

# POLITICS, POWER + GENDER JUSTICE IN THE ANGLOPHONE CARIBBEAN



Women's Understandings of Politics, Experiences of Political Contestation and the Possibilities for Gender Transformation

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## **Enactments, Contestations and Possibilities of Women's Transformational Leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean**

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## List of Acronyms

<b>CARIMAN</b>	Caribbean Male Action Network
<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organization
<b>CIWIL</b>	Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership
<b>GAD</b>	Gender and Development
<b>IDRC</b>	International Development Research Centre
<b>IGDS</b>	Institute for Gender and Development Studies
<b>IWC</b>	International Whaling Commission
<b>NGO</b>	Nongovernmental Organization
<b>SMMA</b>	Soufriere Marine Management Association
<b>UWI</b>	University of West Indies

## Preface

This chapter is one of several outputs of a research project undertaken between 2011 and 2014 by the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) at the University of West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine campus. Titled *Politics, Power and Gender Justice in the Anglophone Caribbean: Women's Understandings of Politics, Experiences of Political Contestation and the Possibilities for Gender Transformation*, the project was spearheaded by IGDS in partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and led by Principal Investigator, Gabrielle Jamela Hosein, with the support of Lead Researcher, Jane Parpart.

Additional technical feedback was provided by Project Advisory Team members including Rawwida Baksh, Eudine Barriteau, Cynthia Barrow-Giles, Patricia Mohammed, and Linnette Vassell. Feedback and support from Francisco Con-Montiel, from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), also contributed to the project outputs. Support from the staff at IGDS, St. Augustine, and especially Tisha Nickenig for project coordination and management, and Kathryn Chan for graphic design and layout, deserve particular recognition.

The project examined four strategies to promote democratic governance, women's rights and gender equality in the Anglophone Caribbean. First, women's political leadership was explored for the extent to which it creates greater governmental will and capacity to more actively and effectively transforms gender relations both within and outside of the state. Second, quota systems were assessed for their impact on effective women's participation and leadership in representative government. Third, the usefulness of national gender policy documents for promoting gender equality was evaluated. Finally, the impact of feminist movement building on women's capacity to be effective transformational leaders within democratic political life was investigated.

Each of these strategies has expanded the spaces for realizing women's rights and gender equality, created greater capacity (among women and men) to achieve transformed gender relations, and shifted the gender ideologies that present resistances to women's effective political participation and leadership. Together, they reflect a core set of historical struggles waged across the Anglophone Caribbean. This project therefore sought to document the history of struggle in five Caribbean nations. It focused on specific countries where these struggles appear to have been won. Trinidad and Tobago provided an appropriate case study for examining the impact of women's contemporary political leadership, Guyana for exploring the impact of quota systems, Dominica and Jamaica for exploring the formulation and impact of national gender policies, and the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWiL) for

evaluating the impact of feminist advocacy on women's rights, effectiveness and representation in democratic governance in St. Lucia. These cases thus investigate four global strategies for advancing democratic governance, women's rights and gender equality. They offer insights into transnational, regional and national alliances between states, international organizations, NGOs and feminist movements, and demonstrate the relevance of national case studies for understanding regional and global experiences. Indeed, the project's comparative, historical and case study approach shows that both regional and national case studies are essential if we are to understand how democracy, the state and politics offer opportunities for and resistances to renegotiating gender relations in different twenty-first century contexts. For a more comprehensive summary of the project's conceptual framework, methodologies and findings please refer to the Introduction by Gabrielle Jamela Hosein and Jane Parpart, available at IDRC and IGDS, UWI, St. Augustine. The following is a list of related chapters produced by the project:

- "Women's Political Leadership in Trinidad and Tobago, Understandings, Experiences and Negotiations" by Aleah N. Ranjitsingh;
- "Getting to One-Third? Creating Legislative Access for Women to Political Space in Guyana" by Natalie Persadie;
- "Feminist/Womanist Advocacy Toward Transformational Leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean: The Interplay of Individual and Collective Agency" by Shirley Campbell;
- "National Gender Policies in the English Speaking Caribbean" by Deborah McFee;
- "The Patriarchal State and the Development of Gender Policy in Jamaica" by Maziki Thame and Dhanaraj Thakur;
- "Crossing over the Barriers: A Historical Journey of Women's Political Leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean" by Beverly Shirley;
- "Advancing Gender Justice? The Opportunities, Resistances and Limitations of Guyana's Quota System" by Iman Khan;
- "Masculinities and the Practice of Dominica's National Gender Policy" by Ramona Biholar

## Executive Summary

This chapter explores enactments of transformational leadership in the lives of two women leaders from St. Lucia in order to determine its effectiveness as a feminist strategy for advancing gender equality and justice in the Anglophone Caribbean. It draws on feminist scholarship and training relevant to transformational leadership demonstrated in the work of the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWiL), which trained these two women. The qualitative research methodology, ethnography was used to collect primary data from forty-two (42) respondents in St. Lucia over a two-month period and the chapter takes a narrative approach to present the findings.

Themes emerged relating to

- leadership approaches;
- manifestations and understandings of gender and gender relations;
- Male domination and marginalization;
- feminist identity;
- community development and sustainable livelihoods linked to the women in development and gender and development approaches;
- organizational and institutional building and sustainability; and
- challenges and resistances to transformational leadership

The researcher found that while the women were enacting transformational leadership in a way that contributes to gender equality and justice in St. Lucia, there is shift in the way gender and gender relations and equality are being understood and acted upon. The women observed do not identify themselves as feminists and seem to be searching for an identity that links the struggle for women's rights within the broader context of the rights of men, children and community. Other findings relate to:

- Male under-representation in community development programmes and the resulting gender inequity in access to resources and opportunities;
- The persistence of masculinist ideologies in the structures of civic leadership which render women leaders 'invisible' while being visible; and
- The women's repudiation of feminism, while being the products of feminist advocacy and activism.

In light of the findings above, the research highlights the need for:

- Devising strategies that will alter established masculinist forms but in a way that encourages gender equality, equity and justice;
- Clearly articulating a set of coping strategies for women transformational leaders to deal with gender discrimination directed at them, particularly in spaces where patriarchal ideologies remain embedded; and
- Clarifying a Caribbean feminist ideological platform in order to strengthen the path towards women in leadership and decision-making, on the basis that this can and will make a difference not just for women but also for the wider society.

The chapter is organized according to the findings in order to show the enactments, ambivalences, contradictions, and repudiation of feminist analyses of gendered structural, ideological, material power relations and how they should be confronted. To this end, it first discusses the Anglophone Caribbean's historical and theoretical context for the pursuit of women's transformational leadership, including a brief commentary on the chapter's specific contribution to the wider research project being undertaken by the Institute of Gender and Development Studies (IGDS). Next, it presents the methodology used to answer the main research question and also provides some background information on the women studied. It then presents the main findings from the field work in St. Lucia, including an analysis of how the women leaders investigated engage with these themes in their capacity as transformational leaders. Lastly, it highlights key emerging issues and proposes how they could be addressed.

## Introduction

This chapter explores enactments of transformational leadership in the lives of two women leaders from St. Lucia in order to determine its effectiveness as a feminist strategy for advancing gender equality and justice, women's rights and empowerment in the Anglophone Caribbean. It draws on feminist scholarship and training relevant to transformational leadership demonstrated in the work of the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWiL), which trained these two women. The women undergo intense sensitization and awareness-raising in key concepts such as democratic governance, gender-sensitive and ethical decision-making, equitable and effective leadership approaches and partnership building with civil society for governance accountability. Keen attention is paid to principles of equality, transparency, fairness, mutual respect, cooperation and non-violence; traits considered to be anti-masculinist. It is expected that as these women assume leadership positions, they will personify and embody the characteristics of a transformational leader and bring about positive changes in the lives of all whom they come in contact with and contribute to gender transformation. But, do they? What are the lived experiences of these women as they engage leadership in a 'new' way? Does training women in transformational leadership translate into practice in their personal and professional spaces? How does enacting transformational leadership transpose into transformed power relations between men and women? Are gender equality and justice and women's rights and empowerment being achieved? What are the implications for feminist advocacy and women's movement building in the Caribbean if these expectations are not realized?

The chapter provides the answers to these questions by taking a narrative approach to presenting the findings from field research conducted in St. Lucia over a two-month period in 2013. Themes emerged relating to (1) leadership approaches, (2) manifestations and understandings of gender, gender relations and equality, (3) Male domination and marginalization (4) feminist identity, (5) community development and sustainable livelihoods linked to the women in development and gender and development approaches, (6) organizational and institutional building and sustainability, and (7) challenges and resistances to transformational leadership. Through these themes we can trace enactments, ambivalences, contradictions, and repudiation of feminist analyses of gendered structural, ideological, material power relations and how they should be confronted. To facilitate this analysis, I first discuss the Anglophone Caribbean's historical and theoretical context for the pursuit of women's transformational leadership, including a brief commentary on the chapter's specific contribution to the wider research project being undertaken by the Institute of Gender and Development



Studies (IGDS). Next, I present the methodology used to answer the main research question and also provide some background information on the women studied. I then present the main findings from the field work in St. Lucia, including an analysis of how the women leaders investigated engage with these themes in their capacity as transformational leaders. I then conclude by arguing that while transformational leadership is being enacted in a way that contributes to gender equality and justice in St. Lucia, there is shift in the way gender and gender relations and equality are being understood and acted upon, as the women observed do not identify themselves as feminists and seem to be searching for an identity that links the struggle for women's rights within the broader context of the rights of men, children and community.

