

**Questionnaire for States: - Non-discrimination and equality in family and cultural life
Trinidad and Tobago**

GENERAL

1. What status/hierarchy does your Constitution gives to international human rights treaties versus domestic law?

Human Rights Treaties have no legal status in domestic law.

Please explain.

The Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago gives no legal status to international human rights treaties versus domestic law. The Constitution is silent on this issue. However, treaties have no domestic force and can only be given force by an Act of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago

2. Has your State ratified international human rights treaties with reservations to provisions dealing with equality in family life?

Yes () No ()

Trinidad and Tobago reserves the right to restrict the right to strike of those engaged in essential occupations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

If yes, are there plans to withdraw these reservations?

Yes () No ()

Please explain.

3. Are the principles of non-discrimination on the basis of sex/gender and equality between men and women established in the Constitution of your State?

Yes () No ()

If yes, please provide references, describe how they are defined (name the specific articles) and whether they cover family and cultural life.

Yes. The Constitution of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago; Section IV proclaims:

It is hereby recognized and declared that in Trinidad and Tobago there have existed and shall continue to exist, without discrimination by reason of race, origin, colour, religion or sex, the following fundamental human rights and freedoms, namely:

- (a) the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law;
- (b) the right of the individual to equality before the law and the protection of the law;
- (c) the right of the individual to respect for his private and family life;

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- (d) the right of the individual to equality of treatment from any public authority in the exercise of any functions;
- (e) the right to join political parties and to express political views;
- (f) the right of a parent or guardian to provide a school of his own choice for the education of his child or ward;
- (g) freedom of movement;
- (h) freedom of conscience and religious belief and observance;
- (i) freedom of thought and expression;
- (j) freedom of association and assembly; and
- (k) freedom of the press.

<http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/Constitution.pdf>

4. Are there any specific anti-discrimination or gender equality laws in your State?

Yes (√)

No ()

If yes, please provide references and briefly describe the content of this law(s), in particular whether it covers family and cultural life.

Yes. The Equal Opportunity Act of 2000 “seeks to prohibit certain kinds of discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different status and circumstance and to establish an Equal Opportunity Commission and an Equal Opportunity Tribunal” (Equal Opportunity Commission of Trinidad & Tobago, 2014). It does not expressly cover family and cultural life but does so indirectly, that is, the Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of , *inter alia*, “marital status” . This is defined as the status or condition of being—

- (a) single;
- (b) married;
- (c) married but living separately and apart from one’s spouse;
- (d) divorced; or
- (e) widowed;

<http://www.equalopportunity.gov.tt/>

5. Have there been and recent legal reforms in your State to guarantee non-discrimination and equality between men and women in family and cultural life?

Yes ()

No (√)

If yes, please explain and provide examples

6. Are there any customary religious law or common-law principles/provision that.....

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Yes ()

No ()

If yes, please explain and provide examples.

7. Are there any good practices that you can share regarding the elimination of sex discrimination in family and cultural life in your State?

Yes (√)

No ()

If yes, please explain and provide examples

Yes. The Government is establishing mechanisms for gender mainstreaming within the public sector (Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development, 2014). Gender mainstreaming refers to a gender equality-motivated reassessment of an institution's ideas and practices. The aim of this is to make gender equality an integral concern of all decision-making within government. Additionally through the Gender Affairs Division programmes for men and boys, namely, the Defining Masculine Excellence Programme and the Non-traditional Skills Training for Men – Food Preparation and Home Management Course, the Division aims to stem the tide of problems associated with the concept and perceptions of masculinity.

- The Defining Masculine Excellence Programme seeks to reshape these concepts by addressing: the relationship men have with their mother, life partner, colleagues and employers; anger management; and self esteem.
- The Non-traditional Skills Training for Men – Food Preparation and Home Management Course seeks to achieve a non-gendered distribution of labour within the home by equipping men with the skills and confidence in sharing family responsibilities.

8. What actions have been taken by your State to eradicate negative gender stereotypes, including in the media?

Please provide examples.

The Gender Affairs Division, Ministry of Gender Youth and Child Development continue with the media to promote gender awareness in Trinidad and Tobago. In 2007 the Division hosted the women in the Media with the aim of engaging them on Gender and Development issues in Trinidad and Tobago.

