MAJOR PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Some of the Project’s major achievements by the end of Year 5 (April 1, 2017—March 31, 2019) were:

Component 1: Legislation and Treaty Policy

♦ 9 Model Bills completed: Arbitration, Business Names, Climate Change Resilience Agency of Dominica (CREAD), Community Mediation, Legal Profession, Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA), OECS Judicial Pensions, and Sexual Harassment and Trade Marks; and

♦ 44 persons trained in legislative drafting between 2014 and 2019, and 23 drafters trained in the consolidation of laws between 2014 and 2019. Legislative drafting tracer study completed in December 2017.

Component 2: Legal Profession

♦ Sponsorship of sensitisation lectures on Continuing Legal Professional Development (CLPD).

Component 3: Legal Education and Information

♦ Legal Education Survey Report to inform future policy on regional legal education completed in 2018;

♦ Digitization of the West Indian Law Journal, Caribbean Law Review and West Indian Legislation Indexing Project (WILIP) and expansion of CARILAW database; and

♦ Delivery of lectures and workshops on aspects of law in association with other organisations; and

♦ Refresher training for police officers in Grenada, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the law of evidence, report writing, interrogation techniques and gender equality.

Component 4: Alternative Dispute Resolution

♦ 627 persons trained in mediation and 1007 in restorative practices between 2014 and 2019. 165 persons completed training under community-based peace-building initiatives between 2014 and 2019;

♦ Plans made to establish networks for offering ADR services in the community to deflect cases from the Court.
ABOUT US

Improved Access to Justice in the Caribbean (IMPACT Justice) is an eight-year, multi-country regional justice sector reform project funded by the Government of Canada. It is being implemented from within the Caribbean Law Institute Centre, Faculty of Law, The University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus, Barbados.

The Project has as its ultimate outcome enhanced access to justice benefitting women, men, youth and businesses in 13 CARICOM Member States.

IMPACT Justice is designed to address deficiencies in the justice sector in CARICOM outside of those that are directly related to the judiciary and the courts.

BACKGROUND

♦ In 2006, CARICOM Member States agreed to implement the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and have been receiving assistance from donors to create a modern, harmonized, enabling infrastructure in the region to improve its trade, external investment, economic and human development.

♦ In 2009, as part of a larger programme to assist the region, the Canadian Government took the decision to support the development agenda established by CARICOM to achieve regional integration. In addition, it is providing assistance for advancing the rule of law and strengthening legal institutions to counter rising crime and maintain law, order and personal security.

♦ In keeping with these objectives, the Canadian Government commissioned a region-wide survey of the justice sector in the region in 2010/2011 during which the consultants spoke to all the key regional stakeholders with regard to what they considered priorities.

♦ Discussions between the Government of Canada and the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus commenced in 2011 and continued through to December 2012 when UWI submitted a Project Proposal to the Canadian Government. These discussions led to the formulation of the IMPACT Justice Project.

PROJECT PURPOSE

To enhance access to justice for the benefit of women, men, youth and businesses in CARICOM Member States.

PROJECT GOAL

To strengthen legal frameworks, improve legal professionalism and legal services, including legal education and information and facilitate increased knowledge and use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms as a means of settling disputes at an early stage and without court intervention in the CARICOM region.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Component 1: Legislation and Treaty Policy
♦ Draft legislation needed to further the objectives of the CSME and the OECS Economic Union and to assist CARICOM Member States in implementing their legislative agendas; and

♦ Train legal drafters to increase the pool available in the region.

Component 2: Legal Profession
♦ Improve the accountability frameworks for the legal profession such as codes of ethics and disciplinary and accounting procedures;

♦ Establish a framework for continuing professional education for members of the legal profession.

Component 3: Legal Education and Information
♦ Conduct a survey of legal education in the region to provide governments with information which can be used to shape policy;

♦ Upgrade and expand legal information databases such as CARILAW, the West Indian Legislation Indexing Project (WILIP), the Caribbean Law Review Online and the West Indian Law Journal Online to make the law of the region more accessible to legal researchers and others; and

♦ Conduct seminars and lecturers on topics of general interest including the rights of marginalized and vulnerable persons and indigenous populations in the region.

Component 4: Alternative Dispute Resolution
♦ Increase knowledge and use by citizens of ADR mechanisms through a training programme, including mediation for settling disputes in a timely and cost effective manner, especially at the community level. (ADR mechanisms have long been used to increase access to justice by reducing the backlog of cases already before the courts and stemming the flow of new cases).