## **Women's Transformational Leadership: Historical and Theoretical Context**

Research conducted by Campbell (2014) highlighted that the pursuit for an alternative style leadership of in the Anglophone Caribbean emerged in the 1970s and 80s in an attempt to situate the locus of power in non-authoritarian, collective, organizational structures that promote equality and respect for everyone and placed women's experiences and voice in public discourse. The gendered impact of neo-liberal economic models of development pursued by Caribbean leaders, particularly on women and the most vulnerable in society, provided fuel for the Anglo-Caribbean women's movement activism for a transformative type of leadership that was people-centered, non-hierarchical, inclusive, consultative and undergirded by gender equality (Campbell 2014; Antrobus 2004). Campbell further argues that the quest was also driven by the desire for a culturally relevant philosophy of leadership and leadership behavior, coupled with the post Beijing call for state and non-state sectors to promote women's public leadership as a human rights issue and a necessity for advancing gender justice (Campbell 2014) To this end and under the leadership of Caribbean office of the United Nations organization for Women (formerly UNIFEM), commitments were made to creating a gender sensitive, human-centered, sustainable development project for the region that would involve women as agents of change at every level of leadership in the society (Campbell 2014). The financial and technical support provided to women's organizations in the region like CIWiL to train women to be transformational leaders kick-started the practical component of the quest to advance transformational leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean

Women's transformational leadership is underpinned by a critical/social feminist analysis of social relations of gender, which includes a problematizing of the role of patriarchal ideology

in producing, and reproducing gender hierarchies that sustain gender inequalities (Campbell 2014). Writers such as Steans (2006) and D'Amico and Beckham (1995) argue that there is a social gender hierarchy or ordering system that privileges masculine traits (for e.g. power, leader, strength, aggression, independence) over feminine traits (for e.g. nurturing, compassion, fragility, weakness, dependence, kindness), and which results in unequal gender power relations between men and women in social, economic and political sphere. Young in Shepherd and Mohammed (1999) further argues that we acquire the social characteristics of masculinity or femininity through a process known as gendering. This involves both acquiring an identity (masculine or feminine) and learning a set of differentiated behaviors and capacities appropriate to one's gender (Young 1999).

One of the earliest conditions challenged by feminist theorizing and activism was masculinist leadership or masculinist ways of leading and feminists work to change patriarchal practices and deployments of power, which is a tool of oppression and perpetuation of unequal social and gendered power relations (Barriteau 2001; Campbell 2001). Thus, feminist transformational leadership is concerned with influencing decisions to achieve outcomes that deconstruct gender hierarchies and power; and advance gender justice (Campbell 2014). Gender justice is defined as the achievement of qualitative changes in women's and men's lives where neither is privileged, where masculinity and femininity are ascribed equal status and women, men girls and boys have equal opportunities, access to and control of society's resources (Barriteau 2007). This re-envisioning of the use of power and authority has been explored by Mosedale (2005) and Luttrell and Quiroz et al (2009) who highlight key concepts such as *power within*, *power to* and *power with* which are seen as expressions of power that bring about positive changes in the lives of individuals and society. This is contrasted against *power over* which is indicative of coercion, hierarchical structures and negative influence, all associated with the exercise of masculinist power. The woman transformational leader is expected to intervene on two main levels, one in the material realm of gender relations (improving the material conditions of women and men) and the other in the ideological realm (mounting an active challenge to patriarchal norms and ideologies that keep women subordinated).

Within the wider research project, **Politics, Power and Gender Justice in the Anglophone Caribbean: Women's Understandings of Politics, Experiences of Political Contestation, and the Possibilities for Gender Transformation**, this chapter presents a different angle to the question of how gender equality and justice can be achieved in the Anglophone Caribbean. Thus, whereas the quota systems look at the implications of getting

greater numbers of women in Parliament (Guyana); and Women's Political Leadership at getting women in at the very top (Trinidad & Tobago); and the Dominica case at mainstreaming gender in policy, this chapter is concerned with complementary because it explores the challenges of women's leadership, the resistances of the material and ideological relations of gender, the personal narratives of women in leadership and how they themselves negotiate with an ideal that women can be different leaders from patriarchal models. This chapter also fills the gap identified by Campbell (2014) to ascertain, through tracer studies, how the women who were trained to be transformational leaders are enacting the skills they acquired and to whose benefit.

## **Methodology**

Determining whether or not transformational leadership is an effective feminist strategy for gender transformation ushered me into the lives and realities of two women who were identified by CIWiL as having transformational leadership potential and trained to affect this type of leadership in their personal and professional spaces. These women are Jeannine Compton-Antoine and Brenda Wilson, both natives of St. Lucia. St. Lucia was selected as the research site as a result of preliminary research and interviews conducted with the then CIWiL Coordinator Ms. Sheila Roseau, which revealed that CIWiL has been particularly successful in training women for political and civil leadership in that country. Ms. Una Mae Gordon, CIWiL Board Member who is based in St. Lucia was instrumental in identifying possible research subjects and in the final selection of these two women, who indicated their interest and availability to participate in the research over the required period. Through two months of intense shadowing, observations, personal interactions, conversations and interviews, I was able to ascertain what transformational leadership means for these women, how this is demonstrated in their lives and the specific outcomes and implications of this engagement. This led me not just to the women and their relatives but also to colleagues and beneficiaries of several project and programme initiatives in several communities and towns all across St. Lucia who had first-hand contact and experience with the research subjects and provided their perspectives and knowledge of these women. Primary data in the form of interviews was collected from forty-two (42) respondents, twenty-three (23) females and eighteen (19) males, drawn from government and civil society organizations including senior government officials, education facilitators, persons with disabilities and their caregivers, women's groups, farmers, community groups and individuals. To compare perspectives on these women and the impact of their interventions, the interviewees comprised of two (2) senior government representatives, ten (10) staff members from the Soufriere Marine Management Authority, ten (10) Facilitators

from the government run island-wide After School Care Community Programme and two (2) children beneficiaries; two women (2) from the St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers, one (1) Clerk from the Micoud Village Council, five (5) members of Superior Broom Superiors Inc., two (2) members of the Joy Sewing Project for Persons with Disabilities, the Principal of the Belle Vue Combined School, one (1) CIWiL Board Member, six (6) family members/friends of the women and the main research subjects themselves, with whom I conducted multiple interviews.

The questions raised were geared towards determining if transformational leadership was being enacted in a way that contributed to the achievement of gender equality and justice, women's rights and empowerment, and how these changes were being experienced in the lives of the individuals, groups and communities. The questions also sought to ascertain the strategies employed to attain these changes, as well as the opportunities and limitations of this particular leadership strategy. Atlas ti, the qualitative data analysis software was used to systematically code, organize and analyze the data gathered. Themes emerged relating to (1) leadership approaches, (2) manifestations and understandings of gender and gender relations, (3) Male domination and marginalization (4) feminist identity, (5) community development and sustainable livelihoods linked to the women in development and gender and development approaches, (6) organizational and institutional building and sustainability, (7) challenges and resistances to transformational leadership. The achievements and limitations of transformational leadership were then inductively derived from the varied and sometimes overlapping strands of the emerging data. In presenting this data, the chapter relies extensively on the narrative approach, allowing the respondents to communicate directly their thoughts and feelings and then uses these first-person perspectives and experiences as the point of departure for analyzing the data in light of the main research question and the theoretical framework on transformational leadership presented by Campbell (2014).

#### **Jeannine Compton-Antoine and Brenda Wilson – Background and contexts**

**Jeannine** is forty-three years old, married and the mother of 4 children, 2 boys and two 2 girls. She resides with her family on the outskirts of Castries, the capital of St. Lucia. A Marine Biologist by profession, she has had a long career in the environmental sciences where she has served in several senior positions, including as a Senior Fisheries Biologist in the Department of Fisheries. She is currently General Manager of the Soufriere Marine Management Authority (SMMA), which is a non-governmental organization based in Soufriere that manages the marine area of the entire west coast through a multi-stakeholder partnership comprising of government and civil society actors (fisher folk, divers, tourism interests, government agencies and private

sector interests). Jeannine is also the first Caribbean Chair to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) as well as the first female Chair from the Caribbean. She achieved this distinction by 'working her way up through the ranks' as a Caribbean representative representing Caribbean's interests in this entity. She has a passion for advocacy and national development, which was nurtured by her family, chiefly her father, the late distinguished former Prime Minister of St. Lucia, Honourable Sir John Compton, who served in that capacity for over 30 years and made sterling contributions to national and regional development. According to Jeannine, "growing in the household that I grew up in and seeing the role that my parents played, both mother and father in trying to improve the lives of people in St. Lucia...you sort of take on some of those roles or similar attitudes." A former Parliamentarian herself, Jeannine has used that platform to advocate for policies and programmes to improve the lives of the people of St. Lucia, with emphasis on domestic violence as a result of her own personal encounters with this issue. Navigating the male-dominated environments of the SMMA and the IWC as a female transformational leader requires vision and commitment and Jeannine has these qualities. She attributes her success to her balanced and objective approach and credits her family for keeping her stable despite her exhaustive list of professional and personal commitments.

**Brenda** describes herself as a 'bold' and 'easy going' woman from the small rural community of Mon Repos, St. Lucia. She is a forty-nine years old Social Transformation Officer in the Ministry of Social Transformation, Local Government and Community Empowerment and works throughout the length and breadth of St. Lucia to secure the livelihoods of communities and build their resilience and sustainability. Brenda has been occupying that position for the past 15 years and has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to community and national development. Years ago she made the decision to be repatriated to St. Lucia from England, leaving behind her mother and two brothers to make "my one inch contribution to St. Lucia, no matter how small, rather than making it in England." The seeds of giving back and community service were planted and nourished very early in her life while in the loving care of her grandmother "granny", who taught her the true meaning of generosity, and concern and care for the poor and underprivileged. Although her mother left her at a very young age to forge a better life overseas for her family, Brenda states that in the absence of her mom, she had her grandmother, grandfather, aunts, uncles, the extended family who filled the void left by her mother and an absentee father. Nonetheless, Brenda asserts that even though her extended family "played the role of mother and father, they never allowed me to forget I have a beautiful woman who is my mother." Brenda is very spiritual and is affiliated with the Catholic Church in Mon Repos. These and other personal experiences have given her a focus, drive and a passion

for inclusive community development. She often goes way above and beyond the call of duty sometimes at great personal costs in her quest to transform individuals and communities. Brenda is a single mother of one child, a teenage son whom she involves in her community work, with the hope of inculcating in him the same values and passion for public service planted in by her grandmother.

Focusing on these two women specifically enabled me to explore the enactment of transformational leadership in two different work contexts, thereby facilitating an understanding of the specific contextual challenges faced in enacting a non-masculinist model of leadership. Furthermore, it allowed for engagement with a wide cross-section of actors and stakeholders, which added depth and richness to the data. However, despite working in two completely different environments, Brenda and Jeannine's lives intersect at the point of being both women in positions of leadership, filled with an intense desire and passion to make a difference in people's life and contribute to community and national development. They are further connected through their involvement in CIWiL's transformational leadership training activities indicating their commitment to a 'new' type of leadership. However, interestingly enough when asked if they considered themselves transformational leaders, both hesitated to label themselves in that way. According to Jeannine, "being a transformational leader sometimes you don't even consider yourself as one because you do things because it means something to you, that you see things going on in your country or society and you want to make changes. Or something happened in your life negatively and you change it into a positive to try and assist others. So you don't necessarily look at yourself as a transformational leader. I think that looking at the gaps within our society then you tend to fill in." She elaborates that transformational leadership is an ongoing process stating, "You don't just wake up one morning and say I am a transformational leader." This suggests the evolving nature of transformation, a process of 'becoming' in which the transformational leader is also growing and evolving even as she contributes to that positive change process in others. Barriteau (2001) advises us not be perturbed by the transformational leaders' inability to articulate a particular philosophy of leadership as this is unimportant. She asserts that what matters is that when researchers analyze women's approaches or the activities of the organizations which they head, or the environment in which they practice leadership, we can map their work on to a new conceptual framework that enables us to identify the transformational worth of their actions and behaviors, their leadership approaches.