Additionally, the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development hosts Distinguished Lecture Series on various gender and development issues to which the media is invited and actively participate.

9. Are tribunals upholding the principles of equality and non-discrimination in matters relating to family and cultural life?

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Yes () No ()

If yes, please provide any relevant case law/jurisprudence

Yes, notably the Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC). The EOC keeps under review the workings of the Equal Opportunity Act. Additionally, the Family Courts – particularly with respect to family matters upholding the principles of equality and non-discrimination

10. Are there any other mechanisms to monitor draft legislation, specific provisions in draft legislation or reverse decisions discriminating against women in family or cultural life?

Yes () No ()

If yes, please provide any relevant examples.

FAMILY LIFE – EQUALITY WITHIN MARRIAGE

11. Is there s legal designation of head of household?

Yes () No ()

If yes, is the head of household the male member of the family? What rights or obligations are attributed to the head of household?

No, there is no legal designation of head of household, but in one specific Act, the Public Assistance Act, a definition was provided in 1996.

The HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD is defined by the Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development for the country's Population Census. Accordingly Head of household refers: For census purposes every household has a 'Head'. The head of the household is the person, male or female, who carries the main responsibility in the affairs of the household. In any event, the person recognized by the respondents as the head is accepted as such for census purposes.

<http://cso.planning.gov.tt/census>

12. Do women have the same rights as men in your State in relation to:

(No) The minimum age for marriage – if the age of marriage is different for men and women, please provide information.

In Trinidad and Tobago, marriages can be performed (and are legally recognised) under civil law or under religious law. The minimum legal age for marriage depends on the type of union involved.

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- The Marriage Act Chapter 45:01 which governs civil and Christian marriages and sets the age of consent for both males and females at eighteen (18) years;
- The Marriage and Divorce Act Chapter 45:02 which governs Islamic marriages and divorces and sets the age of consent at sixteen (16) years for males and twelve (12) years for female;
- The Hindu Marriage Act Chapter 45:03 which governs Hindu marriages and sets the age of consent at eighteen (18) for males and fourteen (14) for females. Provisions are also made for males and females under the age of eighteen and fourteen respectively to be contracted in marriage with consent; and
- The Orisha Marriage Act of 1999 which governs marriages in the Orisha faith and sets the age of consent at eighteen (18) for males and sixteen (16) for females.

(Yes) The right to enter into marriage

(Yes) The freedom to choose a spouse and to express consent

13. With permission or authorization from parents/guardians/courts at what minimum age can men and women in your State? What enforcement measures are provided by law in this regard?

- The Marriage Act Chapter 45:01 which governs civil and Christian marriages and sets the age of consent for both males and females at eighteen years;
- The Marriage and Divorce Act Chapter 45:02 which governs Islamic marriages and divorces and sets the age of consent at sixteen (16) years for males and twelve (12) years for female;
- The Hindu Marriage Act Chapter 45:03 which governs Hindu marriages and sets the age of consent at eighteen (18) for males and fourteen (14) for females. Provisions are also made for males and females under the age of eighteen and fourteen respectively to be contracted in marriage with consent; and
- The Orisha Marriage Act of 1999 which governs marriages in the Orisha faith and sets the age of consent at eighteen (18) for males and sixteen (16) for females.

14. Is there a reference to dowry in the legislation of your State, for example in marriage contracts or traditional practice?

Yes () No ()

If yes, please explain.

15. Are forced marriages prohibited in your formal and customary law?

Yes () No ()

If yes, please provide any relevant references.

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Forced marriages are prohibited indirectly in formal law through the Sexual Offences Act Chap 11:28, Part I Offences and The Prosecution and Punishment of Offences Section 20 -Abduction of a Female States that:

A person who takes away or detains a female person against her will with intent—
(a) to marry her or to have sexual intercourse with her; or
(b) to cause her to marry or to have sexual intercourse with a male person,
is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for ten years

16. Are forced marriages or arrange marriages practiced in your State?

Yes () No ()

If yes, please explain

Anecdotal evidence suggests that arrange marriages are practiced. Women and girls trafficked into Trinidad and Tobago from neighbouring Latin American nations are especially vulnerable to forced marriages (Neaves, 2014).

