

THE NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY OF BARBADOS



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**MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL SECURITY AND HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT**

CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	Page 1
Mission Statement of the Labour Ministry	Page 2
Policy Goal	Page 2
Policy Objectives	Page 2
The International Economic Crisis.....	Page 4
The Road to Economic Recovery	Page 6
The Local Environment.....	Page 7
Responses to the Crisis by Barbados.....	Page 8
Employment Issues Introduction	Page 9
Pillar #1: Creating Employment Opportunities.....	Page 11
Pillar #2: Enhancing Labour Supply.....	Page 18
Pillar #3: Promoting Equality & Equity in the Labour Market.....	Page 26
Pillar #4: Building a Stronger Workforce through Information	Page 43
Pillar #5: Cross Cutting Issues	Page 50
Reference Materials	Page 56

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Employment Policy of Barbados has been prepared with the ultimate intention of ensuring that workers in Barbados have access to full, productive and freely chosen employment. It therefore charts a pathway for the moulding of an environment that embraces the decent work concept. This policy is a manifestation of the fact that in Barbados, the greatest asset is arguably the human resource and as such, is critical to the objective of ensuring that Barbados becomes a developed country, consistent with the National Strategic Plan 2006-2025. This policy also takes note of the fact that all necessary efforts to develop the human resource must be multi-faceted in nature, where Government, the Private Sector, Trade Unions and Civil society are provided with meaningful opportunities to have their voices heard in making recommendations that contribute to the development of Barbados.

The document commences with the identification of a policy goal and policy objectives. It then provides brief overviews of the international and local economic climates and the effects that they have had on employment. The document then places a focus on vital labour issues that must be addressed if the goal of full and productive employment is to be realised. From the enhancement of the labour supply through education and training, to the identification of the industrial sectors that will contribute to the sustainability of Barbados' economy over the medium to long term, this policy seeks to outline ambitious but practical policies that can be pursued and implemented by Barbados, as the country endeavours to achieve developed country status over the long term. Employment issues raised in the policy are aggregated around five "pillars". They are:

1. Creating Employment Opportunities
2. Enhancing Labour Supply
3. Promoting equality and equity in the Labour Market
4. Building a Stronger Workforce through Information
5. Cross-cutting issues

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL SECURITY AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

To assist the Government and its Social Partners in promoting opportunities for the provision of decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom of association, equity, security and human dignity and to provide quality social and economic benefits for Barbadians.

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY GOAL

To create an enabling environment that is conducive to the empowerment of the labour force through employment promotion and the provision of decent working opportunities.

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the National Employment Policy are as follows:

- To assist in charting a structured approach to minimise the impact on labour from the adverse effects of the global economic crisis
- To assist in the fight against poverty by promoting the employment of persons who are desirous of acquiring a job;
- To enhance the employability of the labour force by providing the requisite skills-sets that would be necessary to facilitate the development of key economic sectors
- To promote the creation of decent employment as a key component of trade and direct investment initiatives
- To promote and facilitate entrepreneurship as a viable outlet for gainful employment

- To complement mechanisms, such as the Barbados Decent Work Country Programme, that can assist Government in attaining and realising the decent work goal
- To enhance labour market development through improved access to information
- To promote the tenets of decent work, particularly employment creation, through social dialogue
- To address inequalities through the provision of decent work opportunities for all persons, particularly taking into account the needs of vulnerable categories of workers such as women, the youth, migrant workers and persons living with disabilities
- To underscore the key contribution that a stable industrial relations climate must make towards the attainment of decent and productive employment

BACKGROUND

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The Global Economic Crisis and its impact on the International Economy

Though debate continues to take place in the international arena about (i) the ending of the global financial crisis and (ii) the strength of the recovery, most would argue that the crisis was the most serious event impacting the world economy since the great depression of the 1930's. Evidence of the crisis' adverse impact can be particularly found in the year 2009, when several of the world's largest economies recorded significant contractions in their real G.D.P. Many industrialized countries witnessed notable declines in their stock markets, sales revenues of companies plummeted in the face of declining economic activity and the disbursement of credit to fund businesses almost came to a standstill. Several emerging economies performed marginally better in the face of the crisis but still faced obstacles such as deteriorating manufacturing exports and a marked reduction in foreign investments and capital inflows into their economies. The responses adopted by countries to address the effects of the crisis were varied and included actions such as public capital injections and stimulus packages, with the over \$700 billion stimulus package introduced by the United States being one of the largest on record. The severe effects of the crisis were further manifested through world trade activity. For instance, an examination of world trade statistics compiled by the World Trade Organisation (W.T.O) revealed that in 2009, world merchandise trade fell by 23%, with exports of commercial services contracting by some 13%.

To date, the IMF notes that global growth remains relatively uneven, with growth for 2014 projected to increase by some 3.3%.¹ The economic performance of the major industrialized nations continued to lag behind the performances of emerging economies, with growth in the emerging nations expected to be around 4.4%, more than double the 1.8% rate projected for advanced economies. Amongst the advanced economies, the United States continued to experience

¹ IMF World Economic Outlook Update: October 2014

weaker than expected economic growth. According to the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis, economic growth was estimated to be 3.5% in the third quarter of 2014, a decline of one percentage point when compared to the 4.5% recorded in the corresponding period of 2013. The U.S unemployment rate however was recorded at 5.8% in October 2014, significantly lower than the 7.2% recorded in October 2013.

In the European Union, from 2009 till the present, the crisis has had a particularly severe impact on participating member states. Threats to the future economic viability of the euro zone were manifested through the crippling debt crises existing in countries like Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain. To varying degrees, these countries have had to implement severe austerity programmes that included privatization schemes, tax reforms, cuts in social programmes and layoffs in their public sectors. Greece for instance, with a current account deficit of 11.8% in 2010, had to cut nominal public sector wages by 15%; cut pensions in the private and public sector by 10%; significantly raise both VAT and Excise taxes; raise the retirement age to 65 years and slash public sector employment². Growth in the E.U was projected to be a modest 0.8% in 2014, compared to a decrease of some 0.4% recorded in 2013.

As previously mentioned, emerging economies generally fared better than their advanced counterparts. Economic growth in these economies was primarily driven by expanding demand and exports from countries like China and India, where growth projections for these countries were estimated at 7.4% and 5.6% respectively. Other emerging economies however tended to record lower rates of growth and this challenge was compounded by other issues such as high levels of volatility in oil and other commodity prices.

The Caribbean region was expected to grow by 3.8% in 2014, a slight improvement over the 3.2% recorded in 2013. Some of the more serious economic challenges impacting upon the region included high levels of public debt, adverse conditions existing in the primary markets for those tourism-sensitive islands and continued susceptibility to changes in oil prices.

² http://www.minfin.gr/content-api/f/binaryChannel/minfin/datastore/89/e5/27/89e527a8e4c7891eed132419dfe976e9116f4009/application/pdf/HEPP_NEWSLETTER_issue8.pdf

The Road to Economic Recovery

The rationale for the formulation of a National Employment Policy is underscored when the adverse effects of the global economic crisis are fully taken into consideration. In addition to weaker than expected growth rates across the globe, world trade growth, rose by some 2.2% (2013), only marginally better than the 2.0% recorded in 2012 and significantly below the 5.2% recorded in 2011.

Furthermore, persistently high unemployment rates continued to be a significant problem, particularly for the advanced economies. According to the International Labour Organisation (I.L.O) Global Employment Trends publication (2014), the world unemployment rate in 2013 was recorded at 6%³. This rate was virtually unchanged from those recorded in 2012 and in 2010 respectively and above the 5.6% rate recorded in 2007, when the effects of the crisis first started to manifest themselves. The total number of unemployed persons throughout the world was estimated to be almost 202 million.

The above-mentioned economic and unemployment statistics provide evidence of the fact that a correlation does indeed exist between the state of the world economy and global employment. The crisis has had an exceptionally severe impact on workers throughout the world and urgent initiatives need to be identified by countries to, not only integrate new and displaced workers into the labour market, but to provide them with access to decent and productive employment.

From the statistics provided above, one can conclude that global recovery from the crisis for both advanced and emerging nations is proving to be both challenging and protracted. This problem, by extension, will tend to have a dampening effect on labour demand throughout the globe. It is therefore critical that small open economies such as Barbados are prepared to take all necessary actions to ensure that all labour stakeholders are provided with an avenue to identify meaningful remedies to the myriad of socio-economic problems that are confronting the country as a result of the crisis.

³ International Labour Office (ILO): Global Employment Trends 2014

LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

Within the Barbadian context, the attainment of economic growth in the wake of the global economic crisis continued to be a challenge. A review of the GDP statistics published by the Central Bank of Barbados reveal that growth in the first six months of 2014 was virtually flat⁴. For the period January-June 2014, no meaningful growth was recorded in the country's primary foreign exchange sectors of Tourism, Manufacturing, Sugar or Non-Sugar Agriculture. Inflation was estimated to be around 1.7% up to June 2014, whilst the latest available unemployment rate was reported to be 11.7% up to March 2014.

Other recently occurring developments which had an impact on the local economic landscape included:

- A significant drop in trading activity on the local stock exchange.
- Declining revenues from the export of sugar
- Volatility in oil prices in the international market and.....
- A high fiscal deficit

Economic growth in Barbados is expected to be around 1.2% for the year 2015.

