the Virgin Islands in 1986. Freedom against discrimination, the fair treatment and non-discrimination of women endorsed by this convention are basic rights and freedoms which the Constitution Review Committee agreed should be constitutionally guaranteed. Recently there have been very positive steps made towards the realisation and inclusion of a human rights chapter in the Constitution, and it is anticipated that this will be finalised in the near future.

### **Legal measures adopted since the fifth report on the implementation of the Convention.**

5. Domestic violence and human trafficking of women are current issues affecting women in the Virgin Islands. Efforts are ongoing to raise community awareness, and to implement effective legislation where necessary. The *Domestic Violence (Summary Proceedings Act), 1996* currently enables persons who have been subjected to domestic violence to seek relief in summary court proceedings. The Act provides for the making of protection orders, occupation orders and tenancy orders. These orders may be applied for and where granted they serve to protect, especially in the short term, persons from continuing abuse. An occupation order, for instance, when granted, bestows upon the specified applicant for whose benefit it was granted, the right to personally occupy the household where appropriate, to the exclusion of the respondent. Occupation Orders are only be made if the court is satisfied that such an order is necessary for the protection of a specified person, or it is in the best interest of a child. It is still case that more women than men apply for and are granted occupation orders or other protection orders under the Domestic Violence Act.

6. The *Domestic Violence Act, 1996* is currently under review and certain amendments have already been proposed. Firstly it has been recommended that the legislation should expressly state that the act of domestic violence is a crime, and punitive provisions should be made in relation to this offence. Secondly, it has been recommended that the definition of the word 'abuse' should be extended to include financial abuse in relation to matters of domestic violence. Additionally, given the nature of domestic violence, and the reality that victims and perpetrators often continue their domestic relationships, it is proposed that the Act be amended to provide for mandatory counselling for the convicted perpetrator.

7. In an effort to address the growing problem of human trafficking, the Legislative Council, by the *Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 2007*, amended the *Criminal Code, 1997* to provide for the criminalization of human trafficking for exploitation, and smuggling of migrants. This legislation was passed in recognition that women and children were the most targeted and affected by human trafficking for exploitation and smuggling of migrants, and such acts needed to be appropriately addressed. In the Act, exploitation is therefore defined as “in relation to a person, includes the exploitation of the person through prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour for services, slavery or practices similar to slavery servitude or the removal of organs”. “Human trafficking” under the Act means, “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or reception of a person for the purpose of the exploitation of the person”. Any person who is concerned with human trafficking is liable on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding fourteen years. In the case of the trafficking of a minor (“a person who has not attained the age of eighteen years”) however, a perpetrator is liable to imprisonment for life on conviction on indictment.

**Actual progress made to promote and ensure the elimination of discrimination against women.**

8. The Office of Gender Affairs continues to keep current the major issues affecting women in the Virgin Islands, and also the issues and concerns of men. Since the last report, this office has strengthened its efforts to raise awareness on HIV/AIDS throughout the community and to provide public education on sexual and reproductive health, and domestic violence. The Office continues to sponsor outreach programmes, seminars and workshops in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Development, the Social Development Department, and the Family Support Network.

9. Domestic Violence Awareness month has been observed in October for the past four years. A primary objective of the observance is to educate and create awareness of the consequences of the issue in the BVI. Activities include community education, in the form of TV and radio programmes. Purple ribbons are also annually distributed among businesses, organizations, social clubs in support of the victims of domestic violence.

10. Women continue to assume influential and important roles and job positions within the public and the private sector. Women continue to contest electoral seats, and serve as electoral representatives in the Legislative Council. The below table offers an accurate representation of the impact of women in the work place. It is clear that women are actively employed in the majority of industry sectors.

*Employment, 2005 – 2006*

<b>Number of Employees by Sex and Industry</b>	<b>2005</b>				<b>2006</b>			
<b>Industry</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Not Stated</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Not Stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
Agriculture, Hunting and Forestry	54	24		78	56	29		
Fishing	12	2		14	16	6		
Mining and Quarrying	36	1		37	32	2		
Manufacturing	196	207	1	404	208	204		412
Electricity, Gas and Water	87	58		145	96	60		156
Construction	1,111	145	4	1,260	1,272	146	1	1,419
Wholesale and Retail Trade	821	800	3	1,624	854	844	2	1,700
Hotel and Restaurants	1,252	1,312	9	2,573	1,274	1,328	7	2,609
Transport and Communications	275	179		454	294	185		479
Financial Intermediation	280	517		797	297	550		847
Real Estate, Renting and Business Activity	751	551	5	1,307	807	605	3	1,415
Government Services	2,341	2,798	3	5,142	2,419	2,868		5,287
Education	329	788	2	1,119	349	793	2	1,144
Health and Social Work	48	92	1	141	54	89	1	144



Other Community, Social and Personal Services	293	424	7	724	329	430	3	762
Private Households with employed persons	90	310	4	404	102	318		420
Extra-territorial organizations and bodies				0	0	0		0
Not Stated	2	7		9	1	3		4
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,978</b>	<b>8,215</b>	<b>39</b>	16,232	<b>8,460</b>	<b>8,460</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16,939</b>
Agricultural Sector	54	24	0	78	56	29	0	85
Non-Agricultural Sector	7,924	8,191	39	16,154	8,404	8,431	19	16,854
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,978</b>	<b>8,215</b>	<b>39</b>	16,232	<b>8,460</b>	<b>8,460</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16,939</b>

## Annex B - Falkland Islands

### Background Statistical information

11. The 2006 Census conducted on 8 October 2006, a copy of which is being transmitted to the Secretariat of the Committee along with the current report, showed that the population of the Falkland Islands in 2006 was 2955 persons. This includes persons present in the Falkland Islands in connection with the military garrison, but excludes all military personnel and their families. The population was made up of 1569 males and 1386 females. The population of Stanley was 2115 (1060 males and 1055 females). The population of East Falkland (outside Stanley and Mount Pleasant) was 194 (106 males and 88 females). The population of West Falkland was 127 (68 males and 59 females). The population of islands (other than East and West Falkland) was 42 (25 males and 17 females). The population of Mount Pleasant was 477 (310 males and 167 females).

