



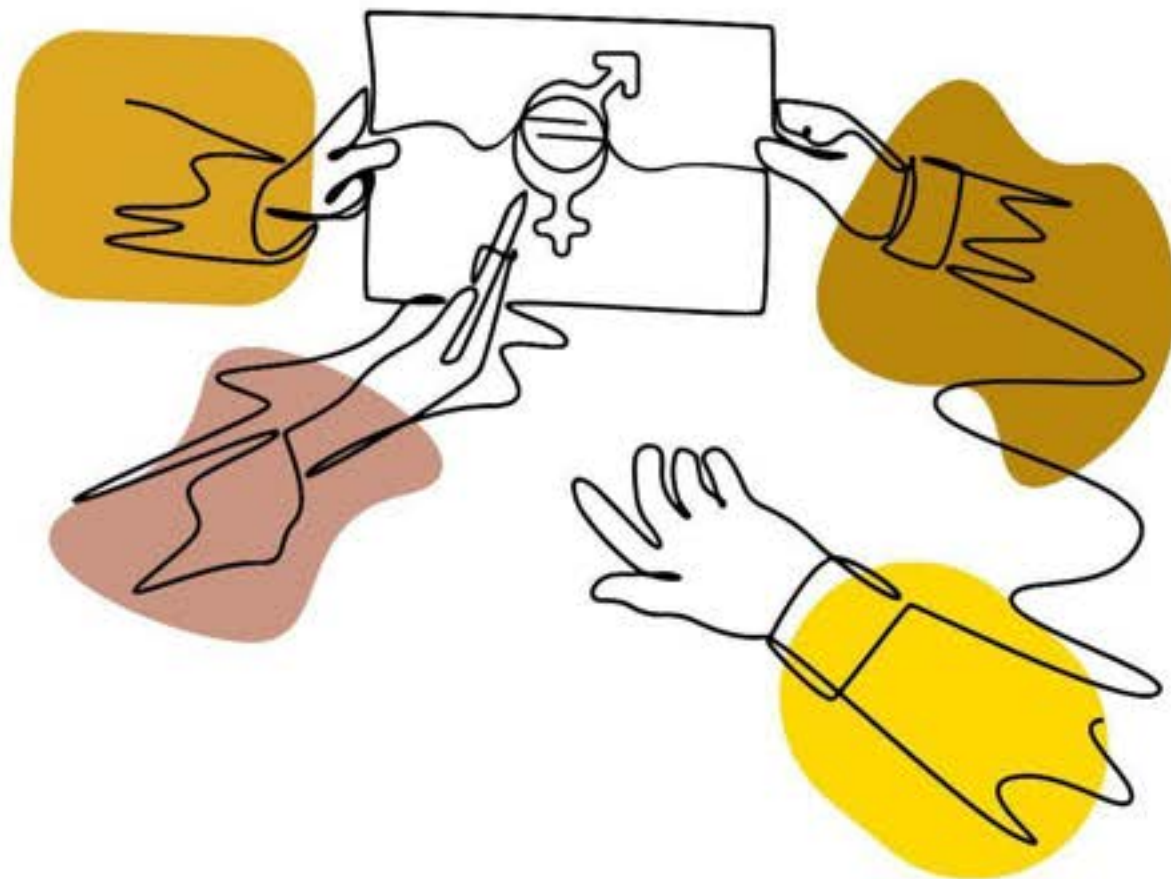
Caribbean Parliamentary Workshop

## Making the Work of Parliaments Responsive to the Needs of Women and Men

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December 4-6, 2024

