



The Caribbean
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DESK REVIEW REPORT

ENHANCING INTEGRATED EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES
IN GRENADA



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January 2025

This report was prepared by the Caribbean Center for Child Neurodevelopment (CCCN) at the Windward Islands Research and Education Foundation (WINDREF) in collaboration with the Government of Grenada and the UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area Office. Special thanks go to our stellar team members Lauren Mohammed, M.A., and Jesma Noel, M.A., for their diligence, thoroughness, and clear thinking.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AACA	All Against Child Abuse
ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences
ADOS	Autistic Diagnostic Observation Schedule
AFG	Autistic Foundation of Grenada Inc.
ASQ	Ages and Stages Questionnaire
BFHI	Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CAYD	Caribbean Association for Youth Development
CBI	Citizenship by Investment
CCCN	Caribbean Center for Child Neurodevelopment
CD	Conscious Discipline
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women
CFS	Child-Friendly School
CHORES	Children’s Health and Organization Relief and Education Services
CP	Corporal Punishment
CPA	Child Protection Authority
CRPD	Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities
ECD	Early Childhood Development

ECDC	Early Childhood Development Checklist
ECDS	Early Childhood Development Services
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECES	Early Childhood Education Services
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ELP	Early Learners Programme
EIB	European Investment Bank
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GBVU	Gender Based Violence Unit
GDSA	Grenada Down Syndrome Association
GEPAP	Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan
GFNC	Grenada Food and Nutrition Council
GLAMS	Grenada Learning and Memory Scale
GNCRC	Grenada National Coalition on the Rights of the Child
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GRENCASE	Grenada Citizen Advice & Small Business Agency
GRENCODA	Grenada Community Development Agency
GRENLEC	Grenada Electricity Company
GRENSAVE	Grenada Save the Children Development Agency
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILP	Individual Learning Plan

IMCI	Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
INTER-NDA	INTERGROWTH-21st Neurodevelopment Assessment
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
JJRP	Juvenile Justice Reform Project
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LACC	Legal Aid and Counselling Clinic
LMIC	Low- and Middle-Income Countries
M-CHAT-R	Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers-Revised
MoE	Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports
MoH	Ministry of Health, Wellness & Religious Affairs
MoSD	Ministry of Social & Community Development, Housing, and Gender Affairs
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NEPSY-II	Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment, Second Edition
NEWLO	New Life Organization
NIS	National Insurance Scheme
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OESS	OECS Education Sector Strategy
OX-NDA	Oxford Neurodevelopment Assessment
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PAM	Programme for Adolescent Mothers

PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
RCP	Roving Caregiver Programme
RGPF	Royal Grenada Police Force
RIAS-2	Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales, Second Edition
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEED	Support for Education Empowerment and Development
SEIA	Special Education Informal Assessment
SEU	Special Education Unit
SVU	Special Victims Unit
TWG	Technical Working Group
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States dollars
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WINDREF	Windward Islands Research and Education Foundation
WPP	World Pediatric Project
YWCA	Young Women’s Christian Association

PURPOSE OF THE DESK REVIEW REPORT

The framework for Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development, released by the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank Group in 2018, offers an evidence-based roadmap for supporting early childhood development (ECD). The framework highlights the critical period from pregnancy to age three for child brain development and underscores the need for ongoing support throughout childhood and adolescence. It emphasises the importance of a holistic approach to ECD, which is essential in helping children to reach their full developmental potential—a human right and an essential element for sustainable development. The framework serves as an organising principle and outlines five components for children’s optimal development: good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security, responsive caregiving, and learning opportunities. Multi-sectoral ECD programmes that integrate these five components have been recognised as best practice as they can enhance children’s overall development and improve their capacity for lifelong success.

While several ECD programmes include selected components of the framework, there are opportunities for improvement. While we acknowledge the strides across Eastern Caribbean countries, we also acknowledge the need to continue developing strategies, allocating resources, and implementing evidence-based ECD programmes across sectors to benefit our children’s health and welfare. The Nurturing Care Framework can facilitate this by pinpointing current efforts, areas for improvement, and gaps in policies, sectors, and services for a holistic approach.

UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Area Office has proposed Grenada to be an ECD demonstration site in the Eastern Caribbean, aiming to develop a holistic, comprehensive approach to enhancing child welfare through effective strategies and evidence-based programmes across sectors. Establishing an integrated ECD system in Grenada requires comprehensive information gathering, collaboration, and innovation.

Grenada features a universal healthcare system, a Roving Caregiver Programme for zero to three-year-old children, private and

government-operated daycare centres and preschools, and services for children with hearing and vision impairments. Both Ministries of Education and Social Development have dedicated services for early childhood, and a number of organisations within civil society are aimed at improving the lives of children. Additionally, the Windward Islands Research and Education Foundation (WINDREF) at St. George's University, home to the Caribbean Center for Child Neurodevelopment (CCCN) team has dedicated over a decade to public health and ECD research, intervention, and advocacy. The CCCN team's experience and ongoing research in public health, particularly in ECD, is supporting the Government of Grenada in drafting an implementation and monitoring plan for the delivery of integrated holistic ECD strategies. This integrated ECD strategy is a comprehensive approach that aims to promote the overall well-being and development of young children through coordinated efforts from key stakeholders across various sectors.

A thorough review of existing policies, programmes, and services was undertaken to prepare for the development of an effective and seamlessly delivered intersectoral strategy. To support the forthcoming Intersectoral Strategy, this Desk Review Report has gathered pertinent information from governmental sectors and NGOs regarding ECD in Grenada and the broader Caribbean. Its objective is to provide the necessary context for enhancing and developing integrated ECD programmes and services, fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors. Grenada's intersectoral strategy will aim to ensure that every child, regardless of age, gender, ability, or economic background, receives the care and education outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and is aligned with the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Early childhood, the lifespan period between conception and age eight, plays a pivotal role in health, well-being, and socioeconomic outcomes across the lifespan. A child’s experiences during these early years influence every aspect of function—physical, behavioural, mental, social, emotional, spiritual, and moral—largely determining their ability to learn, communicate, and participate in society (Kraak & Press, 2008; Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). Investing in early childhood is fundamental and central for societies and governments, as it determines the health and productivity of future citizens.

Approximately 250 million children around the world, most of them in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), face risks such as poverty, poor health, malnutrition, lack of stimulation, and violence, potentially stunting their developmental potential and the future of world populations (Black et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2021). ECD programmes in forward-thinking LMICs can and do improve children’s health and economic outcomes, and quality of life (Guralnick, 2001; Likhar et al., 2022; Walker et al., 2021).



Figure 1. *Five Components of Nurturing Care* (World Health Organization [WHO] et al., 2018)

Countries that adopt the Framework for Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development can strengthen their ECD efforts. The Framework, collaboratively developed by WHO, UNICEF, and the World Bank Group in 2018, underscores the critical period from pregnancy to age three for child brain development and advocates continuous support throughout childhood. It emphasises a holistic, intersectoral approach with five key components: promoting good health, ensuring adequate nutrition, prioritising safety, encouraging responsive caregiving, and providing enriching learning opportunities.

Additionally, it identifies ongoing initiatives, areas for improvement, and policy gaps (WHO et al., 2018). This framework recognises the complexity of ECD and the need to coordinate efforts across sectors and disciplines to give children the best possible support for development in the early years.

The LMIC of Grenada, a small tri-island state located in the Eastern Caribbean, has been proposed as an intersectoral demonstration site by the UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Office. Based on its current programmes and initiatives, and a high number of committed government and non-government stakeholders, Grenada aims to build and exemplify an integrated approach to child welfare and development by implementing the Nurturing Care framework into comprehensive, multi-sectoral ECD services, policies, and programmes.

The current Desk Review was conducted to consolidate information from government and non-governmental organisations on ECD in Grenada and across the broader Caribbean, focusing on children from conception to age eight. The Review draws on diverse sources to assess local, regional, and international legislation and policies related to ECD, as well as public and private sector services, responsive caregiving practices, educational initiatives, safety nets, health interventions, and maternal health support.

Even with a modest population of 108,279 (Central Statistical Office, 2024), Grenada has made important strides towards Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). For instance, the public healthcare system in Grenada, overseen by the Ministry of Health, operates under a primary healthcare policy. Established in 2015, the healthcare policy provides free care for all citizens and includes prenatal and early primary care for mothers and infants. Expectant mothers are encouraged to attend regular antenatal visits at their local clinics from early pregnancy through delivery. The primary hospital, the General Hospital St. George's, was certified as baby-friendly in 2019 under the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), promoting breastfeeding support in maternity services (Straker, 2019a; WHO, 2013). Guided by the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI) and Care for Child Development (C4CD) frameworks, community and clinic nurses monitor child development from birth to age three, emphasising early stimulation and interactive play, and making referrals to paediatricians when delays are detected (Saving Brains

Grenada Team et al., 2020). The Ministry also conducts an annual school health programme, screening children in grade one for health and nutrition issues (K.-A. Renaud, personal communication, 2024). With support from the Ministry of Health and the Grenada Food and Nutrition Council (GFNC), Grenada has banned carbonated beverages and sweet snacks in schools to combat malnutrition and rising rates of childhood obesity (Straker, 2019b).

In the Social Sector, the Daycare Coordinator at the Ministry of Social & Community Development (MoSD) oversees all daycare facilities for children under age 3, while the Ministry of Education (MoE) is responsible for pre- and primary schools, and for children ages 3 to 18. The MoSD currently monitors and supports 11 government-run and 45 private licensed daycare centres. The MoE monitors and supports 62 pre-primary schools, many of which are affiliated with and proximal to primary schools. Education is free for children ages 3 and up, and it is compulsory from age 5. The net enrolment for pre-primary education is 85.3% (Global Book Alliance, 2022). Special education is supported by three government schools enrolling approximately 170 of the nation's school-age children. Specialised intervention services are available for children with visual and auditory special needs, with itinerant teachers and the School for the Deaf. A recently strengthened Special Education Unit assesses children identified with developmental delays or disorders. Intervention services are emerging. Grenada's Policy for Early Childhood Development, while more than two decades old (signed in 2002, revised in 2007), aims to ensure equitable access to high-quality early childhood services for all Grenadian children. The Grenada National Standard for Early Childhood Centers, published in 2017 by the Grenada Bureau of Standards, set guidelines for the establishment and operation of public and private daycare centres and pre-primary schools, aligning with the Education Act 2002, the 2014 Early Childhood Services Regulations, and Caribbean Community's (CARICOM) Regional ECD Guidelines for ECD services.

A number of programmes and initiatives administered by the MoE are detailed in this report; for instance, primary school vocational training (TVET: Strategy for the Enhancement of Technical and Vocational Education and Training); new school construction (GEEP: Grenada Education Enhancement Project); the

Healthy Start Nutrition Programme: a nutrition programme providing breakfast and/or lunch to 9,800 children across the tri-island state, and cash transfers and textbook support for children from impoverished families (SEED: Support for Education, Empowerment, and Development; National Textbook Programme). In addition, most pre-primary and primary schools have adopted specialised curriculum for providing safe learning environments (Child-Friendly Schools framework); child-centred learning (HighScope curriculum); and self-and co-regulation skills training for teachers and children (Conscious Discipline). USAID's Early Learners Programme (ELP), which operated in Grenada from 2015-2019, provided literacy training for teachers and expanded school libraries (Global Book Alliance, 2022).

Grenada's MoSD also provides a safety net for children, overseeing child protection, gender equality, juvenile justice, and violence prevention, among other initiatives and legislation aimed at early childhood. The Domestic Violence Act of 2010 provides protection and legal recourse for victims of domestic abuse and their children. The Child Protection and Adoption Act of 2010 safeguards children's welfare and outlines adoption processes. The MoSD's Parenting Unit runs the National Parenting Programme, educating and empowering parents and caregivers across Grenada on child protection and parenting skills (Spotlight Initiative, 2021).

Other legislation relevant to children, detailed in this Review, includes the Employment Act (amended in 2000) prohibiting employment of individuals under age 16, except under specific conditions; the Maintenance Act, governing support obligations for dependents, including spouses and children; the Juvenile Justice Act of 2012 establishing procedures for juvenile offenders, focusing on their rights and well-being; and the Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP) which specifies equal access to education and training, challenges traditional gender roles, and fosters inclusive development across sectors through collaborative efforts (Government of Grenada, 2014).

The Government of Grenada has signed and ratified several international conventions to safeguard human rights and promote equality for all children. These include the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which affirms that children have rights to civic, political, social, economic, health, and cultural

aspects of their communities, without discrimination. Grenada has also ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

In addition to government support for ECD, a number of organisations in Grenada provide services for young children and their families. Exemplary is the Roving Caregiver Programme (RCP), administered by GRENCASE, a training agency. Initially conceived and internationally funded as an infant stimulation home visiting programme across six Caribbean states, Grenada's RCP is now supported by government funding and has expanded to include the HighScope curriculum, Conscious Discipline (CD) training for parents, and school transition support for children entering preschool.

Other organisations, detailed within this Review, also support ECD. These include GRENSAVE, focused on education, advocacy, and community development (Inter Agency Group of Development Organisations, n.d.). Reach Within, focused on trauma-affected children in care homes (Reach Within, n.d.); the Autistic Foundation of Grenada (AFG), offering diagnostic and intervention services for children with autism; Children's Health and Organization Relief and Education Services (CHORES) collaborating with Grenada's health providers to provide specialised services; and the World Pediatric Project (WPP) providing access to specialised paediatric healthcare through a regional hub in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (T. Martin, personal communication, 2024). Early literacy is promoted by the Grenada Community Library, which serves over 5,000 members with educational programmes such as Tiny Tots and after school programmes (NOW Grenada, 2023; M. Warren, personal communication, 2024).

This Review provides a detailed compendium of organisations, services and programmes dedicated to ensuring a healthy ECD landscape for Grenada's youngest citizens. Given the number of programmes, organisations, and stakeholders involved, there are many opportunities for intersectoral collaboration and efficient resource allocation. We hope this review will serve as a guide for identifying opportunities and rationale for multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration, thus providing a solid context in which

Grenada's children can grow up safe, connected, and empowered to create and sustain a just society.

The authors:

The Caribbean Center for Child Neurodevelopment (CCCN) at WINDREF - St. George's University supports child neurodevelopment in the Caribbean and tropical regions by focusing on evidence-based interventions and assessments, public health and primary prevention, policy advising, and capacity-building. Founded in 2018 with a multidisciplinary staff that has grown to 18 members, the CCCN has conducted epidemiological studies, administered and/or developed assessment tools for measuring neurodevelopment and programme impact, and implemented evidence-based intervention programmes in homes, communities, and schools, including its CD-based Saving Brains Grenada programme, a curriculum to enhance emotion regulation, conflict resolution, and resilience among children and caregivers.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Early childhood development (ECD) is essential for children’s survival, growth, and thriving. A child’s first eight years will largely determine his or her life trajectory (Likhar et al., 2022), and whether and how they acquire physical, motor, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, moral, cognitive, and language skills (Kraak & Press, 2008).

Developmental Milestones



Children progress through various developmental milestones as they grow, reflecting changes in how they play, learn, speak, act, and move. Below is a synopsis of key milestones from 2 months to 5 years.



Figure 2. Some Developmental Milestones for Children 2 months to 5 years ([Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, n.d.](#))

Investment in ECD

Investment in ECD is vital, as children’s developmental contexts significantly impact their later social participation and well-being, including health behaviours and outcomes. (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000, as cited in Kraak & Press, 2008; Lu et al., 2016; Barros & Ewerling, 2016, as cited in Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).).

Research has shown the importance of the first 1,000 days of life in shaping brain development, impacting linguistic, cognitive, and socio-emotional abilities and influencing later-life success (Likhari et al., 2022). For instance, during the critical period from prenatal to three years, the brain shows heightened receptivity to positive and negative influences. Positive factors like nurturing relationships and timely interventions, as well as negative factors such as adversity and stress, have lasting impacts that extend into adulthood (Center on the Developing Brain, 2007, as cited in Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). Positive interventions during early childhood yield significant benefits, mitigating the effects of adverse experiences and supporting favourable outcomes (Likhari et al., 2022).

In low-and-middle-income countries (LMICs), including Grenada, an estimated 250 million children under five are at risk of not achieving their developmental potential due to challenges including poverty, poor health, malnutrition, lack of stimulation, and violence (Black et al., 2017; Walker et al., 2021). ECD programmes can positively impact the development of children in LMICs (Britto et al., 2017; Engle et al., 2011; Walker et al., 2021). Unfortunately, children in LMICs often lack access to early interventions that could substantially improve their future health outcomes (Walker et al., 2011; Lu et al., 2016; Black & Hurley, 2016, as cited in Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

Early intervention is essential for young children, particularly those facing developmental delays and other adversities, as it significantly improves their quality of life and economic and health outcomes (Guralnick, 2001; Scherzer et al., 2013, as cited in Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

ECD programmes, including education, family support, and poverty reduction initiatives, are significant investments with long-term benefits, positively influencing health, well-being, and learning abilities throughout life (Likhari et al., 2022). These programmes have the potential to yield lasting benefits across various aspects of development by integrating comprehensive well-being strategies, such as promoting healthy diets and vaccination, alongside nurturing, engagement, care, stimulation, and protection (Likhari et al., 2022). Investing in ECD can help cultivate lifelong skills, promote physical, social, and emotional well-being throughout a person's life, and build and improve human capital (Likhari et al., 2022). The World Bank estimates that every \$1 USD invested in early childhood yields a \$7 return, and an annual rate of 10 percent, not only increasing a child's future earning potential by 60 percent, but also decreasing social disparities and gender inequality (Charles & Williams, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

Step 1: Outlining the Scope of the Desk Review Report

This Desk Review Report examines Grenada's ECD services from conception to age eight. Focusing on the Grenadian context, this desk review aims to identify ECD services in both the public and private sectors. Per the World Health Organization's suggestions to improve ECD, the state of responsive caregiving, the promotion of early learning, integrated caregiving and nutrition interventions, and support services for maternal mental health were analysed. This Desk Review Report serves as a key data-gathering component of the broader initiative to implement an Intersectoral Early Childhood Development Strategy in Grenada.

Step 2: Preliminary Situation Analysis

This Desk Review employed a qualitative research design to examine secondary sources of ECD services in Grenada. The review was conducted by researchers from the CCCN. During the initial phase, reports commissioned by UNICEF such as the Grenada Landscape Assessment (2020) and the Situation Analysis of Children in Grenada (2017) provided direction for this review. These reports provided foundational data and insights into ECD services available within Health, Education, Child Protection, and Social Services in Grenada.

Step 3: Establishing the Benchmark

The review carefully examined the 2024 Grenada Budget Statement and Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure (Government of Grenada, 2023a) to understand governmental priorities and identify active ECD programmes for the current year. Information about relevant legislation, policies, national plans, research reports, projects, services, and related documents was gathered through internet searches and consultations with the ECD Intersectoral Advisory Committee and key stakeholders.

Established in December 2023, the ECD Intersectoral Advisory Committee convenes weekly to provide guidance and consultative services for the overall project. The Committee consists of representatives from the CCCN, UNICEF, key

government sectors such as the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social Development, and civil society organisations.

Step 4: Literature Review, Collaborative Process, and Feedback

Throughout the process, the researchers adopted a reflective and collaborative approach to data collection. Weekly meetings facilitated ongoing collaboration and further establishment of project benchmarks. An initial extensive checklist of documents was created. Each researcher reviewed and summarised their findings to further refine the comprehensive list. The ECD Intersectoral Advisory Group Committee provided feedback on document relevance and offered additional suggestions.

The findings from this Desk Review Report were compiled and presented to the Intersectoral Advisory Group Committee, whose expertise in ECD enriched the report's quality. To ensure data accuracy, volunteers from the relevant sectors were recruited from a two-day technical workshop held in July 2024 to review specific sections. This technical workshop also provided the opportunity for an initial review of the Policy for Early Childhood Development in Grenada (2007) and Education (Early Childhood Education Services) Regulations (2014) detailed in the Grenada Policies and Acts section of this report.

Unless otherwise specified, all currency in this report is in Eastern Caribbean dollars (XCD).

Step 5: Methodological Limitations

The Desk Review Report encountered methodological limitations due to insufficient reporting from official data sources. Unlike conventional desk review reports, a systematic and comprehensive approach to data collection from online repositories and official internet sources could not be achieved. Consequently, additional efforts were necessary, such as gathering information from social media, third-party websites, and newspapers, conducting email inquiries, and arranging meetings with key personnel. These steps were essential to achieving a more thorough and accurate compilation of data. This methodological challenge underscores broader issues related to transparency and accessibility of information in Grenada.

Limited monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems were noted throughout this process to assess the effectiveness of ECD programmes. Therefore, while this desk review provides an overview of ECD services available in Grenada, it cannot report on the effectiveness of these programmes. This gap highlights the need for continuous, people-centred, and dynamic MEL frameworks to routinely measure the impacts and outcomes of these programmes.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Grenada is a tri-island state in the Eastern Caribbean, consisting of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique islands. With coordinates at 12.1165° N, 61.6790° W, mainland Grenada is the southernmost island in the Lesser Antilles, covering a total land area of 344 km². Grenada itself is divided into six parishes: St. George, St. David, St. Andrew, St. Patrick, St. Mark, and St. John, with the capital city situated in St. George. Carriacou and Petite Martinique informally constitute the seventh parish.



Governance: Grenada gained independence from the United Kingdom on February 7, 1974. Following independence, Grenada continues to be a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, adopting a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. The King of the United Kingdom serves as the head of state and is represented by a Governor-General, who performs ceremonial duties.

General elections are held in Grenada every five years. The Prime Minister is the leader of the majority party and serves as the head of government. In the 2022 election, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), under the leadership of Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell, won the majority vote. The NDC leads with a transformative policy agenda with the ultimate goal of creating:

“A Sustainable, Equitable, and Prosperous Grenada for All”

Grenada's parliament is a bicameral legislature consisting of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives consists of 15 elected members. The Senate is composed of 13 members appointed by the Governor-General based on the advice of the Cabinet.

Grenada's judicial system is based on British common law. The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court is the highest court in Grenada, overseeing appeals and significant legal matters. Grenada has its own Magistrates Courts that deal with less serious criminal and civil cases.

Country Demographics: The latest census from 2021 states that the tri-island state had a population of 108,279 (Central Statistical Office, 2024). According to projections made by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2024), the population is expected to increase at a rate of 8.6% by 2050. Grenada is known for its relatively young population. Currently, 65.51% of the population is between the ages of 15 and 64. This is followed by 22.23% of individuals ages 0 to 14 years and 12.26% who are 65 years or older (Central Intelligence Agency, 2024). The ratio of men to women is nearly equal. It is estimated that there are 100.2 women per 100 men (Pan American Health Organization [PAHO], 2023).

Most of Grenada's population is of African descent (82.4%), 13.3% of the population is of mixed ethnicity and 2.2% is of East Indian descent (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). English is the predominant language. A small percentage of the population speaks Patois or Creole, cultural traditions influenced by indigenous populations such as the Tainos and Kalinagos. Roman Catholicism is the most widely practised Christian religion, followed by other Christian denominations such as Anglican, Protestant, Baptist, and Seventh Day Adventist. The predominance of Christianity is a vestige of colonialism. Smaller groups follow Rastafarianism, Hinduism, and Islam (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

Maternal and Child Health: The Countdown to 2030 highlights a country's progress in achieving core elements of Nurturing Care to improve ECD. The ultimate goal of Nurturing Care is to transform health and developmental trajectories for children worldwide. Parents and caregivers do not have the responsibility of achieving the conditions necessary for nurturing care; rather it

is a supportive macro environment, including top-down initiatives such as laws, policies, services, and community support.

The Countdown to 2030 paints a stark profile for Grenada. As of 2024, there is no quantitative data for any of the five components of Nurturing Care (Appendix A). However, demographics provide key information about early childhood in Grenada. In 2023, it was estimated that there were 1,960 births annually, with 10% of the population being under the age of five (United Nations Children’s Fund [UNICEF] & Countdown to 2030 Women’s, Children’s, and Adolescent Health, 2023). The under-five mortality rate was estimated at 16 per 1,000 live births in 2023 (WHO et al., 2018). Figure 4 provides more information about the causes of death for neonates, children, adolescents, and mothers. Prematurity and birth asphyxia were the leading causes of mortality for neonates, while non-communicable diseases and injuries were the primary causes of death for children between the ages of one and nine (UNICEF, 2024). Maternal mortality is also considered a threat to ECD, with an estimated rate of 21 per 100,000 in 2023. However, maternal mortality rates have improved with a 49.8% decrease since 2000 (PAHO, 2023). The major causes of maternal deaths in 2014 were haemorrhaging and hypertension. In 2020, all births were attended by skilled birth and delivery personnel. Adolescent pregnancy stands at 31.5 per 1,000 live births for youth between the ages of 15-19 years (PAHO, 2023).

