UNiTE Activities in the Caribbean

19 - 20 October 2009 - United Nations Country Teams in the region participated in the then UNIFEM-led consultation with civil society organisations and state representatives to introduce the campaign to key stakeholders in the region. The consultation gave CSOs and state representatives the opportunity to share with UN agencies their expertise on useful ways to implement the campaign. This collaboration resulted in two 2010 UNIFEM sponsored UNiTE activities with Faith-based organisations and artistes.

15 - 16 March 2010 - UNIFEM sponsored UNiTE consultation with Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs). The 16 Bible Verses to End Violence against Women tool was developed during this time and the group agreed to develop tools using Vedic verses and the Koran.

13 - 14 April 2010 - UNIFEM invited leading artistes from across the OECS and Trinidad to a consultation and workshop in support of the campaign. Artistes were first sensitised to the Campaign and its relevance in the Caribbean, and then filmed PSAs for the UNiTE Campaign. The artistes agreed to serve as media advocates and innovators to engage youth and prepare localised approaches to end gender-based violence and to use their onstage presence during national festivals and carnivals.
across the region and the Caribbean Diaspora in London, Canada and the United States to inform their audiences about the campaign and garner support.

26-28 May 2010 – UNIFEM invited 25 men to a training workshop to start a Champions for Change network of male advocates to EVAW. This workshop was done in partnership with the UNIFEM-led UN Masculinities Working Group and the CariMAN (Caribbean Male Action Network) Initiative. 

Caption: UN Women Programme Specialist Tonni Brodber facilitating a session.

21 June 2010 - UNIFEM entered into partnership with the National Cultural Foundation of Barbados to raise awareness about the Campaign. The following was completed:

- UNIFEM and UNICEF sponsored a UNiTE prize for the song and song writer for the calypso that best advocated the theme of the campaign or a closely related theme around respect for human rights, equality and the advancement of peace.

- The song which was adjudged as best fitting this criteria was “Abuse is Abuse” performed by Akaila Small who participated in the Junior Monarch competition in the 13-18 category and the song-writer was calypsonian, Crystal Cummins-Beckles. UNICEF Resident Representative Mr. Tom Olsen and UN Women Regional Programme Director, Ms. Roberta Clarke presented the prizes.
11 - 12 October 2010 - The United Nations Secretary General UNiTE to End Violence against Women Campaign in the Caribbean was officially launched in Barbados.

Mr. Nigel Fisher, Deputy Special Representative, Ad Interim, for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH); Mr. M. Kiari Liman-Tinguiri, Resident Coordinator, Guyana; Ms. Michelle Gyles-McDonough - UN Resident Coordinator, Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean and Ms. Roberta Clarke, UN Women RPD.

The launch was a High-Level Meeting of Attorneys-General, judges, CSOs and NGOs and other relevant stakeholders convened by the UN system in the Caribbean under the leadership of the Caribbean RCs, with the following objectives:

- To launch the UN S.G.’s Campaign: UNiTE to End Violence against Women
- To deepen understanding on the causes, consequences and responses to gender-based violence in the Caribbean
- To build a consensus on law reform and implementation goals within the context of the S.G.’s Campaign

Caption: (from left) Justice Patrick Robinson, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and President of the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Justice Dennis Byron.
Caribbean UNITE Consensus

At the Caribbean launch of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Campaign: UNITE to End Violence against Women, “Strengthening Accountability and Changing Culture to End Violence against Women in the Caribbean” held on 11-12 October 2010, Ministers of government, members of the judiciary, participants from governmental agencies, representatives of organizations working on gender-based violence and the UN system met to discuss strategies for accelerating the work towards preventing and eliminating violence against women.

The participants shared Caribbean experiences and were informed of the innovations in law reform and social policy programming. They discussed approaches that would strengthen state accountability to protect, respect and fulfil women’s human rights as well as support cultures of peace and equality and Caribbean developmental goals.

Following discussions on the causes, costs and consequences of violence against women and on the role of law and the administration of justice to address these constraints to the enjoyment of human rights, the participants agreed as follows:

We the Participants:

Reaffirming the obligations of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, as enunciated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and reaffirming also the obligations of States parties under international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the
11 - 12 October 2010 Coming out of the UNIFEM-sponsored UNiTE artiste workshop, St. Kitts and Nevis artiste Kevin “Masud Sadiki” Donovan wrote a song specifically for the UNiTE campaign “A Stitch in Time”. He was invited to premiere the song at the UNiTE Caribbean Launch along with Dominica artiste Nelly Stharre who had dedicated her song “A Woman’s Prayer to the Campaign”.

Aja, Nelly Stharre and Natalie Burke participated in the Conference panel discussions on the role Caribbean Artistes can play in ending violence against women and creating more peaceful societies overall.

October 2010 – The UNiTE campaign with the support of the National Coordinating Committee was featured in the 2010 Dominica Creole Festival with UNiTE and Dominican artiste Nelly Stharre working to increase awareness and advocacy to bring about an end to violence against women.