⁴ Central Bank of Barbados Press Release June 2014

RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS BY BARBADOS

At the height of the crisis, real economic activity fell by 4.1% in 2009, with unemployment rising by almost two full percentage points for that year over 2008. Cognizant of the need to ensure that economic activity did not cease in the wake of the crisis, Government, in its Medium Term Development Strategy 2010-2014 implemented a number of measures, inclusive of:

- Investments in capital projects through both the construction and renovation of government buildings, as well as the acceleration of the national housing programme
- Increased funding to entities like Fund Access to assist such institutions in providing technical assistance to small and micro enterprises
- Maintenance of employment levels within the public sector and through mechanisms like the Social Partnership, encouraged the private sector to do likewise, by adopting measures such as reduced work hours and implementing shift systems
- The pursuit of additional double taxation treaties in the effort to further develop the International Business and Financial Services Sector

Government also:

- Developed the Tourism Relief Fund to provide Hotels with working capital to keep their businesses open
- Ensured the continuation of multi-million dollar Construction Projects, through the offering of financial guarantees to the project developers
- Augmented its efforts to source overseas employment opportunities for its citizens, by focusing on the external labour market in Canada and the U.S.A. Moreover, opportunities for Barbadians to work on Cruise lines are being actively explored.

ECONOMIC POLICY & EMPLOYMENT: A KEY RELATIONSHIP

Subsequent to identifying the broad economic framework outlining Barbados' chosen economic policies over the medium to long term, issues that have been deemed to be pertinent to the provision of decent and productive employment are now provided. ***The rationale for this course of action is that the Ministry believes that there is a direct inescapable linkage between employment and the state of the economy.*** As a result of this linkage, it is becoming absolutely necessary that policy makers and planners be provided with an assessment as to the major economic initiatives that are taking place within a specific sector that might impact on that sector's ability to create meaningful employment opportunities. For instance, there might be a plan in the Tourism sector to build and complete a number of luxury hotels within five years. This is an economic decision which would likely have a direct impact on the creation of jobs for persons in a wide range of areas, from the employment of Carpenters, Masons, Electricians and Plumbers, to Quantity Surveyors, Engineers, Architects, Project Managers, Contractors and ultimately, various categories of hotel workers to manage the operations. Discussions and dialogue would then need to occur to assess whether such a diverse set of skills can be supplied locally, or whether any specific skills sets would need to be sourced from overseas and in what quantities.

As another practical example, a decision may be taken by a multi-national company to establish a high-tech processing plant in Barbados, a decision that would have clear-cut costs and benefits to the economy of Barbados in terms of the payment of taxes, the building (or rental) of work space, the transport of machinery, equipment and raw materials, the usage of local inputs and resources, etc. In this case, decisions would need to be made as to whether Barbados could adequately supply the TECVOC and professional skills sets that would be needed to effectively manage such a plant. It would also need to be determined whether local training institutions could provide prospective students with internationally recognized certification that would enable them to find work in such an operation.

From the preceding paragraphs, it can be argued that whether they pertain to the generation of employment opportunities, the provision of training opportunities, or to the sourcing of foreign skills sets that cannot be found in the Barbados labour market, there are a myriad of employment issues ***that are inevitably dependent on economic programmes and policies being pursued at the national level.***

Being cognizant of this fact, the following factors serve to outline Barbados' position with respect to a number of issues pertinent to employment. For each employment issue, a background is provided, followed by the challenges surrounding the issues that need to be resolved, along with proposed strategies that could be employed to address each issue. These issues have further been aggregated into five distinct policy "***pillars***" which are now outlined below:

1. Creating Employment Opportunities
2. Enhancing Labour Supply
3. Promoting equality and equity in the Labour Market
4. Building a Stronger Workforce Through Information
5. Cross-cutting issues

1. CREATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Specific Objectives	Key Areas of Intervention
1.1 Exploit the Relationship between Trade, Foreign Direct Investment and Employment	1.1.1 Identify the Skills Needs of areas with strong export potential to guide education and training programmes
	1.1.2 Promote Employment Creation as a key objective of trade and investment policies and agreements
	1.1.3 Increase collaboration between labour stakeholders and relevant agencies to support export promotion & investment initiatives
	1.1.4 Identify the skills needs of foreign investors and potential investors
1.2 Create an enabling environment that promotes entrepreneurship and supports domestic enterprise development.	1.2.1 Promotion of entrepreneurship as an avenue for employment through the Small Business Association, Barbados Youth Business Trust, Barbados Investment & Development Corporation, Fund Access, Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme and Barbados Coalition of Service Industries.
	1.2.2 Provision of relevant education and training by BVTB, S.J.P.P, B.I.M.A.P, B.C.C and others to support the necessary skills development of potential and existing entrepreneurs.
	1.2.3 Increased collaboration with relevant agencies to collect and disseminate information on entrepreneurial opportunities
1.3 Source Additional Local Employment Opportunities	1.3.1 Restructuring of the National Employment Bureau to enhance local job placement services
1.4 Source Additional Overseas Employment Opportunities	1.4.1 Explore additional overseas employment programmes,
	1.4.2 Expanding the Overseas Liaison Services

	1.4.3 Explore new opportunities overseas for persons with professional and technical skill sets, using agencies like the B.C.S.I
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Introduction

As outlined under the Employment tenet of Decent Work and as a key economic policy objective, the sourcing of meaningful employment opportunities remains a top priority of Government. However, the attainment of this goal can prove to be a challenge for developing and developed countries alike. This problem can become even more acute when countries are faced with economic difficulties such as those experienced under the global financial crisis, where large scale job loss can be the unwanted result of (i) falling aggregate demand and (ii) struggling economic sectors that have become uncompetitive vis-à-vis those of other countries. Barbados itself has witnessed its unemployment rate rise by over four percentage points over a six year period, from 7.4% in 2007 to 11.6% at the end of 2013. In response to this challenge, Government will seek to pursue a number of policy actions which are aimed at generating sufficient employment opportunities for its citizens over the short to medium term. Such actions will be focused on the supply of jobs, not only in Barbados, but on the supply of local labour for overseas markets in places such as Canada and the United States.

1.1 Exploit the Relationship between Trade, Foreign Direct Investment and Employment

The Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development (MLSD) recognizes that within the context of globalization, economic growth and development would be contingent on the country's ability to capitalize on trade and investment opportunities. It is acknowledged that the formulation of a comprehensive employment policy will in some cases, be heavily dependent on the policies, actions and programmes which are adopted by **other** institutions within the private and public sectors.

One such policy is the goal to increase trade and access the markets of new trade partners. Indeed, as outlined in the **Global Employment Agenda** of the I.L.O, such actions are considered to be core elements in helping a country to create additional employment opportunities for its citizens. The Ministry is conscious of the several economic benefits that could be derived from the formulation of trading agreements such as the Economic Partnership Agreement between CARIFORUM and the E.U and the pending trading agreement between Canada and CARICOM. The Ministry is further of the view that the successful implementation of such agreements would naturally lead to an increase in the local demand for labour ***in areas with strong export potential such as garments, condiments, etc.***

It is also recognized that Foreign Direct Investment (F.D.I), *if carefully managed*, can make significant long-term contributions to a country's economic landscape, particularly for developing countries such as Barbados. Positive effects of F.D.I can take various forms, including (i) inflows of foreign exchange (ii) skills and technology transfer to the host country (iii) additional revenue to Government from Corporation taxes imposed on foreign companies (iv) contributions to the economy through the purchase and consumption of local goods and services and (v) employment generation.

To fully exploit the employment opportunities arising from increased trade and F.D.I, the Ministry would promote the establishment of an information sharing system, ***where it is periodically informed of trade and investment opportunities for the country. This would require increased collaboration with relevant agencies*** such as (i) Caribbean Export and Development Agency, (ii) Ministry of Foreign Trade, (iii) the Private Sector Trade Team (iv) the Barbados Manufacturers Association (v) International Business and (vi) the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation. The focus of such a collaboration would facilitate the compilation of a list of required occupational and training needs. This list would then be compiled and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant and updated.

Such a listing would be used by (i) the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development (MLSD) and (ii) the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (METI), to objectively ascertain whether Barbados has the wherewithal to supply local exporters with the skills sets they require to conduct their business. The list could also serve to signal to policy makers ***and training institutions*** that specific occupational and training needs that have been identified by exporters ***are not being met and that corrective measures need to be put in place to address any existing skills gaps.***

In addition, the MLSD will remain committed to ensuring that efforts to capitalize on trade and investment opportunities do not compromise the provision of decent work. Therefore, the promotion of employment generation as a target in these macro-economic policies will be balanced with efforts to promote international labour standards that protect the rights of workers.

1.2 Create an Enabling Environment That Promotes Entrepreneurship and Supports Enterprise Development

The Ministry recognises that if adequately facilitated, entrepreneurship ***can easily become the key plank in Government's plan to facilitate meaningful employment creation on a significant scale.*** Indeed, successful entrepreneurs can in turn become employers themselves, as their businesses start to develop and expand.

However, current and potential entrepreneurs continue to experience several obstacles in transforming their business ideas into realistic revenue-earning ventures. Such obstacles range from insufficient access to start-up capital, a lack of partners for venture capital arrangements, a lack of confidence with respect to the pursuit of equity financing arrangements and a lack of the necessary business skills. In spite of these obstacles, Government is of the view that entrepreneurs have a vital contribution to make, not only to employment growth, but towards the overall development of the country and important initiatives will be employed to create a facilitating environment in which entrepreneurs can realise their full potential.