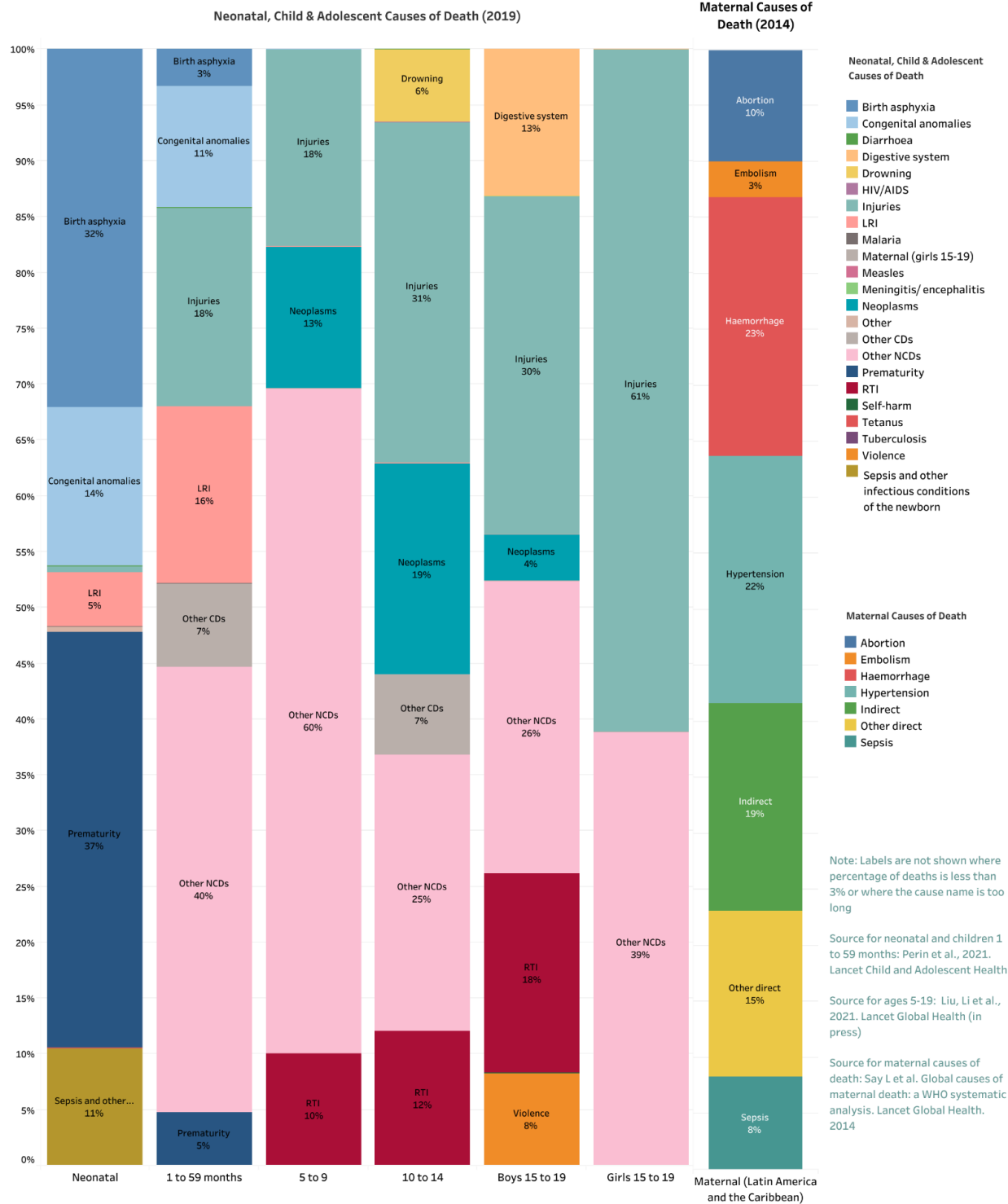


Figure 4. Causes of Neonatal, Child, Adolescent, and Maternal Deaths (UNICEF, 2024)

Human Development Index (HDI): The HDI summarises average achievements in three dimensions: (1) a long and healthy life, (2) access to knowledge, and (3) a decent standard of living. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Grenada has an HDI of 0.793, ranking 73rd out of 192 countries. A country’s HDI does not take into consideration factors like inequalities, inequities, poverty, and human security (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2024).

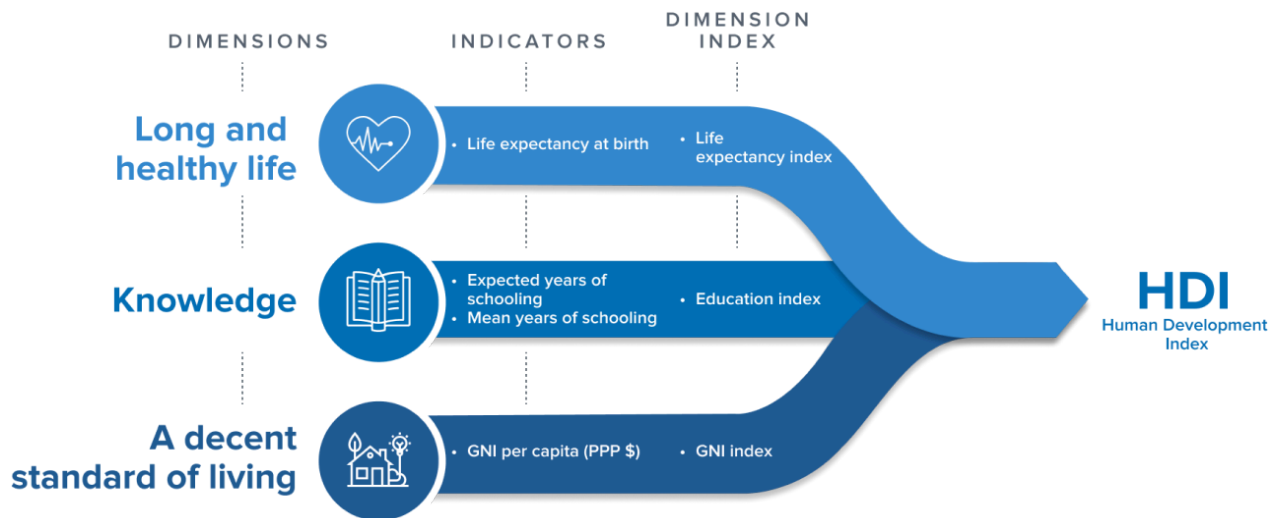


Figure 5. Components of the Human Development Index (PAHO, 2023)

- a) *Long and healthy life:* Current life expectancy in Grenada is calculated at 75.3 years (UNDP, 2024). Although this is lower than the regional average, it represents an increase of 2.7 years when compared to estimates from 2000 (PAHO, 2023).
- b) *Access to knowledge:* The expected years of schooling is 16.6 years (UNDP, 2024). The UNDP (2024) calculates the mean years of schooling as 9.9 years. In addition, school is free and mandatory for Grenadians between the ages of 5 and 17. The literacy rate was 98.6% in 2014 (PAHO, 2023).
- c) *A decent standard of living:* The gross national income per capita is calculated as 13,593 USD.

There has been a consistent increase of the HDI and its indicators since 1990 (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

Economy: The International Monetary Fund classifies Grenada as an upper-middle-income country. Grenada has a tourism-based, small, and open economy (Embassy of Grenada, n.d.). Tourism has replaced agriculture as the dominant sector over the last two decades and is a key driver of foreign currency earnings. Grenada has seen strong economic growth supported by tourism and increased citizenship-by-investment (CBI) revenues. However, growth is expected to slow due to capacity constraints and reliance on CBI and financial sector vulnerabilities. Investments in renewable energy and labour market reforms are needed for long-term resilience (Government of Grenada, n.d.). Known as the Spice Isle, Grenada is the second largest exporter of nutmeg in the world. Other key exports include cocoa beans, fish, wheat flours, spices, fruits, and vegetables.

GRENADA POLICIES AND ACTS RELEVANT TO ECD

(Listed Chronologically)

The legislation referenced in this section is available at <https://laws.gov.gd/>.

Maintenance Act 1938 (Amended 1972, 1991, 1994, 1996)

The Maintenance Act establishes clear obligations regarding providing support for dependents in Grenada. It stipulates that every man is responsible for providing reasonable maintenance for his wife and children under the age of sixteen and his parents and older children who cannot support themselves due to age or disability. Similarly, married women with separate property are obligated to maintain their husbands, children under sixteen, and dependent parents and older children who are unable to support themselves due to age or disability. Single women also have a duty to provide maintenance for their children under fourteen and for their parents and older children who cannot support themselves due to age or disability. Additionally, a man who marries a woman with children under fourteen must ensure their maintenance until the children reach fourteen or until the mother passes away.

Public Health (School Children Immunisation) Act 1980

The Public Health (School Children Immunisation) Act mandates that no child shall be enrolled in a pre-primary school, primary school, private school, or all-age school unless they provide the Principal with a certificate of immunisation for each communicable disease. All school-aged children under 13 should be immunised. Exceptions to this Act include cases where a child provides a certificate from a medical practitioner or community health nurse stating that immunisation against any specific communicable disease(s) is medically inadvisable, or where exemption is granted on religious grounds. The immunisation schedule includes vaccinations for diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, measles, and poliomyelitis.

Employment Act 1999 (Amended 2000)

The Employment Act of 1999 (amended in 2000) prohibits the employment of individuals under sixteen years old in any public or private agricultural,

industrial, or non-industrial sector, except for holiday jobs. Other exceptions include cases approved and supervised by public authorities, such as for technical school, job training, work experience, or on school or training ships.

Policy for Early Childhood Development in Grenada 2002 (Amended 2007)

The Policy for Early Childhood Development in Grenada, developed and approved in 2002 (revised in 2007), outlines a vision wherein all children from birth to eight years old have equal opportunities that meet established standards of care. The Policy's objectives include ensuring equal participation in high-quality early childhood programming for all Grenadian children eight years and under and enhancing services and interventions for good outcomes. This policy also aims to empower parents and caregivers, foster collaboration among stakeholders for quality service provision, and provide training and certification for early childhood services.

The Policy delineates ten interrelated strategies to achieve these objectives, including developing legislation covering all early childhood services, identifying and targeting areas requiring early childhood services, and initiatives to elevate quality and support access for all children. The Policy also involves public and parenting education strategies based on standards such as advocacy tools, institutionalising training and certification for early childhood workers, creating a career path linked to teacher training, dedicating leadership capacity for integrated sector efforts, and coordinating collaboration between ministries. Furthermore, the strategy involves increasing budget allocation for early childhood and developing an investment strategy.

The Policy's recommendation to enhance early childhood services included identifying and selecting areas in Grenada that lacked adequate early childhood services to establish service development and conducting location mapping to analyse existing trends, considering long-term factors. Location mapping was proposed to identify areas with early childhood services and address unmet needs in rural areas. Home visitation programmes led by nurses offer healthcare access to parents and children living in rural areas that lack sufficient services. This programme benefits children from disadvantaged

communities who may not attend clinics or daycare centres and may encounter challenges in the preschool and/or kindergarten context due to inadequate socialisation and stimulation.

The Policy informs programmes geared towards children in daycare (two years and younger), children in preschool (four years and younger), and children in primary schools (eight years and younger). Early childhood officers from the Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Education oversee and support these programmes.

In 2007, the establishment of a Council on Early Childhood Education was proposed to ensure collaboration between the Ministry of Education (MoE) and other relevant ministries and to monitor and support private early childhood services. The proposed Council was responsible for developing an Action Plan to implement the Early Childhood Policy and monitor progress annually. It was also suggested that the Policy's framework be evaluated and reviewed every five years. However, the Council has not been established to date, and a five-year review of the Policy's framework has not been conducted.

Minimum standards have been implemented to regulate ECCE, encompassing staffing, childcare practices, care quality, educational offerings, health, and safety. Based on CARICOM's Regional Guidelines for Early Childhood Development Services, these standards address a range of areas specified for regulation under Section 111(2) of the Education Act. Ongoing efforts are establishing procedures for licensing early childhood providers and monitoring adherence to licensing requirements. For instance, the Policy proposes a comprehensive approach to strengthening the early childhood sector, which involves training and certification programmes for early childhood workers. The Policy recommends several measures to further enhance ECD, including increasing the budget, fostering collaboration with relevant ministries, facilitating private sector involvement, and ensuring equitable financial resources aligned with Education for All commitments.

Initiatives supporting access to high-quality learning and development services are outlined through seven main strategies. These include prioritising children with special needs, curriculum development, establishing demonstration centres,

and creating a diagnostic centre for children with special needs. Public and parenting education initiatives encompass sharing best practices, utilising media for promotion, and educating parents on human development stages and parenting skills.

Education Act 2002 (Amended 2003, 2012, 2024)

The Education Act, developed in 2002 (last amended in 2024), aims to establish a robust education system in Grenada that promotes excellence and supports the community's overall development through schools that foster spiritual, cultural, moral, intellectual, physical, social, and economic growth. The Act emphasises holistic education and includes specific goals to address diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The Act stipulates that all persons in Grenada are entitled to receive an education appropriate to their needs, subject to available resources. Discrimination in admission to educational institutions is prohibited; no eligible student may be refused admission based on discriminatory grounds such as race, birthplace, political beliefs, colour, creed, physical handicap, or sex in mixed-gender schools.

Parents of children of compulsory school-age (5-17 years) can enrol their children in public schools, private schools, assisted private schools, or opt for home education. Pre-primary education starts at ages three; the child should be under five years old to enrol. For primary education, children must be enrolled in public or private primary or all-age schools if they are age five or will attain that age by the following date of 31 December.

The Domestic Violence Act 2010

The Domestic Violence Act provides protection for victims of domestic violence, establishes procedures for granting protection orders, and addresses related matters to safeguard those affected by domestic abuse. The Act allows children or dependents to seek protection orders through various channels. These include individuals they live with or rely on for welfare (e.g., parents, guardians, caregivers, and the Director of Social Services) or another person with parental responsibility.

Child Protection and Adoption Act 2010

The Child Protection and Adoption Act aims to safeguard children's care and protection, and establish adoption procedures. Central to this Act is the commitment to prioritising the child's best interests. The Act mandates that childcare services provide a safe, nurturing environment while promoting each child's educational, social, and developmental welfare. Individualised services are emphasised to cater to the diverse needs of children, including those with disabilities, aiming to enhance their holistic development encompassing physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and cultural aspects. Section 25 of the Act states that children are deemed in need of care and protection in various scenarios, such as experiencing or being at risk of harm due to abuse, neglect, or inadequate supervision. The Act also provides guidelines for cases of abandonment and serious offences committed by children under twelve. Furthermore, it seeks to facilitate adoption processes with a focus on promoting children's overall well-being and best interests throughout their lives.

The Act mandates that childcare services provide a safe, nurturing environment while promoting each child's educational, social, and developmental welfare. Individualised services are emphasised to cater to the diverse needs of children, including those with disabilities, aiming to enhance their holistic development encompassing physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and cultural aspects. The Act also mandates that certain professionals, including health practitioners, social workers, and teachers, must report any reasonable suspicions of child violence.

Juvenile Justice Act 2012

The Juvenile Justice Act establishes a judicial process for children accused of committing offences, safeguards their rights, and addresses other related matters. According to this Act, the child's safety, welfare, and well-being are considered the most important factors. The minimum age of criminal responsibility in Grenada is 12 years old. If a child under 12 is accused of a crime, they are presumed not capable or guilty of committing it. Section 60 of the Act limits the duration of a sentence to a secure residential facility to three years. However, an exception allows for a sentence longer than three years if

the child is under 12 and the gravity of the offence would have warranted imprisonment otherwise. This Act aligns with international standards such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Convention against Torture Initiative Secretariat, 2020).

Grenada Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2013

The Government of Grenada prioritises food and nutrition security, having ratified international agreements such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both affirming the right to adequate food. The Ministry of Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, Creative Economy, Culture, Agriculture and Lands, Forestry, Marine Resources and Cooperatives is tasked with ensuring food security. Its mission is to promote the sustainable use of natural resources and enhance economic returns from agriculture.

Following the 2011 approval of the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy, Grenada sought assistance from the Food and Agriculture Organization to develop a comprehensive national policy. The Grenada Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2013 is guided by the 1996 World Food Summit's definition of food security: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." The vision of the Grenada Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2013 is to ensure all citizens have access to safe, nutritious, culturally acceptable, and affordable food at all times. The policy is built on five pillars: availability, accessibility, utilisation/nutrition, stability, and creating an enabling environment for effective implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Regarding food utilisation and nutritional adequacy, Grenada's government aims to promote the consumption of quality, affordable food throughout all life stages. One objective is to ensure adherence to WHO/PAHO's feeding guidelines for children and teens ages 3-18. This involves implementing a National School Healthy Lifestyle Policy, capacity building in institutions, and intensifying public education for parents and food vendors. Another objective is to align food consumption habits with national dietary goals. Furthermore, the

government advocates for adherence to WHO/PAHO guidelines regarding infant and young child feeding, emphasising the promotion of breastfeeding and nutrient-rich foods. It also supports the implementation of the Baby-Friendly initiative in hospitals. Guided by a holistic and multi-sectoral approach, the Grenada Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2013 addresses the multi-dimensional aspects of food security, ensuring that all Grenadians have access to the necessary resources for a healthy and active life.

Education (Early Childhood Education Services) Regulations 2014

The Education (Early Childhood Education Services) Regulations of 2014 establish standards for registering, operating, and maintaining early childhood educational institutions. These regulations prioritise children's safety, development, and well-being, ensuring they receive high-quality care and education during their formative years. Key guidelines include requirements for staff qualifications, staff-to-child ratios, curriculum development, and the overall school environment.

Regarding staff qualifications, the regulations specify that principals must have completed management and supervision courses or hold an equivalent qualification from a Ministry-approved institution. Teachers must have qualifications appropriate to the age group they teach. Teachers who educate children under age 3 must have completed a course in early childhood education (ECE) or hold an equivalent qualification. Those who teach children ages 3 to under 5 must have completed five years of secondary education and a course in ECE or hold an equivalent qualification from a recognised institution. Aides and volunteers must have at least two years of secondary education, and educational institutions must provide ongoing in-service training to upgrade teachers' knowledge and skills.

Staff-to-child ratios are outlined in the regulations to ensure sufficient supervision and care. The regulations also provide for higher ratios for children with special needs. The regulations outline the requirements for educational programmes at institutions, specifying that they must implement a curriculum approved by the Chief Education Officer in the MOE. This curriculum should be based on sound theory and practice and reflect an integrated and holistic

approach to ECE. It must promote physical, social, cultural, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual development, and include environmental education to foster an appreciation for Grenada's natural environment. The curriculum must also address the needs of children with disabilities to ensure inclusivity and specialised care. Additionally, the curriculum should facilitate the involvement of parents, guardians, or parent organisations.

The regulations also outline environmental and other related requirements for educational institutions. Food provided to children must adhere to specific standards, and the food must be nutritious and varied. Additionally, an adequate water supply must be available for drinking and other uses for children and staff. The regulations also mandate a clear and effective means of escape in case of fire or other emergencies, with fire and emergency evacuation plans displayed in every room. Regular fire drills must be conducted, and fire safety equipment must be adequately maintained and inspected annually. A well-equipped first aid kit must be provided and maintained, and staff must receive necessary first aid training.

AUTHORITIES AND FACILITIES

Child Protection Authority

Established in 2011, the Child Protection Authority (CPA) is mandated by the Child Protection and Adoption Act 2010. The CPA oversees childcare services, adoption practices, and emergency actions if a child's safety is at risk. Its legal mandate includes reporting child abuse, providing follow-up care, and improving responses for children in need of protection. In October 2013, the CPA extended its services to Carriacou and Petite Martinique by opening an office in Carriacou (Sealy-Burke, 2016).

Child Protection Facilities

Grenada has six residential facilities: Bel Air Children's Home, Dorothy Hopkin Home for the Disabled, Father Mallaghan Home for Boys, Grand Bacolet Juvenile Rehabilitation and Treatment Centre, Queen Elizabeth Home for Children, and SMILES Centre. The Dorothy Hopkins Home, initially intended for mentally and physically disabled children, also accommodates a significant number of adult residents. Queen Elizabeth Home cares for children up to age 12, while the other facilities typically accommodate children until they reach 18 years old. Neither the Bel Air Children's Home nor Queen Elizabeth Home for Children accepts girls with behavioural challenges (Sealy-Burke, 2016).

Bel Air Children's Home

- Mandate: Children who are in need of care and protection because of abuse, neglect, or orphanhood.
- Ages of Residents: Males 0-8 years of age, and females 0-18 years of age
- Current Number of Residents: 24
- Current Staff Directly Working with Children: 1 Manager, 1 School Coordinator, 4 Supervisors, 7 Caregivers

Dorothy Hopkin Home for the Disabled

- Mandate: Currently being revised.

- Ages of Residents: Males and females, 5-69 years of age
- Current Number of Residents: 28
- Current Staff Directly Working with Children: 1 Manager, 2 Supervisors, 4 Junior Caregivers, 4 Caregivers

Father Mallaghan Home for Boys

- Mandate: Children in need of care and protection (although the facility has accommodated boys in conflict with the law)
- Ages of residents: Males 10-22 years of age
- Current Number of Residents: 15
- Staff Directly Working with Children: 1 Manager, 1 Supervisor, 8 Caregivers

Grand Bacolet Juvenile Rehabilitation and Treatment Centre

- Mandate: Children who have been determined to require secure residential treatment, whether as a result of being in conflict with the law or being in need of care and protection
- Ages of Residents: Males and females, 12-18 years of age
- Current Number of Residents: 24
- Current Staff Directly Working with Children: 1 General Manager, 3 Counselling Psychologists, 5 Case Management Unit Staff, 1 Case Management Unit Manager, 16 Security Officers, 16 Juvenile Welfare Officers

Queen Elizabeth Home for Children

- Mandate: Children in need of care and protection due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment
- Ages of Residents: Males and females, 3-11 years of age

- Current Number of Residents: 20
- Current Staff Directly Working with Children: 1 Manager, 1 Assistant Manager, 11 Caregivers

SMILES Centre

- Mandate: Children in need of care and protection due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment
- Ages of Residents: Females 12-18 years of age
- Current Number of Residents: 17
- Staff Directly Working with Children: 1 Manager, 8 Caregivers

Foster and Kinship Care System

Grenada's foster and kinship care system serves as a critical safety net for children who cannot safely remain with their parents due to neglect, abuse, abandonment, or other challenging family circumstances. This system has existed for over fourteen years under the CPA. The system is designed to provide temporary, safe, and nurturing family environments that support children's physical, emotional, and social needs until they can either return to their families, be adopted, or reach an age where they can transition to independent living (Joseph-John, 2024).

The foster care system refers to a placement that caters for children that are not related to the carers, whilst the Kinship system provides for children that are placed with blood relatives. The stipulated stipend for foster care is \$500 and kinship care is \$300. This program is guided by the CPA's protocol and Child Protection and Adoption Act 2010. Children who are under the State's care, which includes foster children are firstly recorded through the CPA's Intake system. The foster children are also listed within the foster care database. This is separate to the Intake system (Joseph-John, 2024).

At present the CPA has a total of fifty-one foster and kinship carers, with approximately one hundred and forty-four children in care. For the year 2024, the CPA had approximately twelve approved adoptions. It is noted that there is a mixture of all ages within the foster care system and no particular age range significantly out do the other (Joseph-John, 2024).

Due to the rising number of child protection cases presented to the CPA and the existing number of children in care, several challenges impede progress in meeting the increasing demand for quality placements. Challenges are listed below:

- There is an ongoing shortage of foster carers in Grenada, leading to overcrowded placements or children remaining in residential facilities for longer than necessary.
- There are insufficient resources for training and support due to the CPA's budget constraints. Thus, it is difficult to train prospective foster carers in best practices, trauma-informed care, and child development.
- The public has limited understanding of the role of foster carers, leading to potential stigma against children in care.

Strengthening Grenada's foster and kinship care system is vital to providing children in need with opportunities for stability, support, and positive development. This system can reduce the likelihood of negative long-term outcomes, such as poor academic performance, mental health challenges, and social difficulties. An effective foster and kinship care system ensures that children are nurtured in a family environment where they feel valued, supported, and empowered to overcome their early challenges (Joseph-John, 2024).

Thus, the CPA assumed a formal and non-formal format for the recruitment of foster carers. Formally, information is disseminated through social media, radio and television in an aid to enlist persons. Pop up booths are erected at different locations where information on fostering, and its importance are shared. Non-formally, the CPA held walkabouts within the community, establishing rapport with community members which also assist with the recruitment process (Joseph-John, 2024).

Upon receiving the application of a potential carer, a home assessment of the carer is completed. A copy of a police record must be submitted. If the home assessment is approved, the child is then placed and monthly monitoring is conducted (Joseph-John, 2024).