12. Comparisons with previous Censuses shows that the Falkland Islands at the time of the 2006 Census had the highest population they have ever had at the time of any Census. There has been a continuation of the trend of the loss of population from Camp (all areas

of the Falkland Islands outside Stanley and Mount Pleasant). The 2006 Census shows that 90% of the Falkland Islands population is of British birth or descent.

### **Legal and other measures adopted since the previous report to implement the Convention**

13. The Family Law Bill, first published in the Falkland Islands Gazette in February 2006, originates in the need to fulfil obligations under the Convention. The need for the proposed law arises because women are often disadvantaged by being more likely to be the lower salary earner in a partnership (whether within our outside marriage) with a man. Women may have no earnings of their own, often because they are engaged in bringing up young children of the partnership. The house in which the partners live may be solely owned by the male partner and, under existing law of the Falkland Islands, in the event of a breakdown of the partnership in those circumstances, the woman has no rights in the former family home, and unless the woman obtains an order in matrimonial proceedings (not available to unmarried partners), has no right to remain in the home.

14. The Bill is based on provisions of the English Family Law Act 1996. The orders provided for under the Bill are designed to protect persons in the circumstances described above. The Bill was referred for consideration by Select Committee of the Legislative Council in February 2006. The Bill remains before Select Committee, consideration of the Bill having been delayed for some time, largely because of staff changes and shortages in the Attorney General's Chambers. It is hoped that the Bill will be referred to Legislative Council by the Select Committee for approval, likely in a revised form, later in 2007. A copy of the Bill and Explanatory Note as published are provided with this report.

15. The Employment Protection Ordinance 1989 was amended in 2005 so as to extend its provisions to persons employed by the Crown. Crown servants had previously been excluded from the protections provided under that Ordinance. The amendment means that women employed in the Falkland Islands in the civil service are now entitled by law, in the same manner as any other women employee, to receive maternity pay and to return to work following pregnancy and giving birth. In practice, however, most women Crown servants already received more generous maternity benefits than those provided by law. Maternity benefits for Falkland Islands Government employees are provided for in the Falkland Islands Government's Management Code. For example, under the Management Code, a woman Crown servant can expect to be permitted to claim maternity benefits after one year's continuous employment but, because maternity protection provisions in the Employment Protection Ordinance remain unchanged since its introduction in 1989, a woman in the private sector relying on the protection of the Ordinance is only entitled to the maternity benefits under the Ordinance after two years' continuous employment. In fact a failure to keep pace with developments in employment protection in English law means that women in the Falkland Islands remain significantly disadvantaged in this area."

**Actual progress made to promote and ensure the elimination of discrimination against women**

16. In the earlier reports reference has been made to the removal of role-typing previously evident in Falkland Islands society where women were regarded as being subservient to men. The initiatives taken and reflected in this and previous reports have done much to assist in the removal of such role-typing. The Falkland Islands Government regards as particularly important the education given in Falkland Islands schools and reflected in paragraphs 31-35 of this Report.

17. Efforts to raise the profile of human rights (and particularly women's rights) in the Falkland Islands continue.

18. There is one specific women's organisation in the Falkland Islands. This is Falkland Women's Association which has a membership in the Falkland Islands of thirty women with ages ranging from thirty to late seventy. Membership is open to all women. The Falklands Women's Association has no formal relationship with the Government, being an entirely independent group.

19. As reported previously, the social support system in the Falkland Island is not very sophisticated. This is discussed in paragraphs 19-26. There have been improvements with the development and modernisation of the Social Work Department. The Department is staffed by a Social Work Team Leader, 2 qualified Social Workers, 3 other full-time workers and 3 part-time workers. The Social Work Department offers a 24-hour on call service. The responsibilities of the Social Work Department are varied, including parenting programmes, home help, a young persons unit, community outreach work, a day centre operating for 3 sessions per week, crisis support, housing, benefits, learning disabilities, occupational and community care assessments and probation. The Department runs programmes in the community such as the Responsible Living Programme, which provides assistance for people with alcohol problems which lead to aggression being displayed. There has been a significant shift in the approach of the Department towards the establishment of a professional service advocating a multi-disciplinary approach towards the provision of support and assistance.

**Any significant changes in the status and equality of women since the previous report**

20. The Falkland Islands Government believe that women in the Falkland Islands have an equal status with men.

21. As highlighted in previous reports, the lack of availability of tertiary education in the Falkland Islands, which applied as much to men as women, has been the focus of Government initiatives. Increased levels of achievement amongst Falkland Islanders remains a Government priority.

This is discussed further in paragraphs 31-34.

22. There has been a continued focus on vocational training funded by the Falkland Islands Government.

Any remaining obstacle to the participation of women on an equal basis with men in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their country.

23. As detailed in previous reports, any difficulties associated with the provision of services in the Falkland Islands are mainly related to historical factors, the distribution of the population between Stanley and the Camp (all areas of the Falkland Islands outside Stanley and Mount Pleasant) and the small size of the population. These factors impact on both men and women.

Furthermore, there has been considerable advancement as detailed in previous reports in relation to education and the relative wealth of persons living in the Falkland Islands. As detailed in this Report, advancements continue to be made.