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

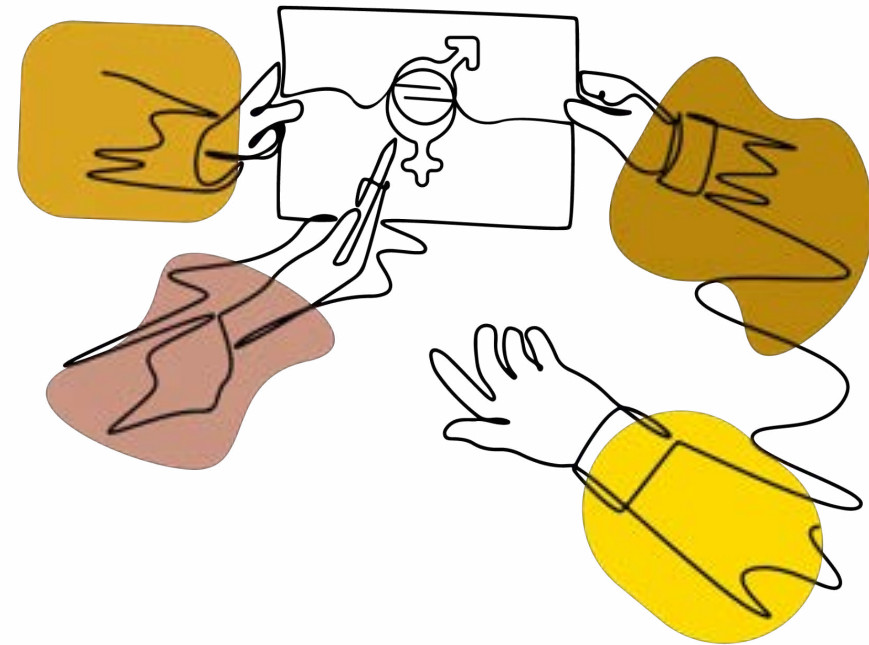




## WiFi

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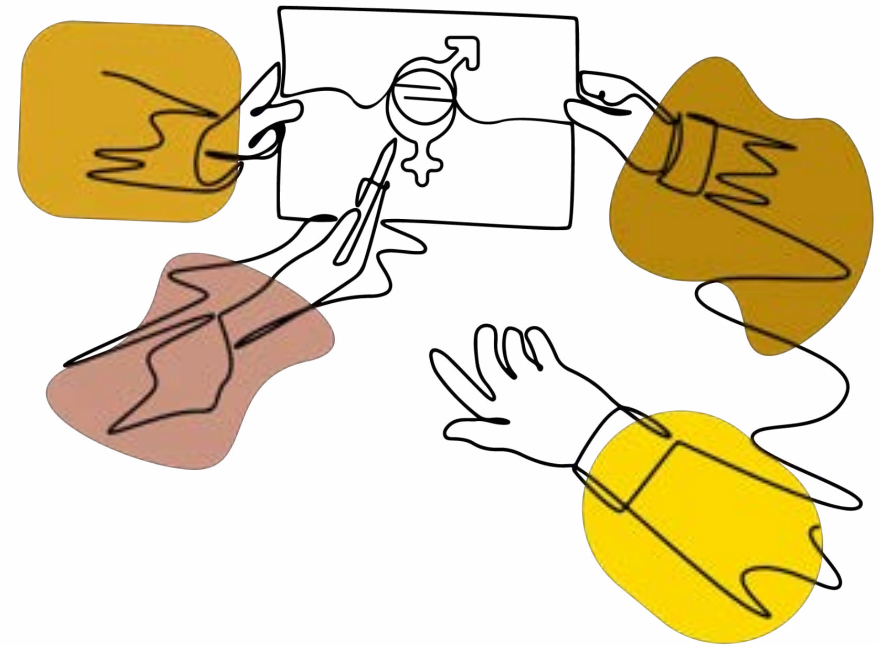
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## Opening