In recent times, through parenting skill training, the CPA was able to cater for the needs of the carers. This training will continue in the first half of 2025 (Joseph-John, 2024).

REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND POLICIES

CARICOM’s Regional Guidelines for Developing Policy, Regulation, and Standards in Early Childhood Development Services

Published in 2008, CARICOM’s Regional Guidelines for Developing Policy, Regulation, and Standards in Early Childhood Development Services were designed to establish uniform ECD services through its member states. The regional guidelines offer a methodological approach and several principles that CARICOM member states can use to develop quality and equitable early childhood policies, regulations, and standards (Caribbean Community Secretariat, 2008). Developing policy frameworks are organised into five linear phases including (1) Preparation, (2) ECD Situation Analysis, (3) Community and Stakeholder Discussions, (4) Policy Draft and Consensus Building, and (5) Policy Approval and Adoption. The guidelines note that the situation analysis is the most crucial phase in policy development as it lays the foundation for the policy by elucidating the pathway to appropriate decisions, policies, and strategies.

The document provides an Early Childhood Minimum Service Standard (ECD) defined as an “essential requirement for achieving desired learning outcomes for children’s development and well-being”, it outlines twelve pivotal areas in optimising ECD:

1. The development of a healthy, strong, and well-adjusted child: This guideline provides instructions on how to create child-friendly environments with age-appropriate curricula, equipment, and motor

development activities. It provides guidelines for maximum group sizes and adult-to-child ratios tailored to different age groups and special developmental needs, emphasising the importance of early detection. Parental education, psychosocial support, social activities, and community referrals are outlined as key components in realising this guideline. Written admission procedures ensure comprehensive care and support for children and families.

2. The development of a child's ability to communicate effectively: This guideline stresses respect for a child's first language with a gradual introduction to the standardised language of the country. Young children should be allowed to freely express themselves, use spoken and gestured language, and engage in activities that develop writing skills. This guideline highlights the importance of early intervention and screening for developmental delays. It recommends print-rich environments, daily reading, and diverse reading materials to support literacy development.
3. The development of a child who values his/her culture and that of others: This guideline notes that learning environments can model non-discrimination and inclusivity through tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. Children are taught how to appreciate both national and international cultural perspectives. Spiritual development is encouraged, with children learning to recognise and appreciate different religious beliefs.
4. The development of a child who is a critical thinker and independent learner: This guideline describes how age and developmentally-appropriate curricula can create respectful and safe environments that support the development of creativity, independence, and leadership abilities. Stimulating programmes and learning materials build imagination, while spaces for play aid in the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Children are encouraged to engage in self-selected individual and group activities.
5. The development of a child who respects him/herself, others, and the environment: This guideline explores how adults can model positive

interactions, impart values, and guide children in their spiritual and moral development, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, and appreciation of the environment.

6. The development of a resilient child: This guideline recommends daily activities that support the development of critical thinking skills, socioemotional development, and coping strategies. Children are encouraged to resolve conflicts for themselves and to persevere through difficult tasks to build confidence. Traumatic experiences are handled with compassion and respect, and children are referred to external social support services.
7. The profile and preparation of persons providing care and learning experiences for children: This guideline describes the characteristics needed for ECE work.
8. The management of challenging child behaviours and the use of positive discipline practices: This guideline highlights the importance of reinforcing positive child interactions and instilling self-regulation through attention, persistence, and impulse control-promoting activities. Disciplinary methods and behavioural expectations are documented in written policies and discussed with children, parents, and staff. Corporal punishment (CP) is strictly prohibited.
9. The provision for safety, security, health, and beneficial nutrition: This guideline outlines disaster preparedness protocols for different emergencies. It also presents comprehensive nutrition plans and education programmes that foster the health and well-being of young children. Parents learn about the importance of balanced nutrition and malnutrition.
10. The inclusion of children with different needs and abilities: This guideline explores how children with different needs and abilities can attain equal access to early childhood care and education through suitable learning materials, equipment, learning methodologies, and communication. These children are supported by staff who can effectively communicate with them and encourage their participation in adapted learning activities.

Statements that are aligned with international conventions on disabilities should be displayed and adhered to. Written procedures and policies for the identification, screening, and referral for early intervention are established.

11. The protection of children from harm and neglect: This guideline recommends nurturing environments where children feel valued and protected. Children are taught about their rights and how to protect themselves from harm. Staff learn about child rights, child abuse, and their duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect. There are care and support plans for child abuse victims and referral systems for additional assistance.
12. The involvement of parents and communities: This guideline acknowledges the importance of keeping parents and community members involved in ECE. They receive a document outlining the rationale for the school schedule and program. Parents are updated about their child's learning and are encouraged to engage in home activities. Engagement of the broader community promotes sensitivity and understanding towards child development needs.

OECS Education Sector Strategy 2012 to 2026

The OECS Education Sector Strategy 2012-2026 (OESS) is a framework to harmonise and improve the quality of education in Eastern Caribbean States (Organization of Eastern Caribbean States [OECS], 2012). It succeeds the reform-focused Foundations for the Future 1991-2000 and Pillars for Partnerships and Progress 2000-2010 approaches, adopting a strategic, results-oriented approach to strengthen leadership, management, and accountability in education sectors. Built on the vision that every learner succeeds, OESS offers an action plan that member states can use to align their national education strategies and plans.

Building on the priorities and challenges of previous approaches, country reviews, and consultative processes, the OESS outlines seven strategic imperatives, objectives, and outcomes:

1. Improve the quality and accountability of leadership and management
2. Improve teachers' professional development
3. Improve the quality of teaching and learning
4. Improve curriculum and strategies for assessment
5. Increase access to quality Early Childhood Development Services (ECDS)
6. Provide opportunities for all learners in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)
7. Increase provisions for Tertiary and Continuing Education

Strategy 5 outlines the necessity of high-quality ECDS, recognising their significant impact on a child's future learning abilities, and academic and life outcomes. It emphasises the importance of collaboration among ECD services, considering important factors such as parental education, child health, nutrition, care, and education. This imperative underscores inequality in access, as young children from disadvantaged backgrounds frequently lack access to universal ECDS.

The strategic objectives for this imperative encompass four key areas: (1) promoting stimulation from birth to age 2 and ensuring universal access to pre-primary education for children ages two to five, (2) enhancing the quality of formal ECDS and refining teaching and learning methodologies for children from birth to five years old, (3) securing increased funding for ECDS through investments from both the public and private sectors and (4) fostering stronger inter-sectoral collaboration and forging alliances between parents and communities to strengthen partnerships.

To implement the Education Sector Strategy, the OECS secured grant funding from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) under their Education Plan Development Grant. Through this partnership, the OECS developed regional learning standards aimed at harmonising primary school education across its member states (OECS, 2018). These standards reflect member states' agreement on academic expectations, skills, and attributes that students should

possess at the end of each grade level. Subject-specific learning standards have been established for Mathematics, Science and Technology, and Social Studies. They guide curriculum development and support teachers in deriving specific learning objectives and determining how students will demonstrate their learning. The initiative aims to ensure educators use these standards consistently to plan, implement, and assess student learning activities, thereby providing equitable learning experiences, reducing overlap, aiding in curriculum scaffolding, and standardising the preparation of students for secondary school education.

Caribbean Early Childhood Development Good Practice Guide

Sponsored by the Caribbean Development Bank and UNICEF, the Caribbean Early Childhood Development Good Practice Guide was created to strengthen policy and to identify and share good regional practices in ECD. A careful multi-year methodology informed by hundreds of stakeholder consultations across the 17 borrowing nations of the Bank selected examples of good practices in the following eight areas: Designing early childhood policies; Designing standards for ECD; Early intervention to identify and treat developmental disorders; Early stimulation for children ages 0 to 3; Pre-school curriculum and programme delivery; Design of Learning environments – physical structures; Teacher and practitioner training; and Parent Engagement. Independent expert reviewers selected or co-selected Grenada for its best practices in four of the eight areas: policy development and design; developing standards; preschool curriculum and programme delivery; and teacher and practitioner training. Other member states featured for their good practices were St. Lucia (for early intervention); St. Kitts and Nevis and Belize (for early stimulation); Guyana (for the design of physical learning environments); and the Cayman Islands (for parent engagement) (Charles, & Williams, 2018).

Disability Frameworks

UNICEF estimated that 19.1 million children in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region live with at least one disability (UNICEF, 2021). Children with disabilities face more inequities compared to children without disabilities on most indicators of child well-being (UNICEF, 2021). It is estimated that

children with disabilities are 24% less likely to receive early stimulation and responsive care, 49% more likely to have never attended school, and 32% more likely to experience severe forms of CP (UNICEF, 2021).

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Disability Frameworks

Using a format provided by the Washington Group on Disability, ECLAC estimated that 4.2% of persons in Grenada lived with a disability in 2010 (Jones & Serieux-Lubin, 2017). These figures are expected to increase around the globe due to ageing populations and the increase in non-communicable diseases. Grenada is expected to see the most significant increase in disabilities in the Caribbean region, projecting a rise of 2.7% between 2015 and 2050. In response to these forecasts, ECLAC has strongly recommended that the Government of Grenada establishes comprehensive disability legislation.

Within the region, a report titled ‘Disability, Human Rights, and Public Policy in the Caribbean: A Situation Analysis,’ published by ECLAC in 2017, explores disability in the Caribbean context (Jones & Serieux-Lubin, 2017). The report notes that persons with disabilities (PWDs) experience barriers that prevent their full and equal participation in society. Limited physical infrastructure prevents PWDs from accessing schools, workplaces, public spaces, buildings, transport systems, and cultural services.

“They are therefore excluded from participation in activities which others take for granted with serious implications for their social and economic well-being. Persons with disabilities experience worse outcomes in education, employment, health, and housing among other areas. This systematic discrimination is now widely recognised as violating fundamental human rights. Societies themselves must also change to remove the barriers that prevent equal participation thereby enabling the effective exercise of rights. Human rights have thus become a focus for advocacy and a framework for public policy on disability (Jones & Serieux-Lubin, 2017, p.7).”

The chapter ‘Access to Education’ underscores the critical importance of integrating children with disabilities into mainstream public education systems.

It highlights that inclusive education is essential for fostering positive social, academic, and developmental outcomes.

“Inclusive education entails identifying and removing barriers and providing reasonable accommodation, enabling every learner to participate and achieve within mainstream settings (Jones & Serieux-Lubin, 2017, p.47).”

ECLAC stresses the critical need for inclusive education systems that include individualised educational plans, flexible learning topics, varied teaching strategies, and adaptable learning styles (Jones & Serieux-Lubin, 2017). The report recommends specialised or adapted classrooms with trained special education teachers for children with disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools. Despite the importance placed on school attendance, the situation analysis reveals that children with disabilities often face low attendance rates (Jones & Serieux-Lubin, 2017). In Grenada, twenty-five percent of children with disabilities are less likely to attend school compared to peers without disabilities. While there have been some advancements in raising awareness about disabilities, entrenched social barriers and discriminatory attitudes continue to hinder equal societal participation (Jones & Serieux-Lubin, 2017).

CARICOM’s Disability Frameworks

CARICOM’s disability frameworks are anchored in two key agreements: the Kingston Accord (2004) and the Declaration of Pétion-Ville (2013). These agreements were established in response to the region’s shortcomings in developing adequate disability policies and programmes. The 2004 Kingston Accord targeted challenges faced by PWDs in the Anglophone Caribbean. It provided a unified framework for CARICOM member states to adopt non-discrimination policies, thereby enhancing the rights, welfare, and equality of PWDs. Key priorities included data collection, societal integration, protection from abuse, and improving access to crucial services such as health, education, and employment (Morris, 2020; Jones & Serieux-Lubin, 2017).

The Declaration of Pétion-Ville, ratified in 2013, underscored CARICOM’s renewed commitment to fostering national and regional legal frameworks that promote and protect the rights of PWDs. Member states have acknowledged

the importance of supporting families of PWDs and the inherent diversity of PWDs. The declaration also mandated the establishment of monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure the effective implementation of these frameworks.

Central to these efforts was the creation of the Caribbean Disability Rapporteur appointment, whose role is pivotal in consistently advocating for disability issues within CARICOM member state governments. In 2018, Senator Dr. Floyd Morris was appointed as the CARICOM Special Rapporteur on Disability. In recent years, CARICOM has supported social media initiatives to amplify the visibility of PWDs and advocacy efforts across the region (Morris, 2018).

Model Special Needs/Inclusive Education Policy and Strategy

The Special Needs/Inclusive Education Policy Framework is a draft policy created by the CDB in consultation with regional educators and disability rights advocates, designed to provide guidance for creating coherent and cohesive policies across states. Based on research from existing legislation and policies in the seven borrowing member countries, the framework outlines essential components for local policies, taking into account the diverse social, legal, political, economic, and cultural contexts (Spencer-Ernandez et al., 2023). The framework is tailored to fit each country's unique legislative and governance structures and is supported by international and regional principles, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989, the Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 2020, the CARICOM Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy, and the OESS, 2021- 2026 (Spencer-Ernandez et al., 2023). The core elements of the framework are:

- Access to inclusive education
- Organizational structures
- Infrastructural provisions and support mechanisms
- Human resource provisions
- Programs
- Stakeholder involvement

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND POLICIES

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international legally binding framework that consists of 54 articles outlining the civic, political, social, economic, health, and cultural rights of children. It asserts that all children are entitled to fundamental rights without discrimination based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, social origin, property, disability, birth, or other status. The Convention recognises childhood as a distinct developmental period where children should be protected and allowed the opportunity to grow, learn, play, develop, and flourish with dignity. Children are acknowledged as individuals with inherent rights, distinct from their parents or families with decision-making authority.

The UNCRC consists of four main pillars: (1) The Right to Survival, (2) The Right to Protection, (3) The Right to Development, and (4) The Right to Participation

1. **The Right to Survival:** Children have the right to life once they are born. All States must take basic appropriate measures to ensure children survive and thrive by providing the necessary conditions for children to live with dignity. Minimum standards include food, shelter, clothing, clean living environments, protection from diseases, and immunisation.
2. **The Right to Protection:** Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence and psychological intimidation, in and out of their family environment. Children must be protected against child labour and dangerous activities that may impact their education.
3. **The Right to Development:** Access to education and child development-promoting activities are key human rights. The CRC Committee has outlined the development of the child's "physical, psychological, spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive, cultural, and economic capacities" as necessary components of child development. The psychological right to development is achieved through love and care, cognitive development is achieved through education, and physical development is achieved through recreation, play, and nutrition.

4. The Right to Participation: Children are active members of societies and have the right to freely express their thoughts, feelings, perspectives, and ideas. Children should be able to participate in society and their perspectives must be appropriately acknowledged, taking into consideration their age and maturity.

The UNCRC also makes provisions for children with disabilities. The right to non-discrimination is detailed in Article 2 and states that children with disabilities need protection from discrimination. Article 23 notes that children with any type of disability should receive special care and all the rights of the UNCRC, noting that children with disabilities deserve to live full and independent lives with dignity.

The UNCRC was the most rapidly signed human rights treaty in history and 196 countries have become State Parties to the Convention as of October 2015. Grenada signed and ratified the treaty in 1990.

As of 2024, the UNCRC has not been formally integrated into law. Grenada's Constitution does not specifically reference children's rights, although general legal codes address some aspects of children's rights (Child Rights International Network, n.d.).

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women [CEDAW] was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 . The CEDAW is a globally binding legal framework that requires all UN Member States to eradicate all forms of discrimination against women and girls, to encourage equality for women and girls, and to protect their rights in all areas of life. This ensures that women and girls are able to enjoy their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. CEDAW has been described as an international bill of rights for women, as it covers human rights across the lifespan for women and girls (United Nations Women, 2016).

CEDAW has been signed by 189 countries and was ratified by Grenada in 1990.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Key international frameworks include the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), the PAHO's Plan of Action on Disabilities and Rehabilitation (2014), and the Organization of American States Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (1999).

Out of the international frameworks, the Government of Grenada has only signed and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the 2014 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [CRPD], 2006. The CRPD (2006) aims “to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all PWDs, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity” (CRPD, 2006). By challenging harmful social norms, the Convention reinforces that PWDs are fundamentally deserving of all human rights.

Disabilities are defined as long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that intersect with different barriers to hinder people's participation in society (CPRD, 2006). Disability is a dynamic concept arising from the interplay between individuals with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers. Together, these factors impede their full, equal, and effective social engagement (CPRD, 2006).

The Convention is guided by eight general principles, including (1) Respect for the inherent dignity and individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices and independence; (2) Non-discrimination; (3) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society; (4) Respect for difference and acceptance of PWDs as part of human diversity and humanity; (5) Equality of opportunity; (6) Accessibility; (7) Equality between men and women; and (8) Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and their right to preserve their identities.

Article 7, focusing on “Children with Disabilities,” mandates that States:

1. Adopt and utilise measures to ensure that children with disabilities have full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on par with other children.
2. Prioritise the best interests of the child in all actions.
3. Guarantee children with disabilities the freedom to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, taking into consideration their age and maturity, and ensuring equal consideration for other children. These children should be provided with disabilities and age-appropriate assistance to uphold this right.

UNESCO's Education for All

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the Dakar Framework in 2000 to realise the vision of Education for All. As outlined in the “Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges” (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 2015), this framework comprises six education goals, their respective targets, and twelve strategies for stakeholders:

- a) Early childhood care and education: Expand and enhance early childhood care and education, especially for vulnerable children.
- b) Universal primary education: Ensure universal access to quality primary education, particularly for girls and disadvantaged groups, by 2015.
- c) Youth and adult skills: Meet the learning needs of young people and adults through equitable access to learning and life skills programmes.
- d) Adult literacy: Improve adult literacy, with a focus on women, and provide access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
- e) Gender Equality: Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education and promote gender equality in education by 2015, ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
- f) Quality of education: Enhance the quality of education, focusing on measurable learning outcomes, especially in numeracy and life skills.

The Education for All initiative is based on UNESCO’s disability-focused international treaties and conventions, including the Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960) and the Convention on Technical and Vocational Education (1989).

Despite progress in achieving universal primary education and gender equality, the report highlights the ongoing barriers faced by impoverished, marginalised, and disadvantaged children in lower-middle-income countries, who often remain out of school. Since 2017, UNESCO has adopted an evaluation framework aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 - Quality Education. This framework aims to assist countries in developing inclusive and equitable education policies and systems to address inequalities in educational access and opportunities.

The Global Education Monitoring Report 2023 acknowledges the transformative impact of technology in education. It highlights its role in improving access to high-quality, equitable, and inclusive education.

Despite being a member state of UNESCO, Grenada has not ratified either convention. It is uncertain whether the Education for All framework is integrated into Grenada’s education policies and systems.

Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the foundation of “Transforming the World - the 2030 Agenda for Social Development,” and were adopted at the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Summit. The 2030 Agenda is a comprehensive plan and call to action for people, the planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership (UNDP, 2019). It succeeds the Millennium Development Goals, providing a multi-dimensional sustainable development that integrates economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

As highlighted in the Progress for Every Child in the SDG era report (UNICEF 2018), children are central to achieving the SDGs. Children stand at the forefront of future sustainable development. Each child should be provided with services, skills, and opportunities to create a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities.

There are 44 indicators spread in the 17 SDGs that are child-related. These indicators are categorised into five fundamental dimensions of children’s rights: the right to survive and thrive, to learn, to be protected from violence, to live in a safe and clean environment, and to have an equal opportunity to succeed (UNICEF, 2018). Achievement of these dimensions fulfils the promise of no child left behind, shifting the discourse from short-term fixes to long-term investments, fostering regional and global partnerships, and collectively co-creating solutions to overcome barriers.

However, UNICEF’s assessment reveals a harsh reality. Approximately 650 million children are behind on at least two-thirds of the child-related SDG indicators. Additionally, 64 nations do not have adequate data to measure their progress on two-thirds of these 44 indicators - Grenada is one of these nations (Sachs et al., 2023).

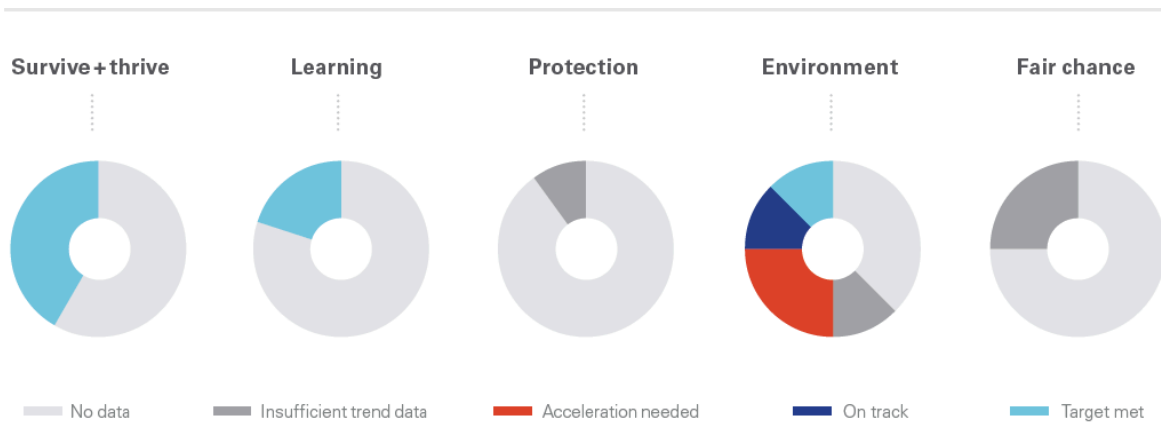


Figure 6. *The Status of Five Child Rights Dimensions in Grenada (UNICEF, 2018)*

The United Nations Flagship Report on Disability and Development addresses additional challenges faced by PWDs, particularly women and girls, in SDG achievement (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2018). These challenges include discrimination, limited accessibility to physical and virtual environments, lack of assistive technology and services, and barriers to independent living. The report advocates for integrating disability into SDG implementation and enhancing support systems to ensure inclusivity and progress.

Both reports note the importance of data - “To change the situation of children, count them” (UNICEF, 2018). Robust data collection and analysis are crucial for monitoring progress and steering policies that address the needs of all, fulfilling the promise of leaving no one behind in the pursuit of sustainable development.

OVERVIEW OF GOVERNMENT SECTORS

This Desk Review Report examines—sector by sector—the services currently available to children and families in Grenada, to support the development and implementation of intersectoral ECD policies and strategies. The following section provides an overview of the ECD services within government ministries.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH, WELLNESS & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

The Ministry of Health, Wellness & Religious Affairs (MoH) is guided by its mission to “[Transform] healthcare through strengthening systems, building resilience, health diplomacy, and compassionate care,” and its vision to “[Become] the Healthcare Capital of the Eastern Caribbean.” The MoH provides direction, leadership, management, and administrative services to ensure the delivery of quality healthcare. Its objective is to make health services accessible for all citizens of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique.

The MoH oversees the General Hospital St. George’s, Princess Alice Hospital, Princess Royal Hospital, Mt. Gay Psychiatric Hospital, community health services, and various health-related projects. Regarding maternal and child health, health services include antenatal and postnatal care and child development monitoring. The MoH collaborates with other ministries to support maternal and child health. For example, it works with the Grenada Food and Nutrition Council (GFNC) from the Ministry of Agriculture to provide nutritional guidance and with the Parenting Unit of the Ministry of Social and Community Development to offer parenting sessions. The Ministry also promotes breastfeeding through its Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) to improve health outcomes for mothers and infants.

The MoH implements projects like the Health Sector Strengthening Project, which focuses on improving healthcare infrastructure, providing medical training, and enhancing vaccine distribution. The MoH addresses healthcare affordability and accessibility through the National Health Insurance Project, which improves access and affordability, protects against financial hardships, and provides sustainable healthcare financing. Public care is available for a small fee, with children under 17 and adults over 60 exempt from all user fees.

The MoH also prioritises women’s and girls’ health through specialised services, public awareness campaigns, and improved accessibility. For instance, health fairs are held in collaboration with St. George’s University and the Grenada Planned Parenthood Association. Additionally, the MoH’s Annual School Health Programme screens Grade 1 and Form 1 students for health issues such as inadequate nutrition and anaemia, demonstrating a commitment to preventative care and early detection of health problems.

The MoH’s efforts align with the 2022 NDC Manifesto, which prioritises healthcare needs and aims to transform the healthcare system. The manifesto outlines plans to expand school health programmes to include all primary and secondary schools, emphasising preventative, curative, and rehabilitative services to benefit all school-aged children in Grenada. Through these initiatives, the MoH is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of all Grenadians.