24. Aside from the issues raised in this Report, the local authorities believe that there are no obstacles to the participation of women on an equal basis with men in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the Falkland Islands. In respect of issues raised, advancements continue to be made.

#### **Matters raised by the Committee which could not be dealt with at the time when the previous report was considered**

25. The Falkland Islands Government knows of no matters raised by the Committee which could not be dealt with at the time when the previous report was considered.

#### **Information on measures taken to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

26. In the Concluding Comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women: United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in relation to the third and fourth periodic reports in paragraphs 303 and 304, criticism was made in relation to the limited follow-up to commitments at the Beijing Conference in the Overseas Territories. In respect of some of the recommendations, action has already been taken in the Falkland Islands and no further action is required. This part of the Report addresses the remaining recommendations and the Strategic Objectives contained in the Beijing Platform for Action so far as they relate to the Falkland Islands.

#### **Women and poverty**

27. Although the Falkland Islands enjoy a relatively high standard of living, the Falkland Islands Government continues to address the issue of poverty amongst women. While poverty is a relative term, there are some women, especially single mothers, who are 'relatively poor' and for whom limited assistance is available.

28. As previously reported, the social support system in the Falkland Islands is unsophisticated.

Financial assistance is presently available to single parents with one or more children under school age, those unable to work due to illness or disability, pensioners who cannot afford all household expenses on their pensions, persons with dependants who are in receipt of inadequate assistance under the Special and Sheltered Employment Programmes, carers of the chronically ill or disabled and low income households in Camp.

29. The major forms of financial assistance include welfare benefits, attendance allowances for those who require assistance in their everyday lives, a winter fuel allowance for recipients of a retirement pension and rent assistance (see paragraph 24). Eligibility and the amount of allowance paid are determined on a case by case basis.

30. There is no statutory single parent's benefit payable and so there is pressure on women to return to work in order to support their children. The Social Work Department will assist by the provision of assistance, food, clothing and the like. However, rarely is a direct 'cash' payment made.

31. A family allowance of £53.50 per month is payable in respect of each child of the family under 16 years of age.

32. Under the Retirement Pensions Ordinance 1996, there is provision for the Falkland Islands Government to pay the statutory weekly retirement pensions contribution on behalf of any resident whose total income is too low for that person to be able to afford to pay the contribution themselves.

33. Rent rebates are available from the Falkland Islands Government for persons living in Government housing. However, assistance with the payment of rent is not available for persons living in private accommodation. Those living in private accommodation may, however, apply for a service charge rebate. The service charge covers refuse collection and the provision of water. There is no dedicated accommodation for single women, but the Falkland Islands Government provides housing for those in need, and a particular priority of the Government's housing strategy is the provision of affordable accommodation, particularly with a view to increasing home ownership and facilitating the availability of affordable accommodation for low-income first-time buyers.

34. The Welfare Benefits Group is currently investigating reforms to the current social welfare payments system. While the existing ad hoc system traditionally may have been appropriate and expedient in the Falkland Islands because of the few cases requiring assistance and the close knit and supportive social structure that existed, a review was considered necessary as a response to the growth in population and the increasing complexity of the circumstances of individuals and families as social structures evolve.

The aim of the review is to create a more publicised, accessible, transparent and equitable system through the payment of a living allowance.

35. The Falkland Islands Government is aware of the issue of elderly women living on their own. The size of the population in the Falkland Islands and the fairly close-knit nature of the community means that support is often provided by an elderly person's family and friends.

There is also some sheltered accommodation for elderly people adjoining the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital. Since the previous report the Government has built further sheltered accommodation for old people. The Government has also created a dedicated residential wing at the hospital so that old people may live comfortably in the hospital once they are no longer able to live at home or in sheltered accommodation. Formerly such individuals were treated on the General Ward, but now there is a facility comprising six single en-suite rooms with a small communal lounge within the hospital building.

36. Women already have an equal right with men to inheritance and to ownership of land and other property in the Falkland Islands. Loans and grants are available on a non-discriminatory basis from the Falkland Island Development Corporation (a Government controlled statutory corporation) for persons who wish to set up or acquire a business. In addition, loans are available on a non-discriminatory basis from the local private financial institution (Standard Chartered Bank). A mortgage scheme to assist residents with the purchase of dwelling houses in Stanley is operated by the Standard Chartered Bank in conjunction with the Falkland Islands Government.

37. As detailed in previous reports, there is essentially full employment in the Falkland Islands.

The 2006 Census figures show that the working population of the Islands has increased since 2001, with 15% more people working full time (was 2025 now 2334).

Among those of working age (and not already retired), the employment rate in full time employment is 91% (men) and 77.4% (women). There has been a slight decrease in the number of women working full-time (from 797 in 2001 to 786 in 2006). However, the number of women working part-time has increased from 25 to 81.

38. The 2006 Census revealed that 174 males and 131 females in the Falkland Islands have secondary or part-time employment.

39. In the Royal Falkland Islands Police, 8 of the 17 officers are women. Only one of those women holds the rank above constable, and she is a leading constable. The Chief Police Officer reports that promotion within the police force depends on experience and time served, not gender, and it is the force's policy to apply equal rights to all. In the Customs and Immigration Department, 3 of the 8 full-time employees are women.

## Education and training of women

40. As detailed in the Second Report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Supplementary Report on the Dependent Territories dated May 1991, education is compulsory in the Falkland Islands. The first year of education (reception) is followed by years 1 – 6 in the Infant and Junior school and years 7 – 11 in the Community School. General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations are usually sat of the end of year 11.