17. Is polygamy illegal in your state?

Yes () No ()

If no, is it legal for both men and women?

Polygamy is not recognised under any of the marriage systems in Trinidad and Tobago. It is prohibited indirectly through the Offences Against the Person Act Chap. 11:08. Section 55 Bigamy states that:

(1) Any person who being married, marries any other person during the lifetime of the former husband or wife, whether the second marriage has taken place in Trinidad and Tobago or elsewhere, is liable to imprisonment for four years.

(2) Nothing contained in this section shall extend to any person marrying a second time whose husband or wife has been continually absent from such person for the space of seven years then last past, and has not been known by such person to be living within that time, or shall extend to any person who, at the time of the second marriage has been divorced from the bond of the first marriage, or to any person whose former marriage has been declared void by the sentence of any Court of competent jurisdiction.

18. Is the registration of marriage compulsory in the follow cases?

(Yes) civil marriage

(Yes) religious marriage

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Are same sex-marriage allowed in your State?

Yes () No (√)

If yes, please provide references

19. Are same-sex relations criminalized in your State?

Yes (√) No ()

If yes, please provide references

Same sex relations are not criminalized directly however indirectly through the offences of buggery and serious indecency under the Sexual Offences Act, 1986.

20. Is equality guaranteed between husband and wife in law and practice with respect to

(Yes in practice not law) The rights to choose a family name. There is no express prohibition but in practice women tend to adopt their husband's name.

(Yes in practice) The right to choose a profession and occupation. There is no legal prohibitions

(Yes in law and practice) The right to choose the place of residence. Section 37 of the Family Law (Guardianship of Minors, Domicile and Maintenance) Act, 1981 provides as follows:

(1) The domicile of a married woman, shall, instead of being the same as her husband's by virtue only of marriage, be determined as if she were unmarried and by reference to the same factors as in the case of any other individual capable of having an independent domicile and (if she is a minor) as if she were of full age; and the rule of law whereby upon marriage a woman acquires her husband's domicile and is thereafter during the subsistence of the marriage incapable of having any other domicile is abolished.

(2) This section applies to the parties to every marriage, wherever, whenever and pursuant to whatever law the marriage was solemnised, and whatever the domicile of the parties at the time of the marriage

(Yes in law) The right to have and retain one's nationality. Citizenship provisions under the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago (sections 15-17) and provisions relating to the acquisition of citizenship provisions under the Citizenship of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Act, 1976 .

(Yes in law) The freedom of movement (including the right to travel abroad). There is no legal prohibitions . Section 4 of the Constitution applies generally and upholds the rights of women to freedom of movement.

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Citizenship of The Republic of Trinidad And Tobago Act Chapter 1:50
<http://www.immigration.gov.tt/Portals/0/Documents/Citizenship%20Act%201.50.pdf>

The Constitution of The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago
<http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/Constitution.pdf>

21. Do both spouses have the same rights in law and practice with respect to
- (Yes) ownership of property and land
 - (Yes) management and administration of property and land
 - (Yes) enjoyment and disposition of property and land

Please provide references.

The government of Trinidad and Tobago affirms women's rights to property ownership, and there are no legal restrictions on their access to land. Subsequent to the 1972 Law on Matrimonial Proceedings and Property, married women have the same rights as their husbands in regard to access to property other than land. The 1999 Married Persons Act enables wives to sign contracts in their name, without their husbands' authorisation, and protects their capacity to administer their own property.

http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical_list/lawspdfs/45.51.pdf

http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical_list/lawspdfs/45.50.pdf

Section 77 of the Real Property Act states that a married woman, being a proprietor of land, shall be deemed to be entitled thereto for her sole benefit, and for the purposes of this Act a married woman may deal with land under this Act, and may execute and sign all instruments, and do all personal acts, without the concurrence of her husband as effectually as if she were a *feme sole*, so the general law of property applies. Generally, it is the legal owner who has the right to administrate the assets, but if the spouse (or another person) has a beneficial interest in the asset that might provide certain limitations.

22. Are women who get married subjected to any form of male guardianship?

Yes () No (✓) If yes, what are the specific conditions of this guardianship and what kind of restrictions does it impose on women?