Healthcare Services for Expectant and New Parents

Antenatal Clinic Visits

Initial Visit and Follow-Ups

Expectant mothers are encouraged to visit the district antenatal clinic in their first trimester. Monthly visits are scheduled for the first 28 weeks, followed by bi-weekly visits until the 36th week and weekly visits thereafter. The initial visit includes a comprehensive physical examination, documentation of personal and medical history, and blood tests (including complete blood count, blood sugar, sickle cell, blood type, STIs including HIV, HTLV 1 and 2, and syphilis). Family planning options are also discussed (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). At each visit, the progress of the pregnancy is monitored with the height of the fundus (the distance from the pubic bone to the top of the uterus) recorded on a gravidogram. If the foetal size is abnormal, a referral to a physician is made. Ultrasounds, though not mandatory, are recommended if there are growth abnormalities or risk factors. On scheduled antenatal clinic days, a nutrition officer from the GFNC (from the Ministry of Economic Development, Planning, Tourism, Creative Economy, Culture, Agriculture and Lands, Forestry, Marine Resources and Cooperatives) provides guidance on pregnancy nutrition and

managing gestational diabetes (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). The Parenting Unit of the Ministry of Social & Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs (MoSD) conducts parenting sessions at antenatal clinics (C. Courtney, personal communication, 2024).

Delivery and Post-Delivery Support for Parents and Newborns

Delivery can occur at any of the hospitals in Grenada: General Hospital St. George's, St. Augustine's Medical Services, Princess Alice Hospital, and Princess Royal Hospital in Carriacou. Home births are also an option. All newborns receive an APGAR score at one and five minutes after birth. Nurses trained in midwifery facilitate births. For premature infants, paediatricians are on hand to offer specialised care and refer these babies to physiotherapy. Parents participate in these therapy sessions to ensure they can perform the exercises at home. Following discharge, mothers may bring their babies to a hospital unit from 6 am to 6 pm for practical (bathing and feeding) and social (interaction with other mothers) support. Fathers are also encouraged to participate and utilise this service (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

Postnatal and Child Health Clinic Visits

Home Visits and Initial Checkups

Upon returning home from the hospital, mothers must inform the district nurse, who will visit 1-3 times within ten days to check on the mother's recovery, the child's health, and caregiver-infant-child interaction. Nearly all mothers and children receive these visits. At six weeks, mother and child have a postnatal checkup to assess recovery and developmental progress.

Nurses follow two frameworks to monitor the development of children ages 0-3 years: Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI), which emphasises early stimulation, and Care for Child Development Approach (C4CD), which incorporates play, language, and interaction (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). The Psycho-Social Support Unit at the MoSD provides psychotherapy prenatal and postpartum based on referrals (C. Courtney, personal communication, 2024).

Developmental Monitoring

Infant development is recorded in a Child Health Record Book, maintained at the clinic and home. This record includes a developmental screening checklist and international growth standards. If developmental milestones are not met, referrals are made to a doctor or paediatrician for further specialist consultations. Electronic record-keeping initiatives are being implemented, including the Perinatal Information System, bedside registration of newborns, and an electronic immunisation system (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

Paediatricians in Private Practice

Referrals for Developmental Delays

Paediatricians refer children with developmental delays to specialised services:

- Hearing: Children's Health Organisation Relief and Educational Services (CHORES)
- Visual: Ophthalmologist (General Hospital St. George's and private practice)
- Communication: Speech pathologist (Ministry of Education)
- Autism: Early Childhood Intervention Programme and Autistic Foundation of Grenada. The Autistic Foundation utilises the Autistic Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS)
- Cerebral Palsy: Physiotherapy and early stimulation
- Occupational Therapy: Pathways Restorative Wellness Center - Dr. Martha Edwards is in Grenada for six months each year and accepts referrals.

Family Education Meetings

Paediatricians in private practice hold ad hoc family education meetings to explain developmental delays/disabilities, offer guidance, and provide

encouragement. These meetings, however, often lack set times, clear referral processes, or documented policies (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

Childcare Services

Grenada has taken significant steps to address unpaid care and domestic work and to support work-family balance. This involves making childcare services more accessible and affordable.

Maternity Leave and Benefits

Maternity Leave and Benefits, as outlined by the Ministry of Legal Affairs, Labour, and Consumer Affairs, grants employees who have worked for their employer for at least eighteen months the right to three months of paid maternity leave. Those who have not met this duration can take up to three months of unpaid maternity leave. Maternity leave begins on a date chosen by the employee, who may return to work before the end of the three months if desired (Department of Labour, n.d.). The Employment Act of 1999 in Grenada does not include provisions for paternity leave. However, employers can grant paternity leave according to their policies or practices.

For monthly paid employees, employers provide maternity pay of at least 40% of two months' salary. For those paid weekly or fortnightly, the maternity pay is at least 40% of four weeks' or fortnights' earnings. Daily paid workers receive at least 40% of one-fifth of their total earnings from the twelve months preceding the leave. Maternity pay can be disbursed as a lump sum on the first day of leave or according to the employee's regular payment schedule (Department of Labour, n.d.).

The National Insurance Scheme (NIS) provides maternity benefits to support insured women during maternity leave and to husbands if their wives do not qualify on their own. A woman may be disqualified from receiving maternity benefits if she continues to receive her full salary, or works while on maternity leave. Other disqualifying factors include neglecting her health, failing to respond to reasonable inquiries from the NIS, not attending required medical examinations, or not submitting the claim within the specified timeframe.

Maternity benefits are divided into maternity allowance and maternity grant (National Insurance Scheme [NIS], n.d.).

The maternity allowance is intended for employed or self-employed women on maternity leave. The maternity allowance offers 65% of their average salary and is paid for three months. On the other hand, the maternity grant is a lump sum payment of \$522. Women are eligible for both the maternity allowance and the maternity grant, whereas husbands can only receive the maternity grant (NIS, n.d.).

To claim the maternity allowance, applications must be submitted up to six weeks before the expected delivery date or within three months after the baby's birth. The maternity grant must be claimed within three months following the birth. To qualify for the maternity allowance, a woman must be registered with the NIS for at least seven months, have a minimum of five months' contributions before the baby's birth or expected due date, be between 16 and 61, and experience a loss of wages. For the maternity grant, the woman or her husband must be registered with the NIS, have at least twelve months of contributions, and be between 16 and 61 years old (NIS, n.d.).

Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative & the Breastfeeding Policy

The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), launched in 1991 by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), aims to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding in maternity service facilities. BFHI has demonstrated benefits, including increased rates of exclusive breastfeeding, reduced incidence of gastrointestinal disease and atopic eczema in infants, and improved IQ and academic performance in children. BFHI encourages immediate skin-to-skin contact immediately following delivery to strengthen the bond between mother and child (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

The Breastfeeding Policy, supported by PAHO and launched in 2017 as part of BFHI, serves as a guide for all maternity and neonatal hospital staff in supporting pregnant women, mothers, and their infants. The BFHI encompasses activities that include assessing breastfeeding practices, training professionals

as lactation specialists, educating over 200 staff members on breastfeeding techniques, and developing brochures and posters for private and public health facilities (Straker, 2019a). This initiative encourages breastfeeding over formula whenever feasible, educates mothers about the benefits of breastfeeding, and provides guidance on extracting and storing breast milk (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

The General Hospital St. George's was certified as baby-friendly in 2019 (Straker, 2019a). To attain BFHI accreditation, health facilities must achieve a minimum 75% exclusive breastfeeding rate at discharge, adhere to the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, and successfully implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding outlined by WHO/UNICEF. These steps serve as guidelines for maternity services to promote and support breastfeeding, enhancing maternal and infant health (WHO, 2013).

Projects & Programmes

Health Sector Strengthening Project

In 2024, the Government of Grenada received a \$9,970,500 USD loan from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), financed by the European Investment Bank (EIB) through the Climate Action Line of Credit II - COVID-19 component. This loan aims to improve the country's health sector infrastructure. Launched in February 2024, this health sector strengthening project aligns with the EU's Global Gateway strategy, prioritising global healthcare investments, with the EIB as a key partner (European Investment Bank [EIB], 2024). The Health Sector Strengthening Project has allocated \$2.0 million XCD to address mental illness and substance abuse post-COVID-19 (Government of Grenada, 2023b).

The funds will be used to procure medical and non-medical equipment and general supplies and provide medical and health training for healthcare workers. Additionally, the loan will fund vaccine distribution, vaccination campaigns, construction and renovation of selected healthcare facilities, and preparedness for future health emergencies in Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique (EIB, 2024).

This project also aims to promote timely medical care, and increase vaccination rates. Enhanced training for healthcare workers and better supply chain management will also ensure consistent access to essential medicines and nutritional supplements, fostering healthier growth and development for young children.

Grenada's Minister for Health, Hon. Philip A. Telesford, remarked, "Our commitment embraces the pulse of every citizen, the rhythm of every heartbeat seeking solace in better and more accessible health services for all our citizens..." (EIB, 2024).

Healthcare Promotion for Women and Girls

Grenada has taken significant steps to enhance health outcomes for women and girls. This includes expanding specialised health services covering sexual and reproductive health, mental health, maternal health, and HIV services. Gender-specific public awareness campaigns have been conducted alongside gender-responsive training for health providers and strengthening comprehensive sex education in schools and communities (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). Moreover, initiatives have been launched to improve healthcare accessibility, such as bedside registration of births and the introduction of the HPV vaccine for girls. Health fairs, organised nationwide by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with partners St. George's University and the Grenada Planned Parenthood Association, have also played a role in advancing these improvements (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

Annual School Health Programme

The Ministry of Health conducts an annual school health programme, screening students in Grade 1 of primary and Form 1 of secondary school for health issues like inadequate nutrition, anaemia and dental care. The programme targets both public and private schools. The screenings are carried out by medical personnel and aim to both prevent and detect health concerns early (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

For the 2024-2025 school year, parents were given medical forms to have their child or children seen by the District Doctor or a physician of their choice during

the 2024 summer vacation. At the start of the Michaelmas term, these forms will be collected and reviewed by the Primary Health Care team. Students who were unable to complete their assessments during the summer will be examined by the team during scheduled school visits in the Michaelmas term (K.-A. Renaud, personal communication, 2024).

If a health issue is identified, follow-up actions will depend on the nature of the issue. The physician may initiate immediate treatment, recommend further investigations, or refer the child to the appropriate service for further management (K. -A. Renaud, personal communication, 2024).

Mental Health

Regional Mental Health Initiatives: UNICEF x Let's Unpack It

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the youth-led regional mental health advocacy organisation "Let's Unpack It" have launched a new initiative to establish the Caribbean Youth Mental Health Focal Point Network across 17 Caribbean islands. This network aims to develop and implement mental health and wellness projects, fostering awareness and dismantling stigma surrounding mental health issues. Racheal Phillip and Celina Douglas have been appointed as advocates of the Caribbean Youth Mental Health Focal Point Network for Grenada. In 2023, UNICEF collaborated with the CARICOM Secretariat to conduct a comprehensive survey to better understand the needs of children, youth, parents, caregivers, and youth-serving professionals. This data will inform the creation of a Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services directory—a user-friendly tool listing free mental health services provided by health, education, social (child protection), government agencies, and emergency services sectors for children and youth (Smith, 2023a; UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area, 2023).

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH, SPORTS & CULTURE

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is guided by its mission “to foster a well-managed, inclusive, and values-based education system that provides quality education and promotes creative cultural expressions, sports entrepreneurship, health and wellness, continuous learning, innovation, and patriotism.” Its vision statement aspires to create “a resilient education system developing well-rounded, global citizens committed to lifelong learning and national development.” In support of these goals, the NDC 2022 Manifesto and the Policy Agenda (2017-2030) emphasise a transformative approach to education in Grenada (National Democratic Congress [NDC]., n.d.-a).

The manifesto envisions ensuring that every Grenadian child receives a top-tier education. This aligns with Grenada’s commitment to the Covenant of Human Rights, which recognises education as a fundamental human right. The manifesto outlines a series of initiatives to elevate the national education system, including the implementation of free and universal education from preschool up to the community college level. Additionally, it proposes integrating courses in agriculture, culture, technical/vocational skills, and information and communication technologies (ICT) into primary school curricula. A significant aspect of this transformation is the revival of the Ministry of Education’s Student Support Unit, designed to offer comprehensive student counselling, healthcare services, truancy monitoring, and school feeding programs.

The Policy Agenda (2017-2030) further underscores the importance of standardising the curriculum across primary schools and recommends early aptitude assessments to tailor education to young children’s specific needs. It also advocates for the introduction of foreign language and civics classes, the reinstatement of the Free School Books Programme, and the provision of necessary resources to sustain academic, technical, and vocational programmes in primary schools.

Grenada has made significant strides in ECE. Notable improvements include the establishment of a network of daycare centres and pre-primary schools, the construction of model daycare centres and preschools and the introduction of

an Early Childhood Standard. The MoE oversees early childhood care for children ages three and older, as well as special education centres.

The 2017 Requirements for the Establishment and Operation of Early Childhood Centers provide a comprehensive framework emphasising care, stimulation, safety, health, and quality educational practices for children ages six months to five years. Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Grenada emphasises literacy, numeracy, and core social skills while focusing on creating learner-centred, and child-friendly environments.

The adoption of Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) framework in Grenada highlights the commitment to prioritising the well-being of children in educational settings and the Special Needs/Inclusive Education Policy Framework, developed by the CDB, provides a guideline for creating cohesive policies. Within the MoE, the Curriculum Development Department is tasked with developing and implementing the national curriculum. The Special Education Unit (SEU) provides diagnostic assessments and interventions for children with special education needs.

The government has launched several projects and programs to enhance ECE. These include the National Textbook Programme, the Grenada Education Enhancement Project (GEEP 1&2), the Caribbean Center in Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT), the Spice Reader programme, The Early Learners Programme (ELP), Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF), and the Programme for Educational Advancement and Relevant Learning (PEARL) project.

The Government of Grenada supports the education of children who are disadvantaged through other programmes including the School Uniform Programme, offering vouchers for uniforms and supplies to eligible households. In addition, transportation assistance is provided in Carriacou to subsidise travel costs, and conditional cash transfers are given to parents eligible for the Support for Education Empowerment and Development (SEED) Programme to support their children's education. These initiatives aim to ensure that children in poverty can access education as a fundamental right (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

Educational Institutions

The Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) oversees early childhood care and education for children ages zero to three years. The Ministry of Education (MoE) takes over responsibility for educational matters from pre-primary (3+) onwards. There are 62 pre-primary schools, three special education centres, one resource centre for the visually impaired, and one school for deaf students. There are 75 primary schools (56 public and 19 private) and 25 secondary schools (21 public and four private), with approximately 23,000 students enrolled from kindergarten to secondary levels (Global Book Alliance, 2022).

According to the 2018 UNESCO Institute of Statistics, public schools have a net enrolment rate of 85.3% for pre-primary education and 95.9% for primary school. On the other hand, private schools enrol 39% of pre-primary students and 15% of primary students (Global Book Alliance, 2022).

Standards & Frameworks

Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education (ECE) focuses on teaching literacy, numeracy, core social and emotional skills, physical, spiritual, and technological skills significantly emphasising ECD to encourage the “initial stimulation” necessary for increasing educational prospects. Grenada’s commitment to providing access to formal education for all eligible children spans various education levels. Initiatives have been undertaken to improve access to day nurseries and daycare facilities. At this level, most children are undiagnosed, thus inclusive education is considered to account for students with special needs in daycares, nursery settings, and preschools.

The learning environments created under the ECE framework are designed to be “learner-centred, child-friendly, and health-promoting.” Daycares, nurseries, and pre-primary schools have been modernised based on ECE standards. Additionally, teacher training is provided to ensure that pre-primary teaching staff are qualified and equipped to meet the diverse needs of young learners. The pre-primary school curriculum builds on students’ strengths, interests, and abilities, emphasizing active learning and hands-on activities.

Requirements for the Establishment and Operation of Early Childhood Centers 2017

The 2017 Requirements for the Establishment and Operation of Early Childhood Centers, published by the Grenada Bureau of Standards, provide a framework for operating early childhood centres (Grenada Bureau of Standards, 2017). The guidelines emphasise care, stimulation, safety, health, and best educational practices to ensure a nurturing environment in private, church-owned, and public daycare centres and pre-primary schools for children ages six months to five years. The Standards align with the Education Act of 2002 and the Early Childhood Services Regulations of 2014. They integrate CARICOM's Regional Guidelines for ECD and draw upon the HighScope curriculum and insights from the Caribbean Child Development Center at The University of the West Indies (Grenada Bureau of Standards, 2017, as cited in Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). Although the Ministry of Education oversees and ensures compliance with the Standards, there is currently no established procedure for enforcing them in private daycare settings (D. Cyrus, personal communication, 2024).

The Standards outline enrolment requirements, staff qualifications, staff-to-child ratios, and teaching methods. It stated that all staff are mandated to report any signs of abuse or neglect to the CPA, and safeguards must be in place to protect children from violence, injury, abuse, discrimination, neglect, or exploitation. Additionally, the Standards specify requirements for the physical setting of ECC, including provisions for children with disabilities, to support their overall development. For children under three years old, the environment must foster development in five key areas: emotional and social development, physical development, communication, discovery and exploration, and creative development. For children ages three to five, the focus shifts to nine key areas: approaches to learning, social and emotional development, spiritual development, language, literacy and communication, mathematics, social studies, physical health and well-being, science and technology, and creative arts.

The Standards require centres to use comprehensive monitoring to assess children's progress (e.g., Early Childhood Development Checklist) and maintain a clean, accessible, and secure physical environment. Health and safety protocols

include staff training in first aid and CPR with valid certification, disease management procedures, and regular fire safety drills. Centres must also have procedures for handling various hazards and educating children on safety rules.

Education Sector Plan 2023-2030

The Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2023-2030 articulates the MoE's vision for the education sector in Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique.

The ESP 2023-2030 begins with an analysis based on a 2021 review of the education sector. It highlights key achievements such as universal enrolment in primary and secondary education, strong ECE participation, gender parity, increased post-secondary options, and low teacher-pupil ratios. Nine challenges within the sector are identified, including disparities in literacy and numeracy, inadequate ICT training in primary schools, negative perceptions of TVET, insufficiently trained teachers, limited access to post-secondary education, lack of second-chance opportunities for dropouts, poor disaster preparedness in schools, inadequate evidence-based policy-making, and infrastructure strains due to universal secondary education.

Informed by national, sub-national, and international strategies, the ESP 2023-2030 outlines five policy priorities and their key strategies, outcomes and indicators. These priorities address the breadth of the education sector, encompassing all levels from early childhood to tertiary education and including both formal and informal learning.

(1) A focus on *Equitable Participation* seeks to guarantee free and universal participation beginning with ECE through secondary education. It highlights the importance of increasing focus on at-risk and vulnerable children, with the goal of offering free access to T.A. Marryshow Community College (TAMCC) to achieve gender parity.

Strategies: Increased educational opportunities for at-risk students, and infrastructure improvement that accommodates special needs are outlined to support equity. Interventions are identified to support at-risk students and to increase awareness among key stakeholders.

Outcomes: All eligible children will be enrolled in quality ECE and will successfully complete quality primary and secondary schooling. Access to TAMCC will be free for identified groups of students. An inclusive education policy will ensure that all students with special educational needs are accommodated. Gender parity will be maintained across all educational levels, and no child will be prevented from attending school due to economic barriers.

(2) A focus on *Quality and Learning* will strengthen teaching and learning practices, such as literacy, oral expression, numeracy, problem solving, soft skills, and digital literacy skills.

Strategies: Curriculum and assessment systems will be guided by knowledge and skills necessary for the 21st century. There will be improvement of teacher professional development and training opportunities, increased use of technology, enhanced school supervision and monitoring, and heightened focus on ECE.

Outcomes: All learners will achieve necessary levels of literacy, numeracy, and technological skills and be prepared to use relevant competencies at school, college, home, and future workplaces. They will also demonstrate mastery of their curriculum. Teachers will create stimulating and enriching learning experiences through effective technology use; and will also be competent in pedagogical delivery and assessment methods.

(3) A focus on *Education for the World of Work* will ensure that youths and adults acquire necessary and diverse skills to become productive, working members of society.

Strategies: There will be reforms and improvements in policy definition, expansion of education and training opportunities, and curriculum development to align the education system with Grenada's economic and social development needs. Integrated approaches will be implemented for TVET, youth and adult non-formal education, and tertiary education.

Outcomes: There will be increased participation in TVET, especially in high-demand employment fields and information technology. Tertiary education enrolment will rise, focusing on subjects relevant to Grenada's economic

development. This will be further supported by scholarships and partnerships. In addition, youth and adults, especially those who did not complete formal education, will engage in lifelong learning and earn qualifications aligned with the Caribbean Vocational Qualification/National Vocational Qualification (CVQ/NVQ) framework.

(4) Focus on *Management and Governance* will be strengthened to ensure that education services are delivered through a well-managed, resourceful, and resilient education system.

Strategies: Policies need to be translated into specific frameworks. Programme implementation in schools will need to be more effectively monitored and supported. Human resources will be improved and there will be a focus on using information in policy making. The MoE will collaborate with national and international partners in a collaborative manner.

Outcomes: Effective functioning of the MoE and its district offices will support an efficient education system. Both the ministry and schools will be prepared for crisis situations, with strong leadership evident throughout the system. The performance of educators will improve, and data, information, and research will be used more systematically to inform policy and practice. Additionally, effective partnerships with national, regional, and international stakeholders will enhance support for the education sector.

(5) *Values* that support the development of the attributes of the ideal Grenadian citizen will be prioritised.

Strategies: Values necessary for the development of the education system will be defined. There will be a distinction between interventions that occur in the education sector and interventions that go beyond the sector. Broader awareness of these values will be promoted to stakeholders.

Outcomes: It is hoped that education staff, educators and students will develop positive socioemotional attitudes. Relevant stakeholders will show awareness of Grenada's culture and history.

The five priorities are further explored through a section on priority programmes. Figure 7 provides a summary of identified priority programmes. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks are highlighted throughout the ESP 2023-2030 with key outcomes and indicators delineated throughout the plan.

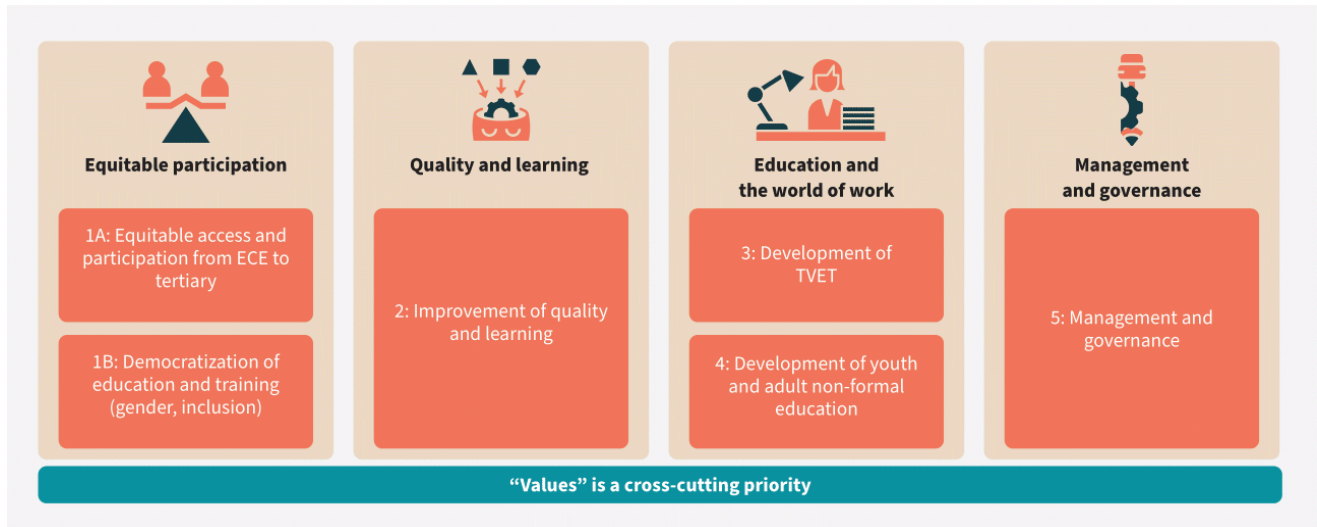


Figure 7: Overview of Priority Programmes Outlined in the Education Sector Plan 2023-2030 (Ministry of Education et al., 2023)

Child-Friendly Schools

The Child-Friendly School (CSF) is a framework “where the child’s best interest is at heart” (UNICEF, 2016). Grenada was one of the first islands in the Windward Islands to implement the CSF Framework in a Special Education School at the Victoria School for Special Education. With the use of trained teachers and resources, the CSF model seeks to create educational environments that are safe, healthy, and protective to support effective learning (UNICEF, n.d.). This model focuses on improving education systems for children by promoting access to quality education, supporting overall well-being, and collaborating with stakeholders like parents, teachers, and communities. Beyond traditional educational concerns, it addresses aspects such as children’s health, safety, and participation in learning. CFS models strive to create inclusive and supportive environments that connect schools with broader communities for enhanced learning experiences (UNICEF, n.d.). In 2024, there are 1,270 students attending CFS.