Caption: Nelly Stharre with friends in front of the wall of signatures in support the UNiTE campaign.
November 2010 - Jamaica

- UNiTE Sensitisation and PSA development in Jamaica with Jamaican reggae and dance hall artistes in concert with the Jamaica Bureau of Women’s Affairs
- Dominican artistes sensitisation on the SG’s UNiTE Campaign facilitated by UN Women Programme Specialist, Tonni Brodber.

November 2010 - UNiTE in Voice and Choice Consultation

An important recognition coming out of the regional consultation on the UNiTE campaign was the need to engage not only the traditional community leaders in the form of our regional politicians and faith-based leaders but all who help to shape our identities, raise our consciousness and also to recognise and embrace the impact of popular culture.
The UNiTE in Voice and Choice Consultation was therefore based on the foundation of the power of radio which reaches audiences at home; work, on the go in most cases with 24 hour programming. There was also the recognition of the reach of the personalities of radio and TV and their ability to influence their audience, thus the workshop name reflects their influence in terms of what they say as well as their choice in music and other programming material. They were 14 participants from Barbados, the OECS and Trinidad – a mix of largely radio personalities and some TV personalities – six men and eight women.

- Coming out of the workshop – the participants recorded PSAs which were aired during “16 Days 2010”.
- The workshop also spawned special programming for 16 Days:

**Saint Lucia**

- Radio Programme - [www.rcistlucia.com](http://www.rcistlucia.com), Mac Naughton McLean Programme Manager at RCI and Sharon Williams hosted a one hour special on violence against women. The in-studio participants were Ms. Sylvie Edwards Department of Gender Relations of St. Lucia, and a domestic violence survivor. UN WOMEN RPD Ms. R. Clarke also participated by phone.

**St. Kitts and Dominica – Masud and Nelly**

- UNiTE artistes, Masud Sadiki and Nelly Stharre participated in a Radio link up interview of the territories of St.Kitts, Dominica and Antigua.

**Antigua**

- Antigua and Barbuda radio stations designated November 25th as a special day where none of the programming including the music tacitly or overly condoned or incited violence against women or girls, or violence period. This was the start of several special initiatives by the Antigua Media led by the Observer Group.

**Dominica**

- Dominica Broadcasting launched the 16 days of activism by airing several news items relating to the issue and the UN Secretary General’s campaign including a
report by UNiTE in Voice and Choice participant Tyrella Alexander for the OECS NewsLink which focused on the GB violence.

- In addition, the Bureau of Gender Affairs, Dominica National Council of Women, National Men’s Forum and Ministry of Social Services, Community Development and Gender Affairs created a Pledge denouncing violence against women, which was submitted to UN Women

  I PLEDGE TO:
  Always treat my partner with respect
  Reject all forms of violence, including physical, verbal and emotional
  Accept responsibility for my decisions and actions.
  Embrace Peace!!!!!!!

Grenada
- UNiTE in Voice and Choice participant Shere Ann Noel hosted a 5-minute TV special on 16 Days and UNiTE.

Belize
- The 16 Days Bible Tool developed at the UNiTE Faith Based Organisations meeting was piloted in Belize through the coordination Icilda Humes, Director of Women’s Department with very positive feedback.

December 2010
- UNiTE PSAs featuring Jamaican artiste Hezron and Barbadian artiste Natalie Burke were featured at a sold-out reggae show in Barbados. In the lead up to the show Hezron promoted his association with the campaign in his radio and newspaper interviews.
  - Barbadian artiste, Michael “Mikey” Mercer participated in 16 Days outreach with UN Women Communications Specialist Sharon Carter-Burke and UNDP Partner for Peace Aja at the Coleridge and Parry Secondary School in Barbados.
Saint Kitts and Nevis UNiTE artist Masud Sadiki was invited to the Occupied Palestine Territory (OpT) to perform at the 3rd *Festival to Combat VAW* on an invitation from OpT UN Women and through funding by the UNiTE LAC office and coordination support from the UN Women Caribbean office.

**July 2011**

- The reach of the UNiTE to End Violence Against Women campaign was extended to the mainland territories of Belize, Guyana and Suriname when fifteen (15) Caribbean performing artists from the First Nations/indigenous people committed to advocating to end violence against women through their various forms of artistic expression.

- The artists came together at a workshop hosted by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat in collaboration with UN Women entitled - “Caribbean Artists against Gender based Violence (GBV)” in Paramaribo, Suriname.

- The objectives of the workshop were to sensitize artists on the issue of gender based violence (GBV) in the Region and to familiarise them with the use of edutainment. A special highlight of the workshop therefore was the fusion of indigenous art forms with popular cultural expressions to create public education messages.
• The Antigua and Barbuda Directorate of Gender Affairs commissioned a mural for one of the downtown main streets in the capital coming out of the 2010 Youth Logo Competition under the UNiTE banner.