The compulsory education age for all children, male or female, is between the age of five or if the child will turn five in the current academic year and the earlier of (a) the end of the third term of the academic year in which the child attains the age of sixteen years; and (b) the end of the first term of the thirteenth year (year 12) of compulsory education, provided that a child who has attained the age of sixteen years before the beginning of a term in year 12 is not of compulsory education age during that term or any following term.

41. In addition, children are given the opportunity of starting school (“pre-school) in the year that they turn four. This means that some children start school while they are three. Pre-school is offered on a part-time basis for children.

42. In paragraph 101 of the Fifth Report statistics were given in relation to education. Those statistics are now updated by information in relation to 2005/2006 as follows:

(a) GCSE examinations □

Total candidates 38

Boys sitting examinations 20 (53%)

Girls sitting examinations 18 (47%)

Total passes all grades 355

Grade C and above passes (all candidates) 168 (47%)

Grade C and above passes (females) 93 (55%)

(b) Students sent overseas by Falkland Islands Government for 12th and 13th years of education as at September 2006

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total	9	17	10	9	18
Girls	6 (66%)	9 (53%)	6 (60%)	5 (56%)	10 (56%)

Year	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total	32	35	32	31
Girls	19 (59%)	20 (57%)	15 (47%)	10 (32%)

(c) teaching staff employed as at 1 February 2006

Teachers Assistant Teachers &

Special Needs Assistants

**Falkland Islands Community School:**

**Male Teachers** 5

**Female Teachers** 14

**Female LSA's** 4

**Male LSA's** 0.5

**Stanley Infant/Junior School:**

**Male** 2

**Female** 12

**Female Teaching Assistants** 3

**Female LSA's** 6





46. The 2006 Census provides information in relation to educational attainments by type, location and sex (Appendix A); population by employment status, age and sex (Appendix B) and primary occupations by type and sex (Appendix C). The census figures show that the population of the Falkland Islands is becoming more qualified. This applies to both men and women.

### **Women and Health**

47. The Beijing Platform for Action affirmed that women have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. The Falkland Islands Government is committed to the attainment of this objective.

48. While broadly speaking the population of the Falkland Islands share the same health problems as the United Kingdom, particular areas of concern are dental health (teeth decay), obesity, heart disease and cancer.

49. Tooth decay is far worse than in the United Kingdom. The Falkland Islands Government is making a concentrated effort to deal with this problem, particularly as regards to children. It has identified the causes of the problem as sugary drinks and failure to brush teeth. The Government is doing everything it can to address such causes and to educate parents. Dental treatment is provided free of charge in the Falkland Islands.

50. Obesity is being addressed by the medical practitioners in the Falkland Islands. There has been publicity via the national radio station and weekly newspaper of the health problems that follow obesity and advice as to possible action that can be taken. The practice nurse is available for regular support; the Government funds free use of all facilities at the Sports Centre to patients referred by medical practitioners; and a weekly diet club (used primarily by women) has free use of Government facilities.

51. As was stated in the Second Report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Supplementary Report on the Dependent Territories dated May 1991, health care in the Falkland Islands is provided by the Falkland Islands Government and is available regardless of age, sex or nationality. It is impracticable to provide in the Falkland Islands, because of the size of its population, all the kinds of medical treatment which may be required. In relation to persons who are resident in the Falkland Islands, and regardless of age, sex or nationality, the Falkland Islands Government arranges suitable treatment in the United Kingdom. No charge is currently made to resident 'consumers' of medical services for medical treatment or for the provision of drugs and medicines. Visitors from overseas (except persons resident in the United Kingdom) are, in general, required to pay for such services, drugs and medicines. No discrimination in those charges is made between men and women.

52. Although the provision of satisfactory health services is more difficult in areas remote from Stanley, medical practitioners make regular visits to all settlements in the Camp. There is a radio clinic for Camp run from the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital.

53. The Well Woman Clinic is run by the Practice Nurse and a female General Practitioner. This clinic offers a gender sensitive health programme. It offers (among other things) cervical screening.

54. There is a high standard of maternal care offered in the Falkland Islands. There are 3 midwives who conduct periodic examinations, as well as antenatal classes. The medical practitioners offer ultrasound screening and access to other testing. If a problem is detected with the pregnancy or thought likely in relation to the birth, either the woman is sent to the United Kingdom or a specialist is flown to the Falkland Islands. This is the situation that occurs with elective caesarean sections that are medically required. Emergency caesarean sections are performed in the Falkland Islands by the resident surgeon. Post-natal care and support is offered by the midwives and the Health Visitor in conjunction with the general practitioner (and resident surgeon in the case of caesarean births).

55. Termination of pregnancies are not routinely offered in the Falkland Islands, so women must leave the Islands for this, unless a visiting Gynaecologist is on the Islands and willing to undertake the procedure. Terminations for medical reasons are referred to the United Kingdom where they are undertaken on the NHS or are undertaken privately in the United Kingdom and paid for by Falkland Islands Government. In such cases the woman's travel costs are also funded by the Falkland Islands Government.

56. The Government policy regarding non-medically required abortions (discussed in paragraph 117 of the Fifth Report) has changed. Government reversed its decision not to fund flights for women requesting elective abortions. The current policy of the Falkland Islands Health Service remains that non-medically required abortions are not funded by the Falkland Islands Government. However, the Health Service provides support in cases of non-medically required abortions (ie elective abortions) in that doctors will refer the woman to the United Kingdom and the Falkland Islands Government will fund the cost of her flight.

57. Health Department estimates show that during the reporting period approximately two elective abortions per year have been arranged through their facilities. The number of women who may have sought abortions in England or elsewhere of their own volition is unknown, but unlikely to be significantly more than that figure.