23. Do parents have same rights and responsibilities regarding to:

(Yes) Deciding the number and spacing of children

(Yes) Guardianship, wardship and trusteeship

(Yes) Adoption of children

(Yes) Care of children

(Yes) Education of children

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(Yes) Alimony

Please provide references

Yes to all above.

- Laws which govern family and education, including the Family Law Act, the Adoption of Children Act, and the Education Act, do not discriminate between sex in their granting of the listed rights and responsibilities to parents. In Trinidad and Tobago, mothers and fathers have equal rights regarding parental authority (with both considered to be the 'natural guardians of the child') and child custody, with the courts deciding child custody arrangements in the best interests of the child. Provisions for alimony are made under the Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act and the Income Tax Act Chap.75:01.
- Family Law (Guardianship of Minors, Domicile And Maintenance) Act Chapter 46:08-
http://www.oas.org/dil/Family_Law_Act_Trinidad_and_Tobago.pdf
- Adoption of Children Act-
http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/Alphabetical_List/lawspdfs/46.03.pdf
- Education Act
http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical_list/lawspdfs/39.01.pdf
- Matrimonial Proceedings And Property Act
http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical_list/lawspdfs/45.51.pdf
- Income Tax Act Chap.75:01.
http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/mesicic3_tto_income_act.pdf

24. Are de facto unions recognized in law in your state?

Yes ()

No ()

If yes, please explain in which law (s) and how this is defined.

The de facto union recognized in law in Trinidad and Tobago is referred to as common law or cohabitational relationship. In Trinidad and Tobago, the parties to a common-law relationship have rights under the Cohabitational Relationships Act Chap. 45:55 and the Distribution of

Estates Act. Under the Cohabitational Relationships Act a "cohabitational relationship" is defined as " . . . the relationship between cohabitants, who not being married to each other are living or have lived together as husband and wife on a bona fide domestic basis." The Cohabitational Relationships Act Chap. 45:55 is: An Act to confer on cohabitants' rights and obligations, to give the Courts jurisdiction to make orders with respect to interests in property and maintenance, to make provision for the enforcement of agreements and for matters incidental thereto. http://rgd.legalaffairs.gov.tt/laws2/alphabetical_list/lawspdfs/45.55.pdf

Under the Distribution of Estates Act: A "cohabitational relationship" means the relationship

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between cohabitants, who not being married to each other, have lived together in a bona fide domestic relationship for a period of not less than five years immediately preceding the death of either cohabitant.

In this Act the 'Rights of Cohabitants' are:

Where an intestate dies leaving no surviving spouse or is judicially separated, but dies leaving a surviving cohabitant, that person is entitled to be treated as if he or she is a surviving spouse. If, however, the deceased dies leaving a surviving spouse and a cohabitant, and the deceased and the spouse were living apart, the cohabitating spouse will be entitled to a part of the estate that was acquired during the period of cohabitation subject to the rights of the surviving spouse and if any the surviving children.

A cohabitant for the purpose of the legislation is a person of the opposite sex who, while not married to the intestate was continuously living with the deceased for five or more years before the death of the intestate, as if they were man and wife. The definition excludes same sex partners from benefiting under the laws of intestacy.

A surviving cohabitant in order to claim a share in the estate of the deceased must file with the court, a notice that they have interest in the estate. This notice must be filed with the court within 28 days of the death of the deceased. The cohabitant must then obtain an order from the court confirming that cohabitating relationship and how much of the estate they are entitled to within three months of the death of the deceased. <http://www.ttparliament.org/legislations/a2000-28.pdf>

25. Do men and women have the same legal rights with respect to dissolution of marriage?

Yes()

No ()

If yes, please explain in which law (s) and how this is defined.

Yes. The Matrimonial Proceedings and Properties Act Chap. 45:51, which directly governs divorce, nullity, and judicial separation of marriages, as well as transference of property and child custody in cases of dissolution, does not discriminate between sex in the granting of rights and responsibilities at any point.

Legal rights with respect to dissolution of marriage are also addressed under the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Act Chapter 45:02 Part III Divorces Section 16:

Part III of this Act shall apply to every dissolution or annulment of a marriage between Muslims (hereinafter in this Act referred to as a divorce) effected or decreed after the commencement of the former Ordinance (that is, 1st July 1936), and all divorces decreed by a Council and registered in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the Divorce Regulations shall be valid for all purposes as from the date of registration.