**Facilitator:**  
**Alisha Todd**  
Director General  
ParlAmericas

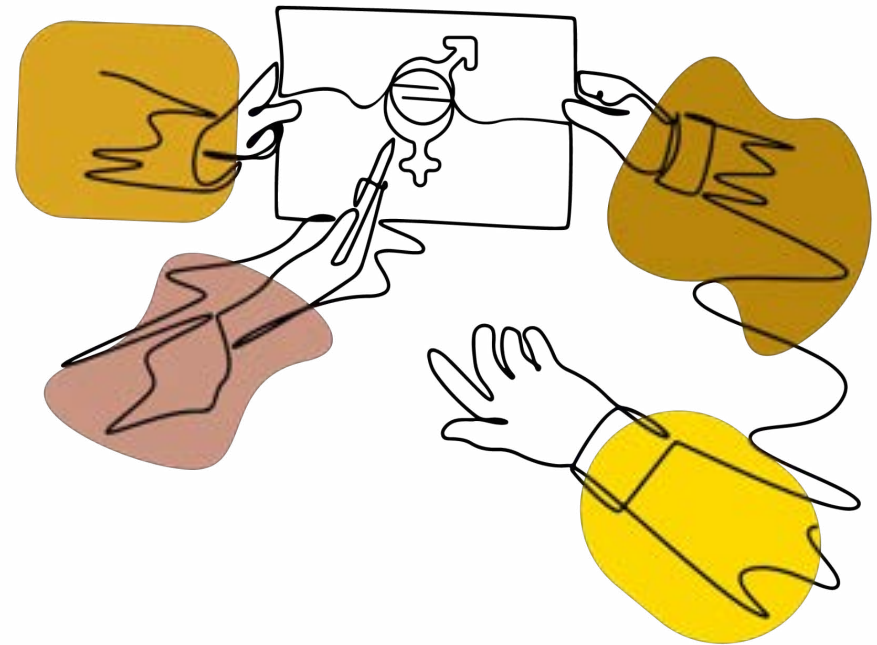




## Panel

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# The Legislative Process



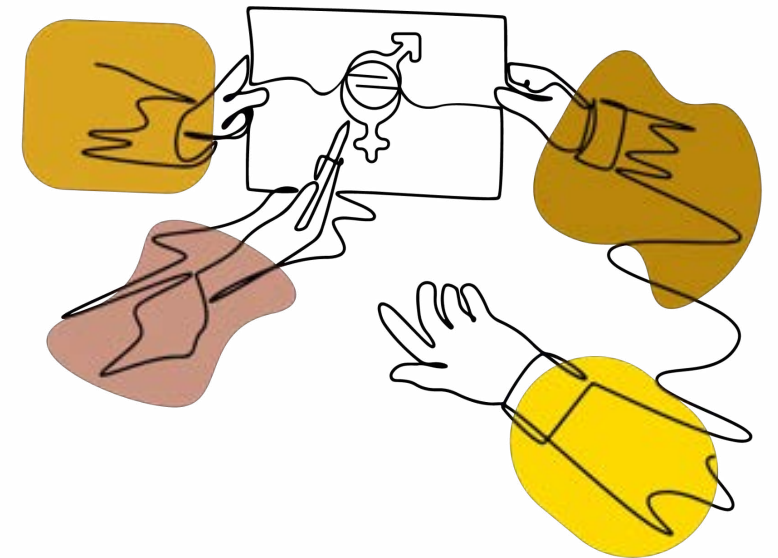




## Moderator: Chrisette Benjamin, Program Officer - Gender Equality, ParlAmericas

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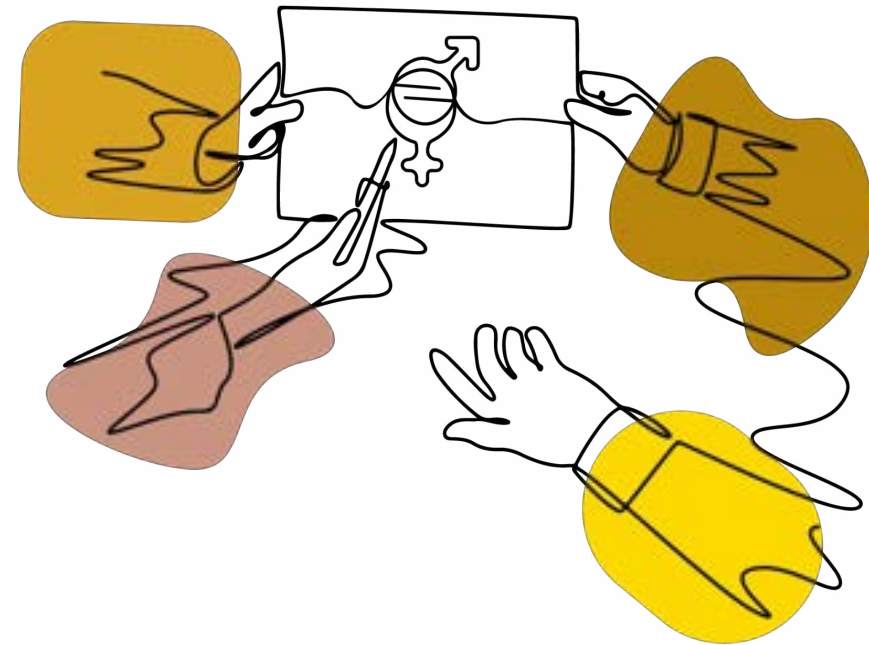


# How do we move forward?

## The Legislative process

**Chrisette Benjamin**

Gender Equality Programme Officer,  
ParlAmericas



# THE BIG QUESTIONS

1. What are the **root causes** of the common gender issues ?
2. How do we actually address these issues or rather **how do we move this forward?**

The legislative process is a **building block** to influence and create the change and the cultural shift that we all desire for the **greater good of all**



# CITIZEN PARTICIPATION MECHANISMS

Individual level:

Consultations, town halls, spark conversations on social media, utilize online polls, engage civil society organisations and your constituents, political party conventions or engage political party groups at the constituency level **before and after parliamentary sittings.**





# CITIZEN PARTICIPATION MECHANISMS

**Citizens can be engaged at any stage of the budget cycle**

**Participatory budgeting:** Participatory budgeting (PB) is at the very basis is when ordinary citizens are involved with helping decide on where a proportion of a budget should be allocated. Research shows that this concept has taken many forms but you can make it your own.