Curricula

Curriculum

The Curriculum Development Department, within the Ministry of Education (MoE), is responsible for developing, revising, and implementing the national curriculum. The Curriculum Development Department is supervised by a senior education officer and is composed of curriculum development officers, each specialising in core subjects such as social studies, mathematics, science, language arts, visual arts, health and family life, food and nutrition, and physical education. These officers also offer professional development sessions and training to teachers and oversee the monitoring and evaluation of educational programs. Literacy coaches support teachers and are typically assigned to oversee 10 to 15 schools each (Global Book Alliance, 2022).

Grenada, along with other members of the OECS, have adopted a curriculum known as the “harmonised” curriculum. Core curricula in mathematics, language arts, and natural and social sciences have been implemented across primary schools. Presently, this curriculum is being revised by the PEARL project and local education experts. In 2022, OECS member-states conducted a national curriculum consultation to further enhance the curriculum. (Global Book Alliance, 2022).

HighScope Curriculum

All daycare centres, preschools and Roving Caregivers implement the HighScope Curriculum. This curriculum incorporates elements similar to the CD Curriculum, facilitates early therapeutic stimulation, and fosters social-emotional and academic development among children in daycare and preschool settings. The HighScope Curriculum emphasises child-focused teaching methods and participatory learning (HighScope, 2019). Its daily structure includes small and large group activities, plan-do-review sessions, and outdoor playtime (UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area, 2017, as cited in the Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

Special Education Unit

The Special Education Unit (SEU) at the Ministry of Education provides diagnostic assessments and student support services for children with suspected special education needs. The SEU is led by the Deputy Education Officer and staffed by seven special education officers with specialties in speech and language pathology, autism spectrum disorder, behaviour management, and child counselling.

Referrals

The referral process begins informally and can be initiated by childcare providers such as teachers, parents, paediatricians, special education officers, and child protection officers. A formal referral form is completed to identify learning concerns and signed by the child's parents or caregivers. Special education officers observe the child in various settings, such as home and school environments. Interviews with parents and teachers are conducted to gain insights about their concerns regarding their child's development.

The SEU has reported a notable increase in referrals over the past year. Between October 2023 and June 2024, the unit received 193 referrals, predominantly for academic evaluations, closely followed by emotional, behavioural, and speech concerns. This rise is attributed to heightened public awareness facilitated by an expanded team of special education officers. To further enhance awareness, the SEU actively engages in community outreach initiatives, including meetings with school principals and promoting SEU services through radio, TV programmes, and informational flyers. Aligned with the OECS Pearl programme during 2022–2023, special education officers conducted community visits to identify children who could benefit from SEU services. The SEU is considering implementing a database for tracking and monitoring referrals as the demand for services continues to grow.

Neurodevelopmental Assessments in Grenada

During the preliminary assessment phase, the SEU uses the revised Early Childhood Development Checklist (ECDC) to assess whether the child has achieved important academic and neurodevelopmental milestones. Based on

these results, special education officers make formal recommendations. If further assessment is deemed necessary, the SEU employs a range of local, regional, and international assessments to gather information on key neurodevelopmental domains. Detailed descriptions of these assessments are provided in the accompanying tables.

Test Limitations

The use of international assessments raises concerns about their psychometric validity. Scoring and interpretation should be approached cautiously due to cultural differences between the population for which the test was developed and the population for which the test is being administered. Most international neurodevelopmental assessments have been normed on a sample of White/Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) populations which often do not translate to Caribbean experiences. Additionally, the SEU sometimes relies on older versions of neurodevelopmental measures, which may restrict its ability to incorporate considerations offered in newer versions.

The use of locally and regionally developed assessments raises concerns about psychometric validity (e.g. construct, content, criterion) and reliability (e.g. test-retest, interrater, internal consistency). There is a lack of documentation on the methodological procedures for test development and standardisation in the Caribbean. For example, it is unclear how or which similar psychometrically validated tests informed the development of the ECDC. Moreover, these tests do not have clear scoring procedures such as cut-off points. As these tests have not been normed on a representative sample of Grenadian children, it limits the assessor's ability to draw accurate and meaningful insights.

Assessment at the Ministry of Education, SEU

Listed are neurodevelopmental tests utilised by the Grenada SEU of the Ministry of Education. A full description of each test is available in Appendix B.

Locally Developed Neurodevelopmental Assessments

1. Early Childhood Developmental Checklist (Ages 3-5)

The Early Childhood Development Checklist (ECDC) was developed by the Ministry of Education and revised by the SEU in 2022. The revised version of the ECDC assesses school readiness in preschool children on four key domains: (1) Language, Literacy, and Communication; (2) Mathematics; (3) Physical Development and Health, and (4) Social and Emotional Development. Additionally, the ECDC assesses motor development, speech and language abilities, behaviours, attention span, and visual and auditory capacities (C. Christopher, personal communication, 2024).

2. Grenada Reading Screening Tool (Ages 5+)

The Grenada Reading Screening (GRS) tool was created by the Task Force on Special Education in 2003. The GRS was developed for primary school teachers to gather information about students' reading ability, strengths, and challenges. It provides checklists for hearing and visual impairment, along with associated physical symptoms and behaviours.

3. Special Education Information Assessment (Ages 5+)

The Special Education Informal Assessment (SEIA) was developed by the Grenada School for Special Education. The SEIA assesses basic knowledge such as shapes, names, bodies, and mathematical computations.

Regionally Developed Neurodevelopmental Assessments Used in Grenada

1. Caribbean Assessment Battery-Reading

The Caribbean Assessment Battery-Reading is an informal reading inventory developed to assess reading abilities, strengths, and challenges. This assessment helps identify appropriate instructional strategies and interventions.

Internationally Developed Neurodevelopmental Assessments Used in Grenada

1. Bracken School Readiness Assessment (Ages 3 years +)

The Bracken School Readiness Assessment (BSRA), first published in 2002, assesses readiness for formal education. It tests knowledge in six subtests including colours, letters, numbers/counting, sizes, comparisons, and shapes (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). The BSRA, now in its 4th edition, has been normed on North American children. However, the first edition of the BSRA is currently used by the SEU (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020).

2. Clinical Assessment of Articulation and Phonology (Ages 2 years, 6 months+)

The CAAP is a standardised assessment designed to assess articulation and phonology in pre-school and school-age children. The CAAP consists of an articulation inventory and two phonological process checklists. The CAAP is a standardised assessment designed to assess articulation and phonology in pre-school and school-age children. The CAAP consists of an articulation inventory and two phonological process checklists. The CAAP-2, now in its 2nd edition, has been normed on North American children (Hegde & Pomaville, 2016; Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). However, the first edition of the CAAP is currently used by the SEU (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020)

3. Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-Fifth Edition (Ages 5+)

The Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals-Fifth Edition (CELF-5), published in 2013, is a battery of 16 language assessments that can be used to diagnose language and communication disorders, develop intervention plans, and monitor progress in children and adolescents. The CELF-5 was normed on North American children (Pearson Assessments, n.d.-a).

4. Early Screening Inventory-Revised Edition (Ages 3+)

The Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-R) 2008 Edition is a standardised screening measure used to identify potential developmental delays or concerns in children who may require special education intervention services to support their school performance (Pearson Assessments, n.d.-b.)

The instrument addresses developmental, sensory, and behavioural concerns across the three core domains: (1) Visual Motor/Adaptive, (2) Language and Cognition, and (3) Gross Motor Skills. This inventory has two versions: Preschool (ESI-P) and Kindergarten (ESI-K). A parent questionnaire assesses social-emotional and adaptive behaviour. Both versions were normed on North American children.

5. The Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers, Revised (Ages 1 year, 4 months+)

The Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers, Revised (M-CHAT-R), published in 2009, is an assessment tool to assess the risk for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children (Robins et al., 2009). It consists of 20 yes/no questions that cover various behaviours and developmental milestones typically seen in children. These questions are designed to be answered by the child's caregiver or parent. Three scores provide information about ASD risk: low-risk, medium-risk, and high-risk. The M-CHAT-R is not reliable for children under 18 months, and was normed on North American children.

6. Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Third Edition (Ages 2 year, 6 months+)

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test- Third Edition (PPVT-III) was published in 1997 and assesses receptive vocabulary and screens verbal ability in standard spoken English (Hayward et al., 2008). The PPVT-III assesses an individual's ability to understand and recognise words by matching them to pictures. The PPVT, which is now in its 5th edition, has been normed on North American children.

7. Preschool Language Scale, Fourth Edition (Birth +)

The Preschool Language Scale, Fourth Edition (PLS-4), published in 2009, is an interactive assessment tool designed to evaluate developmental language skills across various domains (Pearson Assessments, n.d.-c; Zimmerman et al. 2002). This measure assesses receptive and expressive language skills in young children, helping to identify language disorders or delays and intervention planning. The PLS is now in its 5th edition, and has been normed on North American children.

8. Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children | Fifth Edition (Ages 6+)

The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Fifth Edition (WISC-V), published in 2014, is a norm-referenced assessment tool designed to evaluate a child's cognitive strengths and weaknesses (Pearson Assessments, n.d.-d). It comprises ten primary tests organised into five composite scores: verbal comprehension, perceptual reasoning, working memory, processing speed, and fluid reasoning. The WISC-V yields a Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) and index scores for each composite. It has been normed on North American children.

9. Wide Range Achievement Test | Fifth Edition (Ages 5+)

The Wide Range Achievement Test-Fifth (WRAT-5), published in 2014, can be used to measure academic achievement, which measures reading, spelling, and maths skills (Pearson Assessments, n.d.-e). It can be used to monitor skills and helps to identify possible learning disabilities. The WRAT-5 includes two equivalent forms (blue and green) for shorter test-retest periods. The WRAT-5 has been normed on North American children.

Interventions

Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

An ILP will be created for children who have met the criteria for developmental delays. ILPs provide evidence-based goals and recommendations that students and teachers can use to optimise student learning and educational planning. The SEU is revising its ILP protocol, and training will be conducted before the new school term in September 2024.

Previous findings from the Grenada Landscape Assessment indicated that ILPs were optimised for the classroom environments and did not make provisions for home learning. Since then, several initiatives have been introduced to support parents of children with special educational needs. Between March and May 2024, the SEU launched a parental involvement programme in the parishes of St. Mark and St. Patrick. Additional plans are underway to introduce a specialised programme for children with special educational needs by

September 2024. Regionally, Mico Community College in Jamaica conducted virtual workshops on special educational needs during Autism Acceptance Month in April 2024.

School Visits

Special education officers make scheduled school visits twice per month to monitor and support children with special needs. The frequency of their visits may increase depending on the needs of students. Although special education officers are designated to specific districts, they may be rerouted to provide services in other districts if their specialised services are required for specific cases.

Special Education Schools

Education enrolment in special education schools may be recommended to parents of children who need more specialised support. There are three government-run general, special education schools in Grenada that cater to students between the ages of 5 and 21. Before entry, students are administered the Special Education Informal Assessment (SEIA). With the assistance of parents, teachers at special education schools administer this assessment to inform grade placement. The SEIA assesses basic knowledge such as shapes, names, bodies, and mathematical computations. There are no formal scoring procedures. Students enrolled in special education schools follow a Life Skills Curriculum. Special Education Schools provide one-to-one support for students with intellectual delays. The ultimate goal is to reintegrate these children into mainstream school settings.

1. Grenada School for Special Education: 72 students

Staff Directly Working with Children: 11 established; 3 trainees

2. St. Andrew School for Special Education: 49 students (36 males, 13 females)

Staff Directly Working with Children: 9 established; 1 trainee

3. Victoria School for Special Education: 43 students (35 males, 10 females)

Staff Directly Working with Children: 6 established; 3 trainees.

Resource Centre for the Blind

There is an informal assessment protocol for diagnosing vision impairments. Upon referral, three dyads assigned to districts across the island visit home and classroom environments to observe the child for 45-60 minutes over three visits. Children may be referred to the Ophthalmological Department of the General Hospital St. George's if the observations indicate that further testing is needed. Assessments such as eye exams, and the fix-and-follow test are used to diagnose vision issues. Children with refractive errors are provided with glasses. Surgery may be recommended, and parents can access support services through visiting international aid programmes like CHORES, the World Pediatric Project, and Kingdom Workers. The Resource Centre for the Blind offers rehabilitation services for children with severe vision issues. Itinerant teachers visit children ages three and older to teach basic life skills and support their educational advancement. Currently, there are 30 students enrolled at the Resource Centre for the Blind, comprising 14 males and 16 females. There are four established special education teachers and three trainees.

School for the Deaf

Referrals to the School for the Deaf can be made by parents, teachers, paediatricians, and Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) Specialists. The School for the Deaf and SEU personnel may administer assessments such as the Ling Sound Check, the Maico ERO•SCAN® OAE Test, noisemakers, and audiometers to understand hearing challenges. Provisions are being made to procure the Tremetrics RA660. The Maico ERO•SCAN® OAE Test is instrumental in identifying hearing loss that might impact communication and academic performance. Further assessment is needed if a child receives a "fail" or "referred" score on this test. Children are referred to ENT specialists for further ear assessments.

Children with hearing disabilities matriculate into the national school system. Itinerant teachers from the School for the Deaf make routine school visits for children with hearing disabilities. Children with profound hearing loss are visited four times per week. School for the Deaf personnel teach sign language and

support in classroom activities. Currently, nine teachers are assigned to 30 students with hearing impairment in primary schools.

NGOs such as Deaf Voices provide support services to the deaf and hearing-impaired population in Grenada, with the ultimate goal of improving living standards. Primarily active on Facebook, Deaf Voices observes the annual World Day of the Deaf, hosts sign language classes, and shares inclusivity training opportunities.

Teacher Training

Provisions have been made for classroom teachers to receive special education training. An estimated 130 ECE teachers from 72 primary and secondary schools were selected to participate in a 10-week training programme which commenced in July 2024. In addition, pre-primary teachers benefited from specialised training to support students with autism spectrum disorder. Itinerant teachers receive formal training or are trained on the job.

Furthermore, the NDC is offering scholarships for teachers pursuing tertiary education. This is part of a national strategy to enhance the capacity of primary and secondary-level teachers and administrators. These efforts also include implementing performance management systems to evaluate teacher performance with the hoped outcome of enhancing teaching methodologies.

Home Support

Currently, home support is offered to four children, which includes sensory development, physiotherapy, speech therapy, and functional skills training.

Governmental Projects & Programmes

The Planning, Developing, and Technical Services Programme

The Planning, Development, and Technical Services programme provides strategic oversight, technical support, and various services to educational institutions and the central Ministry of Education. These services encompass lesson delivery, curriculum assessment, data management, training, and monitoring/evaluation, all aimed at improving student learning, literacy,

numeracy standards, skills, and overall programme implementation. The department's outcome indicators, including enhanced efficiency in delivering student support services and improved access to eBook technology and other learning resources, are expected to show progress in 2024.

National Textbook Programme & eBooks

The Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Religious Affairs, and Information (MoE) oversees the National Textbook Programme, also called the Free School Books Programme. Primary school students typically require at least four textbooks, which cost approximately \$40 per book. The government initiated the National Textbook Programme in the 1990s to alleviate potential financial strain on families, allowing families to rent textbooks for \$25 annually. Students meeting specific socioeconomic criteria are eligible for fee waivers. Roughly 80% of families have opted into the rental program. At its peak, 10,000 children benefited from the National Textbook Programme. Students who require additional textbooks can purchase them at privately owned bookstores on the island (Global Book Alliance, 2022). In 2018, the National Textbook Programme committed over \$2 million towards procuring an additional 40,143 primary and secondary school textbooks. The preceding year, \$400,000 was invested in textbook purchases (NOW Grenada, 2018).

Starting in 2020, it was announced that both textbooks and eBooks would be used concurrently. In 2020, the MoE distributed tablets preloaded with curricular content and educational apps to every primary and secondary school student (Global Book Alliance, 2022). These e-books cater to students' audio-visual learning needs through blended learning strategies (RealFM Grenada, 2020). Additional tablets were acquired from FortunaPix, the e-content developer, and through grant funding from the GPE under the OECS Academic Recovery Programme.

All schools were equipped with internet access, and the MoE introduced the MStar Learning Support Platform, a web-based teaching and learning platform. This platform features a virtual classroom, activities, and curricular content that students can access at home. The tablets are rented for \$50, with a discounted

rate of \$25 for students enrolled in the National Textbook Programme (Global Book Alliance, 2022).

The National Textbook Programme highlights the MoE's commitment to fostering a learning environment conducive to ECD by promoting equitable access to education and technological resources in schools across Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique.

Increased Internet Accessibility

As part of their commitment to increase internet accessibility, the NDC established an Internet Exchange Point in Grenada, expanding access points across twelve communities (NDC, n.d.-b). This service has significantly benefited students, especially those sitting exams, by improving their access to Information Technology and Education.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

In 2023, the Planning, Development, and Technical Services department developed and approved the Strategy for the Enhancement of TVET in Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique. The TVET Expansion Programme was initiated and is now underway in over 15 primary schools. In 2024, the programme's key priorities include enhancing educational infrastructure and diversifying curricula in primary schools to ensure equal access and opportunities for both genders. There is also a focus on strengthening teacher capacity to deliver inclusive courses at both primary and secondary levels. Additionally, promoting equitable access to educational technology to enhance literacy and digital learning is a priority. Furthermore, the programme aims to initiate rehabilitation, expansion, or construction work on twenty-three priority educational institutions.

Grenada Education Enhancement Project

With \$612 million in concessional loans and grants, the Government of Grenada plans to allocate additional resources to healthcare, water and sanitation, education, and climate resilience (Government of Grenada, 2023b). As part of this endeavour, the CDB is collaborating with the Grenada Education Enhancement Project (GEEP) to renovate and construct primary schools across

the island. The primary objective of the GEEP initiative is to improve the quality of basic education in Grenada. It involves updating teaching and learning methods, enhancing educational facilities, and strengthening the capacity of the education system to adapt to changing circumstances. The St. Andrew's Anglican Primary School and the Grenada Christian Academy in Pearls, St. Andrew, are among the schools set to benefit from this project. Additionally, the School Infrastructure Enhancement Project aims to construct the Florida Government School and St. Giles Anglican School (Government of Grenada, 2023a).

School Administration and Management Unit

The School Administration and Management Unit aims to offer high-quality leadership and develop, implement, and evaluate school systems and policies. These systems and policies guide education administration in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and special education schools, ensuring quality education for all students. This Unit has outlined priorities for 2024, which include implementing the Healthy Start Nutritional Programme (HSNP), establishing an ECE Council, and enhancing parental capacity through gender-responsive programmes and interventions (including promoting parents' engagement to support children with Special Education Needs) (Government of Grenada, 2023a).

Programme for Educational Advancement and Relevant Learning

The Programme for Educational Advancement and Relevant Learning (PEARL) project, funded by the GPE and the CDB, has an implementation period from July 2021 to August 2025. PEARL focuses on improving the access and quality of education for students in primary schools, spanning from kindergarten through Grade 6. The five components of PEARL include refurbishment of ECE centres, professional development training, development of a new digitised OECS Harmonized Primary Curriculum (OHPC), implementation of a monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning data collection, analysis, and reporting system, and change management. In 2024, \$2.5 million was allocated for the implementation of PEARL.

Sweets Ban

In 2020, Grenada banned the sale of carbonated beverages and sweet snacks in schools to reduce sugar consumption and combat youth overweight and obesity rates. Despite a decrease in undernutrition among children under five years old, there is a growing concern about the rising prevalence of overweight and obesity (Straker, 2019b).

Sports Programme

On March 17, 2022, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Sports collaborated to devise a new sports programme to address obesity in selected primary and school schools (Byron, 2022).

International Programmes

Safe To Learn

Safe to Learn is a global initiative aimed at ending violence against children in and around schools (Safe to Learn Coalition, 2021). It acknowledges that more than 246 million children around the world experience physical, sexual, and emotional violence in various contexts: at home, in school, during commute to school, and online (Safe to Learn Coalition, 2021). Violence in and around school settings has detrimental impacts on educational achievement and investments.

The initiative addresses various forms of violence, including:

- Abuse by teachers and school staff. It includes CP, harsh psychological punishment, sexual exploitation, and bullying.
- Peer violence within and around schools. It includes bullying, gender-based, and online harassment.
- Violence within the home and family environment. It recognises that teachers and other school personnel are often the first point of contact outside the immediate family context. They are first responders who carry the responsibility of identifying and responding to signs of violence or abuse.

- Community violence, such as gang-related violence and armed violence outside conflict zones.
- Attacks on schools, defined as deliberate threats or forceful actions for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, religious, or criminal motives against students, educators, and educational institutions.

Ending violence in and around schools refers to two aspects. The first aspect looks at ending all forms of violence occurring at school, on school grounds, during school commutes, and in online activities related to school activities (Safe to Learn Coalition, 2021). The second aspect proposes utilising schools to address and reduce violence in children’s lives beyond the educational setting, including within the home and community, online, and among peers (Safe to Learn Coalition, 2021).

Member organisations of Safe to Learn have jointly developed a five-point Call to Action:

1. Implementing policy and legislation: National, regional, and local governments create and enforce laws and policies that protect children from all forms of violence in and around schools.
2. Enhancing prevention and response at the school level: Safe and gender-sensitive learning environments for children.
3. Influencing social norms and behaviour change: Understanding the far-reaching impacts of violence in schools and supporting actions that promote positive social norms to ensure schools are safe spaces.
4. Effectively allocating resources: Increased and better use of investments dedicated to ending violence at schools.
5. Utilising evidence to guide actions: Generate and use evidence on ways to effectively end violence in schools.

This Call to Action has prompted the development of a benchmarking tool to assess national, sub-national/district, and school-level efforts in preventing and addressing violence in and around schools. These benchmarks serve as the

diagnostic tool. Grenada has not implemented Safe to Learn at the time of this report.

Early Learners Programme

From 2015 to 2019, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Early Learners Programme (ELP) operated in Grenada and five other OECS member-states to improve literacy in primary schools. The programme trained teachers in reading instruction, expanded classroom libraries, and integrated decodable and levelled readers into language and literacy lessons. Decodable books focus solely on a single phonics pattern, while levelled books incorporate various phonetic patterns, sentence fluency, and vocabulary within a text (Global Book Alliance, 2022).

Most schools in Grenada have a school library, and numerous classrooms also have their libraries. Several schools have libraries featuring 800 to 1,000 books across various reading levels and genres due to the support of non-governmental organisations like Grenada Schools Inc. and Hands Across the Sea (Global Book Alliance, 2022). As part of the ELP, the Write to Read project was initiated to create culturally relevant books for children across the Caribbean. Caribbean Reads published 43 books in print and digital formats, which were distributed to participating schools throughout the region (Global Book Alliance, 2022).

**MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING, TOURISM,
CREATIVE ECONOMY, CULTURE, AGRICULTURE AND LANDS, FORESTRY,
MARINE RESOURCES AND COOPERATIVES**

Grenada Food and Nutrition Council

As a unit within the above Ministry, the Grenada Food and Nutrition Council (GFNC) is dedicated to promoting the health and well-being of the nation through informed food choices and healthy living. With a vision of creating a “Nation of healthy, food-secure people,” the GFNC plays a key role in shaping Grenada’s food and nutrition policies. Its responsibilities include advising on the National Food and Nutrition policy, monitoring and evaluating programs, implementing projects, and ensuring food quality in collaboration with relevant agencies. GFNC also provides expert guidance in reducing nutritional diseases, addressing food insecurity, and supporting vulnerable groups. Services include medical nutrition therapy, community outreach, training in healthy food preparation, fostering public health through education, nutrition counselling, monitoring low birth-weight babies and hosting health and nutrition workshops. Furthermore, the GFNC conducts assessments in geriatric care facilities, and food-related surveys in daycares and preschools (Grenada Food and Nutrition Council, n.d.).

The GFNC published its 2024 Daycare Survey Report, which evaluates the nutritional health status of children 3 months to 3 years in daycare centres across Grenada and Carriacou. The survey, conducted by GFNC’s Surveillance Department, assessed 854 children in 46 daycare centres (35 private, 11 government-assisted). According to the report, 93% of the children had normal BMI-for-age. The report highlighted concerns over the rising rates of overweight/obesity (6.4%) and stunting (6.8%), especially among boys. Disparities were noted, with Carriacou and St. Andrew showing higher rates of obesity and stunting. The report indicated that private daycare centres had higher stunting rates (7.2%) compared to government centres (5.8%). The report noted that government daycares had higher rates of overweight and obesity (7.3%) (NOW Grenada, 2024).