## Findings

### Leadership Approaches of Brenda and Jeannine

Both women were found to have a similar leadership approach to a large extent but also specific styles appropriate to their leadership positions, which integrate several elements of the transformational leadership model. For example, both women were described by colleagues as well as themselves as having a democratic or inclusive leadership style. “Brenda explains it this way, “Democratic in that I seek consensus and I don’t go out there enforcing my position. I know what I may want to achieve, but I have to allow the community to see it as though it’s theirs and for them to own it. I’m achieving what I think but they have come up with it in a way that whatever my idea might have been it’s their idea and once communities are able to see things as theirs, they own it and it continues. So when you’re gone it doesn’t just end. So for me I will say a democratic leadership.” Staff members of the Soufriere Marine Management Association (SMMA) view Jeannine as a democratic leader because according to Cleo St. Nicholas, “She doesn’t just give directives. She would come and sit with you and ask, “What do you think about that?” She’s the kind of person that would take ideas from the line staff. Not because she’s the boss we’ll do as she sees fit. She sits with us and we have that exchange of ideas and we sort through and then choose the best. So that’s what she does with us here and we didn’t have that before” (C. St. Nicholas, SMMA Accountant, Interview). Kerjacky Francois concurs with Cleo’s assessment contrasting Jeannine’s approach with that of the previous Manager stating, “He was more like a Commander or something. Because when he comes, he’s all about this position, and with time become, “Do I have to remind you that I’m the boss?” And if there are different things out there that need to be done, but he always say that he makes that decision. It’s not us. Like whatever we say out there, we say, but it’s his decision. And if you do something without him, it’s problems.” (K. Francois, SMMA Marine Ranger, Interview). Jeannine explains what makes her a different type of leader, stating, “I try to do the consultative thing...realizing that you can’t just come and dictate. You listen, you talk and then you put forward your arguments. When I came in, I told them that they have to work together as a team. It is not just me; I am not just the bigger boss.”

This concept of not being ‘the bigger boss’ also comes out in Brenda’s work with Broom Producers in La Pointe District. According to Paulina Ferdinand, “Brenda is a lady who is down to the farmer when she has to meet with them. She wouldn’t meet with us as an Officer, she would meet with us, and she would bring down herself low as being among us like a farmer. There is no boundary between the group members and her and we would interact in a meeting

as all group members” (P. Ferdinand, President of Superior Broom Producers Inc., and Farmer, Interview). For Brenda, decision-making under community development and social transformation is a collective decision stating, “it’s a community based approach, community owns it because the community knows their needs, know how to solve it, all they need are people to facilitate them in dotting their ‘I’s’ and crossing their ‘T’s’”. I don’t profess to have all the answers, they know how to solve their problems all they need is for me to take their hand and help and guide them. Then there comes a point, I drop their hand”. She believes that “the solutions are to be found internally, the community knows the solutions. My role is to facilitate them identifying needs and offering solutions, to help them find sustainable and lasting resolutions. I do not work for you, I work with you. I am not there to do for you; I work with you so you can do for yourself. I am a facilitator. I am an enabler. Don’t expect me to do for, expect me to do with.” Vassell (2013) concurs with this approach arguing that the role of the transformational leader is to facilitate and engage others in the pursuit of individual and social transformation. She further argues that this should caution us not to see the transformational leader as the all-powerful agent or actor making things happen, but see this more as a way of doing and being. Deputy Director in the Ministry of Social Transformation, Mrs. Velda Joseph had this to say when queried about Brenda’s leadership approach, “Brenda has I think, understood very well the concept of community development. You don’t go in and do things for people but you facilitate a process. Brenda has been very effective as a facilitator in that she helps you work through your ideas and she helps you implement your ideas. She’s not doing it but she’s linking you to the resources. She’s linking you to the supplies that you need! She’s linking you to the persons that can help you! Until you are able to achieve the goal that you have set for yourself! That is what I like about Brenda. Brenda’s work programme would not be Brenda sitting and thinking these are the things community’s needs. Even though she might know their needs, Brenda goes to the community and they say what they need. They flesh it out! Is it feasible? Is it possible? Then Brenda works with them, if it’s proposal that she has to help them write, they do that! If it is SSDF [St. Lucia Social Development Fund] that they have to go to, she helps to do that!” (V. Joseph, Deputy Director of Community Services, Ministry of Social Transformation, Local Government and Community Empowerment, Interview). For her, Brenda’s approach to community development as a facilitator, enabler; her belief that with the right tools and support individuals and communities can improve their social condition makes her a transformational leader.



The foregoing perspectives highlight fundamental fissures between the traditional masculinist, authoritarian, hierarchical approach to leadership and the transformational leadership model being enacted by both women. Their non-hierarchical, consultative, people-centered leadership approach which deflects the spotlight way from the all-powerful leader to 'us', to 'team', to 'inclusiveness' and to 'the collective' -- not only in terms of decision-making processes but also in the implementation of agreed actions is consistent with the transformational leadership theoretical framework presented by Campbell (2013) and CIWiL's transformational leadership training curriculum. Based on their philosophy of what leadership means to them and their demonstrated actions with colleagues, Brenda and Jeannine's use of power and authority reflects the concepts of *power within*, *power to*, *power with* (Mosedale 2005; Luttrell and Quiroz et al 2009), which is enabling, uplifting and inspiring. As noted by respondents, this engagement is different from what they were accustomed to under previous masculinist regimes, which were autocratic, hierarchical, divisive and disempowering. This approach has gone over very well with all respondents and what is found is an unequivocal acceptance of the transformational leadership style being enacted by both women.

## **Manifestations and Understandings of Gender, Gender Relations and Equality**

Gender and gender relations manifest themselves in different and sometimes contradictory ways in these women's lives. The division of labour along gender lines is apparent in the marine environment where Jeannine works and which has traditionally been a workspace assigned to men. Men appear as leaders/managers, boat owners, fishermen, dive operators, marine rangers while women figure as boat hostesses, and tour operators or are in administrative and secretarial positions in keeping with traditional gender roles and a gender hierarchy that accords men positions of higher power and relegates women a subordinate status. However, Jeannine breaks through these traditional gender stereotypes by being the General Manager of the Soufriere Marine Management Association and the first female Chair from the Caribbean to the International Whaling Commission (IWC). She attributes this success to her academic background in the environmental sciences as well as her extensive professional experience in this field. Jeannine's ascendancy to leadership in a typically male-dominated field is characteristic of the "insider" or "climber" path to power which was cited by D'Amico (1995) as one of the main paths traveled by women to positions of leadership. Despite being an analysis of women's ascension to national politics and a spin-off of Robert Dahl's

classic analysis of political leadership and leadership types (D'Amico 1995); I find this categorization useful to describe Jeannine's own rise to leadership in a career that is skewed towards male involvement and leadership. Jeannine recounted her journey moving up through the ranks of the IWC as a woman, which started off in 1999 as a Caribbean Scientist to the IWC. "My first meeting was Grenada. So I got to Grenada and I started, I got into discussions, they were discussing the humpback fisheries in St. Vincent and I got into this big argument with these two US scientists who thought that they were experts and here comes this little upstart from nowhere. They had never heard of me, had no idea who I was and here I was arguing and getting into this huge argument and this argument went on for years. Within the three years, because the Caribbean had a very bad reputation at the IWC as being bought for their votes and that sort of thing and my interventions and my work at the IWC started to change the mentality of the countries towards the Caribbean countries that here is someone that is serious about her work, here is someone who knows what she is talking about that can actually talk science, make decisions. So I went on working with the Scientific Committee and then gradually my participation at the IWC expanded from the Scientific Committee to Pre-Commission Meetings and then the Commission." So when the opportunity for Chairmanship of the IWC came up in 2012, Jeannine applied and got the position through the consensus votes of 70 states.

Notwithstanding these outstanding achievements however, and given the strong, resistance belief in the patriarchal ideological realm that women and leadership constitute a contradictory pairing (Barriteau 2001); I questioned Jeannine on how persons are accepting her leadership in the SMMA and the IWC as a woman. She responds, "So far it has been okay. I think that one of the reasons why they have accepted me is because I tend to take a very balanced approach, I listen to both sides of the story and I talk to everyone." The Marine Rangers at the SMMA express admiration and confidence in Jeannine's ability to lead them. For Anthony Cadas, working with Jeannine is very good because of "the way she leads on the front, you know. She's not hard on us all the time, but she's not up for slackness in any way. She's very, very good." (A. Cadas, SMMA Marine Ranger, Interview). McQueen Antoine expresses similar sentiments stating "Well, to be honest, I will not lie, it's a good – it's a good thing working with her. Because, you know, she keeps her rules. She keeps her district. She holds everything right. Now one thing I like about her, she nice with everybody; but she only maintains her work. Make sure everything is right, before anybody go and do what they got to do." (M. Antoine, SMMA Marine Ranger, Interview). While Bernie Cohton, when explicitly asked if he had any difficulty with Jeannine being a woman leader exclaimed, "No. No. That's not a problem." (B.

Cochton, SMMA Marine Ranger, Interview). It is observed that the support for and positive response to Jeannine's leadership is linked to the characteristics and traits she embodies and enacts as a transformational leader rather than based on gendered assumptions about what women are expected to be and do

Nevertheless, when asked about how she is using her position as a woman transformational leader to improve the position of other women in this male dominated environment, Jeannine expresses that she has tried to bring more women in but the main challenge is that women don't put themselves forward and so she is unable to recruit them. She elaborates, "I would love to hire some women but these are the people who put themselves forward [men]. You obviously speak to women and try to get them into more active roles in the area. For example, within the SMMA we together with the people, then, you know, you have discussions. And you make them see that there are possibilities for self-employment in those areas. Because as I said, the maritime industry, presently, in particular St. Lucia, is very male dominated." Factors preventing a general breakthrough for women in crossing over into more male controlled activities include the prevailing perception that "only men work in the marine environment", the inter-generational tradition of male grooming for active roles in marine life and superstition on the part of fishermen that "it is bad luck to have women on board" as this will impact negatively on their catch. The entrenchment of the traditional gendered division in the marine environment poses a formidable adversary for Jeannine even as she tries to create the space for more women to enter in. As a women transformational leader, she seems unable and ill-equipped to challenge the embedded gendered assumptions and inequalities permeating this field in a way that can make a difference in the lives of other women. Thus, it is seen that Jeannine's attempts at intervening in the material relations of gender for women are being constrained by the persistence of masculinist gender stereotypes that permeate the marine environment.