58. Education on abortions is available as part of the normal health education programme run in the schools and the community. Information is routinely offered to women who enquire of abortion services.

59. There are now two full-time female General Practitioners on the Falkland Islands. Women may request an appointment with a female GP if they wish. While it was reported previously that women in Camp did not have a choice of whether or not they saw a female

GP, unless they came to Stanley for their appointment, female General Practitioners now make routine Camp visits, so this is no longer the case.

60. The dissemination of information of women's health is pursued through a number of means including the Well Women Clinic and regular medical articles in the weekly newspaper.

Interviews with medical professionals are also broadcast regularly on the local radio station. These interviews often cover women's health issues. The BBC World Service, which also carries regular items on women's health issues, is receivable throughout the Falkland Islands. There is also literature available free of charge in the hospital.

61. Mental health services in the Islands are currently offered by visiting psychiatrists supported by the Community Psychiatric Nurse and the Social Work Department. Steps have been taken to recruit a second Mental Health Worker and Mental Health legislation in the Falkland Islands is under review.

62. The incidence of sexually transmitted disease is extremely low in the Falkland Islands. Statistical information available on sexually transmitted disease between August 2005 and July 2006 showed that 14% of tests for Chlamydia were positive. It should be noted that half of the positive cases were military personnel and not Falkland Islands residents. The number of tests undertaken may appear high, but this is due to the fact that the Falkland Islands routinely screen all women for Chlamydia when they attend a smear clinic, and all antenatal patients are routinely screened for Syphilis, Hepatitis B, and HIV. All 106 tests for HIV were negative. Of 59 tests for Hepatitis B, only one was positive. There was one reported case of Gonorrhoea during 2006, but this did not involve the local population.

63. Although sexual activity by teenagers occurs in the Falkland Islands, unwanted pregnancies outside marriage have been minimised because of the availability free of charge of contraceptives. Sex education is offered as part of the education system. A 'Sex and Relationships Education' programme is being delivered to secondary school pupils. Health professionals regularly visit the secondary school to promote sex education and ensure that girls under the age of 16 are aware of the availability of family planning advice. Early sexual activity is discouraged. The Health Service's Well woman clinic promotes the availability of family planning services and does not discriminate as to the age of women and girls offered contraceptive advice.

### **Violence against women**

64. Although violence against women occurs in the Falkland Islands (as with other countries), the Falkland Islands Government is committed to the prevention and prosecution of these offences. There is no known instance of violence against any woman perpetrated by the Government or its agents. In relation to violence by individuals against women, the criminal law contains the full range of offences (assault, battery, wounding, grievous bodily harm, murder, rape and indecent assault) that are relevant to the

prohibition of violence against women. In addition, the domestic violence policy makes the protection of women and children from violence the primary objective of police officers in a situation of domestic violence.

65. There is no known prostitution in the Falkland Islands.

66. There is no known trafficking in women in the Falkland Islands.

67. While the population of the Falkland Islands is too small to make it worthwhile to conduct research into the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effective of preventive measures taken, Falkland Islands Government professionals keep themselves informed in relation to research conducted in other larger jurisdictions (such as the United Kingdom). Access to the internet and the availability to publications on-line has greatly assisted the availability of information. In addition, information is made available by the FCO.

68. The operation of the criminal justice system in relation to offences against women is supported by the Social Work Department. The Social Work Department is able to provide limited protection to women and children. However, there are no formal refuges or safe houses in the Falkland Islands. The size of the population in the Falkland Islands would make 'hiding' a family only possible for a short period of time.

### **Women and armed conflict**

69. Women were adversely affected by conflict following the invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982 but the issue is not presently directly relevant in the Falkland Islands. The Falkland Islands Government is not directly represented at an international level and could not directly put into action the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action as foreseen for this area of concern.

### **Women and the economy**

70. The Falkland Islands Government has taken steps towards the promotion of women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment and appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources. These initiatives include the legislative reforms discussed in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5.

71. There has been growing flexibility in the employment market, so that part-time and job sharing arrangements are becoming more common. There is also greater flexibility in work hours.

72. As discussed in paragraph 95, women have access to Government business loans, which are aimed at encouraging self-employment and entrepreneurship.

73. There are many small businesses in the Falkland Islands that are run by women. The 2006 Census showed that there were 133 women running their own full-time or part-time business (the figure for men was 181).

74. Efforts to improve quality of life in rural areas continue. These are aimed at the community as a whole, offering equal opportunities to men and women of all ages and abilities, but have necessarily improved the situation of rural women.

75. Business grants and loans are available to those living in Camp (rural areas) and rural women have used these to establish their own businesses in craft and tourism in particular.

#### Women in power and decision-making

76. The provisions of Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Falkland Islands provide complete equality between men and women as to voting and standing for election as a member of the Legislative Council of the Falkland Islands. Of the eight elected members, two are presently women. Other women have been elected to the Legislative Council in the past. Female elected Legislative Councillors continue to represent the Falkland Islands at various international fora. During the reporting period, female elected representatives have represented the Falkland Islands at Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conferences, Overseas Territories Consultative Council meetings and United Kingdom Parliamentary Party Conferences.

77. As detailed in paragraph 36, the number of women appointed at Grades D to A and above (the Senior Grades in the Public Service) is 84.

78. In terms of female representation in the law, the proportion of female Government solicitors is 50%. Women are well represented (41%) in the bench of lay justices. The private legal sector, being very small, currently consists of only male legal representatives, but one of the two practices has consistently employed female trainee solicitors who are seconded from the United Kingdom.