26. Do men and women have the same rights in law and practice when a marriage or union ends in terms of :

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(Yes) Equal share of the marital property and land

(Yes) Custody of children

(Yes) Remarriage

Please provide any references.

The Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act; and the Cohabital Relationships Act give both partners the same rights to share marital property and take custody of children. However, in each legal separation, court judgments determine the final custody of children and distribution of marital property and land between man and woman. Remarriage is mentioned but not explicitly defined in the Matrimonial Proceedings and Properties Section 17 (5) of the Act states: "Where a decree nisi other than a decree of nullity of marriage has been made absolute and either—

(a) there is no right of appeal against the decree absolute; or

(b) the time for appealing against the decree absolute has expired without an appeal having been brought; or

(c) an appeal against the decree absolute has been dismissed,
either party to the former marriage may marry again.

Sections 26, 54 and 55 of the Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act, 1972 deals with division of property upon divorce or separation and apply equally to both spouses. The Courts have the power to adjust property rights to either spouse under the Act.

27. Is it contemplated in the legislation of your State that, in the event of a divorce, women should remain in the family or common household?

Yes () No (✓)

If yes, please explain in which law (s) and how this is defined.

The Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act give both partners the same rights to remain in the family or common household which is decided by the courts. Section 53 of the Act states that: (1) The Court may, if it thinks fit, on granting a decree of divorce or at any subsequent time, instead of or in addition to making any order under Part II, make an order against the husband or the wife, or his or her personal representative, granting to the wife or husband, as the case may be, for such period and on such terms and subject to such conditions as the Court thinks fit, the right personally to occupy the matrimonial home.

28. Are legal provisions guaranteeing non-financial contributions, including care of children, the sick and elderly in the family, taken into account in the division of marital property upon divorce?

Yes () No (✓)

If yes, please provide references.

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29. Are rights of widow(er)s the same for women and men in terms of :

(Yes) Custody of children

(Yes) Property and land distribution

(Yes) Remarriage

(Yes) Freedom to choose residence There is nothing in law prohibiting the freedom to choose residence.

Please provide references.

Yes to all above.

- Laws which govern the rights of widow(er)s are the same for women and men in terms of Custody of children, Property and land distribution, Remarriage, Freedom to choose residence under the following:
 - The Succession Act Chap 9:02
 - The Widows and Orphans Pension Chap 23:54
 - The Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act

30. Do women have access to legal aid in relation to family matters?

Yes (√) No ()

If yes, please explain.

The Legal Aid and Advise Act grants equal access to men and women in applying for legal aid in summary, civil, and criminal proceedings.

EQUALITY WITHIN THE FAMILY

31. What is the legal definition/concept of “family” in your State?

In section 2 of the Matrimonial Proceedings and Properties Act, a “family” refers to the parties of a marriage, the children of both of those parties, and any other child who has been treated by both of those parties as a child of their family.

32. In law (including customary law) are men and women equal in the family in the State?

Yes (√) No ()

If yes, please provide any references

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There is nothing in law that discriminates against men or women equal in the family.

33. Do men and women have the same social status within the family in your State?

Yes (✓) No ()

If yes, please provide any references

34. Does your State have data on the number of hours spent by women and by men on functions in the home or in care for family members, including children and the elderly?

Yes (✓) No ()

If yes, please explain

Yes. The Central Statistical Office under the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development in the 2002 The Housing and Population Census contains data on the economic activities, including home duties, of all men and women within a one-week span, and included questions counting unremunerated work.

35. Do men and women in the family have the same rights in law and practice, with regards to inheritance (including equal rank in the succession)?

Yes (✓) No ()

If yes, please explain. In addition, is there evidence of waiver of inheritance rights by women?

Yes. The Succession Act and Distribution of Estates Act, which govern the transfer of inheritance within families, do not discriminate between genders in the granting of inheritance to spouses, children, parents, or extended family members. There is no known evidence on the waiver of inheritance rights by women.

36. Does family education in your State include a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of the children?

Yes (✓) No ()

If yes, please provide any references.