Government recognizes that imperfect information about the availability of financial and technical services, the process of setting up a business, training opportunities or other supporting services hamper entrepreneurial initiatives. Government will therefore seek to improve the dissemination of this information to the public, in collaboration with non-governmental agencies. Government will also support the education and training of entrepreneurs and promote entrepreneurship to students and job seekers that are registered with the National Employment Bureau and the Barbados Vocational Training Board respectively. The provision of training in business skills and other relevant competencies would be developed to equip these potential entrepreneurs.

Other key policies that will be promoted to assist in entrepreneurial development include:

- The provision of fiscal incentives for new business ventures
- The establishment of specific time frames in which entrepreneurs can obtain the necessary documentation they need to start a business
- The conduct of a study that would review the tax system's effects on small businesses
- Facilitating the timely access of small businesses to telecommunications, buildings and other infrastructure
- The review and amendments where necessary of key pieces of legislation that are relevant to small businesses

1.3 Source Additional Local Employment Opportunities

Employment Services play a critical role in matching job seekers with employers, thereby enhancing the job search process and reducing frictional unemployment. The National Employment Bureau is the agency of Government that provides this service and its efforts must be supported by the building of meaningful linkages with local employers. Therefore, local employers will be encouraged to utilise the National Employment Bureau, to register their vacancies and complement

traditional methods used in the recruitment of workers such as (i) word-of-mouth and (ii) advertisements placed through various media sources.

Government remains mindful of the traditional heavy emphasis on elementary, low skilled occupations that has traditionally characterized its employment service and will ensure that the proportion of professional and technical array of jobs on offer are substantially increased. This is an effort that cannot be done in a vacuum, but with the cooperation of the private sector and the student bodies of all major tertiary institutions.

Job seekers will also be targeted and sensitised to the fact that they can expand their methods of job search to include the services of the National Employment Bureau. Through avenues such as career showcases and workshops, the MLSD will actively engage in public outreach activities in the areas of employment guidance, counseling and job placements.

1.4 Source Additional Overseas Employment Opportunities

Barbados is cognisant of the fact that the creation of decent employment opportunities for its citizens is key towards the goal of transforming the country into a developed nation by 2025. In pursuing this objective, emphasis must also be placed on strengthening existing programmes and securing new opportunities beyond the shores of Barbados, with a firm focus to be placed on the labour markets of countries such as the United States of America and Canada. Therefore, Barbados will move to facilitate the significant increase of several quality jobs in a wide number of economic sectors that utilise the services of both skilled and semi-skilled Barbadians. This action will not only serve as a source of employment, but could serve as a significant avenue for the injection of remittances into the economy.

The MLSD is of the view that all persons who have successfully obtained overseas employment opportunities through Government sponsored programmes are ambassadors of Barbados. It is also recognized that their performance and attitudes on the job affect the success and longevity of the programme. Therefore, the screening of applicants will be enhanced and registrants who have

been successful in gaining opportunities will be required to participate in an orientation process, where they would be sensitised to all:

- rules and regulations contained in their contract of employment, along with penalties for non-compliance
- rates of remuneration for normal work hours, as well as rates for overtime work
- all taxes, insurance, fees and other deductions made to wages
- modalities and mechanisms to be used by workers in the event that legitimate grievances arise during their overseas tenure of employment, whether such grievances concern terms and conditions of work, dismissals, disputes over wages, the employer, fellow workers, etc.

The Government will seek to place additional liaison officers at strategic locations overseas, whose primary purpose would be to seek increased job opportunities for Barbadians in North America and other emerging markets. Such officers would be in constant contact with the National Employment Bureau and would provide continuous reports on vacancies, the skills sets required of those vacancies and the criteria necessary for hiring in terms of qualifications, experience, etc.

Additionally, staff from consulates and embassies would be required to include within their current work programmes the responsibility of continuously monitoring the environment in which they are based, for overseas opportunities for Barbadian workers. They will be further requested to communicate such information to the MLSD, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Meaningful opportunities would also be sourced through the formation of linkages with the Council for Investment, Export Foreign Exchange and the Diaspora (CIEX) and other entities with overseas interests.

2. ENHANCING LABOUR SUPPLY

Specific Objectives	Key Areas of Intervention
2.1 Enhance Career Guidance and Counseling for the Adult Population	2.1.1 Position the NEB as the main career counseling centre for the adult population
	2.1.2 Development of career guidance and counseling tools for the Barbados labour market
	2.1.3 Increase collaboration with relevant stakeholders to improve career and guidance counseling of students.
2.2 Promote Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Barbados.	2.2.1 Improve the image of vocational areas of work.
	2.2.2 Increasing the provision and quality of TVET in Barbados
	2.2.3 Strengthen the collaboration between the TVET system and employers
	2.2.4 Increase promotion of the TVET programmes and initiatives under the Ministry of Labour through the BVTB & the TVET Council's Employment Training Fund (E.T.F)
2.3 Improve the Certification of the Barbados Labour Force	2.3.1 Facilitate the development of the National Qualification Framework.
	2.3.2 Increased promotion of Competence Based Education & Training (CBET) and Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition (PLAR)
	2.3.3 Increased collaboration with the Barbados Accreditation Council
	2.3.4 Promoting and awarding National & Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (NVQ and CVQs)

2.4 Improve Labour Productivity	2.4.1 The promotion of Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) standards to create a workplace environment conducive to high productivity.
	2.4.2 Increased collaboration between the Ministry of Labour and the Barbados National Productivity Council to promote mechanisms like the System for Measurement & Improvement of Productivity (SYMAPRO).
	2.4.3 Preparation of quality, highly-skilled professionals from UWI and BCC for entry into the real-world work environment
Specific Objectives (Cont'd)	Key Areas of Intervention
2.5 Improve the levels of Customer Service Excellence throughout both the Public and Private Sectors	2.5.1 Disseminate the service excellence message at all conferences, seminars and other events that are hosted by the Ministry of Labour
	2.5.2 Strengthen the co-ordination between Ministry of Labour and agencies such as the National Initiative for Service Excellence (N.I.S.E) that are responsible for the delivery of service excellence
	2.5.3 Utilise the Ministry's G.I.V.E programme to promote the service excellence message to public sector workers across various Ministries and Departments

Introduction

The Ministry is of the view that a well-structured and balanced employment policy must outline a clear direction to improve labour on the supply side, in addition to identifying measures to stimulate the demand for labour. Enhancing labour supply would naturally involve a variety of issues, ranging from equipping workers with certification that is well recognized both regionally and internationally, to the improvement of labour productivity to enhance the competitiveness of business. Regardless of the issue, all supply-oriented policy

recommendations will ultimately have the intention of providing the employer with a calibre of worker that is well educated, trainable, innovative, skilled and that will bring maximum value added to the organization, whether in the private or in the public sector.

2.1 Enhance Career Guidance and Counseling for the Adult Population

The Government of Barbados will work assiduously to facilitate the moulding of a modernised employment services department that is relevant and that meets the needs of employers, job seekers and students desirous of receiving information. The Government is aware that the establishment of such a system will instill confidence in the public and will be key to reducing the many imbalances that arise in the labour market. This confidence will primarily emanate from the placement of the Bureau in a professional and appealing work setting in which job seekers will be encouraged to visit and register. The Government will therefore invest in the training of staff to deliver quality employment guidance and counseling services to the public. Government will additionally endeavour to ensure that the requisite software and other information and communication technology (I.C.T) resources that the Bureau needs to deliver its mandate are kept updated and can compare favourably with the employment services offered by industrialized countries. Once upgraded, the Bureau will enhance its position as a primary source of labour market information for policy and decision makers, supplying them with periodic statistics on jobs requested by occupation, vacancies received from employers by occupation, placements made by occupation, usage of the resource centre, job seekers counseled, etc. Once upgraded, an extensive and continuous public relations campaign will be planned and implemented, with the intention of boosting the image of the NEB in the eyes of the public.

2.2 Promote Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Barbados

Countries throughout the world, both developed and developing, have acknowledged the critical contribution that TVET training must make towards diversifying the skills set of the workforce and contributing towards the overall

development of the human factor. To this end, Government will upgrade and expand the physical infrastructure of its major training institutions to deliver quality TVET programmes to the public and will seek to continuously communicate with industry to ensure that all training programmes are (i) demand-driven and (ii) standards based. Government will also place special attention on upgrading the competencies and certification of TVET training instructors and will take steps to ensure that all training instructors are periodically sensitized to the needs of employers in industry. Institutions responsible for the development of such an initiative would include the METI, the TVET Council and the Barbados Vocational Training Board. Government will also be more proactive in countering the negative image attached to TVET training programmes and will seek to combat the stereotype by actively promoting TVET through avenues such as the “World Skills” competition. Government will further formulate a strategy to encourage representatives of major training institutions (such as the Barbados Vocational Training Board and the TVET Council’s Employment Training Fund) to promote the awareness of TVET training down to the community level.

2.3 Improve the Certification of the Barbados labour force

The need for workers to attain internationally recognised certification in today’s increasingly competitive climate is a reality facing **all workers** in the labour force. This statement is underscored when it is considered that in 2013, some 41% of the employed labour force possessed no formal certification. Though it can be argued that most workers in professional and technical occupations will already have attained some form of certification to function in their jobs, there are some occupational groups such as Artisans and other Skilled Craftsmen that may find themselves marginalized in the near future due to the lack of certification that proves their competency to perform a particular task.