The gendered division of labour also manifests itself in Brenda's work in community development as this is an area that has traditionally been the preserve of women. Thus, unlike Jeannine, Brenda doesn't have to try to get more women involved as the majority of the persons she works with and who are actively involved in community development are women. Brenda highlights that "What has happened is that women are the greater activists in the communities that I've worked with than men. Therefore, women are a larger portion of the persons that I do my day-to-day activities alongside. Women are the ones driving community development." However, interestingly enough, while women play a lead role in community development, this is mainly done within their traditional gendered roles as housewives and mothers and there

appears to be widespread acceptance of these gendered roles. Men appear in limited numbers either as Facilitators of the Community After School Care Programme, husbands and farmers, alongside their women counterparts. The men who are beneficiaries of the various projects and programmes coordinated by Brenda have limited power in relation to Brenda who because of her leadership position allocates and provides access to government's material resources. Thus, the male privileging observed in Jeannine's case is almost non-existent in Brenda's case. How Brenda's uses her power and authority as a woman transformational leader to advance the practical and strategic gender interests of her constituents will be explored in the section on the interventions of both women. However, the men I spoke with did not express resentment of Brenda's leadership. On the contrary, they expressed immense satisfaction with the work Brenda has been doing with them. So far example, Paul Lescastes noted that he had no difficulties at all with Brenda's stewardship stating that "She's like an advisor to us; she would try all different techniques to try to see how we could progress. So I appreciate her now very much and her presence has been a good part of my life and the group as well." (P. Lescastes, Broom Producer, Interview). Like Jeannine, the expressions of support and gratitude for Brenda's leadership are linked to her embodying and exemplifying the traits of a transformational leader rather than to viewing her through the lens of traditional feminine gender stereotypes.

However, despite working in two very clearly gendered environments, particularly in terms of the gendered division of labour, both Jeannine and Brenda's conceptions of gender and gender relations and how gender equality and justice are to be achieved differ from the feminist analysis underpinning transformational leadership. For example, Jeannine argues that she doesn't promote women over men stating, "I'm proud to be a woman but I try to balance everything so I wouldn't specifically look at my staff and say, ok, you're a woman, you're better, or I'll give you better privileges than men, or whatever. I tend to look at everyone as human beings, male and female." While Brenda asserts, "for me, we talk a lot about equity but not only should there be equity. Not because you are female that benefits must come only to you. Males suffer some of the very disparities that women suffer too and so we need to understand that together men and women have to work for gender justice for both male and female, not one over the other." Her vision of community development extends beyond men and women's rights to encompass the rights of "youth, elderly, marginalized, illiterate, literate..." What the aforementioned perspectives translate into for both women in terms of working for gender equality and justice as transformational leaders is that both men and women are seen as equals and accorded equal treatment. Noticeably absent from their interactions with their male and female constituents; is the overt re-enforcement of stereotypical gender roles and norms.

This notwithstanding however, both women hold very interesting and divergent viewpoints on gendered roles. For example, Jeannine believes that there is a place for division of roles based on sex arguing that “women look at social issues and men look at physical structures” and that “you need the involvement of both roles. They are distinctive but have place in society, some roles are female oriented and male oriented. I see them like different faces of the same coin.” Glen Wilson expresses a similar perspective on gender roles stating, “I do believe there are specific roles that each gender holds and should take on. I do believe there are specifics (Glen Wilson, Master Trainer, St. Johns Ambulance, Interview). Thus, essentially both Jeannine and Glen see gendered roles (masculine roles and feminine roles) as distinct but complementary, relating together in equal ways and interacting together in a non-hierarchical manner. However, Brenda doesn’t subscribe to stereotypical gender roles nor does she fit herself within the roles assigned to men and women by society. According to her, “I do everything for myself. There’s no one doing for me and I don’t rely on a male person to do what I need to get done. I do what I need to do. I don’t see it in terms of gender. I see it in terms of there’s a need to get things done, male or female who ever can do it, just do it. We’ve got to get pass some of these issues and say, here’s the goal, let’s go for it!” She tells persons “don’t be willing to accept your roles!” And interestingly enough, while Glen sees the need for gender specific roles, he expresses admiration for Brenda as a woman leader who is transformational stating that “I think one of her qualities is that she’s very strong! As for a woman, given the myths surrounding women, men and the different gender roles, I think Brenda has really taken it up to the next level. Especially on a community level and as well on a national level! She’s out there on the fore front; she’s doing things, make things happen for people and communities. Sometimes those roles were considered to be that of the male, but you find Brenda is taking up some of those responsibilities.” (Glen Wilson, Master Trainer, St. Johns Ambulance, Interview).

The foregoing highlight a number of contradictions concerning gender and gender relations in Jeannine and Brenda’s lives. On the one hand, they clearly operate in gendered spaces in terms of the sexual division of labour. On the other hand, being women in leadership both of them fall outside the gendered norms that assign public leadership roles to men and the domestic sphere to women because of reproductive functions. In fact, as Barriteau (2001) argues, there is continued resistance to women’s leadership because of the strong, resilient belief that women and leadership constitute a contradictory, oppositional pairing rather than a complementary coupling. However, the acceptance of Jeannine and Brenda’s leadership by the male respondents interviewed suggest that the men hold no such beliefs and that there is a shift in the gender perceptions on the role and place of women in society as it relates to leadership.

Nevertheless and interesting enough, this is juxtaposed against the belief on the one hand that there should be specific gender roles for men and women in society, seen as distinct but complementary (Jeannine and G. Wilson, Interview) and on the other hand, the belief that there should be a focus on issues where anyone, male or female can act without being limited by gender stereotypes (Brenda, Interview). The following questions arise out of these divergent perspectives. How do we go about reconciling these two seemingly contradictory viewpoints on gender roles/stereotypes? Do we need to? Is the problem gender roles per se or discrimination based on these roles? Is there a place for gender roles as long as they don't form the basis for social, economic and political discrimination? Should we forget about gender roles all entirely? What would be strong arguments for and against gender roles in society? How would societies look without gender roles?

These questions aside for the moment, what appears to be missing from Jeannine and Brenda's conceptions of gender and gender relations is consideration of the prevailing unequal gendered power relations and hierarchies between men and women that restrict particularly women's equal access to social, economic and political resources and which constitute barriers to the achievement of women's rights and empowerment, gender equality and justice. From a feminist perspective, women's rights, gender equality and justice will not be achieved without problematizing and challenging the patriarchal ideologies that sustain gender inequalities. Thus, for feminists, the starting point for work on gender equality is the identification of the source of gender inequality, which they trace to patriarchal ideologies and norms, which maintain women's subordination. This feminist analysis constitutes the theoretical framework underpinning women's transformational leadership and women transformational leaders are expected to use their positions of power to intervene in the ideological relations of gender in order to achieve the goals of gender equality and justice. However, it is seen that Brenda and Jeannine's have a different starting point for working on gender equality and justice which is informed by their own personal understandings of gender, gender relations and equality. For them, men and women are equal and are to be treated equally and so as women transformational leaders, they take an approach considered free from discrimination and balanced, virtually ignoring the active challenge to patriarchy that feminists consider fundamental to achieve gender equality. A feminist reading of their approach to gender equality and justice might consider that by ignoring the active challenge required to patriarchy, Brenda and Jeannine are in fact inadvertently supporting and enabling the masculinist systems that keep women subordinated and that perpetuate gender inequalities.

However, in her study on the Women's Piety Movement in Egypt, Saba Mahmood (2004) calls for us to widen our understanding of women's agency on the question of gender equality and justice to consider the role of cultural and other contexts in shaping the form women's agency and activism take. While in a different cultural context from the women in Egypt, Jeannine and Brenda's backgrounds certainly provide some insights into formation of their ideas on gender, gender relations. So for example, Jeannine grew up in a household with a father who was the Prime Minister of St. Lucia and in her words, "seeing the role that my parents played, both mother and father in trying to improve the lives of people in St. Lucia you sort of take on some of the roles or similar attitudes." Growing up in that context clearly influenced her views on gender roles and gender relations seeing the complementary roles by both her mother and father. But even more importantly this setting and accompanying experiences shaped Jeannine's approach to working with men and women, which she does in an egalitarian manner. As previously indicated by her, she does not privilege one sex over the other, arguing that she "tends to look at everyone as human beings, male and female." For Brenda, growing up in a community setting with a grandmother who inculcated in her the value of community service, and giving back formed the basis of her own understanding of gender and gender relations and approach to working with and for not only men and women but also for the poor and underprivileged. It is seen that Brenda and Jeannine's background, experiences, connectedness to family and community inform their views on gender relations and how they enact transformational leadership. Thus, bringing to the fore again the fact that women's contexts and experiences do influence their agency (Mahmood 2004) and in the case of Jeannine and Brenda do shape the way in which they conceive and enact transformational leadership.