Yes. One objective of the Primary Health and Family Life Curriculum (H.L.F.E) of the Ministry of Education is to instruct on the serious responsibilities both sexes should associate with childrearing (Curriculum Development Division, 2006, p. 76).

37. If equality is guaranteed in law and practice, does this apply in all different types of families?

Yes (✓) No ()

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If yes, please provide any references.

The Cohabital Relationships Act accords legal recognition to informal unions between women and men, although this entails a smaller range of legal rights and responsibilities than marriage. However, polygamous relationships have no legal status, and same-sex unions are illegal.

VIOLENCE WITHIN THE FAMILY AND MARRIAGE

38. Are there any of the following traditional practices in your State?

(No) Female Genital mutilation

PART IV of the Children Act of 2012: OFFENCE OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

(1) Subject to subsection (2), a person who excises, infibulates or otherwise mutilates the whole or any part of the labia majora or labia minora or clitoris of a child commits an offence and is liable—(a) on summary conviction, to a fine of fifty thousand dollars and to imprisonment for ten years; or(b) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for twenty years.

(2)A person shall not be liable under subsection (1) if—(a)the performance of a surgical operation on a child is necessary for her physical or mental health and the operation is performed by a medical practitioner; or

(b)the surgical operation is performed on a child who is at any stage of labour, or who has just given birth, for purposes connected with the labour or birth, and the operation is performed by a medical practitioner or a person undergoing a course of training with a view to becoming such a practitioner.

(3) For the purpose of determining whether an operation is necessary for the mental health of a child, it is immaterial whether she or any other person believes that the operation is required as a matter of custom or ritual.

10. A person who aids, abets, counsels or procures a Girl to excise, infibulate or otherwise mutilate the whole or any part of her labia majora, labia minora or clitoris is liable on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for fifteen years.

(No) Honour Killings

(No) Son Preference

(No) Dowry Deaths

() Polygamy

(Yes) Prohibition of work or travel without the permission of a guardian

PART XIV of Children’s Act of 2012: under Employment of Young Persons

() Other

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If yes, is there legislation prohibiting such practices in your State?

Please provide any information on other actions taken to eradicate these practices.

39. Is/are there any anti-domestic violence legislation/regulations in your State?

Yes (✓) No ()

If yes, please provide any references.

The Domestic Violence Act: The Domestic Violence Act (No. 27 of 1999) was enacted to repeal the Domestic Violence Act (No. 10 of 1992) with the aim of ensuring a prompt and equitable legal remedy for victims of domestic violence, for the empowerment of the Court to provide financial relief for the benefit of the applicant of any child, and makes provision for the enlargement of the ambit of Protection Orders. This Act:

- Enabled a Protection Order to be granted in the Magistrate's Court
- Relatively cheap and accessible
- Improved definitions: DV (physical, sexual, emotional or psychological and financial abuse)
- Categories of persons protected expanded (visiting relationships of over 12 months)
- Financial compensation for monetary loss (loss of earnings etc.)
- Interim maintenance for applicant and child
- Improved counselling provisions

40. Does your State have a legal definition of discrimination which covers gender-based violence or violence against women, which included domestic violence?

Yes () No (✓)

41. Does your State have a national policy to eliminate gender-based violence or violence against women, including domestic violence?

Yes () No ()

Not yet. However the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development in collaboration with UN Women has embarked on a project entitled 'Strengthening State Accountability and Community Based Action to end Gender Based Violence in Trinidad a Tobago' with the aim of developing a National Strategic Action Plan on Gender Based and Sexual Violence for Trinidad and Tobago. The Ministry has secured a consultant to conduct the participatory base line review of legislative policy and programmatic action and Consultation of Multi-sectoral Responses to address GBV and SV which will be conducted during August 2014.

42. Is marital rape considered a crime in the legislation of your State?

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Yes (√) No ()

This is addressed under the Domestic Violence Act, A man can be prosecuted for committing the offence of rape against his wife.

43. Is adultery considered a crime in the legislation of your State?

Yes () No (√)

If yes, is it equally punished for men and women?

Please provide any reference and further explanation.

44. Are there any public campaigns in your State to raise awareness that violence against women and girls is a human rights violation?