The MLSD, through its TVET Council, will work to ensure that both Caribbean and National Vocational Qualifications are further developed and expanded to the fullest extent possible. To achieve this objective, workers who may have acquired their skills sets through on-the-job training and other programmes will be

afforded every opportunity to demonstrate their competencies to a recognized certifying body and will be examined by skilled, experienced assessors. Upon the demonstration of competence, the qualification will be awarded.

The Government will promote a competence-based approach to technical and vocational education and training, to ensure that the certification earned is relevant to real-world workplace requirements. This will involve the conduct of curriculum and programme assessments to determine the use of CBET⁵ methodology in training institutions and the provision of any necessary technical assistance. The MLSD will also support the implementation of a system of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), to acknowledge the skills and competencies already acquired by persons outside of traditional academic and training settings.

The public will be sensitised through a promotional campaign which will be developed to ensure that the public is made aware of the importance of attaining relevant and recognized certification for any career that they may wish to pursue.

2.4 Improve Labour Productivity

Improvement of productivity is one of the key components needed to facilitate meaningful growth in an economy. It can increase efficiency and enhance the ability of a business to offer lower and more competitive prices, vis-à-vis those offered by its competitors.

As productivity is a critical ingredient in the goal of improving national competitiveness, initiatives to measure productivity are paramount in enhancing the efficiency of businesses. However, the measurement of productivity and the identification of relevant indicators to assess productivity changes has been a critical challenge to private and public sector entities alike. For years, this has been a perennial issue that often manifests itself at wage negotiations in some industries, when employers seek to peg wage increases with increases in productivity. More often than not, employers do not have objective means of

⁵ Competence Based Education and Training

ascertaining productivity increases within their organizations and have to resort to other methods of granting wage increases to their employees, such as the traditional approach of “tying” wage increases to movements in inflation.

Government will encourage the utilization of tools such as the SYMAPRO (System of Measurement and Improvement of Productivity) mechanism in response to such dilemmas. Within this system, the social actors in an enterprise agree on objectives and indicators which are systematically measured and these social actors are invited to commit themselves to raising productivity and improving working conditions. Government is of the view that systems like this can help to foster improvements to productivity and working conditions, including respect for workers’ rights, the promotion of gender equality and social dialogue.

Government will seek to expand and strengthen existing information awareness campaigns that seek to inform the public about the need to improve productivity levels and to ensure that such messages are delivered down to the level of micro-businesses. Government will further seek to offer assistance to entities in identifying (or improving) productivity measurement indicators for assessing the performance of their respective businesses. Once such measures have been implemented, Government will encourage the use of industry benchmarks, in order that individual companies can objectively determine whether their own productivity levels have been improving, declining or fluctuating, relative to the levels being collectively recorded by their competitors.

Of special importance to the issue of improving labour productivity is the need for information linkages to be strengthened between primary training institutions like the University of the West Indies on the one hand and employers in the real world environment on the other. Through initiatives such as Skills Needs exercises, the Ministry of Labour is seeking to bridge that gap. However, the forging of meaningful linkages would necessitate the formation of a **“two-way”** relationship on both the part of the employer and the training institution. Employers should be prepared to share information with Government on the skills-sets and competencies that they wish graduates to possess upon entry into their workplace. This information in turn, would ultimately be disseminated to major training institutions, in order that they could review the concerns raised by employers and seek to amend their training programmes accordingly. Upon the

receipt of reports containing skills needs of employers across various sectors, institutions such as the University of the West Indies should be invited to provide their views as to how best to close skills gaps which employers have identified. In addition to core technical competencies that graduates in professional occupations must have, employers should further be willing to identify any general attributes, knowledge and skills that tertiary institutions should provide for the moulding of a “work-ready” graduate.

2.5 Improve the levels of Customer Service Excellence throughout both the Public and Private Sectors

As Barbados increasingly moves towards being a services-oriented economy, service delivery is becoming a critical issue for both the public and private sectors. Despite many structured and organised programmes to sensitise the public, especially workers as to the importance of delivering excellent service to customers, many reports are still being made by employers that workers are providing a level of service that is quite unsatisfactory. The gravity of this issue can be appreciated when employers in the tourism sector, the primary foreign exchange earner for Barbados, express concern about the matter and inform of the dire consequences that can result if service excellence is not taken seriously.

The Ministry is of the view that service excellence is a multi-dimensional matter that will involve the corporation of organisations throughout the public and the private sector. To this end, the Ministry will seek to pursue the following activities as key components of the national employment policy:

- Organise more information-awareness campaigns targeted at the public on the issue
- Increase the number of service excellence training programmes and investigate the possibility of certifying such programmes for workers
- Formulate and disseminate the service excellence message at all conferences, seminars, workshops and other events that are hosted by the Ministry

- Disseminate promotional materials (pamphlets, brochures) with the customer service message to the public and place the message on the Ministry's website
- Formulate smart-partnerships where appropriate between the Ministry of Labour and public sector agencies whose mandate requires them to focus on service delivery. The Ministry's G.I.V.E (Great Attitudes, Initiative, Values, Excellence) programme, will be the primary vehicle used to disseminate the service delivery message to public sector workers. Agencies to be targeted include the Hospitality Institute, Office of Public Sector Reform, Licensing Authority, Water Authority, Land Tax, National Petroleum Corporation, etc. Such partnerships could possibly take the form of (i) sponsorship by the Ministry of major events (ii) collaborating in the conduct of service excellence surveys and (iii) co-financing of publications with a focus on service, etc.

3. EQUALITY & EQUITY IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Specific Objectives	Key Areas of Intervention
3.1 Empower Persons with Disabilities through Employment ⁶	3.1.1 Increased provision of employment services to PLWD
	3.1.2 Sensitisation of key labour stakeholders to the rights of PLWD
	3.1.3 Increased access to TVET programmes to PLWD
	3.1.4 Collaborate with relevant agencies to formulate & promote programmes focused on the employment of PLWD
3.2 Formulate Youth Focused Programmes to prepare Youth for Employment.	3.2.1 Collaborate with relevant agencies to form & promote youth employment programmes
	3.2.2 Enhance programmes that promote school-to-work transition
	3.2.3 Increased promotion of TVET and certification opportunities to the youth
	3.2.4 Targeted guidance & counseling programmes
3.3 Promote Gender Equality	3.3.1 Formulate legislation to deal with gender discrimination
	3.3.2 Encourage work initiatives such as flexitime and day care nurseries
	3.3.3 Promote gender sensitization to the public
3.4 Evaluate and Cater to the Needs of Informal Sector Workers	3.4.1 Formulate incentive system to encourage this group to register in formal arrangements
	3.4.2 Streamline the regulatory framework to encourage formal registration of informal sector workers
3.5 Facilitate Managed Migration	3.5.1 Promoting temporary guest worker programmes to local employers

⁶ This group includes persons living with HIV/AIDS

Introduction

There are a number of vulnerable groups in Barbados that, because they do not have the means to pursue activities in their own interest, may find themselves marginalized from mainstream society, incapable of making a viable contribution towards national productivity, their communities and ultimately towards their own self-development. Such groups include persons with disabilities, the youth, the impoverished, migrant workers, informal sector workers and unskilled female workers. Individuals within these groups often have to overcome ignorance and prejudice and other economic, social or cultural obstacles to make a meaningful contribution to society and to the economy. Their social exclusion makes them especially vulnerable to underemployment, unemployment, poverty and exploitation in both the community and workplace. Any employment policy should therefore seek to provide jobs for all those Barbadians who are available for and desirous of work. Regardless of means or physical ability, the policy should ensure the freedom of choice of employment in an environment void of any form of discrimination, where workers have the greatest possible opportunity to qualify for, and to use their skills and potential in a job well suited to them.

The MLSD is particularly sensitive to the plight of such groups and is of the view that they should be given every opportunity to self-actualise, through the attainment of decent and productive work. Consequently, the Ministry will ensure that the labour related interests of such groups are addressed and that respective programmes and actions are put in place to address those needs. It is also recognized that a working environment that is conducive to high levels of productivity (and by extension international competitiveness) is contingent on other key factors such as freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Some of the issues that will be addressed under this segment include, inter alia:

- Persons with Disabilities
- The Youth
- Gender Equality
- The Informal Sector
- Migrant Workers

3.1 Empower Persons with Disabilities through Employment

People living with disabilities (PLWD) have for a long time been amongst the most economically impoverished members of society. The MLSD recognizes that PLWD represent an untapped human resource, who should be provided with every opportunity to make a valuable contribution to the economic development of Barbados. It is also recognized that PLWD are entitled to equal access to employment opportunities to realize their potential, without the experience of unfair discrimination on the grounds of disability. The Ministry is therefore committed to promoting the employment of PLWD based on the recognition of their skills and qualifications. However, the Ministry acknowledges that the employment promotion of PLWD will require a holistic approach with individual, enterprise and institutional interventions that would remove any barriers to the labour force participation and employment of PLWD.

At the individual level, the provision of adequate education and training opportunities will be critical to ensuring the employability of PLWD. Therefore, the Ministry promotes the development and strengthening of curricula and programmes to enable PLWD to participate fully in all pre-vocational and vocational training and apprenticeship programmes leading to gainful employment and self-employment. This effort must be supported by enhanced employment services that are provided with the wherewithal to offer specialized career counseling and job placement assistance to facilitate the integration of these individuals into the labour market. It is recognized that such initiatives would also involve the usage of adaptive technologies, improved physical accessibility of buildings and the training of personnel to provide specialized support to PLWD.