## **Contrasting Images of Masculinities and Implications for Feminist Transformational Leadership**

Although belonging to the broader discussion on gender and gender relations, the subject of masculinities is being examined in-depth here because of research findings that have implications for feminist transformational leadership, particularly in the context of how we approach inclusive development. Two contrasting and parallel images of masculinities emerge from the data and these are linked to the male domination (patriarchy) and male 'marginalization' discourse (Miller 1994). On the one hand, and certainly in Jeannine's sphere of work, men dominate the marine environment, form the majority members of the SMMA Board of Director, the staff complement of the SMMA and the members of the IWC. Male presence and

involvement is overwhelming and keenly felt by Jeannine and she often vocalizes that “this is a male dominated arena”, “we live in a male dominated society” and the “world is male dominated.” Some of the challenges she faces navigating this male dominated environment as a woman transformational leader will be explored in subsequent sections. On the other hand, male domination is juxtaposed against a different and weaker image of masculinities emerging in the context of community development which on the face of it appears to give some credence to the ‘male marginalization’ thesis as advanced by Errol Miller (1994). As previously stated by Brenda men are largely absent from community development activities and processes and it is mainly women who are the drivers. Glen Wilson also observes the disengagement of men from community activities noting that “things such as being at the helm of community activities or community groups, you'll find that the ratio of females to males, you'll have a lot more females. Also when you want to get person's participating in activities, you'll find that those at the front are females, who are ready and eager to work. To see change happen, to see things happening for the better! So you find now there's a shift and the men are staying home now, whilst the women are out there working in communities and making things happen. Get communities involved, get things moving forward.” (G. Wilson, Master Trainer, St. Johns Ambulance, Interview). Velda Joseph is acutely aware of this situation stating “we recognize that the persons who come out when we call town hall and community meetings and the persons who form the majority of the membership in community based organizations are women. So all of your training programmes a higher percentage would be women. Even when we call for wider consultations to plan for the community, to develop work programmes, it's the women coming out! So women issues would feature more prominently within the work programme!” (V. Joseph, Deputy Director of Community Services, Ministry of Social Transformation, Interview). Her experience shows that limited male involvement in community interventions is a conscious decision on the part of men who simply do not turn out even when called. Ms. Joseph's experience also supports the analysis done by Barriteau (2003) in her critique of Errol Miller's male marginalization thesis. Barriteau argues that for Miller's thesis to be correct, it must be shown that Caribbean gender systems are unjust for men through deliberate and systematic attempts to deny them equal access to and distribution of material resources and power. No such evidence was found (hence the death of a non-theory) and as illustrated with this case, men's limited access to training opportunities and resources is as a result of the choices they make, that is, not to be involved. In fact, what is considered ‘male marginalization’ can be argued as men being victims of their own internalization of patriarchal prescriptions of what it means to be masculine. As argued in previous sections, being masculine denotes a number of



traits are juxtaposed against feminine traits, which are considered more suited for community work and hierarchically inferior to masculine traits. Glen Wilson concurs that male retreat from community endeavors is as a result of the embeddedness, entrenchment and internalization of masculine stereotypes in Caribbean culture where “men are supposed to be tough, hard and not supposed to cry” and hence the disassociation from community development, which is considered “social type of work” and associated with feminine stereotypical expressions of empathy, caring and emotions.”

However, as articulated by Brenda, one negative consequence of men’s disengagement is that they benefit less from community interventions, opportunities and resources (Brenda, Interview). V. Joseph acknowledges “even though the programmes are undertaken based on the needs identified by the communities as a whole, including men we have recognized that this is not necessarily the best approach. I think we need to find a way to have an audience with men, farmers and fishers so that all of the various sectors would be represented in the work programme.” “Notwithstanding we work closely with other government agencies and these government agencies may have specific programmes that target those specific groupings within communities. However, I still think it’s inadequate. I think we need to look at it differently and see how we can target, so we can get the full involvement of communities. (V. Joseph, Deputy Director of Community Services, Ministry of Social Transformation, Interview). Given the fact that limited male involvement can be attributed to ideological rather than material, interventions would have to of necessity confront patriarchal ideologies that serve to restrict male access to resources and opportunities and which prevent their issues being addressed within community development programmes.

This discussion calls for us to look at how we treat with the issue of male under-representation in development programmes within and outside the state or if we do. As well as how we engage men and boys in the struggle for women’s human rights, gender equality and equity. What strategies could be used to involve them in community development and also in the broader development agenda? How do we engage men and boys to re-write unequal gender power relations that are detrimental to women and also to their own advancement? It is clear that engaging men and boys require interventions into the ideological realm of gender, necessitating women transformational leaders with a feminist understanding of the ideological relations of gender and what is required to mount a challenge to patriarchy.

## **Feminist Identity and Transformational Leadership**

As previously highlighted by Campbell (2013) and Barriteau (2001), the quest for transformational leadership or a non-masculinist/gender equitable way of leading is a project of feminist activism and advocacy in the Caribbean demonstrated in the work of the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership. However, interestingly enough what emerged from the data is this disconnect in the minds of Jeannine and Brenda between themselves and their enactment of transformational leadership and a feminist identity. It is a fact that conceptually the transformational leadership in the Anglophone Caribbean is underpinned by a feminist analysis of the social relations of gender, which problematizes the unequal gendered power relations between men and women and the implications for the achievement of gender equality and justice. However, when asked if they considered themselves feminists, both Jeannine and Brenda responded with an emphatic, "No!" When asked why not, Brenda responded "I don't see myself in the stereotypical view of a feminist, the view of, as women, females we must have equal power, equal share and so on. For me it's not about woman or man, it's about us working together to achieve what needs to be achieved and for improving lives." Jeannine expressed similar sentiments stating that "if you look at the view of feminism and how people believe how feminists are and all they want to talk about is women's issues and gender and stuff like that whereas I try to be maybe I won't consider myself a feminist, I try to have that balance. I tend to look at issues. I mean part of my role would have some aspects of feminism in it...getting women to improve their livelihoods but it's not only women. My focus is on like society, getting societal change, which includes women. I would be looking at children; I would be looking at women, men to a certain extent. I tend to focus more on social issues and having social change because I think if you have the proper social change then you will end up with equity. But when it boils down to women, because there needs to be for me, there needs to be a balance looking at every aspect. I think that there needs to be that balance of not only the female side but also the male side."

Thus, the rejection of a feminist identity is based on the perceived narrowness of the feminist agenda, which is seen as limited to women's rights and issues. As women transformational leaders they see themselves as having a broader and more inclusiveness agenda that incorporates not only women's rights but also the rights of men, children and the wider society. Brenda and Jeannine's repudiation of feminism brings to the fore the fact that the rejection of a feminist identity is not new to the Caribbean (Mohammed 2000). Mohammed draws attention to the fact that gender equality advocacy in the Caribbean was not expressed in terms of *feminism* and that the majority of women and men in the region tended to equate the

term with anti-male hostility, lesbianism, and separatism. Mohammed's analysis is corroborated by the fact that CIWiL's transformational leadership training is not couched within a feminist framework (problematizing unequal gendered power relations and direct confrontation with patriarchy required) but rather within the framework of the quest for gender equality and justice and women's rights and empowerment in the Anglophone Caribbean. Vassell (2013) concurs with the fact that many Caribbean women do not feel comfortable with the definition as feminists and seem to be searching for an identity that links the struggles for women's rights within the broader context of rights of men, children and community, and they are all connected. She further argues that the fact that the women do not see themselves as 'feminists' should lead us to pause in terms of our collective definition as activists as it invites a conversation about how we define ourselves and takes us into the womanist vs. feminist discussion, which she considers has not been fully engaged. Vassell considers it appropriate to first clarify what we hold as core principles, what would make up our 'ideological platform' and then move to classify it, if we must. She adds that the issue of self-identification is critical especially if our aim is to strengthen the path towards women in leadership and decision-making on the basis that this can and will make a difference not just for women but also for the wider society. However, this brings into question the extent to which feminist movement building can create transformational leadership given the ambivalence of the women about the very analysis that is part of transformational leadership if it is to transform masculinist power. If feminism (feminist advocacy) wants to put its stamp on transformational leadership in the Caribbean, these issues would need to be raised within the context of the transformational leadership training institute organized by CIWiL and with other relevant gender stakeholders such as the Institute of Gender and Development Studies, who are committed to positioning women as agents of change. This notwithstanding, it is seen that even while Brenda and Jeannine don't consider themselves feminists, their views on gender equality and justice revolve around ideas of gender balance, non-discrimination and equity that are informed by their backgrounds and contexts. Their perspectives are consistent with the definition of gender justice articulated by Barribeau (2007), as the achievement of qualitative changes in women's and men's lives where neither is privileged and where masculinity and femininity are ascribed equal status. This is what Jeannine and Brenda enact in their work as transformational leaders.

## **Enactments and Interventions of Women's Transformational Leadership**

The following sections present some of Brenda and Jeannine's interventions as transformational leaders as well as highlight the challenges encountered as they seek to effect change in the lives of individuals, communities and organizations in St. Lucia in an a gender equitable way. The two main areas of intervention explored in this section are: community development and institutional building.

### ***Community Development, Livelihoods and Sustainability***

Community development, livelihood and sustainability are critical areas of work for both Jeannine and Brenda and to which they have made substantial contributions either through the development and implementation of projects and programmes and/or as advocates. Communities as observed in the field research comprise of men, women and children as a collective. Issues of concern to whaling communities such as those in Alaska and St. Vincent are food security, livelihoods, community survival and sustainability as international debate rages up on whether or not whaling should be permanently banned. As Jeannine explains, the issue has become highly politicized and polarizing as States and other vested interests are in divided into pro-whaling or anti-whaling camps. However, for her, it's about the fundamental right of these populations to a basic human need, food and hence one of the things she has been advocating for "is that the aboriginal subsistence whaling quota for the four countries [Denmark Greenland, Russia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the United States] that are allowed to catch whales be continued because the people need the food. So I am known for being an advocate for that." By adopting this human rights-based approach, Jeannine becomes a voice and an advocate for these indigenous peoples worldwide, which she argues is necessary because "Once that comes up for discussion in the IWC, there are some of the...arguments about it. Countries obviously don't think you should hunt whales, they think you should phase it out but in the case of the people who live in Alaska, the land is covered with ice, they don't have a choice, they can't grow anything; their whole land is covered with ice. So for me, I would advocate for that because this is their livelihood, this is how they sustain themselves." Women here are not considered a separate category but a part of the community collective, which includes men, women and children. The survival and sustainability of this community depends on having this basic human need met, which is what Jeannine advocates for from a human rights-based approach.

Community development and empowerment is the mission and expected outcome of Brenda's work in urban and rural communities across St. Lucia and this takes place within the context of state initiatives. According to V. Joseph, "The Ministry is a very important one! It's the Ministry that deals with social issues within communities! It's a Ministry that seeks to work with people at the local level to ensure that they are empowered. To ensure that they build capacities to be able to help themselves! To put it very simply, we're helping people to help themselves! It's a Ministry that we believe can make a difference in terms of how people interrelate, how people interact, how people come together to work! We believe that you do not necessarily have to depend on government, so we work towards self-reliance, self-efficiency! We believe that people can come in groupings to do things that can benefit the entire community and so basically we work with people! We facilitate processes at the community level that will lead towards general development of the community." (V. Joseph, Deputy Director of Community Services, Interview).