#### **Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women**

79. There are no institutions or authorities in the Falkland Islands which have as their specific task to ensure the principle of equality between men and women is complied with in practice. Neither does a sophisticated means of ensuring the advancement and development of women exist. In view of the size of the population of the Falkland Islands, this would be inappropriate. However, the Falkland Islands Government is committed to equality between men and women. The advancement and development of women is achieved, in the main, by the adoption of appropriate Governmental and official policies. However, there is no elected representative with particular responsibility for women and no policy objectives have been formally set down in this regard.

## **Human rights for women**

80. All persons in the Falkland Islands enjoy the rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual set out in Chapter 1 of the Constitution of the Falkland Islands. These provisions reflect the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights and are directly enforceable at the suit of the individual before the Supreme Court under the provisions of section 16 of the Constitution. In particular, section 12 provides protection from discrimination on the grounds of sex. On local remedies being exhausted, there is a right of individual petition to the European Court of Human Rights.

## **Women and the Media**

81. There is limited opportunity for access to the communication sector in the Falkland Islands. This is not a gender issue but is due to the lack of media outlets in the Falkland Islands. In the national media that exists, women are well represented. The media consists of a weekly newspaper and a national broadcasting station. The 'Penguin News' is a weekly newspaper. The Editor, Deputy Editor and Advertising Manager of this newspaper are females. The manager of the local broadcasting station (FIBS) is a woman, and most of the full-time staff and casual presenters are women including the Programme Controller and Senior News Editor. There is no national television station in the Falkland Islands. There is also a commercial internet news journal owned and run by a woman.

82. Similarly, the size of the local media limits its ability to influence stereotypes about women. However, a television channel (British Forces Broadcasting Service) is broadcast throughout the Falkland Islands. In addition, for a subscription fee, a number of cable and satellite channels are also available in Stanley. Many programmes of particular interest to women are broadcast.

## **Women and the Environment**

83. In the Falkland Islands, women are involved in the environmental decision making. The Falkland Islands Government Environmental Planning Officer and Environmental Officer are both women. In Falklands Conservation, a non-governmental environment charity, a number of staff are women.

## **The Girl Child**

84. In the Falkland Islands, girls and boys are accorded equal status. In view of this, many of the strategic objectives in the Beijing Platform for Action are not relevant in the circumstances of the Falkland Islands. For example, female genital mutilation, son-preference which results in female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, early marriage, sexual exploitation, discrimination against girls in food allocation and other practices related to health and wellbeing have never existed in the Falkland Islands. There is no 'preference' for sons, and negative cultural attitudes and practices do not exist.

85. The education of children in the Falkland Islands is offered on a non-discriminatory basis as shown in paragraph 100.

86. There is no discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.

87. There is no sexual exploitation or child labour in the Falkland Islands.

88. The Falkland Islands Government is committed to the elimination of violence against both the girl and boy child. The Social Work Department provides a child protection service.

## **Annex C - Turks and Caicos Islands**

### **National census**

89. The last official census was done in 2001 and the results are that the household population of the TCI as 21,886, principally on the islands of Providenciales (13,021) and Grand Turk, which is the seat of Government (3,976). This is divided almost equally between belongers (10,335) and non-belongers (9,551). There are 9,990 women in the population (5,358 belongers) in the following age groups:

Under 19 years:	3,609
20-39 years:	3,901
40-59 years:	1,914
60 or over:	566

### **Women and legislation in TCI**

90. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women was extended to the Turks and Caicos Islands in 1986. The principal TCI legislation is the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Ordinance (Cap.97) of 1950. Fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual and protection from discrimination are expressed in the TCI Constitution of 1988 (Cap. I articles 67 and 78) whatever (the individual's) race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex.

### **Legal and other measures adopted since the previous report**

91. Since the last reporting cycle in 2003 the Turks and Caicos saw the enactment of a new Constitution on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2006 with a focus on enlarging the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual provisions and placing those provisions in Part 1 of the new Constitution.



92. Under these provisions, women are protected from all forms of discrimination. Section 1 provides that “every persons in the islands is entitled to the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say the right, without distinction of any kind, such as race, national or social origin, political or other opinion colour, religion sex, birth or other status, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest, to each and all of the following, namely -

- (a) life, liberty, security of the person and the protection of the law.
- (b) freedom of conscience, of expression and of assembly and association, and
- (c) protection for his or her private and family life, the privacy of his or her home.

93. Also since the last reporting cycle, the Turks and Caicos Islands have participated in a project with the Organization of Eastern Caribbean states to reform the law relating to Domestic Violence and the Family. Six bills have been drafted as a result of wide spread consultation among stakeholder groups and in various town hall meeting around the islands. These six bills cover the following areas of the law -

- a) The Family Court
- b) Domestic Violence
- c) Protection of Children
- d) Custody of Children
- e) Adoption
- f) Juvenile Justice

In the Caribbean region women are seen as the focal point of the family and are often in the weakest position financially and physically. These reforms are seen as a mechanism to, among other, strengthen the position of women by providing through the law a structure through which women and their children can be better protected.

94. In mid 2003 Executive Council agreed to the setting up of a Turks and Caicos Islands Human Rights Committee. Due to varying circumstances, the Committee ceased to function with no precise terms of reference.

95. In May 2006, the Human Rights Committee was re-established with the Government nominated Chairperson and five other members. The Committee met to determine its terms of reference drawing on the practice in other Overseas Territories, and advice as necessary from elsewhere. Following extensive research and consultation it was ultimately decided that a Human Rights Commission will be established and will serve as

the National Institution vested with the competence for the promotion and protection of the fundamental rights and freedom as was enshrined in the Amended Constitution Order 2006.