The Ministry is committed to ensuring that technical and vocational education and training opportunities are available to all individuals. While there are no institutionalized restrictions on PLWD applying to available programmes, a comprehensive review of all courses offered by the Vocational Training Board, as the training arm of the Ministry, will be conducted in conjunction with representatives from the disabled community. This review will determine which courses persons with different levels of ability can readily pursue. Where

shortcomings in the delivery of certain training programmes have been identified, the Ministry will seek to identify and acquire all resources necessary to make such programmes totally accessible to PLWD.

At the enterprise level, a paradigm shift must occur at workplaces where PLWD are recognized as having the ability to make a viable contribution to enterprise growth and development. This can be facilitated by sensitization to the rights and needs of PLWD and a greater understanding of their skills and capabilities in the workplace. Therefore, the Ministry of Labour would develop and support such sensitization efforts in collaboration with its tripartite partners. The Ministry will also promote the development of enterprise policies for managing disabilities in the workplace in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders. Such policies would address non-discrimination in recruitment, promotion, training and the implementation of necessary adjustments to make the workplace and workstations accessible and adaptable to the specialized needs of PLWD. The reintegration of employees who acquired a disability whilst still in employment will also be promoted as a critical component of workplace policies. ***The Ministry will further encourage all private sector businesses and government ministries to hire at least one disabled person over the next three to five years.***

At the institutional level, the Ministry of Labour would strive to strengthen its linkages with the National Disabilities Unit and other government and non-governmental agencies which represent PLWD. Such collaborations would facilitate, inter alia, the continuous compilation and dissemination of information on PLWD, reporting on new employment and self-employment opportunities, the organization of training in skills relevant to these opportunities for PLWD, etc. The Ministry would also seek to mainstream disability issues into pending anti-discrimination legislation, its policies, programmes and activities, in collaboration with entities that represent PLWD.

3.2 Formulate Youth-focused Programmes to Stimulate Youth Employment

The MLSD recognises the youth (i.e. persons between the ages of 15 to 24 years⁷) as a resource that is critical to the future development of Barbados. This cohort has the benefit of the most recent and relevant education and training, an unbridled enthusiasm, openness to new skills and technology and is more likely to embrace learning opportunities. They are also more adaptable and mobile, important characteristics in an increasingly dynamic global economy.

However, in post-independence Barbados, finding sufficient employment opportunities for young Barbadians continues to be a critical challenge for successive governments. Indeed, like other countries throughout the globe, unemployment amongst young adults under twenty-five tends to be significantly higher than persons in other age groups. In Barbados, statistics for the year 2013 reveal that youth unemployment in Barbados was recorded at some 30%, considerably higher than the general unemployment rate of 11.6% recorded for that same year. Many social planners attribute this problem to long-standing issues such as:

- Insufficient qualifications and certification;
- The lack of adequate work experience;
- Limited skill-sets;
- Poor work attitudes;
- Inadequate job searching skills;
- Inadequate school-to-work transition programmes;
- Limited scope for meaningful career planning in non-traditional areas like culture, arts and sports and
- unrealistic expectations of the labour market in terms of levels of remuneration

⁷ Criteria used by the Barbados Statistical Service

Persistent unemployment for this group is problematic in that it represents unrealized returns to investments in education and training, reduces the potential taxation base and generates higher social welfare costs. In turn, youth unemployment is often attributed to high incidences of deviant behavior such as drug use, violence and a general level of apathy, in terms of willingness to make a positive contribution to mainstream society.

The Ministry is of the view that regular, direct, constructive dialogue with the youth is the primary approach that should be used in the formulation of strategies to assist in their development. Therefore, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, the Ministry will seek to meet with and form meaningful and continuous dialogue with various youth groups and organisations, in order to obtain a more detailed assessment of the unique labour related challenges and problems that they face.

For some time, one such challenge has been the role of Government in preparing the youth for the world of work by supplying them with the skills-sets, competencies, attitudes and work experience necessary to operate in any work setting. The Ministry is of the view that in an increasingly competitive and tight labour market, those individuals that do not have any meaningful skills sets to offer employers will have to:

- endure lengthy spells of unemployment or.....
- find themselves confined to basic, elementary, low-paying jobs that will not contribute to their meaningful, long term development

Through the various facets of the media, Government will promote the essential message that the youth must possess a skill that employers are demanding or that they can use to engage in self-employment. This message will stress that all programmes and activities aimed at identifying meaningful employment opportunities for the youth must be promoted ***in conjunction with programmes and activities that encourage skills development amongst the youth.***

Moreover, recommendations and ideas put forward by the youth themselves in fora such as the youth summits held in 2010 will be continuously collected and forwarded to policy makers who in turn, will direct the relevant government ministries and departments to implement strategies that can best address the concerns that have been raised by the youth. A key component of these strategies will be the dissemination of resources, whether in terms of employment guidance, counseling, jobs or enrollment at training institutions.

In terms of the identification of resources for training, the Ministry is well aware ***that the ideal mix must be found between catering for youth with academic backgrounds and youth that are desirous of pursuing careers that require vocational training.*** Therefore, charting structured developmental paths for **all young persons** to be equipped with the skills, competencies and certification necessary to find decent employment will be a priority for the Ministry. This action will be particularly aimed at those that leave secondary school without any formal certification.

Consequently, the Barbados Vocational Training Board of the Ministry of Labour will seek to be continuously apprised of the changing vocational requirements of the youth **AND employers.** Therefore, the Ministry will endeavour to (i) expand existing courses that experience heavy demand and (ii) continuously review training programmes and offer new courses for which there is a heavy demand, but which are not offered by the Board.

The Ministry of Labour will further encourage the:

- Strengthening of linkages between businesses and training institutions, to facilitate internships and apprenticeships. These arrangements could become established through formal agreements. The Ministry would also collaborate with the Finance Ministry to explore the possibility of providing improved incentives to businesses that participate in apprenticeships. Such initiatives would assist in providing the apprentice with some experience, thereby making them more attractive to employers on the job market. They would also become sensitised to the world of work which in turn, would facilitate a smoother transition from school to the workplace.

- Strengthening of linkages between the National Employment Bureau, the proposed Career Counselling Unit⁸, secondary, post-secondary and tertiary institutions. This strengthening would serve to enhance career counseling, ensure that students understand what is available to them in the job market and what is expected of them in the world of work. These linkages can also provide an avenue for the promotion of the job placement services of the NEB in order to encourage graduates to seek professional assistance in their job search. The Ministry will specifically ensure that inter-departmental co-operation between the National Employment Bureau (N.E.B) and the Barbados Vocational Training Board (B.V.T.B) is enhanced, so that (i) the graduates of the BVTB register at the NEB and (ii) the NEB can inform the B.V.T.B of any vacancies that have been referred by employers that could possibly be filled by graduates of B.V.T.B courses.
- The Ministry of Labour will collaborate with the METI to encourage the speedy introduction of Caribbean Vocational Qualifications (C.V.Qs) at the secondary school level between third to fifth forms, to ensure that young persons are equipped with employable skills and certification to more effectively compete in the labour market.
- Increased promotion of available TVET opportunities, thereby effecting a positive attitudinal change towards vocational areas of work and increased enrolment in TVET programmes.
- Promotion of good work ethics to effect attitudinal change among the youth, thereby enhancing their employability and productivity on the job.

The Ministry will also seek to place a new focus on youth employment through entrepreneurship. Young job-seekers who indicate to labour officials that they are desirous of receiving technical assistance to start micro-enterprises will be promptly referred to the relevant entities that can offer the technical and financial advice that they need to guide them in establishing their businesses.

⁸ To be established by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (METI)

Furthermore, the B.V.T.B will offer a specialised course in entrepreneurial training which will be offered to such students.

3.3 Promote Gender Equality

The MLSD is committed to implementing gender mainstreaming in its policy and programme development processes, to ensure that gender perspectives are considered in all of its activities. It is therefore recognized that the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men are integral considerations in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of employment promotion initiatives, so that women and men benefit equally and that inequality is not perpetuated.

All individuals who are available and seeking employment are entitled to suitable employment which would utilize their skills and endowments, irrespective of their gender. Therefore, the Ministry is committed to promoting equal opportunities, recognizing that discrimination is a central factor to perpetuating gender inequality. The Ministry would therefore develop its legislative framework to prohibit discriminatory practices with respect to recruitment, promotion, training and conditions of employment. The Ministry would also liaise with its social partners to promote gender equality and discourage discrimination in the workplace, recognizing that organizational practices and workplace cultures may unintentionally reinforce inequality.

The Ministry acknowledges that gender inequality can also be perpetuated by the gender roles constructed by society and the establishment of traditionally “male or female” occupations. Therefore, efforts to prohibit discrimination must be complemented by the breaking down of these cultural barriers and the promotion of non-traditional occupations, thereby encouraging individuals not to limit themselves when seeking employment.