As a Social Transformation Officer, Brenda plays a lead role in facilitating these processes. For example, in the Community After School Care Programme, which she coordinates, a number of community needs are being met. The programme provides a safe haven for children whose parents are working outside the home and are unable to provide supervision in the critical hours immediately after school. As pointed out by Brenda, "we know that's their vulnerable period, either they will find themselves victims or they themselves are perpetrators of delinquent behaviors." Thus, the programme serves to deter social deviant behaviors and promote behavior modification in children. It does this by engaging them in activities that build critical life skills and inculcate positive values that will benefit communities and the wider society. These skills include personal development, life skills, information technology, sports, performing arts and kitchen gardening (agriculture); homework assistance is also provided (Facilitators of the After School Care Programme, Interview). One key observation about the programme was the absence of the gender socialization of the children into differentiated roles based on sex. Both boys and girls participate in all programmes; gardening, sports, etc. on an equal basis. Speaking on this Brenda says, "I don't look at difference in terms of boys and girls...we don't make a distinction between male and female. The subject areas being offered provides for all of them." This highlighted that gender equality and equity was being fostered by the programme through the absence of sex segregated curriculum. This can be attributed to a large extent to Brenda's leadership approach and her conceptions of gender and gender relations. As mentioned previously, she doesn't see herself restricted by gendered

norms and roles and is equally concerned with equity for men and women and also boys and girls and these principles are manifested in her work.

The programme is also a source of employment/income for community members who are involved as Facilitators of the different components and their capacities are being strengthened to better support the range of needs of the children through training in First Aid by St. Johns Ambulance (Brenda, Interview; G. Wilson, Interview). Household economic independence is being promoted through emphasis on kitchen gardening using recycled containers. Brenda highlights that the rationale behind this component is to “grow your own...to reduce expenditure on the household budget...so that they [children] can go home and those skills can impact the household and eventually the community”. In this way, the programme contributes to building the self-reliance of the community and augurs well for their sustainability at it relates to meeting their basic household needs.

The Joy Sewing Project is also coordinated by Brenda and focuses exclusively on the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities and their caregivers. In this project, members are taught how to cut and sew materials into shirts, school uniforms, dresses and other clothes, which are then sold in the communities and provide an income not only for persons with disabilities but also for other community members who need financial assistance. This project is a part of the government’s poverty reduction initiative. However, it taps into community volunteerism so that the funds generated can benefit the wider community instead of only those that work specifically for the project. According to project members, Brenda plays an instrumental role in this initiative by providing sewing equipment and materials; facilitating training for women on how to improve their sewing skills; sourcing markets for their products and providing oversight and guidance (Joy Sewing Project Members, Interview). One respondent muses that “If Ms. Wilson did not come on board when she did, maybe I would be at my home right now”, highlighting the critical importance of this project for her livelihood. However, the benefits of the project also extend beyond income generation activities. As explained by V. Joseph, it also serves to build a sense of autonomy and independence in its beneficiaries. According to her, “persons that we did not think would have such a skill because I remember when we started, there was one woman who could not even hold a needle because of her disability but then you find something else for her to do and now she's fully employed, dependant on her own, to supply for herself and that is good.” That these individuals are being economically empowered is clear as they are being provided with the skills, capabilities and resources and access to secure and sustainable incomes and livelihood (Luttrell and Quiroz et al 2009). But we also see elements of human and social empowerment as they are being

assisted to gain control over their lives, especially as a persons with disabilities and a marginalized group in society. Luttrell and Quiroz et al indicate that this is a process that fosters power in people, for use in their own lives, their communities and their society.

In the case of the St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers, the practical programmes in income generation characteristic of the women in development approach (WID) also serve as the entry point to the redefinition of gender roles and gender power relations specific to gender and development approach (GAD) in some cases as a result of the increase in women's awareness, self-esteem, autonomy and activism. One of the main objectives of the network is to bring women together who are housewives and unemployed outside the home in a supportive environment where they can build their incoming earning capabilities. Through Brenda's support, women are trained in backyard gardening, craft, agro-processing and livestock raising, which generate income to support their families. In an interview with Carmen Nurse, President of the Network, she highlights that this is a way of "empowering women to develop skills and become independent, so they would be better able to support self and family." (C. Nurse, President of the St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers, Interview). Brenda had this to say about the impact on the women, "Most of them and one who farms and harvests everything, processes and sells. She's a go getter and this one's like nothing is going to stop her from going and getting what she needs to get because she needs to feed her children, pay her mortgage. And as little as it is they find themselves, taking themselves out of bad situations and improving conditions. Bad situations might be that they are in a relationship with a partner who is not able to contribute anything financially and when they engage in the processing it becomes, I don't care if you are there or not because I can now take care of myself and my children. So the attitude is there, I don't need a man, he can do what he wants but I know I can now take care of my kids because I have the means. For them it's good."

The possibility for this spill-over from achievements in the practical realm from women (economic empowerment) to the strategic realm (change in unequal gender power relations) was highlighted by Moser (1989). Moser points out that practical and strategic need should not be seen as entirely distinct and separate, but rather as a continuum as demonstrated in this case. The increased self-confidence, independence and economic autonomy brought about by being able to earn a living for themselves and their families loosened the control that partners exercised over them due to financial dependence, hereby changing the power relations in the relationships. Women in this network have also been personally and economically empowered as a result of the ability to organize and mobilize themselves collectively as a group and to support each other (Luttrell and Quiroz et al (2009). P. Ferdinand states that Brenda has been

instrumental in assisting “us in finding ideas, getting that togetherness among us. She helps us to work as a team, bring us together and make us understand that if there are five of us doing the same thing we can use one network, label, then produce and one would be responsible for the selling. We understand what we have to do to keep ourselves together. We have had a little more confidence in ourselves in what we do and we have the skills to survive” (P. Ferdinand, Present of Superior Broom Producers/Farmer, Interview). C. Nurse further highlights that some of the women have done more than just ‘survive’ as they have grown to the point where “there are those who sold at home initially, that branched off to shop level and some branched off to international level privately.” She credits Brenda for her role in the process as a transformational leader stating “her aim is not to allow anyone to remain the way they are! Also to strive for independence! Transforming in that you see yourself not within the small box but you can see yourself at the next level. You can reach it through education, skill training or just improve knowledge. You can see where you are and work to the next level. No mountain is too hard to climb!” (C. Nurse, President of the St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers, Interview). This also comes out in her work with the male and female broom producers/farmers in La Pointe where she builds their knowledge and capacities to resist the impact of climate change on their livelihoods. She engages and stimulates them in coming up with indigenous solutions for mitigating the potential risks hereby empowering them to take control over their lives. Brenda also facilitates income earning opportunities by assisting in product presentation and marketing. These interventions address the practical gender needs of the farmer and contribute to their economic empowerment.

Speaking on the transformational impact of Brenda’s work, V. Joseph asserts that “she has been able through her activities to help persons to transform their lives! Not just children but she has been able to work with adults to help them transform the process they use, to transform how they see things so they enact a change through how they see things and how they think through things; getting people to understand that you can form a group and manage community assets!” She adds, “I think you need transformational leaders to make that kind of change happen and in Brenda’s working areas, she’s been able to achieve that, she’s been able to help people do things that can change their standard of living and change communities in general” (V. Joseph, Deputy Director of Community Services, Interview).

### ***Organizational Building and Sustainability***

Jeannine has been able to bring the transformational quality of her leadership to strengthening the institutional capacity of the SMMA to be an efficient and effective



organization. She highlighted that the absence of clear management and operational structures had resulted in mismanagement of the funds and weakening of the organization's capacity to sustain its operations. In light of this, she has taken several actions since she started to build the organization's capacity. These include changing the financial systems to be able to generate more funds, fixing non-operational boats so that the rangers are able to effectively patrol the marine area and monitor its users; recruiting more staff to bolster the human resources capacity; and training staff to provide them with the skills required to function better. She has also worked at building relationships with partners and stakeholders to support the work of the SMMA. The SMMA staff expressed satisfaction with her efforts and the way she has shared her vision and created an enabling environment for them to support that vision. According to Anthony Cadas "she's been working her heart out in getting our boats out so we can collect those fees we are losing in certain areas...calling in some meetings to find out if we guys have any ideas in building the SMMA, making it a little more stronger, a little more progressive" (A. Cadas, SMMA Marine Ranger, Interview). Kerjacky Francois has a similar perspective of Jeannine's work in strengthening the organization and states that "things have been improving" under her leadership (Kerjacky Francois, SMMA Marine Ranger, Interview).

Brenda has also done work in institutional development and strengthening of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), Mothers and Fathers' Groups, Sports Councils, Women's Organizations, community clubs and disaster preparedness committee (Cynthia Desroses, Clerk of the Micoud Village Council, Interview; Principal of Belle Vue Combined School, Interview). She provides them with skills training to build capacities in group cohesion, proposal writing, budget preparation and other relevant areas as well as connects them to resources and opportunities for further development (P. Ferdinand, Present of Superior Broom Producers/Farmer, Interview; P. Lescastes). As change agents, Brenda and Jeannine have been able to contribute to sustainability of livelihoods and individual, collective and organizational empowerment and transformation.

## **Challenges and Resistances to Enactments of Transformational Leadership**

Four main challenges were identified by Brenda and Jeannine as they seek to enact transformational leadership the spaces they operate within and these relate to (1) the persistence of traditional gender stereotypes and women's perceived role in society, (2) resistance to the bottom-up approach to community development (3) personal struggles with

balancing work and family life; and (4) compromise of physical and mental health due to pushing oneself beyond the limit. Speaking on the challenges related to women's transformational leadership, Jeannine highlights that, "Well, um it can be difficult, you know there are challenges and sometimes we don't even realize some of the blocks that we have because you are a woman. I think that we know we are women and you don't get up in the morning and say, yeah, I am a woman and I am different from everybody else. Right, it is just you and you know that I am coming in to work and I am quite capable of doing it the same way that a male counterpart is capable of doing it. It is not until you are involved and you realize that they actually don't think of you that way, that you can't do certain things including when I come as General Manager, you know I am in charge of a group of men and some of them are stubborn you know, set in their ways and here comes this woman and telling them what to do." As a result of this resistance, she found it is difficult sometimes to be taken seriously by men and to get them to listen to her as a woman. She highlights that "as much as women have reached positions of power, influence, leadership, women are still looked at as a woman you know. It's a sexual thing other than when she's making serious achievements so, um you know they would describe you and say well yes, ok that's Jeannine or they look at you, but you're just one of the guys you know, so I don't need to take you seriously whereas you trying to have some serious input so it tends to be that challenge of how do you get people to see you not only as a woman but see you as someone who has a valuable contribution, not just Jeannine the woman but Jeanine that has a contribution to make, so that is a challenge I think not only for me but for women in general." She relates an incidence in her role as "General Manager of the SMMA and having to deal a lot with the persons in my office and the users given that it is male-dominated, and putting forwards ideas, suggestions and recommendations. We had a meeting recently and I kept putting this idea forward and then one of the Directors from the Board, who happens to be a man, said exactly the same thing and they agreed. It was immediate acceptance and I was like, I have been saying this for the last hour but you know, you are not listening to me but you listen to a man."