**Case study:** Portugal Participatory Budget (PPB) started in 2017 that allows civil society to decide on public investments in different governmental areas.



# Parliamentary committees

## Case Study- Jamaica

In 2019, a special select committee was appointed to consider and report on the bill entitled “The Sexual Harassment Act, 2019”

Outcomes:

- a. Recommendations made by the public were included in the bill such as expanding the definition of sexual harassment and online sexual harassment among many others.
- b. The Sexual Harassment (Protection and Prevention) Act, 2021, which took effect and is being hailed as an important piece of legislation for ushering in concrete measures to protect the vulnerable and promote cultural change to end sexual harassment.

# Parliamentary committees

## Case Study- Trinidad and Tobago

Joint Select Committee (JSC) on Human Rights, Equality, and Diversity conducted a public survey on period poverty in 2024.

Outcomes:

- a. The survey gathered responses from 1,930 members of the public and the findings were that 93.4 percent of respondents did not believe that period products were affordable.
  
- b. The Minister responsible for Gender and Child Affairs, Ayanna Webster-Roy, started discussions with the Prime Minister and Finance Minister on reducing the cost of feminine products in this country.

# Parliamentary Caucuses

Women's caucuses are crucial for **coordinated efforts across party lines** to address gender inequality.

**Case study:** In Rwanda, the Women Parliamentary Forum advocated for constitutional quotas for women in parliament and other electoral mechanisms, which allowed a rapid increase in women's parliamentary representation, going from 16 percent in the lower house in 1996 to 61.3 percent in 2018

**Costa Rica:** Parliamentary Group of Women Members of the Legislative Assembly presented a bill on sexual and street harassment on March 8, 2017, and the creation of this broader initiative included the participation of three civil society organizations, the National Institute of Women of Costa Rica (INAMU by its Spanish initials), the Special Committee on Women, and the Technical Unit

# Key Resources

## Gender Sensitivity in Legislation

As representatives of many diverse members of the public, it is vital for parliamentarians to take an inclusive approach to the performance of their legislative functions. This is particularly important in the drafting and review of legislation. Applying a gender perspective in these processes will help to ensure that laws and policies are designed to respond to the unique experiences of women and men, avoiding "one-size-fits-all" thinking. This contributes to greater equality and to a legal framework that works in favour of as many people as possible.



**Key definitions:**

- Gender:** how one identifies and expresses themselves in relation to conventional cultural and social associations with "man" and "woman." While someone may be declared male or female at birth (sex), their gender is related to the attributes they assume and how these would fall on a spectrum of masculinity and femininity in a given context.
- Gender equality:** the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys.<sup>1</sup>
- Gender equity:** informal rules and shared social expectations that distinguish expected behaviour on the basis of gender.<sup>1</sup>
- Gender stereotypes:** generalised view(s) or preconception(s) about attributes or characteristics, or the roles that are or ought to be performed by, or performed by women and men.<sup>1</sup>

Source: UN Women Economic Development Institute / UN Human Rights

**Thinking about gender and intersectionality in relation to legislation**

An individual's gender shapes social expectations of their specific interests, careers, household responsibilities, and characteristics. These expectations reflect historical patterns that have reinforced particular roles in society for women and men, which have also led to gender norms and stereotypes that continue to shape our daily lives. These have also contributed to gender inequalities in access to resources, opportunities, and power that particularly disadvantage women.

**Example:** Women's labour force participation has been increasing for decades, but gendered expectations around responsibilities in the household have been slower to change. Women continue to take on the majority of unpaid household care work in addition to carrying out their paid work, resulting in a "double shift" that limits their time and negatively impacts their relative earnings.

We are often unconscious of the many ways in which gender impacts our lives. A gender perspective can be applied in legislation as a means of correcting this, in an understanding that – because of their gender – women and men may have different needs and experiences in relation to policy issues, as well as specific needs from responses. The different ways in which issues could positively or negatively impact different individuals must be brought to light when developing such proposals to ensure that these will benefit as many constituents as possible.

**Example:** When assessing a labour reform that would stimulate job creation, it is important to think about which sectors will be growing and who this will impact. New jobs in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields, for instance, could primarily benefit men, as women are currently underrepresented in these fields and in related training programmes. To make this reform more gender-sensitive, additional provisions could be put into place to support women's increased entrance in the field.