Whilst promoting gender equality, it is important to acknowledge the unique work and family responsibilities of women, who despite their labour market status, continue to bear the primary responsibilities of maintaining the home and child care. The Ministry of Labour therefore recognizes the need to promote the work-family balance for all employees, not only allowing individuals the time to

more effectively fulfill their responsibilities, but to encourage a more equitable distribution of family responsibilities between men and women. This would involve measures such as:

- The promotion of flexible work arrangements such as flextime, flexplace and job sharing. The Ministry would consult with other labour stakeholders in examining existing legislation relevant to such arrangements such as the Shops Act and address any legislative constraints that impede the implementation of such arrangements. Additionally, employers would also be encouraged to recognise the benefits that such arrangements could bring in improving employee morale and productivity. However, the Ministry would also caution that such flexibility should be accommodated within the context of management-labour discussions, where the move towards greater flexibility (along with the accompanying terms and conditions) should be discussed between business places and workers that would be directly affected by such arrangements.
- Increased access to child care assistance for single parents.
- In relation to the provision of TVET programmes by the BVTB, the Ministry will explore the possibility of introducing an additional stipend for child care for single parents attending the BVTB programme. This could involve encouraging employers to offer such assistance through various forms, including informational and referral services, the provision of on-site child care facilities, negotiated discounts with child care providers or child care subsidies.
- The promotion of flexible TVET programmes, recognizing that some family responsibilities may hamper a woman's ability to engage in full-time programmes to acquire employable skills. Also, full-time programmes could discourage labour force participation for the duration of the programme. Therefore, flexible delivery modes such as distance learning would be explored and facilitated where viable.

The Ministry of Labour recognizes the need to promote and develop bridging programmes to help those individuals, primarily women, who:

- have been absent from the labour force for prolonged periods;
- are enrolled in social assistance programmes; or
- face barriers to labour force participation.

These programmes would include the provision of career counseling services, life-skills training and basic skills training in numeracy and literacy. Assistance in finding a job would also be provided and supported by training in job search skills, interview techniques and other employment related skills.

It is also acknowledged that inadequate gender awareness could perpetuate unintentional discrimination and gender insensitivity. Therefore, the Ministry of Labour would ensure that all of its staff, particularly those involved in policy making, the delivery of training and employment services are provided with the requisite training. This would further enable the Ministry to more effectively deliver its services and develop its policies to cater to any gender specific needs.

The Ministry also recognizes that a key component of gender mainstreaming is the identification and analysis of gender gaps in both the public and private sectors. Through the conduct of requisite studies and surveys, the Ministry pledges to continuously collect, analyse and disseminate gender specific information on the labour market, in collaboration with key stakeholders such as the Bureau of Gender Affairs and the Barbados Statistical Services. From the conduct of such exercises, the Ministry will be in a position to objectively determine whether gender gaps have been increasing, decreasing or fluctuating over a period of time.

3.4 Evaluate and Cater to the Needs of Informal Sector Workers

Throughout the world there is general consensus as to the fact that the informal sector usually consists of that segment of the economy that is not formally registered with any established agency (particularly from the public sector) and does not make any structured contribution to the economy, whether through the payment of taxes or towards any system of social protection.

This group usually comprises persons who may possess minimal skills sets and that have had difficulty in entering the formal labour market. Catering to the unique needs of informal sector workers continues to be a special challenge for Government, especially against the backdrop that such workers may be operating under sub-standard environments that do not facilitate the attainment of decent work. Government recognizes that the informal worker phenomenon has been a distinctive feature of the Barbados landscape for some time and is likely to expand if a full recovery from the effects of the economic crisis does not occur.

Government will strive to implement the requisite policies and programmes to ensure that workers in the informal sector can also have access to decent and productive work. Efforts will be made to provide these workers with safe, hygienic, well-lighted facilities in which to ply their trade and Government will periodically inspect such facilities to ensure that informal sector workers are not subjected to unhealthy and dangerous work conditions. Where it is feasible to upgrade and/or repair such facilities where they already exist, such upgrading activities will be undertaken. In any respect, prior to any exercise to provide well-appointed facilities in the primary areas where informal sector workers can be found, the relevant government agencies that have the responsibility for the installation/repair of the requisite infrastructure would be consulted. They would then be requested to prepare estimates of the costs of such works.

Additionally, in acknowledging that informal sector workers can access and benefit from various social services, Government will also seek to design a promotional campaign to encourage them to register their status with public entities like the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office. Whilst actively employed, such workers can make a viable contribution to the economy through (i) the payment of taxes and (ii) the payment of national insurance. In the case of the latter, a promotional campaign should be devised that would seek to solidify

the social protection message to this group and underscore the need for them to be registered with the National Insurance Scheme in the event that they experience an employment injury, fall sick, or suffer from some other unforeseen circumstance that may leave them incapable of working and providing for themselves.

3.5 Facilitate Managed Migration

In accordance with international instruments such as the ILO Conventions #97, #143⁹ and the U.N International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, Barbados will strive to ensure that migrant workers are afforded the same opportunities to attain decent work as citizens and residents.

The Ministry views migration as an occurrence that if properly managed, can result in positive synergies for both the host and sending country. In general, the host country benefits through (i) the supply of labour to address any shortages occurring in its labour market and (ii) the taxes that migrants contribute towards the functioning of the host country's economy. The sending country also benefits, primarily through the remittances made by their nationals and the skills and experience gained by them whilst working in the host country.

However, the experience of working in a foreign country by some migrants can be one that has been marked by obstacles and frustration. Some are faced with overt discrimination and xenophobia, both at the workplace and as they go about their daily lives. Moreover, many are exposed to dangerous working conditions and receive insufficient levels of remuneration from employers, who show little respect for their well-being and basic human rights. In conjunction with relevant agencies such as the Immigration Department, METI, National Insurance, Social Care and the Barbados Social Partnership, the MLSD will strive to ensure that the following migrant worker issues are adequately addressed:

⁹ These are the Migration for Employment and Migrant Workers Conventions respectively

- equal treatment of migrants, particularly as they relate to employment, membership in trade unions, payment of taxes and social security contributions
- the establishment of criteria to be satisfied for migrants to access health, social services and educational and training services
- the right to be covered under the core I.L.O Conventions
- access to an appropriate “grievances and complaints” mechanism, in the event that the work contract has been violated by the employer
- the compilation and maintenance of migrant worker statistics on migrants by gender, age, number of dependents, country of origin, skills sets, occupation and industrial sector.
- implementation of legislation to protect against abusive practices such as human trafficking, degrading treatment, punishment and physical abuse
- acknowledgement and respect for the social, religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of migrants and the promotion of workplace policies on managing diversity
- the implementation of measures to recognize the skills and qualifications of migrants.
- a structured approach for addressing issues pertaining to undocumented workers, particularly the humane treatment of undocumented workers and the protection of their basic human rights
- the provision of information to migrants on their human rights, conditions of work, housing, transport, education, health services and life in general in the host country

A critical migrant worker issue which is of special interest to the MLSD centers around the need for collaborations between government and employers to establish “**formal guest worker programmes**” Such programmes, if implemented, can become a key element in the effort to formulate a managed migration policy. Under such a programme, prospective employers seeking to hire workers can apply to the MLSD for a license to bring foreign nationals into Barbados to work. Upon checking the bona fides of the prospective employer, the MLSD would then issue the appropriate license. This license should outline, inter alia – terms and conditions of work; obligations of the employer; wages; housing arrangements, etc.

Categories of Migrant Worker

The Ministry is of the view that foreign nationals seeking to pursue employment opportunities in Barbados can ultimately be dissected into the following categories:

1. CARICOM and Non-CARICOM nationals that need Work Permits;
2. CARICOM nationals that can be placed into the approved categories of skills that are allowed free movement; and
3. CARICOM nationals seeking to enter into the country on structured Guest Worker Programmes

For the first category, the Ministry is of the view that structured skills needs assessments of industries will be critical in guiding future decisions to award work permits in areas where there are proven labour market shortages. ***The Ministry of Labour will therefore seek to continuously collaborate with the Immigration Department, to ensure that they are supplied with information on skills shortages existing in the Barbados labour market.*** Such an action could therefore assist in better matching labour supply with demand and in ensuring that labour imbalances are kept to a minimum.

In the case of the third category, the Ministry is of the view that similar to the systems that have been established in the United States and Canada, it is becoming increasingly necessary to facilitate ***the organisation of structured Guest Worker Programmes to manage inward migration into Barbados.*** These programmes will be established in compliance with established laws and customs and practices. In terms of its modus operandi, an employer that wishes to hire foreign nationals would apply to the Ministry of Labour for permission to acquire the foreign labour he requires. The Ministry of Labour, in collaboration with the Immigration Department would issue a certificate for the employer to acquire labour from fellow CARICOM territories. Terms and conditions affecting the employment relationship would be outlined and formalized, including inter alia:

- the obligations of the employer, especially in terms of maintaining adequate work records
- the job description, work rules and regulations
- the payment of wages, along with deductions
- procedures to be followed in the event that the worker becomes injured on the job
- the establishment of a suitable, transparent grievance and disputes mechanism in the event of a work-related conflict between the migrant worker and his employer

The key advantage to be derived from such an initiative is that policy makers would be continuously appraised as to the numbers of persons entering the country to pursue employment opportunities in specific occupations, as well as their country of origin. This initiative would also facilitate the establishment of networks between government and the employer. Furthermore, both employer and migrant worker would be informed as to their rights and obligations accruing to them from the agreement. It would further provide a formal mechanism for ensuring decent work for migrant workers.

3.5 (a) Verify the Skills Sets of Work Permit Applicants

In reviewing the number of work permits issued to non-nationals in recent times, the Ministry believes that it is now critical that active consideration be given to formulating some type of mechanism that would facilitate a more comprehensive analysis of work permits, particularly for work permit applications in professional, technical and vocational occupational groupings.