She highlighted a related issue, which is penetrating the boys club. "You know that besides being taken seriously you need to be able to enter in because they will tell you they have that level of respect for you but still they don't see you as an equal partner which is a problem so they say you know yes we are giving women all these different positions and yes we you know it's a 50-50 share and women, women, women but you still aren't being viewed as an equal partner in terms of contribution and development which is frustrating". Jeannine relates that "you end up being marginalized because you don't follow the boys club, you don't follow the

ground rules. You stand up for what you believe in as a woman and you find yourself ostracized.” She emphasized the importance of having a support network for women, “somewhere you can stand, people you can lean on.” Commenting on the low support received since becoming the Chair of the IWC, she notes that “it is an international recognition not only for me but for St. Lucia and for the region. But no one is making any big deal about it. But if it were a man, there would have been greater kudos in terms of acceptance. The level of support I am getting as a woman, I know it is because I am a woman that they don’t see the importance of the position, because oh, it is just Jeannine.” Brenda’s non-hierarchical approach to decision-making under community development, which she considers should be a ‘collective decision’ sometimes clashes with traditional masculinist ways of leading to the detriment of people-centered community development. Brenda relates that she’s had instances “when you go out there promoting inclusion, promoting people-centered decision-making and to be told at the end of the day, here is what we’re going to do and what we are going to do does not reflect the consulting process that took place.” Another challenge for her relates to the broader neo-liberal context in which socio-economic interventions are taking place. She highlights that “social programmes are the first to be cut when there’s fiscal issues in the economy” which undermines development efforts and negatively impacts programme and project beneficiaries. However, in her capacity as a transformational leader there is little that she can do as these forces are outside of her capacity to control.

Speaking on the impact of their work on family life, both women indicated that the family came out on the wrong end in most cases. According to Jeannine, because of selfless tendency and wanting to see things change for the better, “I tend to do things which sometimes drive my family crazy in terms of putting other people first not necessarily my family. Your family tends to be impacted by those things because you tend to see them there as a stable force in your life so that they’re always there you tend to abuse them just a little bit too much.” Brenda reflects on the impact of her community service on her son and says, “in terms of my personal life on the level of Brenda the mother, my son is alone while I’m giving my time to community and so I often say that he becomes at risk while I’m trying to take away the risk from someone else. So I have to be very cognizant of that and it is stuff we discuss, he says while I’m available to everyone. I’m less available to him.” As Brenda the worker, “I am always extending myself to get things done. Sometimes you feel exhausted, unappreciated because you want to see it happen. If I can’t get support with an activity, I do it myself. If I have a task to do, I will do it all if I have to when other persons don’t pull their weight. As Brenda the worker, it takes its toll sometimes but I keep going. The challenges are many as with everything. Sometimes it takes a toll on my

health; many times I don't eat properly and so on it impacts me negatively that way. I guess I do need to remedy that.”

This notwithstanding, both women have developed strategies overtime to off-set some of the challenges. These include adopting a consultative approach where agreements are cemented and problematic issues are addressed through consultation and building partnerships (alliances) and relationships making it easier to resolve conflicts and advance on issues. Specific to her work in community development, Brenda focuses on community mobilizing and advocacy to counteract top-down decision-making and imposition of decisions on communities. She states, “Sometimes I want to throw my hands up in the air but then you empower the bottom people to effect the change at the top. You do advocacy with your group...and let them lead the advocacy where they agitate that the decisions made were not done in the best interest of the community.” For Jeannine, she adopts a non-confrontational approach when dealing with men because “confrontation definitely does not work. They automatically put up resistances when you come as a woman, the resistance is already there. If you come in as a woman with an agenda, if you come forward there is an automatic block. You don't get very much done. They will block you in every possible way.” According to her, you realize that you have to start talking to men in a different way. Men want certain things done their way and so you have to stroke their egos in different ways you wouldn't talk to a woman or you end up having a lot of blockage.” So for her, it is strategic to “start to have the conversation and you do the consultative process. You talk more, you engage them more about issues that pertain to them and you bring in your issues as well.” As it relates to being invisible or ignored by men while being physically present, she argues that in order to get the kind of change, it is about realizing that “if I can't get it done through me, I can set up the forum where I bring everyone together. I put forward the idea, we argue about it and then I get someone else to do it.” Both women's experiences illustrate the persistence of masculinist power and the inherent challenges in launching a frontal attack on patriarchy. This is keenly appreciated particularly in Jeannine's experiences. And so what we see are the women devising strategic coping mechanisms necessary for them to enact transformational leadership.

## **Achievements and Opportunities of Women's Transformational Leadership**

However, notwithstanding the various challenges identified by Brenda and Jeannine, their enactments of non-masculinist forms of leading as women's transformational leaders have brought about a number of positive changes and results in the lives of individuals, communities,

and for organizations. For example, democracy is being enhanced and strengthened through the participatory, inclusive, non-hierarchical approach adopted by in decision-making processes. Whether it be staff members of the Soufriere Marine Management Authority, the men and women Broom Producers in the community of La Pointe, the women of the St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers, the Facilitators of the Community After School Care Programme, or women employed in the Joy Sewing Project all are directly involved and engaged in the decisions that will affect their lives. They have the opportunity to be involved in assessing their situations and crafting innovative, creative and homegrown (indigenous) solutions to their concerns, facilitated and guided by Jeannine and Brenda, who create that enabling environment. This fosters ownership of processes and outcomes and ensures sustainability of development interventions. Jeannine and Brenda's approach to gender, gender relations and equality position men and women equally on a level platform; which serve as their launching pad for engaging with their constituents in a way that does not re-enforce or re-inscribe gender inequalities. What was observed is that all persons are equally engaged, irrespective of social status, educational level and attainment, physical ability, age or sex; signaling a leveling of social characteristics where none is positioned as being higher, more esteemed or lower than the other; hereby fostering a sense of social equality. The absence of discrimination particularly on the basis of gender contributes to the achievement of gender equality and equity and justice.

Jeannine and Brenda's approach to community development and organizational building is such that each that they treat with each individual as precious, recognizing the sex difference but ultimately considering the humanity in us all as the great equalizer. Men and woman are considered of equal value and are accorded equal treatment. In the Anglophone Caribbean where gender differences often constitute the basis of inequality and discrimination, by treating men and women equally Jeannine and Brenda as transformational leaders are contributing to gender transformation. That is, a change or shift in established and normalized gender ideologies that consider differences based on sex as sufficient justification for discrimination and inequities based on these differences. The significance and necessity of transformational leadership for creating a gender just and equitable society is re-affirmed when we consider that under masculinist forms of leadership, gender inequalities are reinforced and perpetuated. Thus, making Jeannine and Brenda's contributions as women transformational leaders even more significant as they are going against the grain of what has been normalized under patriarchal structures.

One of the most visible contributions these women have made is in improving the material conditions of all persons in the society, which is a key prong of the feminist transformational leadership strategy. Their enactments of transformational leadership has contributed to poverty reduction in communities and households across St. Lucia through the economic empowerment of men and women by way of income generating activities and the focus on building resilience and sustainable livelihoods. For women in particular, specific gains the area of practical gender needs within the framework of the women in development approach (WID) have resulted in a spill over into their strategic gender needs indicative of the gender and development approach (GAD). Women's economic rights and needs are being met through income generating activities such as agro-processing, back-yard gardening, farming, livestock raising and their capacities are being built to better financially support themselves and their family as a result of their activities in the network of rural women producers. These activities take place within the women's gendered roles as wives and mothers. However, for some women, economic empowerment has also resulted in a shift in unequal gender power relations in the home because of their increased autonomy and independence. As these women become empowered, more confident in themselves and in their abilities to generate income to sustain themselves and family, their perception of themselves in relation to their partner shifts; thereby redefining the gender boundaries and limitations of what they can or cannot do. This supports Moser's observation that practical and strategic gender needs sometimes overlap and that gains in the material realm can bring about positive changes in the ideological realm (Moser 1989). The practical gender needs of men are being met as the interventions geared at economic empowerment and sustainable livelihoods also capture them as a group.

However, Brenda and Jeannine's transformational leadership's interventions are not limited to the rights and needs of men and women but also extend to the concerns and needs of persons with disabilities (Joy Sewing Project), children (Community After School Care Programme), indigenous (marginalized) populations (Whaling communities in St. Vincent & Alaska) and the wider society. Additional benefits to communities include resilience and adaptation to climate change, behavior modification in children to prevent future delinquent behaviors in the society, building and strengthening of government and civil society organizations for community and national development, skills building (capacity development) of community human resources, and group cohesion. These processes build on the strengths of men and women in society characteristic of the transformational leadership style; hereby validating it as an effective strategy for the achievement of gender equality, gender transformation and women's rights and empowerment in the Anglophone Caribbean. These

achievements of transformational leadership by extension also validate Caribbean feminist advocacy for a non-masculinist type of leadership as exemplified in the work of CIWiL. Furthermore, these achievements should also provide the impetus for continued work throughout the Caribbean as we work towards building more democratic and equitable societies where there is an absence of discrimination on the basis of gender or other social qualifiers.