96. The Terms of Reference was adopted and subsequently received Cabinet approval in October 2006. The Human Rights Commission recognizes that it is new body providing an alternative avenue of redress for persons who feels that their rights and freedoms have been infringed upon. To this end, the Commission has drafted applicable legislation and is actively working on formulating its operational and investigative procedures and remains a work in progress. Training has been offered and a working visit is already planned for the Chairman, who will attend a week of training in consultation with the FCO in the UK.

97. In June 2007, plans are underway for a public education awareness campaign, with a view of increasing the public awareness and their understanding of what their human rights entail and about the role of the Human Rights Commission itself; how it can be assessed; and what assistance it is able to provide.

#### **Actual progress to promote and eliminate discrimination against women**

98. Since the inception of the Gender Affairs Unit in 1999 great strides have been made. The Unit now boasts of six offices functioning on the two main inhabited islands namely Grand Turk (the capital) and Providenciales. The Unit is manned by a Director, an Assistant Director, an Administrative Officer and a Clerical Officer in Grand Turk and a Deputy Director and a Clerical Officer in Providenciales. Plans to expand this Department and to set up offices in other islands are being discussed since the need for such a Unit is becoming increasingly visible. The Gender Affairs Unit is currently being run through the Ministry of Health and Human Services.

99. One of its responsibilities is the monitoring of the status of women in the TCI and to ensure gender equity and equality. The Gender Affairs Unit is supported by the NGO, Women in Development, which has branches in all the main islands. Representatives have established a combined Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and CEDAW whose objectives are to raise awareness about the Conventions and ensure compliance.

100. The Gender Affairs Unit organizes seminars, workshops and talk shows to increase the awareness of both women and men on issues related to the equality of women with men. The print and voice media is also regularly utilized for the development of awareness.

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

### **Family education and maternity**

101. The rights of married women in respect of tubal ligation are at times hampered by the requirement for the husband's consent to the procedure. Although there is no law to back this up, yet from the ethical point of view the Doctors would like the husbands input and consent prior to performing this procedure.

102. As is noted throughout the Commonwealth, abortion is prohibited and the Unit works along with the Department of Social Development to assist in anyway possible when such cases arises. Young ladies are encouraged to empower themselves at all times regardless of the situation.

### **Trafficking in women - violence against women and girls**

103. Legislation for the protection of women is currently under revision. The Unit continues to work in collaboration with the Police advocating against domestic violence and abuse in any form or fashion. Training workshops for Police Officers, Teachers and Social Workers, funded by CAFRA (Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action) and the Caribbean Development Bank are still being an effective tool of education and awareness. The Domestic Violence Foundation is still in effect. The Women's Crisis Centre in Providenciales is slowly moving forward with assistance from Government, NGOs, the public and other well-wishers, namely UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) who will be funding Trainer of Trainers course to run simultaneously with the construction of the Crisis Center which will commence in few months time.

104. The Domestic Violence Foundation is working vigorously for more women-friendly legislation especially concerning the length of sentences and the rehabilitation of offenders returning to society. The establishment of the Crisis Center is an important priority for DVF, as for the first time, it will provide women with essential, viable alternative to staying in a violent relationship.

105. The main challenge facing the foundation is women who would come forward and speak out about the abuse while still maintaining the decorum within society and not having any prejudices levy at them.

106. The Gender Affairs Desk is constantly raising the level of awareness on domestic and sexual abuse on minors by speaking to students, especially primary school students, distributing posters and hand-outs throughout the community, appearing on talk shows, publishing articles in the print media, and community out reaches with targeted focus groups. These public awareness strategies are proving to be very beneficial as we are observing a marked increase in the number of complaints filed and more cases brought before the courts. Nevertheless it is believed that a significant number of offences against

women go unreported and there are instances where women have withdrawn complaints, even at a late stage, in proceedings brought by the Crown.

107. Police statistics for offences against females are:

		Jan- Dec 2004	Jan- Dec 2005	Jan- Dec 2006	Jan- Mar 2007
1.	INCEST	0	0	1	0
2.	RAPE	1	0	11	2
3.	ATTEMPTED RAPE	2	2	0	0
4.	UNLAWFUL CARNAL KNOWLEDGE	4	7	4	2
5.	BUGGERY	0	0	1	0
6.	ATT BUGGERY	1	0	0	1
7.	INDECENT ASSAULT	3	42	11	1
8.	INFLECTING GRIEVOUS BODILY HARM	0	3	3	0
9.	A. O. A. B. H.	8	21	47	8
10.	WOUNDING	5	8	21	0
11.	COMMON ASSAULT	16	11	6	5
12.	ASSAULT ON FEMALE	5	7	9	1

### Political and Public Life

108. Women continue to make their mark in the most senior governmental public service positions. There are currently four female Permanent Secretaries (previously there were none) and there are six females at the next level of Under Secretaries (previously there were three). Also, many departments are led by women including the Budget and Treasury to name a few.

109. There are currently six women local attorneys (up by one), who have been appointed Crown Counsel (43% of the total) in the Attorney General's Chambers. Before 2000, there were no women Crown Counsels. There are seven women local attorneys in private practice, up by three.

110. 80% of public sector employees are women. Many qualified women are recruited to the TCI public service from the Caribbean region. Senior service positions held by women include Clerk to the Legislative Council (who is the regional Secretary of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association). Some other appointed women are: Chief Nursing Officer, the Coordinator of the HIV/AIDS Programme, Head of the Drug Unit, Director of the National Trust, Managing Director of the Financial Services Commission and Finance Director of the National Insurance Board. Many represent the TCI at international and regional meetings.