This mechanism would entail increased emphasis on the ability of the potential employee to produce regional and international certification, in order that the Immigration Department could be provided with conclusive evidence that the applicant does indeed possess the skills sets that he claims to have. It should also be made compulsory for potential employers to produce job descriptions for each individual vacancy they would wish to have filled by foreign labour. **Where applicable,** a proposal for knowledge transfer to locals should also be provided by the employer.

The Ministry will further support the establishment of a tripartite inter-ministerial advisory committee to review specific work permit applications in the event that difficulty is experienced by the Immigration Department in reaching a decision to award a work permit. This committee could be chaired by the Immigration Department and would involve representatives from the Accreditation Council, Barbados Employers' Confederation, C.T.U.S.A.B, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Labour and any other related agency. This committee would (i) review and discuss the particulars of each individual case (ii) analyse any background or statistical information which could assist in making an informed decision and (iii) advise the Immigration Department as to what would be the ideal course of action to pursue under any special circumstance.

4. BUILDING A STRONGER WORKFORCE THROUGH INFORMATION

Specific Objectives	Key Areas of Intervention
4.1 Improve Labour market analysis to identify Skill Needs and Labour Supply	4.1.1 The conduct of Skills Needs Assessments in Barbados' vital economic sectors
	4.1.2 Training of labour officials to collect, analyse and disseminate value-added labour market information to various users
	4.1.3 Ascertaining new information areas that the public has an interest in obtaining
4.2 Strengthen the capacity of the Barbados Labour Market Information System to deliver quality Labour Market Information	4.2.1 Conduct of a comprehensive audit of the current Barbados Labour Market Information System (BLMIS)
	4.2.2 Formulating and targetting labour publications to key user groups
	4.2.3 Strengthening relationships with relevant L.M.I producers to improve the information sharing process
	4.2.4 Increased usage of I.C.T measures in the dissemination of information
	4.2.5 Development of a comprehensive P.R campaign to inform the public about the BLMIS

Introduction

The successful implementation of any employment policy will ultimately be reliant on the ability of individuals, government, private sector establishments, trade unions and civil society to access labour related information that they need to make critical decisions. This is an issue that has been a challenge to Governments throughout the world. Moreover, due to technological developments such as the internet, the demand for information that is accurate and timely has not only increased, but has become more complex. In the past, information users would request conventional labour force statistics like the

unemployment rate and the size of the labour force broken down by age group and gender. Government is now being challenged to provide the public with information such as labour force projections, as well as monthly job gains and job losses, **both** by occupation and by the industrial sector in which they occurred. Additionally, a frequent demand that is now being placed on the MLSD is for information on training needs, skills sets required and specialist occupations being demanded by employers, both now and in the future. Cognisant of these new and ever-changing demands, Government will seek to put the necessary measures in place to ensure that it keeps abreast of the dynamic information requirements of its citizens.

4.1 Improve Labour Market Analysis to Identify Skills Needs and Assess Labour Supply

Information on the current and future skills needs and occupational requirements of industry is one of the most critical challenges confronting the further development of the labour force. However, the timely and efficient dissemination of such information to all segments of the labour market has long been a problem. It is becoming critical that labour market participants, particularly job seekers and students, must be provided with assessments as to the prospects for securing employment in specific occupational and industrial areas.

Without access to such information, persons such as graduates of tertiary institutions may invest their time, efforts and other resources pursuing studies in a specific area, only to find that upon graduation, they encounter extreme difficulty in finding employment within the area they have studied. Unfortunately, the end result of such a dilemma tends to be long term unemployment, fruitless job searches, under-employment and frustration from being in a job that is not fully utilizing the skills that have been acquired.

Employers on the other hand may encounter challenges with the quality of skills sets acquired by employees that graduate from Barbados' tertiary institutions, as employers may be demanding a specific set of competencies from their employees that training institutions may not be supplying.

Against this backdrop, the MLSD will endeavour to strengthen its capacity to deliver such information by forming partnerships with key stakeholders in Barbados' major economic sectors. Through mechanisms such as focus groups and employer surveys, the Ministry will continuously seek to acquire quantitative and qualitative information on:

- labour-related challenges being faced by employers
- existing skills gaps of employees in the workplace
- current and projected skills shortages
- training and certification requirements for occupations in demand
- training requirements not being addressed by local training institutions
- occupations for which skills sets usually have to be sourced overseas

Responses to the above mentioned questions will be compiled and analysed by the Ministry for selected industries such as Tourism, International Business and Agriculture and disseminated to public, particularly policy makers, job seekers, students, researchers and training institutions. It is envisaged that such information will lead to the making of more informed decisions, will contribute to the development of a demand-driven TVET system and will be critical to the correction of any labour market imbalances.

Moreover, the Ministry supports the formulation of a national skills bank that would, by means of a database, seek to capture the **certified** skills sets of every worker and prospective worker in Barbados. This activity would have the very important benefit of informing and sensitising various interest groups as to the skills sets which are currently available in Barbados, and in what quantities. These interest groups would include not only employers, but policy makers, training institutions, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour, TVET Council, the Immigration Department and potential foreign investors, who may have an interest in establishing operations in Barbados.

The successful implementation of this action would provide a very practical means for Government to identify where skills gaps exist. In instances where the skills sets demanded by employers are outstripping available skills sets, corrective measures would then be put in place to narrow such gaps. These measures could include the awarding of additional work permits in the area in which there is a proven shortage. In terms of implementation, the Ministry is of the view that the online job centre of the Barbados Labour Market Information System (BLMIS) website could serve to be the ideal tool for the formulation of such a database and consequently, efforts will be made to inform the public of its existence and to encourage registration.

4.2 Strengthen the capacity of the Barbados Labour Market Information System to deliver quality Labour Market Information

Any analysis conducted of developed countries would usually reveal that they have invested significant resources in developing electronically based labour market information systems that are advanced, comprehensive and continuously updated. These systems not only provide policy makers with traditional information such as the adult population by age group and gender, but also provide information users with a wide array of labour market information to meet differing needs. For instance, occupational classification systems are vital components of modern information systems, supplying key information on the changing characteristics, tasks performed and qualifications needed by workers in the labour market. Changes in the employment levels in key industrial sectors, as well as new unemployment applications are also used by industrialized countries to assess the relative health and performance in vital economic sectors. Advanced systems can also supply Governments with information on employment projections for critical economic sectors. With the receipt of information on projections, ***Government can then objectively plan for expansions or contractions in training programmes for specific occupations.*** With access to such information, Governments can then formulate policies to tackle issues such as sectoral job gains and losses and implement the corresponding policies necessary to address any shortcomings. The Government recognizes that there are several benefits to be gained from these assessments and will strive to

implement such exercises over the short to medium term. Other instruments that Government will utilise are surveys that will seek to ascertain the whereabouts of graduates of tertiary institutions over a five year period, to see whether they have found employment in the occupational area in which they graduated. Other key aspects of information that will be supplied include occupational information and wage movements. The effective production and dissemination of such information is the ultimate goal to which the Ministry aspires and to which the Ministry will work assiduously to achieve.

Conscious of the many benefits that can be accrued from the development of an effective LMIS, the Government will strive to ensure that the BLMIS becomes one of the premier information systems in the Caribbean, through the continuous collection, analysis and dissemination of information in a structured and systematic manner. As a key step, every effort will be made to utilise existing organisations and in particular the Statistical Service, rather than create new departments. Government entities charged with the responsibility for producing labour information will be encouraged to input that information on a timely basis. Public agencies that produce labour market information include the National Insurance Department, the Immigration Department, the Labour Department, the Barbados Accreditation Council and the Barbados Statistical Service.

In the attempt to enrich the array and quality of labour market information collected and inputted into the BLMIS, the private sector is regarded as a vital source of information, whether through the collection of information on wages, productivity indicators, etc. Various aspects of the media will be used to target this sector and sensitise them as to the benefits that could be accrued from supplying information into the BLMIS. Methods such as (i) establishing a tripartite Labour Market Information Advisory Committee (LMIAC) to improve the quality and relevance of information collected and (ii) consulting with the umbrella associations with responsibility for specific industries will further be employed by the MLSD. Under these consultations, umbrella associations will be informed of the need for adequate and timely labour market information.

Audits of each labour market information producer will be conducted, where each producing entity will be encouraged to state:

- ✓ What information they produce, especially statistics
- ✓ The periodicity of producing that information
- ✓ Storage of that information, whether by database, computer files, etc
- ✓ Who is that information disseminated to
- ✓ Method (or methods) employed by the agency to disseminate that information

However, Government remains cognizant of the fact that technical assistance to improve the capacity of entities to deliver quality information is a key challenge that must be addressed. Such assistance could be diverse and may well take the form of institutional strengthening, enhancing I.C.T capacity, the training of staff or any necessary combination these three factors. Government will further ensure that where such technical assistance is needed to improve upon the quality and range of information being demanded, such assistance will be promptly delivered to improve the capacity of the targeted entity.

The receipt of this information will be processed by an enhanced BLMIS that will be restructured to analyse and add value to information collected from both primary and secondary sources. The capacity of the Manpower Research and Statistical Unit under the MLSD, the entity charged with the management of the BLMIS, will be reviewed and recommendations made for the strengthening of this Unit. These recommendations will outline, inter alia, the additional skills sets that will need to be added to the Unit, the training needs of each staff member and the I.C.T initiatives that could be used to more effectively disseminate value added information to the public.