## Making the Case: Key Gender Considerations for Addressing Development Challenges in Caribbean SIDS

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are disproportionately susceptible to global and regional crises that hinder sustainable development progress and exacerbate the magnitude and scope of new and emerging developmental challenges. Loss and damage due to climate change impacts such as sea level rise, increase in disaster risk due to more frequent and intense natural hazards, water availability and other climate impacts, as well as vulnerability to economic shocks, rising debt, scarce and fragile resources and emigration of pose a significant risk to SIDS and their efforts to achieve sustainable development.

In the context of the Caribbean, stakeholders have identified these issues – coupled with loss of biodiversity, challenges accessing financing for the Sustainable Development Goals, poverty and hunger, education and access to opportunities – as primary challenges to the pursuit of sustainable development priorities.<sup>1</sup>

Gender inequality is a pertinent factor at the core of these developmental challenges that can be overlooked in analysis and the crafting of legislative and policy solutions. Whether consciously or not, gender and other identity characteristics shape nearly all aspects of our lives, including how we experience social and economic issues, generating disproportionate impacts for marginalised and vulnerable groups that can be assessed through the lens of intersectionality.


Furthermore, many SIDS are signatories to human rights instruments that grant the responsibility of guaranteeing that responses to different issues take into account inequalities and strive to generate equal access between individuals of all genders to resources, opportunities, and rights in order to build sustainable, inclusive, equitable and resilient societies.

**Intersectionality** is an analytical tool which recognises that the experience of systemic inequalities is shaped by overlapping social factors such as gender, race, and class. An individual's disadvantages and privileges in a given time and place therefore cannot be understood by examining elements of their identity in isolation. Rather, attention must be paid to the full set of power relations that impact them, including macro forces such as histories of colonisation and poverty, and micro forces such as an individual's health status and the structure of their family or community.




This publication was made possible in part by the generous support of the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada. Published in May 2024.

<sup>1</sup> Regional Overview: Caribbean Region, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.



# MULTI-PARTY CAUCUSES FOR GENDER EQUALITY

A Handbook for Parliamentarians in Latin America and the Caribbean



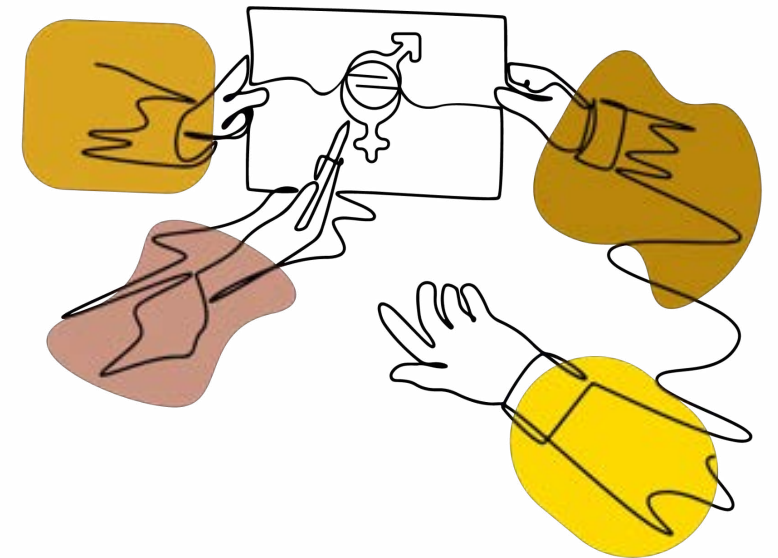


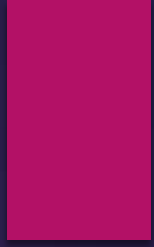


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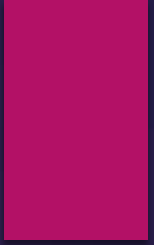


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**“Making the Work of Parliaments**  
**Responsive to Needs of**  
**Women and Men”**



## The Legislative Process

**Key themes: Identifying how all legislation can be analyzed and developed to promote gender equality, tools for committees/caucuses, citizen participation.**



# Engaging with Women's Org: CIWIL

**INFO-SESSION**  
**CELEBRATING**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**DAY OF WOMEN**  
**IN DIPLOMACY**



**TOPICS :**



**WHAT IS THE WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS**  
Dr Alison Gajada-Foster



**A PERSONAL JOURNEY IN DIPLOMACY**  
Mrs Nancy Nicholas



**EXPLORING SAINT LUCIA'S LEGISLATURE AND WOMEN**  
Mrs Leonne Theodore-John

**CASTRIES CENTRAL LIBRARY**  
**5:30 PM - 8:00 PM**  
**MONDAY 24 JUNE 2024**



758 722 3682



ciwilslunationalchapter@gmail.com



join us at our inaugural

# Women <sup>in</sup> POLITICS TRAINING

2023

## MOCK PARLIAMENT SITTING

✦ November 08, 2023  
10:00am- 12:00pm

✦ House of Assembly  
Castries

✦ RSVP-1-758-722-3683



**CIWIL**  
Caribbean Women in Leadership  
ST LUCIA NATIONAL CHAPTER















"On my own I will just create, and if it works, it works, and if it doesn't, I'll create something else. I don't have any limitations on what I think I could do or be."