The GFNC's 2023 Daycare Survey Report which assessed 951 children (479 boys and 472 girls) between 3 months to 3 years, found that 92% (875 children) had a normal BMI-for-age. However, 18.4% were at risk of becoming overweight, with a slightly higher number of girls (52.2%) compared to boys (47.8%). The survey also found that 8% of the children had abnormal BMI levels. Sixteen children (1.7%) were classified as wasted or severely wasted, with boys making up 56% of this group. Sixty children (6.3%) were overweight or obese, with boys being more affected. Private daycare centres had higher stunting rates (6.46%) than government centres (3.6%). The report noted that government daycares had higher rates of overweight and obesity (6.6%) compared to private daycares (6.2%) (Grenada Food and Nutrition Council, 2023). Compared to 2022, the 2023 report indicated an increase in children with normal BMI, rising from 89.3% to 92%. Overweight rates decreased from 6.7% to 4.6%, and obesity from 2.5% to 1.7%. However, more children were found to be at risk of becoming overweight (18.4% in 2023 vs. 16% in 2022). Wasting and stunting rates have also slightly increased, with stunting showing a significant rise over the past three years (Grenada Food and Nutrition Council, 2023).

Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy

The Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy (2016) guides the Government of Grenada, parents, caregivers, healthcare workers, businesses, and the community to promote optimal feeding practices for infants and young children. By improving maternal, infant, and child nutrition, the policy aims to enhance child health outcomes, reduce malnutrition, lower rates of childhood illness and death, and decrease national healthcare costs related to chronic diseases in later life (Grenada Food and Nutrition Council, 2016).

Guided by the vision of “A healthy and productive population with reduced morbidity and mortality among infants and young children”, the Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy Framework aims to provide adequate nutrition to support growth, development, and overall health for all infants and young children in Grenada by creating supportive and sustainable environments that reduce undernutrition, overweight, obesity, and related health issues (Grenada Food and Nutrition Council, 2016).

The Policy was developed through collaboration between the Grenada Food and Nutrition Council (GFNC), the Ministry of Health, and other stakeholders, in response to several nutritional and health issues among Grenada's youngest and most vulnerable population. These issues include the high number of low-birth-weight infants, low rates of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, poor complementary feeding practices, high anaemia rates among one-year-olds, hospitalizations for failure to thrive in young children, and rising rates of overweight children between six months and five years (Grenada Food and Nutrition Council, 2016).

The Policy aligns with UNICEF recommendations and targets set by the WHO, the SDGs, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and Grenada's Food and Nutrition Security Policy. The Policy outlines principles for promoting the nutritional well-being of infants and young children from birth to 24 months. There are eight key objectives of the policy which include influencing policy and programme development, providing timely and accurate information on infant feeding practices to women of childbearing age, achieving Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative certification across all maternal and child health services, implementing the Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, increasing support for breastfeeding in businesses and communities, raising public awareness about the benefits of proper feeding practices, offering pregnant women evidence-based information on infant feeding related to HIV and HTLV, and providing ongoing support to mothers and infants based on their chosen feeding method (Grenada Food and Nutrition Council, 2016).

National School Feeding Programme/Healthy Start Nutrition Programme

According to the Grenada Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Assessment Mapping 2013, the parishes of St. Andrew, St. George, and St. Patrick collectively represent 74.5% of individuals vulnerable to food insecurity. Additionally, parishes of St. David, St. John, and St. Mark account for 23.4%. These parishes comprise 97.9% of the population vulnerable to food insecurity (Ministry of Education et al., 2015).

A 2014 GFNC survey of 2,483 children found that 3.9% of preschoolers ages 3 to 5 were overweight or obese, up from 2% in 2010. In a 2015 Daycare Survey of

786 children aged six months to three years, 3.4% were wasted, 3.4% were stunted, and 4.7% were overweight or obese, with a notable increase from 2.7% in 2012. 16.3% were at risk of being overweight or obese. The 2008 Global School Health Survey reported that 7% of students ages 13 to 15 experienced hunger due to lack of food at home, 42.7% were sedentary, and only 15.2% were active (Ministry of Education et al., 2015).

The National School Feeding Programme, which began in 1950, aims to ensure that children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds in pre-schools, primary schools, and secondary schools receive a nutritionally adequate meal. At the outset, the School Feeding Programme provided milk, crackers, or cookies to primary school children. As the years progressed, support from governmental, international funding agencies and local non-governmental organisations has allowed the programme to include pre-schools (some daycare institutions) and certain secondary schools, providing hot meals. Currently, the programme covers all primary schools, attached preschools, some unattached preschools, and 14 out of 22 secondary schools. Meals are typically prepared on-site. The programme aims to raise awareness of the nutritional value of local foods, improve school enrolment and attendance, increase local food production at schools, and refurbish and upgrade school kitchens and dining facilities (Ministry of Education et al., 2015).

The Government of Grenada provides support to schools through monetary donations as well as supplying essential food items (e.g., chicken, fish, turkey, dried peas, powdered milk, oil, flour, rice, sugar, macaroni, onions, and tomato ketchup) every month—over 60% of the school population benefits from this programme, not only those who are disadvantaged. Meals were subsidised at \$1.00 in pre-primary and primary schools and \$2.00 at the secondary level, with \$0.25 of each dollar remitted to the Ministry monthly (Ministry of Education et al., 2015). As of 2024, under the Healthy Start Nutrition Programme, students in primary schools will no longer have to pay \$1.00 for meals. It is estimated that this programme will save parents of children in pre-, primary and secondary schools approximately \$2.7 million while ensuring that these children have access to nutritious and healthy food (Government of Grenada, 2023b).

In 2024, the National School Feeding Programme was rebranded as the Healthy Start Nutrition Programme. With a budget of \$3.5 million for full implementation, the programme aims to reduce hunger in schools and promote health, by providing students with nourishing meals. This programme addresses food insecurity among school-aged children, contributing to their overall health and well-being. The programme provides breakfast and/or lunch to 9,800 disadvantaged children ages six months to 18 years. As part of the National Zero-Hunger Project, it integrates primary health care into schools in collaboration with the GFNC. Currently, 1,923 students are involved in healthy eating activities monitored by the GFNC (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, AND GENDER AFFAIRS

The Ministry of Social and Community Development, Housing, and Gender Affairs is dedicated to improving the quality of life for the people of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique. Its mission is “To provide services geared towards equitable and sustainable improvement in the quality of life of the People of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique,” while its vision is “To become the vanguard and exemplary organisation for positive social development of the citizens of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique.”

The 2017-2030 Policy Agenda underscores the NDC’s commitment to social development, focusing on safeguarding vulnerable populations by addressing social, institutional, and systemic barriers that perpetuate socio-economic imbalances and inequalities. Regarding ECD, the policy agenda emphasises the reorganisation and enhancement of services within the Ministry of Social Development. It incorporates plans for implementing social development strategies encompassing family life and planning, child care and development services, family support services, child protection, and juvenile justice reforms. Moreover, the 2017-2030 agenda underscores the imperative for robust systems to protect women and children from all forms of violence. In the NDC 2022 Manifesto, the government reaffirms its dedication to social development by pledging to sustain social safety programs, notably highlighting the SEED programme (NDC, 2022).

The Early Childhood Unit (ECU) of the Ministry of Social Development oversees daycare and child development centres for children ages 0-3, using the HighScope Curriculum. The ECU monitors 45 centres and conducts annual health assessments. Although the Unit does not screen for developmental delays, staff monitor progress and refer children for evaluation if needed.

Key initiatives of the MoSD include the SEED programme, which began in 2012 and provides monthly cash transfers to 7,745 vulnerable households. These transfers support children’s education and also offer financial assistance to those with disabilities and those over 65. By reducing the financial burden on

families, SEED ensures that more children from disadvantaged backgrounds can access educational opportunities and resources.

Another initiative, the National Parenting Programme, established in 2007, educates and empowers parents and caregivers on child protection and parenting skills. The programme addresses key aspects of child development such as nurturing and safe parenting practices. The recent expansions in 2023, which include free transportation and childcare services, further enhance accessibility for families, enabling more parents to participate and benefit from the programme. This support helps create a more conducive environment for early childhood learning and development.

The Psycho-Social Support Unit also seeks to promote mental health through public education, counselling, and community-based services. By addressing mental health issues and providing support for stress management, the Psycho-Social Support Unit helps parents create nurturing home environments.

Early Childhood Unit

The Early Childhood Unit (ECU) within the Ministry of Social Development oversees daycare services and child development centres. It is led by a team of a supervising social worker, three field supervisors, and eleven centre supervisors (C. Courtney, personal communication, 2024). Specialising in children ages 0-3, ECU's Field Supervisors oversee one government-assisted and 12 government-run child development centres. The HighScope Curriculum is implemented across all daycare centres. The Curriculum promotes therapeutic stimulation, social-emotional learning, and academic growth through active, child-centred methods and structured daily activities. Field Supervisors use assessment tools to gauge the curriculum's effectiveness in promoting child development. The ECU also monitors and evaluates 45 public and private daycare centres using the Grenada National Standard. In collaboration with the GNFC, annual health assessments are conducted for all children attending these centres (C. Courtney, personal communication, 2024).

While the Ministry of Social Development does not conduct screenings for developmental delays, daycare staff closely monitor and work with children to

ensure they reach key developmental milestones. A referral is made to the Ministry of Education's SEU if further evaluation is needed. In cases of suspected or detected child abuse, the Ministry collaborates with the CPA to offer counseling services to affected children and families.

An inside look: Opened in 2020, the government-assisted Mount Horne Child Development Centre operates between the hours of 7 am and 5 pm and caters to underserved communities in St. Andrew. The centre aims to provide comprehensive ECD services through structured daycare, child protection, tailored early education programmes, and nurturing care. Centre Supervisor, Kathy Julien Ramsey, highlighted the centre's efforts in stimulating children's cognitive, motor, and language development through enriched activities and reduced teacher-to-child ratios (Smith, 2023b). Acting Permanent Secretary, Veronica Charles, underscored the centre's role in preparing children for a seamless transition into primary school (Smith, 2023b). Moreover, high-quality child development centres allow women in rural parishes to pursue higher education and careers.

Projects & Programmes

Support for Education, Empowerment, and Development

The Support for Education, Empowerment, and Development (SEED) programme began in 2012 by merging three initiatives: Public Assistance Programme, Necessitous Funds and the School Transportation Allowance Scheme (NOW Grenada, 2025). Managed by the Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment, SEED serves as the Government of Grenada's primary social safety net programme, providing monthly cash payments to aid the most vulnerable households. Beneficiaries include families with elderly members, individuals with chronic illnesses, school children from impoverished backgrounds, and PWDs. As of December 2024, 7,745 households have benefited from the programme (NOW Grenada, 2025).

SEED's conditional cash transfers to parents and guardians of eligible households in Grenada support children's access to education. Payments vary by age and educational level: \$50 for toddlers, \$75 for primary school students, \$100 for secondary school students, and \$200 for tertiary education (MoSD,

personal communication, 2024). In 2024, it was announced that SEED beneficiaries meeting specific criteria, such as physical disabilities, mental illnesses, or being 65 years and older, would receive a permanent increase of \$200 per month (Ministry of Social & Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs, 2024). Each household can receive up to a maximum of \$700 per month, regardless of the number of children or beneficiaries (MoSD, personal communication, 2024).

The 2024 budget allocated \$21 million to the SEED programme (Government of Grenada, 2023b) underscoring the government's commitment to supporting its most vulnerable citizens. The programme also offers housing and relocation support to the Cedars Home for Abused Women and their children when necessary. Cedars Home serves as both an emergency and medium-term shelter for victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) and their young children. However, the facility is not suitable for children and cannot accommodate boys over the age of 12 due to space and supervision limitations (Spotlight Initiative, 2019).

The National Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan

Between 2014 and 2019, significant efforts have been made to accelerate progress for women and girls through various laws, policies, and programmes. One major priority has been quality education, training, and lifelong learning for women and girls (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). The Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment (MoSD), with funding from UN Women and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), spearheaded the development of the Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (GEPAP). This was a collaborative process integrating the perspectives of civil society and the private sector. The GEPAP adopts a developmental, social justice, and human rights approach, engaging the Government, civil society, and the private sector to empower citizens, alleviate poverty, and promote national development, economic growth, and sustainable development (Government of Grenada, 2014).

GEPAP highlights the Government's commitment to promoting equal access to education and training in non-traditional fields. Women and girls are being

increasingly recognised as competent leaders; motivated to pursue career positions beyond traditional roles (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). GEPAP considers the biological, social, and cultural distinctions between Grenadian men and women. It aims to promote equality and equity by tailoring approaches to address specific gender needs in healthcare, education, employment, protection from discrimination, access to essential services, and justice. GEPAP seeks to enhance and promote the role of families as fundamental units in Grenadian society. GEPAP collects and organises data on gender equality, examines its effects on the life prospects of Grenadian men and women, and assesses Grenada's legal and policy framework (Government of Grenada, 2014).

Some of GEPAP's overarching aims are to shape gender-responsive policies, resource allocation, service delivery, and the monitoring and evaluation of gender equality and equity outcomes, gender-responsive entrepreneurship, and support civil society in advancing gender equality. GEPAP fosters dialogue, collaboration, and accountability among the state, private sector, and civil society for gender equality (Government of Grenada, 2014).

A key objective of this policy is to dismantle traditional barriers created by patriarchal discrimination. The government is committed to engaging primary socialisation institutions, including homes, schools, churches, and the media, to address harmful mindsets and foster positive relations between the sexes (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). GEPAP seeks to ensure the full and equal participation of men and women in the development process, assess the different realities, needs, challenges, and opportunities of women/girls and men/boys through gender analysis, identify and address gender gaps in various areas of political, economic, social, and cultural life, allocate necessary financial and human resources for gender-responsive budgeting and planning, and achieve equitable, effective, and sustainable outcomes in government, civil society, and private sector programmes/actions (Government of Grenada, 2014).

The MoSD engages in community work throughout Grenada, including organising annual campaigns like the 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence and International Women's Day, which aim to reach communities

across the island. Furthermore, initiatives like the Social Mobilization Project 2015/2016 have been implemented to challenge and change harmful gender stereotypes and myths by promoting positive norms. The Health and Family Life Education Curriculum for primary and secondary schools covers subjects such as equality, non-discrimination, and rights (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

National Parenting Programme

In 2007, the Parenting Unit at the Ministry of Social and Community Development, Housing, and Gender Affairs launched a National Parenting Programme designed to support, educate, and empower parents and caregivers on child protection and parenting skills. This programme is part of a broader initiative to positively influence social norms, attitudes, and behaviours at the community and national levels (Spotlight Initiative, 2021). The programme has been implemented across various community settings, including prisons, schools, and clinics. It involves extensive collaboration across sectors with partners such as the Spotlight Initiative, Ministries of Education and Health, and NGOs like the CPA, RCP, New Life Organization (NEWLO), Programme for Adolescent Mothers (PAM), and Grenada Education and Development Programme.

Previous training covered topics such as parenting support groups, child development stages, the importance of education, parental and children's roles and responsibilities, conflict resolution, and sexual and reproductive health (UNICEF Office for the Eastern Caribbean Area, 2017). Additional strategies such as radio advertisements and bus wrapping challenge harmful social norms and gender stereotypes. A 2020 report stated that these efforts reached approximately 25,000 individuals across Grenada (Spotlight Initiative, n.d.).

In partnership with the Spotlight Initiative and the European Union, a free parenting programme was launched across five parishes in October 2023 to promote healthier familial dynamics (“Empowering Families for Healthier Lives”, 2023). To enhance programme accessibility, support features such as free transportation, childcare services, and a formal graduation and awards ceremony were provided. A comprehensive interactive curriculum was

developed to enrich parental knowledge and practices (“Empowering Families for Healthier Lives”, 2023):

- Child Abuse Prevention: Types of child abuse, prevention, detection, and prevention tools and strategies.
- Fathers Make a Difference: As single-mother households are prevalent in Grenada, the need for co-parenting and active paternal involvement in child-rearing was explored.
- Discipline vs. Punishment: Effective disciplinary methods and differences between constructive discipline and punitive measures.
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Prevalence, forms, and strategies for parents to create safe homes and communities.
- Communication With Your Child: Effective communication tools to enhance connection and understanding in parent-child relationships.

The Parenting Unit offers support services to expectant and postpartum mothers at antenatal clinics. Psychotherapy is available through the Psycho-Social Support Unit upon referral. Despite the absence of information on official government offices, the public learns about these services through news outlets, the Ministry’s social media platforms, community engagements, flyers, and brochures.

Mental Health

Psycho-Social Support Unit

The Psycho-Social Support Unit within the Ministry of Social and Community Development, Housing, and Gender Affairs conducts initiatives to promote the mental health of Grenadians. Activities includes observance of global events like “World Suicide Prevention Day” and timely responses to local incidents such as suicides and murders which highlights a commitment to addressing mental health issues. The Unit raises awareness about mental health and seeks to provide support to those in need through the use of education campaigns and the provision of free resources.

Programmes within the Psycho-Social Support Unit highlight the importance of community-based mental health services in building resilience and promoting mental health. The Unit's efforts represent a significant step forward in building a society where mental health concerns are recognised, addressed, and supported. Through counselling support, the Psycho-Social Support Unit can assist parents in creating nurturing home environments which are important for ECD. In addition, the Unit can provide early intervention and support services that can help promote the well-being of future generations.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Libraries

Sheila Buckmire Memorial Library

The Sheila Buckmire Memorial Library, also known as the Grenada Public Library, was closed in 2011 after being deemed unfit for use by the MoE and MoH. Although the restoration process for this building was scheduled to commence in 2023, little progress has been made as of the time of this report (NOW Grenada, 2023). As part of the Public Library Modernization Project Phase I, \$0.25 million has been allocated to restore the library and establish a digital department.

This restoration project is particularly significant for ECD, as libraries help to promote literacy, creativity, and lifelong learning. They provide access to books and resources that positively impact language skills and overall literacy maintenance (Krolak, 2005). A revitalised library can enhance early childhood learning opportunities and contribute to the educational development of children throughout Grenada.

The Grenada Community Library

Established in 2014, the Grenada Community Library is a non-profit organisation that serves over 5,000 members. After a decade of relying solely on fundraising, the library recently received its first government funding, marking a significant milestone in its operations.

The library offers the Tiny Tots Programme, which is held in June for children from birth to age five. One of the goals of the Tiny Tots Programme is to prepare children ages two to three for preschool. This programme provides a stimulating change from the daily daycare environment. Activities include singing, reading, and outdoor play, exposing children to various sounds, textures, and colours. The library currently collaborates with four daycare centres and is open to all daycares on the island as well as to the general public. The After School Programme caters to preschoolers and children up to age ten,

operating Monday to Saturday. It includes homework assistance and motor skills activities, with children engaging in building with blocks, playing with toys, and solving puzzles. While parents are asked to pay a fee of \$75 to \$100, many children participate without paying.

During the Easter break, the library hosts an annual Easter Programme, featuring activities such as painting on river stones and Easter egg hunts, held outdoors for two weeks. Additionally, the Christmas Programme, known as “9 Days of Christmas,” engages children in creating Christmas cards, crafts, and tree decorations while incorporating arithmetic and language activities.

The Summer Programme runs for four to six weeks from Monday to Friday, including field trips. The theme for 2024 celebrated Grenada’s 50th independence anniversary by exploring the island’s history, food, and culture. Previous themes have included environmental conservation. The programme is supervised by qualified staff and is open to children ages 3 to 12.

The library faces challenges in accessibility and resources. The programmes are not currently accessible to children with disabilities. There is a need for more educational toys, laptops, computers, and tablets, as well as additional research desks. The library can also benefit from book donations, as many books still need to be returned. Free Wi-Fi is available, but visitors must bring their own electronic devices such as laptops and tablets.

The library employs three paid staff members: the manager, the library coordinator, and the children’s librarian. Volunteers from the university, T.A. Marryshow Community College, and the probation unit assist through community service hours. Currently, the library is situated in a building that is up for sale. Therefore, finding a permanent structure is important in allowing the library to continue to serve the community. Despite funding limitations, the Grenada Community Library remains committed to providing diverse educational programmes and expanding its resources, including those for young children (M. Warren, personal communication, 2024).

Local Non-Governmental Organisations

Grenada Save the Children Development Agency

The Grenada Save the Children Development Agency (GRENSAVE) is Grenada's oldest NGO focused on children and families. Operating since 1963, its mission is to provide support, guidance, education, and advocacy to improve the quality of life for all children, support vulnerable children, and build capacity for young mothers in Grenada. Initially, GRENSAVE aimed to alleviate problems contributing to high infant mortality rates and improve educational attainment among children. GRENSAVE now addresses broader community development and promotes self-sufficiency (Inter Agency Group of Development Organisations, n.d.).

Its achievements include establishing a rural nutrition programme, a student sponsorship programme, four daycare centres, and founding the Grenada Coalition on the Rights of the Child (GNCRC). The organisation has also operated youth clubs and launched women's income-generating projects, such as the Pearls Women Coconut Oil Project and the Sauteurs Women Sewing and Craft Project. Other initiatives include managing the PAM, providing adolescent counselling, running a Big Brother/Big Sister mentorship programme, youth drop-in centres, and annual children's Christmas parties (Inter Agency Group of Development Organisations, n.d.).

GRENSAVE's current projects and services include the Pearls primary school, an annual children's summer camp, after-school programmes, a library programme, and the River Sallee Children Development Centre. The organisation also runs a Women's Income Generating Project and maintains the Student Sponsorship Programme supported by Jean Augustine and J.J. Robinson Trust. Ongoing priorities include staff training and development and revitalising the Ex-sponsored Students' Association. GRENSAVE supports the less fortunate by providing food, clothing, shoes, used school books, and household items through public contributions. Furthermore, GRENSAVE also refers child abuse cases to relevant authorities and offers guidance to those in need (Inter Agency Group of Development Organisations, n.d.).

Reach Within

Reach Within provides support for children, adolescents, and young adults who have experienced trauma, neglect, and abuse. Reach Within is grounded in resiliency research and positive psychology and aims to empower individuals and communities through recovery and secure attachments. This initiative uses activities like mindful breathing and movement to regulate the nervous system and enhance emotional well-being in safe environments. Its programmes cater to individuals of all ages and addresses trauma's long-term impacts and promotes community engagement. Key initiatives include the Self-Regulation Programme for children, which focuses on resilience and boundaries, and the Caregiver Certification Programme, which equips caregivers with trauma-informed care strategies, insights into brain changes, methods for creating harmonious environments, and techniques to support children's resilience and recovery through healing approaches (Reach Within, n.d.).

GRENCASE: Roving Caregiver Programme

The Grenada Citizen Advice & Small Business Agency (GRENCASE) is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation dedicated to tackling unemployment and economic challenges in marginalised communities. GRENCASE coordinates programmes that help to promote skill development and entrepreneurial growth. GRENCASE aims to empower youth and women.

The Roving Caregiver Programme (RCP), an initiative under GRENCASE, embodies the motto of "No Child Left Behind." Its mission is to provide early childhood intervention services to children from birth to age three and their families in impoverished rural communities. Originating in Jamaica, the RCP employs a robust and evidence-based approach to enhance child-rearing practices. Informed by the Conscious Discipline and Saving Brains Grenada Curriculum, interventions prioritise culturally and developmentally appropriate strategies such as infant stimulation, fostering nurturing and responsive parent-child relationships, and offering parental education and skill-building activities. The RCP aims to achieve outcomes such as quality care, life skills development, enhanced health and nutrition, and improved educational attainment.

Grenada Community Development Agency

Established in 1986, the Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA) is committed to enhancing the lives of rural families in Grenada. GRENCODA's programme delivery focuses on supporting vulnerable individuals and communities through people centred initiatives that foster self-reliance. The principles of equity, social justice, and inclusivity are used to uplift the lives of traditionally marginalised groups such as rural residents, farmers, artisans, women, and youth. Notable achievements include launching the Legal Aid and Counselling Clinic (LACC) in 1988, establishing the Student Assistance Programme in 1986 for educational access, and leading the Coastal Resource Management Project from 1996 to 1997. Collaboration with local, regional, and international organisations is integral to GRENCODA's operational strategy (Caribbean Policy Development Centre, n.d.).

GRENCODA engages in community initiatives that positively impact the families of young children both directly and indirectly. One of their programmes is the annual Grenada Youth/Children Empowerment Programme (GYCEP) held during the summer months. Designed for children ages 7 to 17, GYCEP offers a safe haven to children of working parents. The programme offers a wide range of activities focused on life skills, educational enrichment, occupational exploration, and professional development activities to support both children and adolescents in their growth and learning (A. Boldeau, personal communication, 2024).

GRENCODA offers programmes on small business and entrepreneurial development. This is achieved by conducting family diagnostics in rural areas to help families develop sustainable sources of income (A. Boldeau, personal communication, 2024). The primary aim of this programme is to improve the economic stability and sustainability of underprivileged families. By working closely with each family, GRENCODA identifies the unique talents and skills of each family member to support their livelihood projects. Families may also have the opportunity to receive a loan from the Grenada Co-operative Bank to kickstart their business ventures (A. Boldeau, personal communication, 2024). In addition, GRENCODA supports families in creating backyard gardens to

address the dietary needs and combat malnutrition of their children. These gardens can also provide a secondary source of income.