A keen focus will also be placed on the changing information needs of individuals and where feasible, government will work to ensure that new types of information are continuously added to the BLMIS in order to improve its relevance to changing labour market needs. Such information will include statistics on skilled labour supply, work permits awarded by occupation and monthly recipients of unemployment benefits by occupation.

A public relations exercise that is structured and continuous will also be devised by the Ministry and employed to sensitise the public as to the types of information that is currently available, the importance of labour market information and how it can be used to enrich their career related decisions.

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Specific Objectives	Key Areas of Intervention
5.1 Obtain stakeholder Involvement and Support	5.1.1 Exploring new and solidifying existing strategic partnerships between labour and identified stakeholders
5.2 Promote Social Dialogue at all levels	5.2.1 Establishing a Social Partnership Secretariat
	5.2.2 Disseminating information on the social partnership down to the micro level through the use of various media
5.3 Commit to the Maintenance of a Stable and Harmonious Industrial Relations Climate	5.3.1 Promote PROMALCO as a practical mechanism for encouraging social dialogue at the enterprise level
	5.3.2 Promote local and international labour standards to the workforce
	5.3.3 Further develop the legislative framework necessary to comply with international standards
5.4 Organisation of an employment policy monitoring mechanism	5.4.1 Formulate a tripartite employment policy monitoring mechanism which would assess the success achieved in meeting the objectives of the policy, through the establishment of key performance indicators which are SMART.

Introduction

Against the backdrop of the four primary pillars of the employment policy, there are a number of complementary issues that must also be considered and suitably addressed if the policy's broad goals are to be realised. These cross-cutting issues are relevant to all pillars. They primarily revolve around the existence of a collaborative framework, where key labour stakeholders can work together to make a viable contribution towards the promotion of decent and productive employment. Government also recognizes that such a collaborative framework

can be the means where stakeholders can be provided with the opportunity to chart a path for the economic development of the country. Though it may be successfully argued that such mechanisms are actually in place, Government will endeavour to review such mechanisms and make improvements where such improvements are deemed necessary.

5.1 Obtain Stakeholder Involvement and Support

The Ministry is of the view that there is a vital need for a structured approach to planning for employment. There needs to be urgent dialogue amongst labour stakeholders, the Private Sector and the Ministries of Economic Affairs, Tourism, Agriculture, International Business, Foreign Trade and Finance. However, the Ministry would specifically advocate for additional stakeholders to be incorporated into any strategy geared at attaining decent and productive employment. In addition to the Social Partners, there are already established mechanisms that can be utilised, not only in national planning, but in promoting “*buy-in*” on the decent work concept. These include the Council for Economic Advisors, the Joint Economic Group of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and the Human Resource Advisory Council of the MLSD. Since there is also a critical social dimension to the promotion of decent work, the Social Safety Net Committee under the Ministry of Social Care could also be added to this list of agencies. This invitation could also be extended to select representatives of youth groups and civil society. Upon the organisation of the above-mentioned stakeholders, they would be sensitised as to the importance of recognising the contribution of labour and its critical link with overall economic development.

The most important focus of such a forum would be to seek consensus as to the economic areas (both traditional and emerging) that will drive the Barbados economy over the medium to long term and for which Barbados may enjoy some level of comparative advantage in the international arena. Once these areas have been established, ***for each area***, the forum should endeavour to chart a clear direction for the goods and services that Barbados produces which can be competitive in both regional and international markets. Government would then be provided with first-hand information as to the goods and services that can

propel economic growth as well as the legal, administrative, technological and human resource based obstacles that business men are faced with in the conduct of daily operations. Government would further be supplied with information as to the new skills required to spur the further development of these sectors, both in the short and the medium term.

5.2 Promote Social Dialogue at all levels

Throughout the region, the Barbados social partnership is widely regarded by practitioners in industrial relations as a model for small island states. Its genesis can be traced to the economic challenges experienced in the early 1990s, when the country experienced (i) falling levels of real GDP (ii) rapidly declining foreign exchange reserves (iii) a worsening balance of payments position (iv) dramatic rises in unemployment and (v) a high fiscal deficit. Though the crisis affecting the country in the early 1990s was successfully overcome, this tripartite structure has remained in effect to this date. However, the partners are indeed aware of the concerns that have been raised about the partnership in its present form, concerns which include the lack of a Secretariat and the need to promote the partnership down to the micro level.

Mindful of these concerns, Government and its Social Partners will commit to the launching of a national information awareness campaign, to sensitise workers and employers as to the goals of the partnership, its tasks and duties and the potential benefits that could be accrued to the average worker. Promoting an awareness of the partnership will utilise social networking mechanisms such as “Facebook”, in addition to traditional sources such as the radio and print media. In addition, key members of the partnership, regardless of the sector from which they originate, will deliver presentations to various worker and employer groups, community organizations and civil society that may be desirous of obtaining information on the partnership’s *modus operandi*.

Government will provide the partnership with a functioning Secretariat to facilitate its daily operations and to better address the needs of members. Such a Secretariat will not only include administrative support to service meetings, but

will also be inclusive of staff to manage and co-ordinate the Secretariat's work-plans and to conduct research in areas that have been identified as priority by the Partnership's members.

5.3 Commit to the Maintenance of a Stable and Harmonious Industrial Relations Climate

The MLSD is of the firm opinion that a stable industrial relations climate is a key variable to be considered in the drive to improve national productivity and facilitate meaningful economic development. In turn, a stable industrial relations climate is itself dependant on the state of the employment relationship existing between workers and managers. The Promotion of Management Labour Corporation (PROMALCO) system is regarded by the Ministry as the prime mechanism which can be adopted by establishments to enhance that employment relationship between management and labour. PROMALCO can be used for the prompt identification and addressing of workplace issues before they become chronic problems. If left unaddressed, such problems undermine relations between management and labour and can not only lead to mistrust and resentment between employee and employer, but to strikes, disputes, walk-outs, industrial accidents and loss of man-days. Government will actively encourage the private sector to adopt the PROMALCO system and through its Labour Department, will organise information awareness campaigns to promote its use. Government will inform that this mechanism seeks to establish procedures where employees can report workplace issues they may have to management. Government will inform that PROMALCO encourages both parties to collectively formulate workplace policies that address terms and conditions at work, safety and health, grievance procedures, etc. It will be noted that a healthy relationship with trade unions and their representatives will be essential and business entities will be encouraged to work in partnership with unions to introduce this mechanism into the workplace.

Some of the more critical work-place issues that should be discussed between management and labour would include, inter alia;

- The need to protect workers and employers who exercise their constitutional right to freedom of association
- An understanding by both workers and employers of the right to decent work, including a written statement of the particulars of employment, the payment of adequate wages and salaries, reasonable working times, satisfactory arrangements for wholesome conditions at work, for security when ill or otherwise reasonably absent from work, and for the application of suitable and acceptable benefits on retirement
- The provision of adequate safeguards against recourse to contracts of employment for a specific period of time, whose effects are designed to run counter to the decent work principle and as a consequence negates the intended protection of workers' security of tenure
- Ensure an agreed framework whereby any exercise of subcontracting shall include the stated expectation in the recruitment of labour of an adherence to domestic law and employment practices, and that the provision of employment in such subcontracting shall be in accordance with the decent work standards of the International Labour Organisation.

Given the importance of educating the public as to the importance of this mechanism, Government, will use tools such as workshops, seminars and continuous information campaigns to provide guidance and advice to business-houses as to how to establish policies that will enhance the work climate at their respective workplaces. A national awareness campaign will be embarked on by the Labour Department to sensitise employers and workers alike as to their rights in employment, to freedom of association, non-discrimination and freedom of choice with respect to employment. This awareness campaign will also seek to

inform and sensitise workers and employers as to their rights and obligations under current and pending labour legislation like Employment Rights, the Shops Act, Holidays with Pay, Severance and Maternity Leave.

This activity will require that the Labour Department be institutionally strengthened to enhance its capacity to deliver these functions to the public and Government will ensure that the Department is provided with the requisite skilled personnel to see that this function is conducted in an efficient and effective manner.

5.4 Organisation of an Employment Policy monitoring mechanism

To objectively evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the various programmes included in the employment policy, a specialised sub-committee of the Social Partnership could be established that comprises six representatives, with two each being chosen from Government, the Employers and the Congress of Trade Unions and Staff Associations of Barbados (CTUSAB). This partnership would not only formulate key performance indicators to objectively assess the entire policy, but would also meet once every quarter to review the contents of the policy and highlight any programmes that were not being implemented. The Committee would also meet with those agencies responsible for the implementation of each programme, to obtain a better understanding of their mandate, their work programmes and challenges. The findings, whether positive or otherwise, would then be reported to the wider social partnership, where recommendations for addressing failing programmes could be discussed.

Reference Materials

I.L.O Convention on Employment Policy #122 (1964)

Recovering from the Crisis: A GLOBAL JOBS PACT (ILO Publication)

ILO Global Employment Agenda

Programme Budget Document: Ministry of Labour 2014-2017

Barbados Decent Work Country Programme

The Barbados Human Resource Development Strategy 2011-2016

Protocol VI (2011-2013) of the Barbados Social Partnership

Employment Policy in a small open economy

Medium Term Development Strategy 2010-2014

Barbados Growth and Development Strategy 2013-2020

National Strategic Plan 2006-2025

Draft National Youth Policy of Barbados