Oprah Winfrey



**OAS**

More rights for more people



**95 YEARS**

**OAS  
CIM**

**"Increasing Gender Parity in Political Participation and Leadership in Saint Lucia"**  
Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2023  
Parliament Chamber

# Engaging Youth























# Women's Caucus





















# Empowering Women Through Sports











# Violence Against Women









# Engaging Women In Political Org















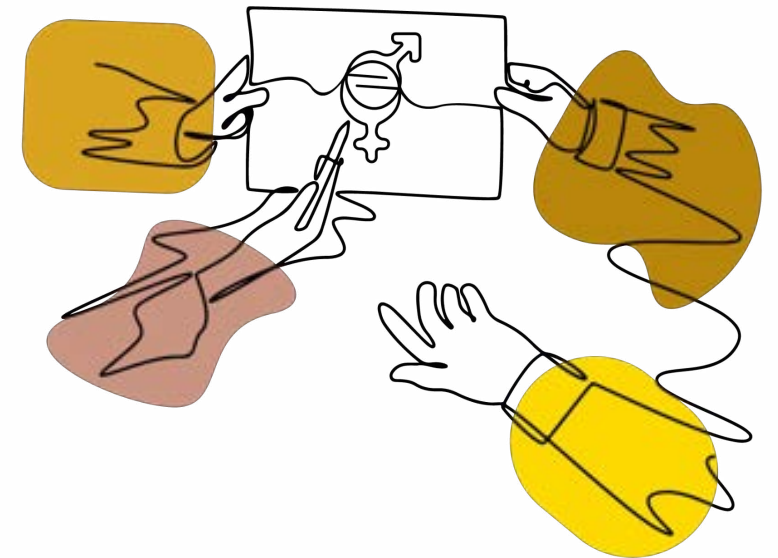
**Thank You**



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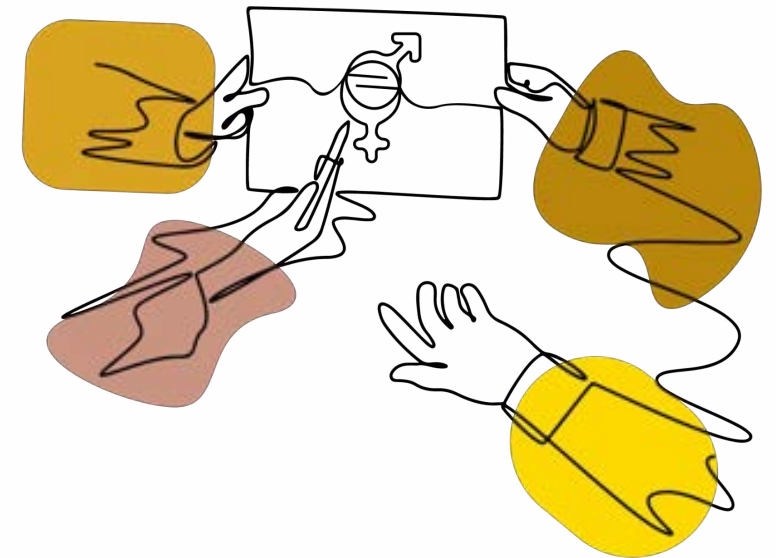




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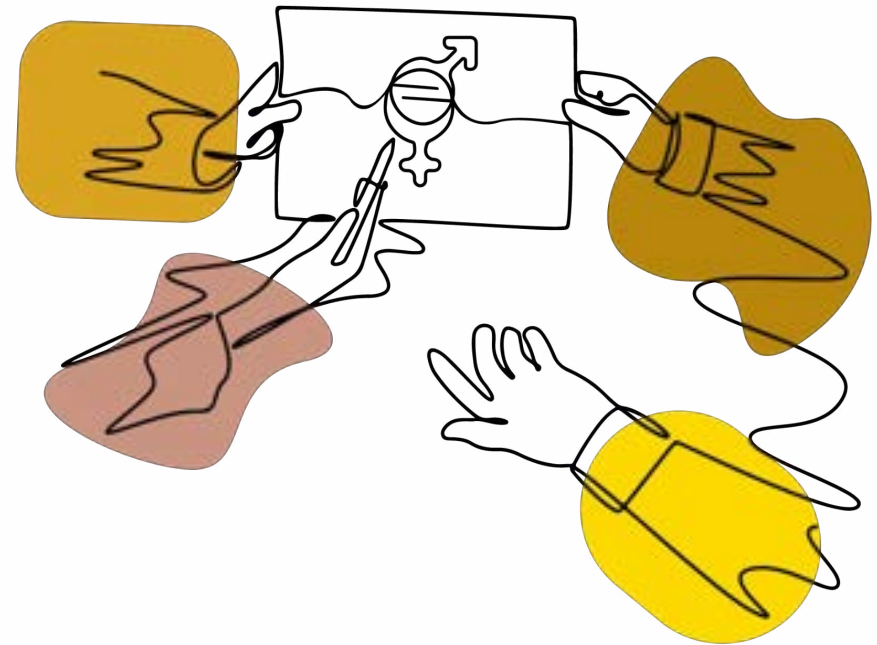