Yes (√) No ()

If yes, do they attempt to change the attitudes of men?

- Yes, there are public campaigns in to raise awareness that violence against women and girls is a human rights violation. Both Government and Civil Society host public awareness campaigns which include attempts to change the attitude of men.
- Yes the Defining Masculine Excellence Programme and Gender Sensitization Workshops conducted by the Gender Affairs Division, Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development. Through the Gender Affairs Division programmes for men and boys, namely, the Defining Masculine Excellence Programme and the Non-traditional Skills Training for Men – Food Preparation and Home Management Course, the Division aims to stem the tide of problems associated with the concept and perceptions of masculinity.
 - The Defining Masculine Excellence Programme seeks to reshape these concepts by addressing: the relationship men have with their mother, life partner, colleagues and employers; anger management; and self esteem.
 - The Non-traditional Skills Training for Men – Food Preparation and Home Management Course seeks to achieve a non-gendered distribution of labour within the home by equipping men with the skills and confidence in sharing family responsibilities.
 - Gender Sensitization Workshops- The initiative is in keeping with government's commitment to promote the principles of gender equity and equality as advanced in the Seven Interconnected Pillars of Sustainable Development.

45. What measures have been taken in your State to raise awareness among law enforcement officials regarding violence against women and girls, including domestic violence?

Please explain and provide examples.

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- The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in support from Civil Society continuously conducts Domestic Training workshop in which law enforcement is also include. Additionally specialized training workshops are conducted for law enforcement personnel to raise their awareness and strengthen capacity for treating with issues of violence against women including domestic violence.
- There is a **Domestic Violence Investigative and Procedural Manual for Police Officers** outlines how issues of domestic violence should be address and includes how to:
 - Provides immediate injunctive relief to victims
 - Refers victims and perpetrators for counseling and support
 - Ensures prompt and just legal remedy for victims
 - Assist police officers and all rank of security services to effectively and sensitively respond to domestic violence and take appropriate action to prosecute the suspect.

This manual is used in the training of all police recruits at the police academy and subsequently available to police officers for reference.

- The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is currently in the process of establishing a Central Registry on Domestic Violence as approved by Cabinet, Cabinet Minute No.575 of February 20, 2014. This will be facilitated by the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development. The project is currently in its inception phase and is oversee by a Technical Coordinating Committee for a period of three (3) years which has the mandate to support the process of establishing the Central Registry on domestic violence.

46. Are there special law enforcement units to respond to complaints of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence?

Yes (√) No ()

If yes, do these included female law enforcement officers?

Generally all police officer respond complaints of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence received. However two (2) main units of law enforcement who treat particularly with violence against women and girls, including domestic violence are the Victim and Witness Support and Community Police. All units include female law enforcement officers.

47. Please provide information on the incidents/complaints of domestic violence, sexual assault including rape, and child abuse against women and girls in your State.

48. Are there shelters or safe houses for women and girls who are victim of gender-based violence, including domestic violence in your State?

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Yes (√) No ()

If yes, are these available to women and girls living in rural and remote areas?

Yes these are also available to women and girls living in rural and remote areas.

PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL LIFE

49. Are men and women equally entitled in law and practice to interpret cultural traditions, values and practices in your State?

Yes () No () There is no prohibitions in law

If yes, please describe and provide examples.

50. Are there restrictive dress codes for women which do not apply to men?

Yes () No ()

There are no restrictive dress codes in law. However some restrictive dress codes for women which do not apply to men are practiced in some cultures and religions.

51. Are women in the country allowed to be a member and fully participate in cultural and scientific institution in your state?

Yes () No () There is no prohibitions in law

If yes, please describe and provide examples.

52. Are women entitled in law and practice, independently of their marital status, to decide freely whether or not to participate in certain cultural events, traditions and practices in your State?

Yes (√) No ()

If yes, please describe and provide examples

There are no prohibitions in law; however in practice under certain cultural and religious events women may experience certain restrictions.

53. Are there any specific actions to recognize and value the contributions of women to culture in your State?

Yes there specific actions to recognize and value the contributions of women to culture such as national awards that include recognizing and valuing the contributions of women. Additionally, during certain events women are particularly recognized such as Mother Day and International Women's Day.