GRENCODA offers counselling sessions for parents of vulnerable adolescents at the secondary school level. The Adolescent Motivational and Psychosocial Programme moves children from the standard school environment to a retreat setting (A. Boldeau, personal communication, 2024). Adolescents learn how to succeed despite life challenges, avoid conflict with the law, and learn study skills. If an adolescent shows signs of delinquent behaviours, GRENCODA offers counselling services through LACC and their partnerships with the Ministry of Social Development (A. Boldeau, personal communication, 2024).

Caribbean Association for Youth Development

Founded in 2010, the Caribbean Association for Youth Development (CAYD), previously known as the Caribbean Youth Empowerment Agency, is a non-profit organisation that advocates for the needs of young people in Grenada and the wider Caribbean. CAYD's mission is to prepare and inspire the next generation of leaders by providing them with the necessary tools for constructive engagement and social participation. Rooted in sustainable development, CAYD is committed to fostering collaboration, advocating for change, promoting volunteerism, and advancing educational initiatives. CAYD has an active social media presence on Facebook and posts educational material and youth development opportunities, and celebrates commemorative days like World Children's Day.

Autistic Foundation of Grenada

Established in 2015, The Autistic Foundation of Grenada Inc. (AFG) is dedicated to raising awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder in Grenada, Petite Martinique, and Carriacou. The Foundation provides early screening diagnostic services and specialised developmental programmes designed for children with autism and other developmental delays (Autistic Foundation of Grenada, n.d.). Internationally validated assessment tools such as the ADOS, the Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers-Revised (M-CHAT-R), and the Early Childhood Direction Center Developmental Checklist are used to screen children for autism (T. Martin, personal communication, 2024).

Through a holistic approach incorporating play therapy and life skills, the Foundation collaborates with children, parents, educators, and government entities to tailor interventions precisely to each child's unique needs to support socio-emotional and cognitive developmental growth within safe, inclusive, and nurturing environments. Using global prevalence rates, the AFG previously estimated that there are 1,000-2,000 persons in Grenada who may be impacted by autism spectrum disorder (Saving Brains Grenada Team et al., 2020). Since 2010, the AFG has facilitated an Early Childhood Intervention Programme, offering play therapy and nurturing learning environments tailored for children with autism and developmental delays. AFG is currently hosting a day programme for children with autism.

Grenada Down Syndrome Association

Founded in 2015, the Grenada Down Syndrome Association (GDSA) is a non-profit committed to enhancing the lives of individuals with Down Syndrome. With a mission to foster equality and inclusivity, the GDSA engages in initiatives that increase public awareness campaigns, family support, and educational and social opportunities to create pathways for education and social integration (Grenada Down Syndrome Association, n.d.) Leveraging social media, the association utilises its platform to inform the public about signature annual events like 'Walk Your Socks Off' to observe World Down Syndrome Day.

International Specialty Support

Children with special health needs benefit immensely from the expertise and resources offered by external specialists and organisations, such as the World Pediatric Project, CHORES, and Kingdom Workers.

CHORES

Established in 1987, the Children's Health and Organization Relief and Education Services (CHORES) is a non-profit health organisation based in Jacksonville, Florida. Their mission is to ensure that every child in the State of Grenada has access to essential health and support services, fostering hope for a brighter future.

Since 1989, specialist medical volunteers have previously made approximately three annual visits to Grenada, delivering around 70 million USD worth of healthcare services and supplies to the paediatric population and healthcare facilities. CHORES in collaboration with the Grenada health system, offers consultation, educational services, and medical equipment to improve paediatric care (CHORES, n.d.). Notably, over 80 children and young adults have received life-changing treatment and surgeries at the Wolfson Children’s Hospital through this partnership. To sustain their work, CHORES organises fundraising activities to cover expenses such as airline travel, accommodation, and transportation. It is noted that CHORES have not visited Grenada since 2023 (T. Martin, personal communication, 2024).

World Pediatric Project

Founded in 1999, the World Pediatric Project (WPP) is a nonprofit medical aid organisation with the mission “to heal more children by transforming access to advanced pediatric healthcare.” It was formed upon the realisation that 450 million children in low- and middle-income countries under five are unable to access basic, life-preserving surgical care. WPP works with governments and healthcare workers to ensure that these children can access safe and timely surgical care (World Pediatrics, n.d.).

St. Vincent and the Grenadines has been the World Pediatrics’ Regional Eastern Caribbean Hub since 2002. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the WPP established the Pediatric Surgical Center for Excellence, which is a facility for a paediatric operating theatre that opened in 2017. WPP has been active in St. Lucia since 2008 and has partnered with the Ministry of Health and local care providers to provide training opportunities, annual screening clinics, surgical programmes, and international referrals.

Patients from other Caribbean islands wishing to access healthcare services at the St. Vincent and the Grenadines hub, must cover their airfare and accommodations.

Kingdom Workers

Kingdom Workers is a global, non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting clean water, construction, disability care, family and social support, and health and sanitation initiatives. This organisation oversees the Cognitive Delay Assessment and Support programme in Grenada to provide assessment, accommodations, and alternative learning strategies to support children living with cognitive disabilities and delays. Volunteers are trained to use tools such as the Holistic Approach to Neurodevelopmental Learning Efficiency (HANDLE) to identify neurological sources of difference and to understand challenging behaviours. Kingdom Workers has served 369 persons in Grenada and 92% of parents who engage in their programming report feeling less overwhelmed in navigating their child's learning concerns (Kingdom Workers, n.d.).

Support groups and skills training are provided for parents, caregivers, schools, and teachers. The main goal of these groups is to teach adult caregivers ways to better communicate and interact with their children (Magsig, 2021). Teachers gain essential experience in working with children with special needs. Kingdom Workers has also hosted several events including a Sensory Day and the Special Needs Awareness Walk in October 2021.

Local And Visiting Specialists

St. George's University

St. George's University School of Medicine provides paediatrics training through a six-week clerkship programme, encompassing both in-patient and outpatient services. These placements ensure that medical students learn the skills necessary to deliver quality paediatric care. Within the emergency department and urgent care settings, students gain firsthand experience in conducting physical examinations and assessing infants and children with acute illnesses. Emphasis is placed on evaluating febrile illnesses and managing common childhood emergencies.

The clerkship placements span various sites, including the general paediatric unit, ambulatory care unit, paediatric emergency department, nursery, neonatal care unit, paediatric intensive care unit, and private office practices.

Private Paediatricians

Private medical residents and visiting paediatricians play a pivotal role in providing specialised paediatric care in Grenada. These professionals include Dr. Beverly Nelson, Dr. Tyhiesha Donald, and Dr. Kecia Lowe. Additionally, Dr. Martha Edwards, an occupational therapist, resides in Grenada for six months annually and accepts referrals for occupational therapy services.

Neurodevelopment Research

Caribbean Center for Child Neurodevelopment

The Caribbean Center for Child Neurodevelopment (CCCN) is a research centre under the purview of the Windward Islands Research and Education Foundation (WINDREF) at St. George's University. With the mission of advancing child neurodevelopment in the Caribbean and all tropical regions worldwide, the CCCN has four pillars: interventions, measurement and evaluation, public health, and policy advising. Since its formal establishment in 2018, this institution has supported ECD initiatives in Grenada. The Saving Brains Grenada arm of the CCCN has been operating locally since 2014.

Monitoring and Evaluation is a major pillar that supports research activities at the CCCN. The centre has spearheaded several studies that monitor the impact of infectious diseases on child neurodevelopment in Grenada. These investigations have included surveillance of Chikungunya Virus, Zika Virus, and coronavirus outbreaks. Longitudinal studies begin with expectant mothers to assess child exposure *in utero* to specific viruses. Child neurodevelopmental assessments begin at 12 months and continue annually until the child reaches five years of age. Locally registered nurses conduct health examinations to ensure children meet key health developmental milestones.

Due to a lack of regionally developed measures, internationally validated measures such as the Cardiff Vision Tests, Oxford Neurodevelopment Assessment (OX-NDA), INTERGROWTH-21st Neurodevelopment Assessment (INTER-NDA), Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment, Second Edition (NEPSY-II), and the Reynolds Intellectual Assessment Scales, Second Edition (RIAS-2) are used to monitor

child neurodevelopment. The Grenada Learning and Memory Scale (GLAMS) was developed to assess memory and learning in young children. Psychometric features of the GLAMS were collected on a sample of 90 Grenadian children. As of 2024, over 1,500 neurodevelopmental assessments have been conducted by the CCCN.

Previous analysis of test scores indicates that Grenadian children perform similarly to Euro-American peers. However, caution is advised when interpreting results since many of these tests are not standardised on a sample of Caribbean populations. While formal reports are not provided to parents and caregivers, they are promptly informed if test results raise concerns and are referred to public and private support systems. Upon study completion, parents receive a detailed letter outlining developmentally appropriate activities they can engage in with their children.

The CCCN's methodology uses a robust theory of change to create effective holistic and systemic interventions. From "bottom-up" initiatives, the CCCN recognises that healthy child neurodevelopment begins with the relationship between children and their adult caregivers. Interventions are informed by an evidence-based, trauma-informed social and emotional learning programme called Conscious Discipline (CD). CD coaching in homes, communities, and schools increases capacity for composure, self-regulation, safety, connection, problem-solving, attuned communication, and healthy conflict resolution. These factors build resilience to emotional stress and reduce the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), challenging childhood behaviours, and mental illness throughout the lifespan.

Capacity building is prioritised at the CCCN. Since 2014, our team has collaborated with the RCP, housed under the NGO GRENCASE, to promote non-violent child discipline through the Saving Brains Grenada project. To date, seven CD School Coaches and two internationally certified CD instructors have trained 205 Roving Caregivers and 250 pre-primary and primary school teachers. As of October 2023, these caregivers have provided CD training to 2,183 children. In addition, CCCN has conducted several public workshops on neurodevelopment, childhood trauma, and managing difficult behaviours and emotions; the most recent, "Responding to Anger and Rage," drew over 200

participants, most of whom were from Ministries of Education and Social Development. A free online CD foundation course is offered bi-annually and has been attended by participants from 19 countries.

Through its “top-down” initiatives, the CCCN conducts public health campaigns and policy advising. In 2022, Saving Brains Grenada partnered with UNICEF and the Spotlight Initiative to produce a series of public service announcements that promote healthy alternatives to violence. Recognizing that family violence and harmful child-rearing practices can detrimentally impact healthy brain development, the CCCN utilised the composure skill of CD to advocate for individuals to “S.T.A.R.” — Stop, Take a deep breath, And Relax — when encountering challenging emotions. A jingle, composed by two local Soca artists, Luni Sparks and Electrify, was created to promote the S.T.A.R. technique, and four short videos were disseminated on local radio and television channels.

CLUBS/ORGANISATIONS FOR CHILDREN

This section highlights key clubs and organisations dedicated to the development and empowerment of children and youth in Grenada. These groups offer a variety of programs and activities designed to build skills, foster self-esteem, and promote community involvement.

Guiding Movements

The Girl Guides Association of Grenada involves girls and young women ages three and up, boasting a membership of 2,500. Although Girl Guides is non-governmental, it receives support from the Ministry of Education and other government ministries, mainly operating in primary and secondary schools and TAMCC. The Girl Guides focuses on boosting self-esteem, curbing violence, and engaging girls in social and environmental issues. Initiatives like “Free Being Me” aim to enhance body confidence, while the “Voices against Violence” curriculum addresses violence against women and girls (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

4H Club

Supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the National Zero Hunger Challenge Initiative, 4H (head, heart, hands, and health) was introduced to Grenada in 1959 and is part of a global network offering youth experiences in health, science, agriculture, and citizenship.

The 4H movement in Grenada focuses on engaging youth to reach their full potential through practical learning in agriculture, environment, health, and leadership.

4H operates in over 70 schools and provides hands-on projects like poultry raising, tree planting, gardening, and workshops. Parents are encouraged to involve their children in 4H to learn about food origins and nutrition (NOW Grenada, 2019).

The Grenada Scouts Association

The Grenada Scouts Association, founded in 1924, engages boys and girls in activities promoting teamwork, leadership, and outdoor skills. In 2011, there were approximately 1,378 members in Grenada and its local chapter has been a member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement since 1979 (Scout, 2011).

The Boys' Brigade

The Boys' Brigade offers character-building activities and promotes Christian values among boys through drills and fun activities (The Boys' Brigade, n.d.). The Boys' Brigade was introduced in Grenada in 1898 (Boys Brigade, Skill Acquisition Center, 2024). Its objectives include fostering obedience, reverence, discipline, and self-respect (The Boys' Brigade, n.d.).

Despite this information about the Boys' Brigade Grenada, it has been reported that there has not been contact with them for some time. There have been discussions within the region about having someone travel to Grenada to seek contact, but this has not yet been done (Capt. K. Perry, personal communication, 2024).

Young Women's Christian Association Grenada

The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Grenada is part of the World YWCA network, which operates in 106 countries. Established in 1889, YWCA Grenada empowers young women and girls through diverse programmes and services. YWCA offers classes in basic sewing, cake decoration, baking, cooking, crocheting, knitting, floral arrangement, computer courses, and sign language. YWCA hosts an annual summer school, a children's Christmas party, and an after-school library programme.

In addition, YWCA runs community projects, such as HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and farming projects, and offers safe spaces where women and girls can discuss issues like sexual health, stigma, discrimination, and unemployment (The Connection, n.d.).

ONGOING INTERSECTORAL COLLABORATIONS

This section provides an overview of the various collaborative efforts aimed at responding to issues affecting children in Grenada. These ongoing and/or potential intersectoral collaborations help to support ECD in Grenada by creating safer, more supportive environments for young children to grow and learn.

Mental Health

In January 2024, Young Caribbean Minds, in collaboration with USAID, Let's Unpack It, The University of the West Indies, and UNICEF, created and published the *Directory of Government Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services: A Child and Youth-Friendly Version*. This directory is available in both hard and soft copy formats.

The content is organized into sections that include Education, Health, Justice, Child Protection and Social Services, and Emergency and Disaster Response. This directory provides details about the different mental health and psychosocial support services offered by various organizations and institutions, in addition information about their accessibility for individuals with mobility challenges, instructions for accessing the services, the target audience, and the location and contact information for each service. Approximate wait time and duration of service sessions are also included.

The online version of the directory is available for download at <https://www.youngcaribbeanminds.com/reachout473>.

Violence Against Women and Children

The Government of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique, in partnership with Civil Society, have made strides in legislation, policy frameworks, and national action plans to combat gender inequality and protect the human rights of women and girls. Grenada has prioritised addressing various forms of violence against women and girls. IPV, including sexual violence and marital rape, has been a focal point, along with combating sexual harassment and violence in public spaces, educational settings, and workplaces. Additionally,

efforts have targeted violence facilitated by technology, such as cyber violence and online stalking, with the enactment of the Electronic Crimes Act in 2013 and subsequent public awareness campaigns (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

Grenada has taken steps to address trafficking in women and girls, including the enactment of the Trafficking in Persons Act in 2014. To combat violence, the country has introduced or updated national action plans, enhanced survivor services, implemented prevention strategies in education, media, and communities, conducted monitoring and evaluation, and increased awareness among stakeholders responsible for ending violence against women and girls (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). Despite these efforts, violence against women and girls remains a pervasive issue (Spotlight Initiative, 2019).

The Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment (MoSD) has demonstrated ongoing commitment through the implementation of laws, policies, procedures, and mechanisms to respond to GBV (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

From 2012 to 2015, the Project State Response to End Violence Against Women facilitated several training workshops and awareness campaigns. Key sectors, including health, education, law enforcement, the legal fraternity, media, NGOs, community-based organisations, and faith-based organisations, received training and sensitization on GBV. The media has emerged as a significant ally in these efforts. The MoSD also engages with various groups, such as schools, churches, youth organisations, and parenting groups, to promote the message of ending GBV. Initiatives such as the “I Respect You, You Respect Me” and “#IRepNonViolence” campaigns have aimed to foster positive interactions among women, men, boys, and girls to eradicate GBV (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

These efforts help in protecting women and girls and creating a healthier environment for children. IPV not only harms adults but also significantly impacts children, increasing their risk of abuse and other ACEs. For instance, the link between domestic violence/IPV and child abuse is well-established. Witnessing IPV can lead to severe psychological and emotional trauma for

children, including poor physical health, substance use, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress (Dube et al., 2002; Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, n.d.). Exposure to IPV notably reduces children’s likelihood of being in excellent health by 7% and increases their risks of hearing and respiratory problems, as well as long-term health conditions (Jofre-Bonet et al., 2024). Furthermore, this exposure can lead to developmental delays, learning difficulties, behavioural issues, and chronic health problems. ACEs, including witnessing violence in the home, can also result in toxic stress, negatively impacting brain development, immune function, and stress response, which can persist into adulthood, leading to relationship difficulties, unstable work histories, and health issues (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024).

By addressing GBV and violence in general, Grenada is making significant strides in mitigating ACEs and fostering a safer, more supportive environment for children.

Grenada Spotlight Initiative

Launched on March 5, 2020, the Grenada Spotlight Initiative aims to eradicate family violence and all forms of violence against women and girls by increasing awareness, coordinating actions, and strategically deploying resources (Spotlight Initiative, 2019; Spotlight Initiative, 2021). Developed through consultations with the Government, Civil Society, and a technical team from International Labour Organization (ILO), UNICEF, UNDP, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women, and PAHO/WHO, the initiative focuses on six key pillars, particularly emphasising prevention and essential services. UNDP leads Pillars 2 and 5, while UN Women, UNICEF, and PAHO lead the other pillars (Spotlight Initiative, 2019).

Pillars of the Spotlight Initiative

Pillar 1: Legislation and Policy Frameworks

Pillar 2: Strengthening Institutions

Pillar 3: Prevention and Social Norms

Pillar 4: Delivery of High-Quality Essential Services

Pillar 5: Data Availability and Capacities

Pillar 6: Supporting the Women's Movement

The initiative aims to promote gender equality, peace, social inclusion, and human rights protection, contributing to sustainable development and inclusive growth. It aligns with the UN's Agenda 2030, the UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework, Grenada's Medium-Term Agenda, and the National Sustainable Development Plan 2035. By building on previous successes and tackling existing challenges, the Grenada Spotlight Initiative seeks to make substantial and enduring progress in ending violence against women and girls in Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique (Spotlight Initiative, 2019; Spotlight Initiative, 2021).

Men and boys are the primary perpetrators of GBV against women/girls and violence against other men/boys. This behaviour is influenced by societal expectations of masculinity, which emphasise traits like toughness, control, and dominance. Males are largely responsible for the violence and criminal activity (i.e., burglary, drug use, and weapon trafficking) in Grenada. This is exacerbated by the high dropout rate among males and their susceptibility to joining gangs and engaging in criminal behaviour (Government of Grenada, 2014).

Although males are often perpetrators of violence, they can also be victims of incest, CP, bullying, domestic violence, and other forms of violence. Many men don't report these incidents due to shame. Society aims to protect women and girls by imposing restrictions, but this approach undermines the equality and accountability of the perpetrators of violence. Additionally, there are inadequate support systems for addressing GBV and other forms of violence. This is compounded by law enforcement's insufficient response and insensitivity towards male victims (Government of Grenada, 2014).

Committees, Groups, Procedures, and Programmes

In 2017, Grenada established the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse (NCP CSA) to address child sexual abuse. This committee, comprised of various stakeholder agencies, conducted consultations and reviews, including a report titled "Situational Review of Child Sexual Abuse in

Grenada.” Recognizing the multifaceted impact of child sexual abuse, the committee submitted recommendations from the 2018 Assessment of Child Protection Mechanisms in Grenada to strengthen prevention efforts. These efforts included improved victim services and formal mechanisms to address various forms of violence. Key recommendations from the NCPSCA focused on advanced learning in psychology, scholarships for child psychology, gender-sensitive budgeting, a ban on CP, and enhanced services for teenage mothers. Additionally, the “NONE in Three” initiative aimed to reduce GBV, engaging partners such as Huddersfield University, Sweet-Water Foundation, and Grenada’s Ministry of Social Development (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

In 2019, Grenada’s National Gender Machinery incorporated child violence into its GBV response efforts. Strengthening interventions against domestic violence and child abuse emerged as a key priority in Grenada’s Medium-Term Agenda for 2019-2021 (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

In 2018, a Technical Working Group (TWG) was established by the Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment in collaboration with the Royal Grenada Police Force (RGPF) to develop a comprehensive response to IPV, sexual violence, and child abuse. The TWG identified roles, responsibilities, service gaps, and proposed parameters for a Sexual Offenders Registry. A subsequent High-Level Meeting outlined priorities for strengthening services and preventing GBV and child abuse, informing future action (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

In 2014, Grenada implemented a Health Care Sector Standard Operating Procedure for Gender-Based Violence. This protocol guides healthcare professionals in providing consistent and quality services to victims of GBV. It also includes instructions on handling medico-legal evidence (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

In 2017, the Girl Guides Association of Grenada introduced the “Voices against Violence” Curriculum to address violence against women and girls through preventive measures. This curriculum targets children and youth ages 5 - 25 and utilises non-formal education methods to educate them about GBV. Training

sessions were conducted for leaders of voluntary groups across the island, including Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, Red Cross, and 4H Groups (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). In addition, the Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment collaborated with the Ministry of Youth to implement an after-school programme for boys ages 8 to 14. This programme aims to raise awareness about the concepts of good touch, bad touch, and sexual violence.

The RGPF and the CPA have collaborated with schools to address Child Sexual Violence. They have organised walks and marches in different parishes, with students from schools actively participating in these events. The CPA has also implemented various prevention strategies in collaboration with stakeholders, focusing on raising awareness among the general population. In 2017, the CPA launched the All Against Child Abuse (AACA) Programme, which educates on abuse prevention and self-protection (Campbell, 2018; Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). It aimed to combat child, sexual, and other forms of abuse through an extensive information and education campaign. A key focus of the programme is enhancing parenting skills within the community to promote positive behaviour change. Engagements with schools, churches, and community groups have included panel discussions, motorcades, marches, and the introduction of a mascot to support the education campaign (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). The funding for the AACA ended in 2018 (Campbell, 2018).

In 2018, the CPA expanded the “Break the Silence” campaign into the “All Against Child Abuse” initiative. The GNCRC spearheads the Child Abuse and Awareness Month Programme (CAAMP), targeting schools and community forums with a primary focus on girls. Other efforts, like publishing a child abuse handbook and hosting media discussions, also contribute to safeguarding all children from abuse (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). Founded on October 17, 1993, the GNCRC advocates for children’s rights, protection, and development in Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique. The GNCRC has over 24 partners, including government ministries, NGOs, and service organisations. GNCRC is supported by technical and financial assistance from

the Government of Grenada and UNICEF, as well as contributions from local businesses (Grenada National Coalition on the Rights of the Child, n.d.).