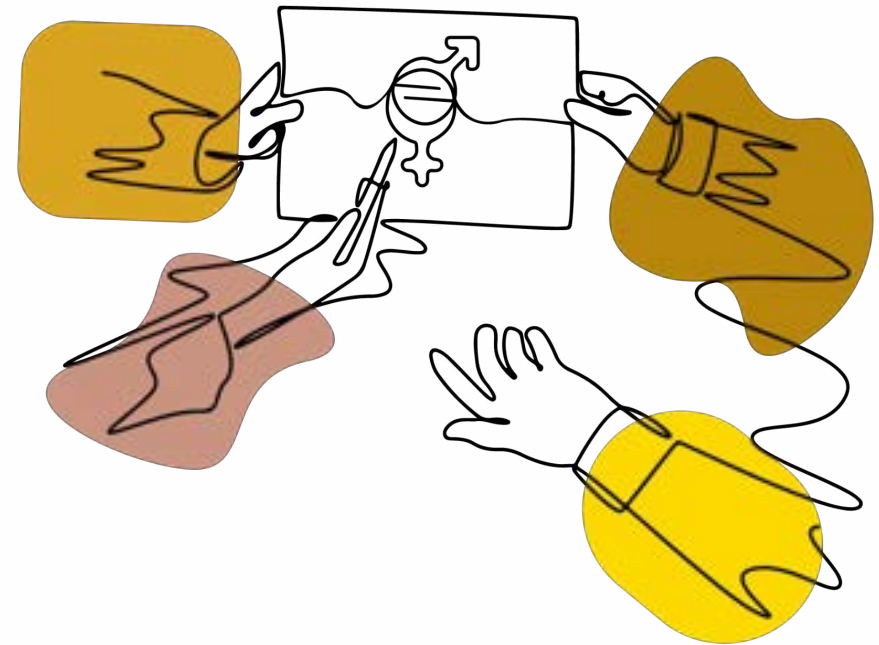
# Coffee/ Tea Break

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# Open dialogue: Priorities and recommendations to inform creation of the guide