111. Senior positions in education held by women include Director of Education and The Principal of the Community College, which is the principal tertiary education establishment in TCI. Eleven out of the fourteen principals in Government primary and secondary schools are female, and 18 out of 21 at private schools. Of 273 teachers, 200 or 84% are women. Women are therefore contributing tremendously towards the empowerment of young people and the most vulnerable members of society in TCI.

112. Women are again showing stamina and a greater increase in the country's political life. Recently a Deputy Governor's position was made due to the new Constitution and a woman was appointed to that position. Out of a total of 18 elected, appointed and ex-officio members of the Legislative Council, only three of those elected, and four in all, are women. There is only one female minister, although in previous Governments, there have been two female ministers. The Deputy Speaker of the House is currently a female and so is the Clerk to the House of Assembly.

113. The last general election held in February 2007 saw a noticeable increase of women who were actively aggressive in campaigning and placing themselves as candidates to serve in the newly named House of Assembly.

### **Marriage, nationality and equal rights for children to nationality**

114. A child born in or outside the TCI, or if legally adopted or otherwise dependent, has Belonger status if at least one of his/her parents has Belonger status or was born in the Islands. Belonger status shall also be granted to the spouse of a Belonger, provided that the applicant has lived with his/her spouse for not less than five years or would have done so but for the death of the spouse, and that on the date of application was not formally separated or, where the spouse has died, has not remarried.

115. All Belongers and Naturalized / Registered persons are now consider British Citizens and may apply for and obtain a British passport.

116. Currently an immigration reform policy is being prepared for submission to the Government.

### **Education and employment; economic benefits**

117. All children are entitled to compulsory education from ages 4-16. The TCI Government offers a number of scholarships to students at the secondary and tertiary levels. The Continuous Education Program for teenage mothers and other needy persons are still continuing and the results are very encouraging.

118. There are 388 female students at the TCI Community College, 69 % of the total. Typical areas of study by female students are associate degrees in hospitality, business administration, computers, general science; and certificate courses in hospitality studies, business studies, school administration management, early child development, human resource management and clinical nursing. There are pre-college courses including O & A levels and CXC (Caribbean Examination Council) upgrading, also adult and continuing education courses, conversational Spanish and computer literacy courses. There are six full time members of the female faculty, and sixteen adjunct or part time members.

### **Healthcare**

119. The TCI government commits the largest share of public expenditure to improving the health and education of the population. It is increasing its investment in diagnostic services in order to reduce the number of medical referrals to hospitals abroad. The main hospital in Grand Turk and smaller clinics in the other islands provide free family life education and family planning services to all women in the country.

120. There are many new clinics in Providenciales with one especially for women and it is owned by a Belonger. It must also be noted that there is an increase in the hiring of female doctors by TCI Government.

121. The Gender Director and the AIDS Coordinator continues to work very closely together in a number of outreach programs to the community. In an effort to curb the increasingly serious spread of HIV and AIDS and to reduce the impact on families, communities, individuals in general, and women in particular, the TCI Government has implemented several initiatives through the National AIDS program which will assist in educating the populace further.

### **Poverty alleviation, economic and social benefits**

122. The Department of Economics, Planning and Statistics has established a number of poverty alleviation schemes, providing project support for women's advancement. The TC National Trust promotes sustainable tourism and economic activity by assisting women in the small islands to improve the quality, competitiveness and marketing of their traditional handicrafts such as basket weaving.

123. Recently the Hon. Minister for Social Development in 2006 launched a Programme called Poverty Alleviation Citizens Empowerment (PACE) to assist all women in achieving their goals and striving for deeper input into the economic growth and development in all aspects of the community. Through this Programme females of all ages are encouraged to seek empowerment skills in positive decision making. This programme was received favourably by the women of the TCI Community. Under this programme the Hon. Minister introduced a Sister to Sister programme where women from the upper echelon are assisting their female counterparts.

124. In 2006 a new Cruise Ship Center was opened on Grand Turk with Carnival Line being the main user. In this form of investment and empowerment women are noticeably seen in the forefront as entrepreneurs.

125. The Small Business Enterprise program managed by TCI Investment Agency has provided loans to 159 business women (61% of total applications) and small business management advice and other support to a further 239 (53% of the total assisted) to ensure that their business would be successful and sustainable. Other TC Invest programs provide assistance to single women, for low-cost housing and continuing education loans and Entrepreneurship. Women now have access to land and other resources to improve their financial status.

126. Student loans have allowed women to pursue their educational studies and pursue their chosen careers at the highest level while our business loans give them the opportunities to realize their dreams of becoming successful business owners.

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

### **Legal capacity**

128. A family court has been established in the TCI to deal with family matters. Sitting for one day a week, this allows for more privacy and sensitivity, which should encourage more women to bring family matters before the court.

129. Support for women is delivered increasingly through NGOs. The work of the Domestic Violence Foundation has been described above. Women in Development are working with children left behind by victims of HIV/AIDS. Women In Action is an advocate for women's rights through mentoring and networking. Specific programs currently undertaken by WIA include increasing self-esteem amongst young girls, and developing political leadership potential.

## **Religion**

130. Religion continues to play a vital role within the society with the Christian faith being the leading force. Within this field females can undisputedly seen as taking the leading or the assistant leadership role in over 50% of the organized congregations.

## **Constraints**

131. The Gender Affairs Unit, although the staff has been increased, still suffers from insufficient funding and lack of training within the field. Also, there is a lack of logistical support such as transportation. NGOs also lack human and financial resources to ensure that programs are successful and sustainable.

132. The Report on the Turks & Caicos Islands was prepared by the Gender Affairs Unit within the Ministry of Health and Human Services, with input from other relevant government departments and NGOs to which the report relates. The preparation of the report has enabled each organization to become more familiar with the Convention and to consider the measures they have taken to implement its provisions.

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