## **Limitations of Women's Transformational Leadership as a Feminist Strategy for Gender Equality and Justice**

In this field research, I didn't observe any limitations to women's transformational leadership in its conceptualization or operationalization. Based on the responses of the respondents this is clearly what is required for genuine people centered sustainable development in the Anglophone Caribbean that is not underpinned by masculine gender stereotypes. Nevertheless, despite the achievements and opportunities for women's transformational leadership, some of the challenges identified earlier as well as some emerging contradictions and inconsistencies in the actual enactment of transformational leadership serve to undermine the effectiveness of transformational leadership as a feminist strategy for advancing women's rights, gender equality and justice in the Anglophone Caribbean. I would like to however, perhaps draw attention to a few of these emerging issues which require consideration in the context of the transformational leadership training by CIWiL and how the programme could be strengthened to better achieve the goals of feminist transformational leadership and which also that have implications for a unified Caribbean feminism. One concern relates to the issue of male under-representation in community development programmes. If the goal of transformational leadership is gender equality, justice and transformation, this inequity will be of concern in terms men and boys limited access to opportunities and resources for individual and collective empowerment and advancement and for the transformational leader who is working within this type of setting. That this disadvantage is considered to be the result of their internalization of masculinist stereotypes related to the sexual division of labour and hence their disengagement (G. Wilson, Interview) provides an opportunity to consider how we engage them as a constituent of society for their own development as well as in the quest for women's human rights and gender equality. Another issue relates to the fact that the women investigated do not identify themselves with feminism, while as CIWiL's trainees; they are products of feminist advocacy. The concern would be how to resolve this disconnect in a way that the Caribbean feminist identity is clearly defined and positioned in such as way that includes the

rights of not only women but also men, children and the wider society; hereby synchronizing the goals/ideals of transformational leadership with its feminist roots. As it now stands, there is a disconnect and while the women themselves did not suggest how to treat with this, it is seen that their ideas about gender, gender relations and equality differ fundamentally from the feminist vision and are derived/influenced by their personal background and contexts.

The third and final issue relates to women's invisibility and agency or lack thereof as leaders in male dominated environments. While it is seen from the data that Brenda and Jeannine's leadership were accepted by respondents (both men and women); Jeannine's experiences also highlighted the difficulty in being taken seriously by men and to get them to listen to her in a serious way, not as Jeannine the woman but as someone who has a contribution to make. This points to what Barriteau (2001) highlights as the lingering ambiguities and ambivalence surrounding women and leadership which are partly the residue of beliefs in predetermined roles for women centering on women's traditional roles. Despite the battles fought and 'won' by feminist movements over the years to raise women's visibility at all levels in society, it appears that women are still not considered equal partners with men in decision-making and are not allowed equal voice in masculinist spaces where both men and women occupy positions of leadership. Jeannine shared her coping strategy, which is to ally with supportive men and let them articulate her inputs. However, this raises the question of women's empowerment and agency and how to cope with being 'invisible' while being visible in male dominated environments and patriarchal societies? It also points to the difficulties in challenging the established gender hierarchies which remain embedded in Caribbean societies and pose a significant challenge to feminist transformational leadership's vision of a direct confrontation with patriarchy as the only way to achieve gender equality and justice. Finally, it appears that what is missing from CIWiL's training arsenal is a set of articulated coping strategies for women transformational leaders to deal with gender discrimination directed at them even as they work to break down these barriers for others.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter sets out to ascertain the effectiveness of transformational leadership as a feminist strategy for pursuing women's rights and empowerment and gender equality and justice in the Anglophone Caribbean. It found that while the enactment of transformational leadership (non-masculinist model of leadership) is contributing to gender equality and justice and a gender transformation in St. Lucia, there is shift in the way gender and gender relations and equality are being understood and acted upon, as the women observed do not identify themselves as



feminists and seem to be searching for a identity that links the struggle for women's rights within the broader context of the rights of men, children and community. Thus, what was found is an approach to engaging with men and women that is not informed by traditional gender stereotypes and where both men and women are considered of equal value and accorded equal treatment in access to opportunities, resources, and agency (voice). Hereby, fostering gender equality and equity and also strengthening democracy (Jeannine, Interview; Brenda, Interview). While the rights and issues of men and women are being addressed in the context of economic empowerment, sustainable livelihoods and community development, there is also a focus on the rights and needs of marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities and indigenous whaling communities indicative of a wider agenda necessary for inclusive people-centered development in the Caribbean. It was found that interventions to address the practical gender needs of women through income generation activities (WID approach) have also resulted in spill-over benefits in the realm of their strategic gender needs (GAD approach), where increased economic independence, autonomy and activism have contributed to a shift in unequal gender power relations between them and their partners; hereby transforming gendered power relations. Additionally, through their transformative engagements with constituents and by being women leaders in traditionally male dominated societies, both Brenda and Jeannine are further contributing to a gender transformation of the Anglophone Caribbean by going against the grain of the gendered inequalities that have been normalized under patriarchal structures.

This notwithstanding however, contradictions and conflicting viewpoints remain on whether there is place in society for gender roles or if these should be discarded altogether because of the limitations they place on both men and women to achieve their full potential. Also, while transformational leadership has resulted in a number of achievements, which validate the relevance of Caribbean feminist advocacy and activism for transformational leadership, a number of issues emerged which have implications for Caribbean feminism broadly and feminist advocacy for transformational leadership in particular. These relate to male under-representation in community development programmes and the resulting gender inequity in access to resources and opportunities; the persistence and embeddedness of masculinist ideologies in the structures of civic leadership which render women leaders 'invisible' while being visible; and the dissociation of the two women transformational leaders from feminism and a Caribbean feminist identity while being the products of feminist advocacy and activism (CIWiL). I consider that engaging men and boys in development programmes and in the quest for women's rights, gender equality and justice in the Anglophone Caribbean does require problematizing the constructions of masculinities and femininities and the sources of unequal

gendered power relations in line with a feminist analyst. CIWiL's role in this process could be to ensure that this critical analysis is fully integrated in its trainings and that its trainees fully understand the implications for creating a transformation that will alter established masculinist forms but in a way that encourages gender equality. I see a role for the Caribbean Male Action Network (CARIMAN) and similar male networks in this process of altering conceptions of masculinities that prevent men from benefiting equally with women from development opportunities, in partnership with CIWiL.

Addressing the disconnect between ideas about what a feminist identity means in the Caribbean in the context of transformational leadership given its feminist roots would require as Vassell (2013) argues, clarifying what feminists/activists in the Caribbean hold as core principles and what would make up our ideological platform. She considers self-identification to be particularly critical if our aim is to strengthen the path towards women in leadership and decision-making on the basis that this can and will make a difference not just for women but also for the wider society. Finally, the issue of how do women transformational leaders cope with being 'invisible' while being visible in spaces where masculinism remains embedded/entrenched requires an understanding of the difficulties in challenging the entrenched gender hierarchies in the Anglophone Caribbean. These challenges should be explicitly addressed in light of the fact that a key expectation (tenet) in the theoretical and practical framework underpinning feminist transformational leadership is that women transformational leaders will engage in a direct confrontation with patriarchy. It might be useful to the women for CIWiL to explore and articulate some strategies that could be used to offset this masculinist challenge bearing in mind that the success of such strategies will also depend on the background and contexts within which feminist transformational leadership is being enacted.

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- Antoine, McQueen (Marine Ranger, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.
- Antoine, Sian (Daughter of Jeannine Compton-Antoine). Interview, April 3, 2013.
- Aussini, Ronald (Marine Ranger, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.
- Butcher, Peter (Chief Marine Ranger, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.
- Cadas, Anthony (Marine Ranger, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.
- Charlery, Eustachus (Information Technology Facilitator, Community After School Care Programme). Interview, March 13, 2013.
- Charlery, John (Farmer, Superior Broom Producers/Latanye Farmers, La Pointe). Interview, March 23, 2013.
- Charles, Vaughn (General Manager, St. Lucia Fisheries Corporation; Board Member, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, April 2, 2013.
- Cochton, Bernie (Marine Ranger, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.
- Coleon, Anna Zilma (Principal, Belle Vue Combined School). Interview, March 20, 2013.
- Compton-Antoine, Jeannine (General Manager, Soufriere Marine Management Association; Chair, International Whaling Commission). Interview, March 8, 2013; April 3, 2013
- Corisimie, Ronald (Marine Ranger, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.
- Descartes, Serina (Cook, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.
- Desroses, Cynthia (Clerk, Micoud Village Council). Interview, March 21, 2013.
- Dorleon, Leona (Daughter of Broom Producer, Superior Broom Producers/Latanye Farmers, La Pointe). Interview, March 23, 2013.
- Ferdinand, Paulina (Farmer, Superior Broom Producers/Latanye Farmers, La Pointe; Member, St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers). Interview, March 23, 2013.
- Ferdinand, William (Farmer, Superior Broom Producers/Latanye Farmers, La Pointe). Interview, March 23, 2013.
- Francilla, Heledonia (Facilitator, Community After School Care Programme, Choiseul). Interview, March 20, 2013.
- Francois, Kerjacky (Marine Ranger, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.
- Gordon, Una May (Board Member, Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership; Representative for the Eastern Caribbean, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture). Interview, April 2, 2013.
- James, Lesley (Sports Facilitator, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.
- JeanBaptiste, Dion (Close Friend of Brenda Wilson; Assistant Human Resource Manager, St. Jude Hospital, Vieux Fort). Interview, April 4, 2013.
- JeanBaptiste, Nicholas (Cousin and Close Friend of Brenda Wilson; Lawyer). Interview, April 4, 2013.

Joseph, Shern (Agriculture and Kitchen Garden Facilitator, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.

Joseph, Sonia (Member, Joy Sewing Project for the Disabled, Mon Repos). Interview, March 21, 2013.

Joseph, Velda (Deputy Director of Community Services, Ministry of Social Transformation, Local Government and Community Empowerment). Interview, March 22, 2013.

Justin, Mario (Marine Ranger, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.

Lescastes, Paul (Farmer, Superior Broom Producers/Latanye Farmers, La Pointe). Interview, March 23, 2013.

Moncherry, Edianna (Member, Joy Sewing Project for the Disabled, Mon Repos). Interview, March 21, 2013.

Nesto, Vinnette (Administrative Officer, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.

Norbert, Rocha (Life Skills Coordinator, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.

Nurse, Carmen (President, St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers). Interview, March 21, 2013.

Roseau, Sheila (Coordinator, Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership). Telephone Interview, October 31, 2012.

Smith, McLeod (Music Teacher, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.

St. Nicholas, Cleo (Accounting Officer, Soufriere Marine Management Association). Interview, March 8, 2013.

St. Paul, Jondive (Child Beneficiary, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.

Wilson, Annabelle (Child Beneficiary, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.

Wilson, Brenda (Social Transformation Officer, Ministry of Social Transformation, Local Government and Community Empowerment). Interview, March 12, 13, 26, 2013; April 4, 2013.

Wilson, Elvinette (Centre Coordinator, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.

Wilson, Glen (Master Trainer, St. John Ambulance; Cousin of Brenda Wilson). Interview, March 20, 2013.

Wilson, Lyle (Son of Brenda Wilson). Interview, March 23, 2013.

Wilson, Phillys (Performing Arts Facilitator, Community After School Care Programme, Mon Repos). Interview, March 13, 2013.