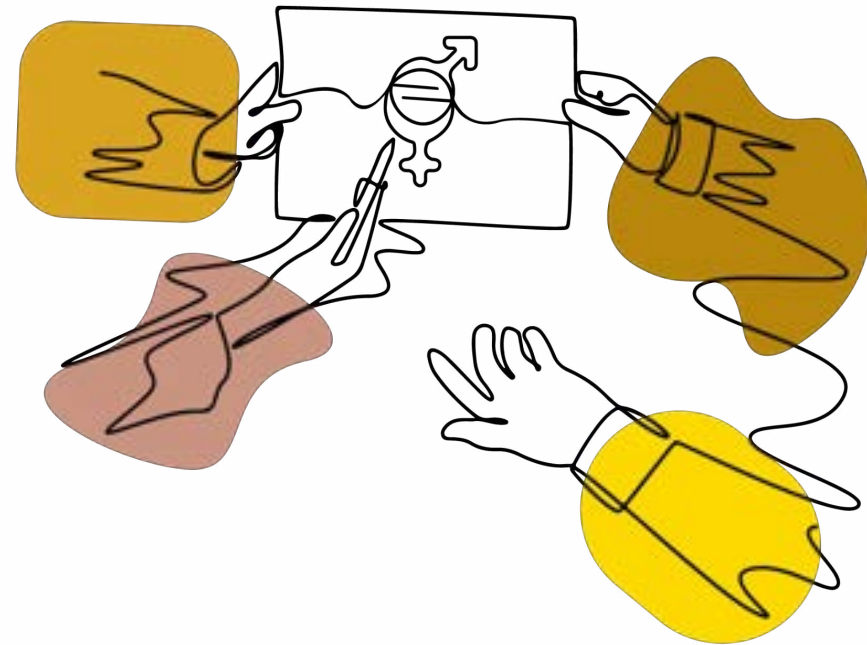




## Closing Remarks

**Stuart Shaw**

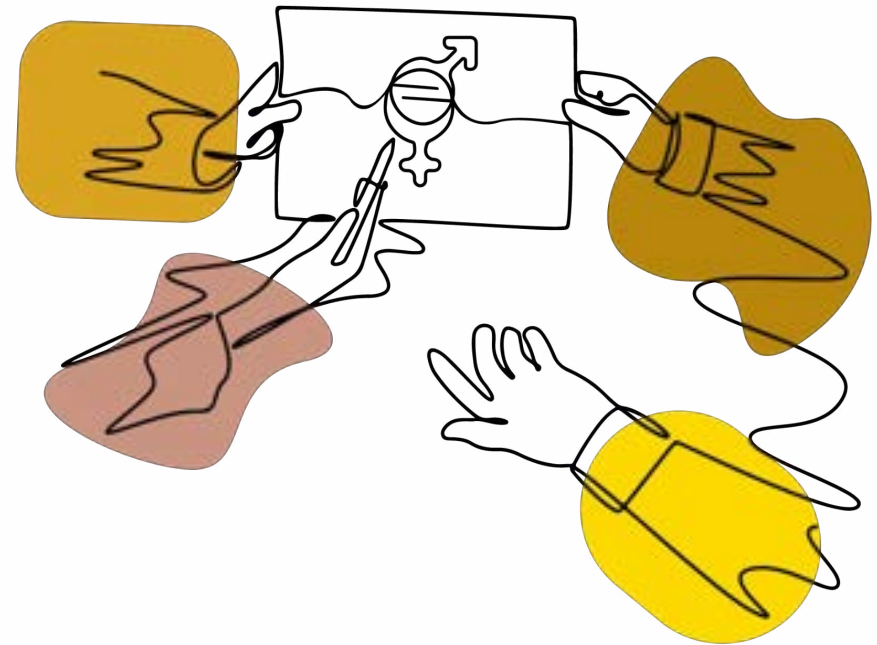
Political and Public Affairs  
Counselor, High Commission of  
Canada in Trinidad and Tobago







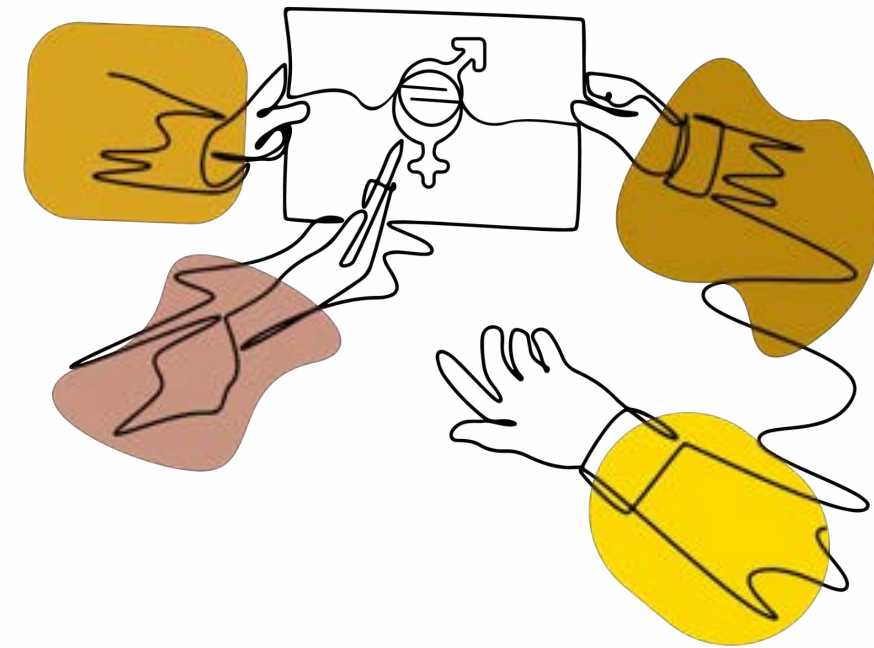
**Closing Remarks**  
**Senator the Honourable**  
**Nigel de Freitas**  
(Trinidad and Tobago)  
President of the Senate





## Vote of Thanks

The Honourable **Bridgid Annisette-George**  
(Trinidad and Tobago), Speaker of the  
House of Representatives and  
Vice-President of ParlAmericas





**Thank you very much for your  
participation!**