September 28-30 - TALLER DE ARTITAS ÚNETE para poner fin a la violencia contra las mujeres – Panama City

• Seven Caribbean artists were among a total of 26 artists from Latin America and the Caribbean, who were invited to participate in a workshop in Panama City from 28 to 30 September under the aegis of the Panama-based, Latin America and Caribbean regional centre for the United Nations Secretary-General’s Campaign UNiTE To End Violence Against Women. During these three days, these
musical, visual and performing arts artists were also given a contextual awareness of the incidence of violence; a deeper understanding of concepts around violence against women and gender equality and as well the opportunity to collaborate and through their artistic creativity, generate compelling messages and other initiatives to raise awareness of and advocate for an end to this scourge of violence against women and girls.

October 2011 – Dominica Creole Festival

UNiTE Caribbean artist Nelly Stharre of Dominica, for the second year running engaged in
awareness activities during the world-renowned indigenous World Creole Festival in Dominica which every year attracts thousands of visitors to this Eastern Caribbean island. Nelly also coordinated joint artists' Peace Concert.

**November 2011 – UNiTE Consultation with Regional Parliamentarians**

Regional Parliamentarians came together at the Terra Nova Hotel in Jamaica to look at ways in which they could lead policy and community interventions to end violence against women and girls.

Themed, “**Building Political Will to End Gender-Based Violence**”, the November 9-10 meeting was one of the initiatives in support of the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon’s UNiTE to End Violence against Women Campaign.

Coordinated by the Jamaica-based United Nations Population Fund Caribbean Sub Regional Office (UNFPA), the Regional Consultation of Parliamentarians was a collaborative effort involving several partners including UN Women, the Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (IAPG), the Caribbean Network of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (CNPPD), and the CARICOM Secretariat.

Specifically, the two-day meeting supported the UNiTE campaign targeted Outcome 1 - the adoption and enforcement of national laws to address and punish all forms of violence against women and girls and Outcome 3 - strengthening data collection on the prevalence of violence against women and girls and paragraph 22 of the **UNiTE Caribbean Consensus Document**, which calls upon national parliamentarians to join in the leadership of the Campaign.
Networking to End Violence Against Women

Suriname - Wednesday November 30th:

UN Women Programme Coordinator, Mrs. Leah Odle-Benson presented on the UN Secretary-General’s UNiTE to End Violence Against Women Campaign at a national congress “Networking to end Violence Against Women” which was organized by Stichting Stop in partnership with UNFPA and the Ministries of Home Affairs and Justice and the Police.

Mrs. Odle-Benson was among a number of presenters, sharing on regional and international initiatives to combat violence against women with the audience of more than 100 persons. The Programme Coordinator set out the objectives of the campaign and in addition highlighted the work being done throughout the Caribbean and Latin America by the UN System in partnership with artists, women’s organisations, faith-based and men’s groups.

December 2011 - UNiTE walks a Mile in Her Shoes with the YWCA Barbados Chapter

UN Women Regional Programme Director Roberta Clarke and UNiTE Caribbean artist Terencia "TC" Coward joined with partners and Barbadians to support the Mile in Her Shoes event hosted by the Young Women’s Christian Association Barbados chapter on Saturday December 03, 2011.

Members of the general public joined with stakeholders from the YWCA; the National Organisation of Women; the Bureau of Gender Affairs; Senator Irene Sandiford-Garner - Vice President of the Organisation of American States Inter-American Commission of Women and representatives of the Business and Women's Professional Club, headed by its President, Ms. Nalita Gajadhur.

The UN Women RPD commended all those who participated in the event noting that it represented their taking steps to extend their influence and raise their voice for zero tolerance to all forms of violence against women.
"Every Caribbean country has a higher rate of sexual violence than the global average", Ms. Clarke stressed. "This represents a significant challenge to citizenship and human rights in the region," she added.

http://saynotoviolence.org/join-say-no/unite-walks-mile-her-shoes-ywca-barbados-chapter

**April 2012, Barbados - Team Mikey for UNiTE**

UNiTE Ambassador and Barbadian Soca Artist Michael Mercer launched an advocacy and fundraising appeal for the local shelter for victims of domestic violence. This is a further initiative as part of his advocacy for ending violence against women in support of the United Nations Secretary-General UNiTE to End Violence Against Women Campaign. Part of the proceeds from the sale of Team Mikey shirts will go to help victims of VAW.

UN Women Representative for the Caribbean, Roberta Clarke said: “Music matters, musicians matter and those who produce it like Mikey, are powerful, influential, trend setters. I say today that Mikey in this particular initiative has gone one step beyond and he is a pioneer. In this Team Mikey effort he is spearheading, he is continuing to give his time and his intellectual energy to the campaign.

“Indeed, he is also mobilising the support of others. When he speaks of his corporate support for Team Mikey, he is influential also then in leveraging support to the campaign and that is a tremendous effort for which we are very grateful,” she said.