The National Child Abuse Protocol, introduced in 2012, aligns with the Child (Protection and Adoption) Act of 2010. Additionally, the 2012 Amendment to the Criminal Code strengthens this framework by mandating the reporting of any child abuse (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

The Ministry of Health, with support from PAHO, developed the National Adolescent Health Policy and Plan in 2013. To address child abuse, efforts focus on providing adequate services for victims, holding offenders accountable, and preventing abuse (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). Schools and national activities/partnerships, like the Grenada Electricity Company School Debate and the Royal Bank of Canada Young Leaders Programme have also addressed issues such as violence against women and girls. The National Parenting Programme raises awareness about GBV in communities, involving both men and women. Community organisations, parent-teacher associations, and faith-based groups also organise events to prevent GBV, often collaborating with the GBVU (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

Various government entities and programmes in Grenada offer long-term support services to victims of IPV, child abuse, and sexual violence. These services, often accessed through referrals, include legal proceedings and accountability through the justice system, counselling services provided by the Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment, and support for child victims offered by the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, and Religious Affairs. Additionally, various government ministries provide financial and material safety net programmes. NGOs like the Legal Aid & Counselling Clinic, Sweet Water Foundation, and the Sexual Violence Helpline offer specialized services (such as counselling) with government support, contributing to comprehensive support for GBV victims (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

Gender Based Violence Unit

Services for survivors of GBV in Grenada are coordinated by the Gender Based Violence Unit (GBVU) within the Division of Gender and Family Affairs of the Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment, along with the CPA. Additionally, several other government entities are mandated to provide immediate assistance and support to victims of IPV, child abuse, and sexual violence. These include the Special Victims Unit (SVU) of the RGPF, Cedars Home for Abused Women and their Children, as well as various health services (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

In September 2018, the RGPF launched the SVU within the Criminal Investigations Department. This unit is dedicated to addressing cases of IPV, domestic violence, sexual violence, and child abuse. Staffed by trained police officers, the SVU operates in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, including the Revised Police Standing Orders. It provides direct support to victims, enhances responses at all police stations across the country, and engages in advocacy on these issues. Additionally, a dedicated hotline (#400) was created and is operated by the SVU. They also maintain a Domestic Violence Register (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

The Cedars Home for Abused Women and their Children offers emergency and medium-term shelter and care for victims of IPV and their young children, providing a haven during times of crisis. In 2017, all staff members at the Cedars received training to better assist clients. The training covered topics such as guidelines for supporting abuse victims, empowering survivors, understanding trauma, and promoting healthy relationships. Staff also learned about recognizing abuse, safety planning, and creating personal development plans. The training aimed to cultivate a culture of respect and non-violence within the shelter (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). Health services, including medical examinations, treatment, and care, are conducted to support survivors of GBV. Additionally, health professionals gather medico-legal evidence, contributing to comprehensive support and recovery services (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

Gender Equality

Grenada remains committed to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly its goals for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019). From 2010 to 2016, Grenada enacted several laws, policies, and protocols to combat violence against women and girls. These legislative measures include the Domestic Violence Act (No. 19 of 2010), the Child (Protection and Adoption) Act (No. 20 of 2010), and the Criminal Code Amendments (No. 29 of 2012), which introduced marital rape provisions. Additionally, the Electronic Crimes Act (No. 23 of 2013) and its amendments, along with the Revised Police Standing Orders (Statutory Rules and Regulation 19 of 2017), were established. The Electronic Crimes Bill is particularly significant as it addresses the exploitation of women and girls, ensuring that offenders are held accountable through fines or imprisonment. Policies and protocols implemented during this period include the National Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Protocol (2011), the Strategic Action Plan to Reduce GBV, the Health Care Sector Standard Operating Procedures for GBV (2014), the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) Standard Operating Procedures for GBV, and the GBV Unit Sexual Assault Response (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

To enforce these laws and policies, several key institutions were established, including the GBVU in the Division of Gender and Family Affairs of the Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment (formerly the Domestic Violence Unit), the CPA (established in 2012), and the SVU of the Criminal Investigations Department of the RGPF (established in 2018). Additionally, four health facilities nationwide were identified to support the system, and a shelter for abused women and their children was established (Division of Gender and Family Affairs, 2019).

Juvenile Justice

The OECS Commission's efforts in Juvenile Justice within the Eastern Caribbean align with the region's Social Development goals, focusing on facilitating social reintegration and creating inclusive communities (OECS, 2022a). This initiative specifically targets individuals involved in criminal activities, aiming to reduce

repeat offences. Grenada was the first Caribbean country to draft and implement legislation based on the OECS Child Justice Model Bill (Convention against Torture Initiative Secretariat, 2020).

In May 2019, Grenada's government, along with the OECS Commission and USAID, signed a Memoranda of Understanding to strengthen juvenile justice systems and support the reintegration of Youth in Conflict into society (Campbell, 2020). Grenada was among six CARICOM nations participating in the OECS's Juvenile Justice Reform Programme (JJRP). The JJRP, spanning from 2011 to 2022 in two phases, aimed to divert, rehabilitate, and reintegrate child offenders for a stable future (OECS, 2022b). This programme aimed to enhance juvenile justice systems with an emphasis on the rehabilitation and reintegration of youths 18 years and younger who are involved in legal disputes (Convention against Torture Initiative Secretariat, 2020).

The first phase, from 2011 to 2016, funded by US\$5.8 million from USAID and US\$1.6 million in counterpart funding, achieved significant milestones such as renovating the Grand Bacolet Juvenile Rehabilitation and Treatment Centre, staff training, professional development, procurement of vocational tools, and improving data management (Campbell, 2020). It focused on enhancing the legal framework, capacity building, modernising processes, and strengthening civil society linkages (Campbell, 2020).

JJRP II (phase two), launched in 2017 and completed on June 30th, 2022, built upon the successes of phase one. Through JJRP II, the OECS aimed to strengthen juvenile justice systems to enable the rehabilitation and reintegration of youth involved in legal disputes. Through collaboration with various stakeholders, the OECS Commission aimed to provide support services to targeted youth. Significant progress was made during JJRP Phase II, including the passage of child justice legislation in Grenada, and the development of a framework for diversion, rehabilitation, and reintegration, which is being implemented across OECS member states, including Grenada (OECS, 2022a).

JJRP II successfully diverted over 570 children from the court and trained over 1,400 service providers across the OECS for diversion and rehabilitation. Infrastructure and programmes were established to support the rehabilitation

of children ages 12 to 17, steering them away from the adult justice system (OECS, 2022b). Additionally, with USAID support, the Ministry of Social Development, Housing, and Community Empowerment has established a juvenile justice unit within the ministry (Campbell, 2020).

Grand Bacolet Juvenile Rehabilitation and Treatment Centre

The Grand Bacolet Juvenile Rehabilitation and Treatment Centre opened in April 2016. It is designed to serve all children needing treatment interventions, including those under secure or open residential sentences, community sentences, or diversion day programmes. The facility also offers non-residential services for children needing care and protection, prioritising treatment and rehabilitation over incarceration (Sealy-Burke, 2016). It accommodates boys and girls either in conflict with the law or needing protection, all requiring secure treatment. This includes those with chronic behavioural or conduct disorders, irrespective of legal charges (Sealy-Burke, 2016).

Family Court

Grenada does not have a dedicated Family Court. Consequently, there is no centralisation or specialisation for cases involving young offenders. Instead, these cases are heard in Magistrates Courts and at the High Court level. “Juvenile days” are set aside each month solely for these cases, streamlining court proceedings for juvenile matters. A Family Court would enhance the systemic response to vulnerable children by integrating social services with judicial processes (Sealy-Burke, 2016).

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment (CP) is a prevalent form of child discipline throughout the Caribbean. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child defines corporal or physical punishment as “any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light” (United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, n.d.). Decades of research show that regardless of its severity, frequency, or intent, CP is ineffective and detrimental to all facets of child development (Landon et al., 2023).

The legal status of CP in Grenada is characterised by inconsistencies within the legislative framework. While the Juvenile Justice Act of 2012 explicitly prohibits certain forms of punishment, stating that “a sentence of flogging or whipping shall not be imposed on a child,” ambiguity persists due to inconsistent sentence provisions in the Criminal Code of 1958. The Criminal Code has not yet repealed CP used as “justifiable force” or for the purpose of “correction”.

The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (2019) notes that CP has not been prohibited in the Child (Protection and Adoption) Act of 2010. However, amendments have restricted CP in child care services, which include “(a) a boarding home; (b) a group home; (c) a foster home; (d) a residential home; (e) a training centre; (f) an assessment centre; (g) a children home; or (h) such other service; approved by the Minister pursuant to this Act to provide for the care of children.”

Under the Education Act of 2002, CP may be administered to students only if another form of discipline is deemed unsuitable or ineffective. It specifies that disciplinary measures should not be degrading or injurious. The Act outlines conditions for administering CP: it must be carried out by the principal, deputy principal, or a designated teacher; it should occur in the principal’s office or another private room in the school; an instrument prescribed in the regulations must be used; it must conform with written guidelines provided by the Chief Education Officer; and only female authority can punish female students. Additionally, all cases of CP must be documented in a punishment log detailing the nature, extent, and reasons for administering CP.

CP is a prevalent form of child discipline in many home settings. To reduce CP in the home, Saving Brains Grenada has been working since 2015 to educate caregivers on non-violent forms of discipline using the SEL-informed CD curriculum. A pilot study by Waechter et al. (2022) noted limited changes in CP-related behaviours and attitudes among caregivers. Both control and intervention groups of the pilot study showed a high prevalence of physical punishment, with the majority using it within the past week, according to the locally developed Attitudes to Corporal Punishment Questionnaire. However, there was a statistically significant increase in tolerance and acceptance of child behaviour post-intervention based on responses to the Home Observation

Measurement of the Environment - Acceptance Subscale (HOME-A). A subsequent quality assurance study highlighted discrepancies between caregivers' attitudes or beliefs and their actual disciplinary practices.

Several theories have been suggested to explain the cultural normativity of CP in the Caribbean. One perspective is that CP is a legacy of post-colonialism. Slaves were historically subjected to physical punishment to enforce submission. In the Caribbean, a culture of intergenerational violence has normalised violence as a valid form of discipline. Many parents who practise CP today were themselves subjected to it as children, potentially internalising its effects unconsciously. This historical context may contribute to the perpetuation of CP as a disciplinary practice. CP is a complex issue in the region that requires complex multi-level solutions.

SIDS and Climate Change

Formally recognised at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) refer to a unique group of countries that experience distinct social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities. The UN recognises 39 States and 18 Associate Member Nations as SIDS, whose combined population is 65 million, which is less than 1% of the global population (United Nations Office of the High Representative of the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States [UN-OHRLLS], n.d.). SIDS are located in three geographic regions: the Caribbean, the Pacific, and the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and South China Sea.

The vulnerabilities of SIDS are tied to factors such as geographical remoteness, small yet expanding populations, limited land and natural resources, economic reliance on international funding, substantial debt levels, geographical isolation from global markets, heavy reliance on tourism and international trade, and heightened susceptibility to external and environmental shocks (UN-OHRLLS, n.d.).

Due to their size and geographic location, many SIDS experience the brunt of natural disasters, which are invariably linked to climate change. Despite

contributing less than 1% to global greenhouse gas emissions (McLean, 2024), Caribbean islands are increasingly vulnerable to intensifying storms, floods, droughts, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and landslides. These climate-related events not only pose existential threats but also impose significant social, economic, and psychological consequences that hinder sustainable development (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development et al., 2016). It is estimated that Caribbean islands spend \$12.6 USD billion per year on disaster relief efforts (Rozenberg et al., 2021). These nations have limited access to climate financing. For instance, SIDS only had access to \$1.5 billion USD out of \$100 billion pledged to developing countries in 2019 (UN-OHRLLS, n.d.). As such, Caribbean nations such as Dominica have allocated resources to developing integrated climate resilience strategies and early warning systems (Kentish, 2023). The Government of Grenada has established the Ministry of Climate Resilience, The Environment & Renewable Energy to champion climate resilience and climate financing advocacy on a local, regional, and international level.

There is growing recognition that climate change impacts ECD. An advocacy brief published by UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (2022) frames climate change as a child rights crisis. Climate change, environmental degradation, and disasters impede the stability and predictability needed for healthy brain development in the first 1,000 days of life. Children between the ages of zero to eight are vulnerable to toxic stress which occurs when children are consistently faced with stressful situations (UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, 2022). Chronic toxic stress can lead to the dysregulation of stress response systems and increase the risks for physical and mental health disorders throughout the lifespan (Nelson et al., 2020).

To underscore the gravity of climate change, the profound impacts of Category 4 Hurricane Beryl in July 2024 on the Eastern Caribbean islands cannot be overlooked. Hurricane Beryl exceeded meteorological history as the earliest forming Category 5 on record. It made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane on Grenada's sister islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique on July 1st, leaving behind a trail of devastation. The Prime Minister of Grenada, Hon. Dickon Mitchell, underscored the severity of the situation, noting that the electricity

grid, telecommunications, infrastructure, and agriculture on the sister isles had all experienced catastrophic breakdowns. He stressed the pressing necessity of climate justice for SIDS, affirming,

“The hurricane is a direct result of the climate crisis that Grenada, the Caribbean, and other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are on the frontline of. We demand and deserve climate justice. We are no longer prepared to accept that it is okay for us to constantly suffer significant loss and damage arising from climate events and be expected to borrow and rebuild year after year while the countries responsible for creating the situation sit idly by with platitudes and tokenism. This hurricane has put the people of Carriacou and Petite Martinique light years behind and they are expected to pull themselves up by the bootstrap on their own. This is not right, not fair, and not just.”

Carriacou and Petite Martinique have been established as disaster zones for the subsequent three months (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2024). A situation report published by the PAHO and the World Health Organization estimated that approximately 10,000 persons in the tri-island nation experienced significant damage to their homes (PAHO & WHO, 2024). In Petite Martinique, 100% of homes have been devastated or destroyed (UNICEF, 2024a).

UNICEF initiated child protection measures to offer mental health and psychosocial support to children and their families. Priority is currently being placed on setting up physical and mobile child-friendly areas. Training sessions are also being conducted on preventing sexual abuse and exploitation, mitigating GBV risks, and providing psychological first aid. Regarding educational aid, UNICEF is facilitating the provision of psychosocial care and educational activities for all children. These efforts aim to help children establish routines, foster a sense of normalcy, and enable them to engage with their peers. The situation report notes that there has been significant damage to schools, emphasising the urgent need for rebuilding and refurbishment.

The devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need for global solidarity and meaningful support for SIDS. Regional and international disaster relief and humanitarian efforts have bolstered the efforts of the Government of Grenada.

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APPENDIX A

Countdown to 2030: Early Childhood Development Grenada Profile

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Grenada

2023 updates



Countdown to 2030
Women's, Children's & Adolescents' Health

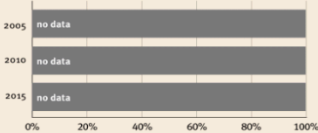
Demographics

Population	125,438
Annual births	1,960
Children under 5	9,966 (8%)
Under-five mortality	16/1,000

Threats to Early Childhood Development

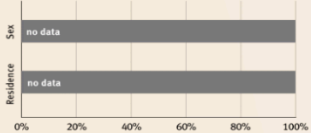
Maternal mortality	21/100,000	Adolescent birth rate	36/1,000
Low birthweight	no data	Preterm births	10%
Child poverty	no data	Under-five stunting	no data
Violent discipline	no data	Inadequate supervision	no data

Young children at risk of poor development



At risk in 2005, 2010 and 2015, using a composite indicator of under-five stunting or poverty

Risk by sex and residence



Children with functional difficulty

no data

Children developmentally on-track

no data

Support and services for early childhood development: Nurturing care

Parents and caregivers need a facilitating environment of laws, policies, services and community support to assist them in providing their young children with nurturing care.

Health

- Treatment for HIV+ pregnant women: no data
- Careseeking for child pneumonia: no data
- Postnatal visits: no data
- Antenatal care (4 or more visits): no data

Nutrition

- Early initiation of breastfeeding: no data
- Exclusive breastfeeding: no data
- Minimum acceptable diet: no data

Early learning

- Early stimulation at home: no data
- Children's books in the home: no data
- Playthings at home: no data
- Attendance in early childhood education: no data

Responsive caregiving

- Public information about ECD: ?
- Parental mental health: ?
- Parent support (groups, home visits): ?
- Quality child day care: ?
- Comparative country data urgently needed: ?

Security and safety

- Birth registration: no data
- Positive discipline: no data
- Basic drinking water: no data
- Basic sanitation: no data

Facilitating environments

Policies	<20%	20-39%	40-59%	60-79%	≥80%
Officially adopted national multisectoral ECD policy	X				
Child and family social protection	None <14 14 - <18 18 - <26 ≥26				
Maternity leave (weeks)	None <14 14 - <18 18 - <26 ≥26				
Paternity leave (weeks)	None <14 14 - <18 18 - <26 ≥26				
International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (alignment)	Not	Slightly	Moderately	Substantially	

International conventions

- ✓ Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ✓ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- ✓ CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography
- X Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption

DETAILED COUNTRY DATA SOURCES AND FOOTNOTES CAN BE FOUND IN THE MASTER DATABASE AT NURTURING-CARE.ORG 79

APPENDIX B

Assessment at the Ministry of Education, Special Education Unit

Local Assessments

Test name	Age	Test Description
<p>Early Childhood Developmental Checklist (ECDC)</p>	<p>3-5 years</p>	<p>Developed by the MoE, the ECDC assesses school readiness in preschool children ages 3-5. The SEU revised the ECDC in 2022. The revision was deemed necessary as teacher feedback indicated that the original version did not track key developmental domains.</p> <p>This revision was informed by feedback from educators, developmental checklists used in other Caribbean countries like St. Lucia and Dominica, and regional educational guidelines from the OECS Learning Standards and the Highscope curriculum. The revised version of the ECDC focuses on four key domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Language, Literacy, and Communication (2) Mathematics (3) Physical Development and Health (4) Social and Emotional Development <p>Additional items are included that assess motor development, speech and language abilities, behaviours, attention span, and visual and auditory capacities (C. Christopher, personal communication, 2024).</p> <p>This assessment is administered by teachers to gain insights into a child’s learning progress at the end of the school term. The ECDC does not have a formal scoring system to guide administration.</p>

		<p>There are four scores for interpreting skill acquisition, including competent, in process, not yet, and not taught. Teachers are provided with a section to provide written remarks on strengths and areas for improvement.</p>
<p>Grenada Reading Screening Tool (GRS)</p>	<p>5 years +</p>	<p>The GRS tool was created by the Task Force on Special Education in 2003.</p> <p>The GRS was developed for primary school teachers to gather information about students' reading ability, strengths, and challenges. It may be administered to students reading below grade level and considered 'slow learners.' The screening tool is not administered if the student has a specific learning disability. The test developers note that teachers must be appropriately trained to administer and interpret the GRS.</p> <p>The GRS provides checklists for hearing and visual impairment, along with associated physical symptoms and behaviours. Further instructions are provided if visual impairment is suspected, and teachers are encouraged to conduct a 'Tumbling E' visual impairment screening activity.</p> <p>The GRS begins with assessing perceptual skills and includes subtests on oral vocabulary, visual memory, visual discrimination, auditory sequential memory, and auditory discrimination. Other test domains include letter identification, basic phonics, graded sight word lists, and graded reading passages.</p> <p>Teachers are provided with information for scoring and interpretation.</p>

Special Education Information Assessment (SEIA)	5 years +	The SEIA was developed by the Grenada School for Special Education. With the assistance of parents, teachers at special education schools administer this assessment to inform grade placement. The SEIA assesses basic knowledge such as shapes, names, bodies, etc., and mathematical computations. There are no formal scoring procedures.
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Regional Assessments

Test name	Test Description
Caribbean Assessment Battery-Reading (CAB-R)	<p>The CAB-R is an informal reading inventory developed to assess reading abilities, strengths, and challenges. This assessment helps identify appropriate instructional strategies and interventions.</p> <p>It comprises two main test domains: word lists and passages. The Word Lists include 20 words ranging from Pre-Primer to Grade 10, assessing students' ability to read words in isolation and guiding the selection of passages for oral and silent reading.</p> <p>The CAB-R offers two parallel forms for the passages, Form A and Form B, enabling pre- and post-intervention measurement of students' reading skills. It features narrative passages for Pre-Primer to Grade 5 and expository passages for Grade 6 to 10.</p> <p>Students unable to pass the Pre-Primer test undergo the Names and Sounds subtest, where they identify 26 letters and produce corresponding sounds.</p> <p>Normed on populations in Belize and Jamaica, the CAB-R includes scoring and interpretation guidelines for administrators. This ensures consistent and meaningful assessment of students' reading abilities.</p>

International Assessments

Test name	Age	Admin Time	Test Description
Bracken School Readiness Assessment (BSRA)	3 years, 6 months - 7 years, 11 months	10-15 mins.	<p>The BSRA assesses readiness for formal education. It tests knowledge in six subtests including colours, letters, numbers/counting, sizes, comparisons, and shapes.</p> <p>This assessment is individually administered. The BSRA is administered in a multiple-choice format, and participants point to or verbally indicate their choice from four or more response options. This assessment provides six subtest scores and a school readiness composite score. A child's performance places them between the range of very delayed to very advanced.</p> <p>The BRSA-3 is the latest edition of this test. It includes revised subtests that align with present-day educational standards and developmental expectations. New normative data provides information on children from diverse backgrounds.</p> <p>The SEU currently uses the first edition of this measure.</p>
Clinical Assessment of Articulation and Phonology (CAAP)	2 years, 6 months -	15-20 mins.	The CAAP is a standardised assessment designed to assess articulation and phonology in

	8 years, 11 months		<p>pre-school and school-age children.</p> <p>The CAAP is a standardised assessment designed to assess articulation and phonology in pre-school and school-age children.</p> <p>The CAAP consists of an articulation inventory and two phonological process checklists. Phonological Checklists I and II are used to assess the presence of 10 phonological processes. These phonological processes encompass patterns observed in typical speech development and those characteristic of children experiencing delayed phonological development (Hegde & Pomaville, 2016).</p> <p>Phonological Checklists I and II produce two types of scores: percentage of occurrence and standard scores. For the percentage of occurrence, the number of 'yes' responses is totaled. A score of 40 or higher indicates an 'active' process. The CAAP provides standardised scores that compare the child's performance to norms for their age group. It includes percentile ranks, standard scores, and age-equivalent scores.</p> <p>The CAAP-2 is the latest edition of this measure. The CAAP-2 screens for a broader spectrum of speech and language issues.</p>
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			The SEU uses the first version of this measure.
Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals - Fifth Edition (CELF-5)	5 years - 21 years, 11 months	30-45 mins. for core language 90-120 mins. for full battery	The CELF-5 is a battery of 16 language assessments that can be used to diagnose language and communication disorders, develop intervention plans, and monitor progress in children and adolescents. It provides information about morphology, syntax, and pragmatics. Each test provides structured, interactive, and observational/interview tasks that challenge the bounds of a student's language abilities. It provides standard scores, percentile ranks, growth scale values, and age equivalents for the core language, receptive language, expressive language, language structure, and language content domains.
Early Screening Inventory-Revised Edition (ESI-R)	Two age groups: 3 years - 4 years, 5 months for ESI-P 4 years, 6 months - 5 years, 11 months for ESI-K	15-20 mins.	The ESI-R is a standardised screening measure used to identify potential developmental delays or concerns in children who may require special education intervention services to support their school performance. The instrument addresses developmental, sensory, and behavioural concerns across the three core domains: (1) Visual Motor/Adaptive, (2) Language and

			<p>Cognition, and (3) Gross Motor Skills. This inventory has two versions: Preschool (ESI-P) and Kindergarten (ESI-K).</p> <p>A parent questionnaire assesses social-emotional and adaptive behaviour.</p> <p>Scores from the ESI-R result in one of three outcomes based on age norms: Refer, Rescreen, or OK. Scores in the Refer range suggest that the child may be at risk for a developmental disorder or delay and warrants further diagnostic exploration. Scores in the Rescreen range raise concerns about potential developmental disorders or delays. The ESI-R is re-administered to assess test-retest scores and whether referral is necessary.</p>
The Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers, Revised (M-CHAT-R)	1 year, 4 months - 2 years, 6 months	5-10 mins.	<p>The M-CHAT-R is an assessment tool to assess risk for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children. It consists of 20 yes/no questions that cover various behaviours and developmental milestones typically seen in children. These questions are designed to be answered by the child's caregiver or parent. Three scores provide information about ASD risk: low-risk, medium-risk, and high-risk.</p> <p>The purpose of the M-CHAT-R assessment is to maximise</p>

			<p>sensitivity to ensure that it detects cases of ASD. However, there is a high false positive rate, which indicates that not all children who score at risk will be diagnosed with ASD.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Follow-Up (M-CHAT-R/F) be administered if children fall into medium-risk categories. If the M-CHAT-R/F score is two or higher, the child has screened positive. It is recommended that these children be referred for diagnostic evaluation and eligibility for early intervention support.</p> <p>If a child receives a high-risk score: The child is referred immediately for diagnostic evaluation and eligibility for early intervention support.</p> <p>The SEU only uses the M-CHAT-R.</p>
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Third Edition (PPVT-III)	2 years, 6 months - 90 years	10-15 mins.	<p>The PPVT-III assesses receptive vocabulary and screens verbal ability in standard spoken English.</p> <p>The PPVT-III has two parallel forms: Form III-A and Form III-B. Each form consists of four training items and 204 test items grouped into 17 sets of 12 items. Each PPVT-III item consists of two parts, a stimulus word and a corresponding page of four pictures. There are three distractor illustrations and a depiction of the stimulus word. The</p>

			<p>PPVT-III assesses an individual's ability to understand and recognise words by matching them to pictures.</p> <p>PPVT-III raw test scores are transformed to provide age-based standard scores, percentiles, and equivalents. The PPVT-5 is the latest edition of this measure. It includes updated normative data, more culturally appropriate test items, and digital administration and scoring. The SEU does not use the latest version of this test.</p> <p>The SEU uses the PPVT-III.</p>
<p>Preschool Language Scale, Fourth Edition (PLS-4)</p>	<p>Birth to 6 years, 11 months</p>	<p>20-45 mins.</p>	<p>The PLS-4 is an interactive assessment tool designed to evaluate developmental language skills across various domains. This measure assesses receptive and expressive language skills in young children, helping to identify language disorders or delays and intervention planning.</p> <p>For children from birth to 2 years and 11 months, the PLS-4 focuses on interactions, attention, and vocal/gestural behaviours. For children aged 5-6, it emphasises early literacy and phonological awareness skills crucial for school readiness. A Caregiver Questionnaire is available for parents and caregivers to provide insights into a child's</p>

			<p>communication at home.</p> <p>The PLS-4 provides standardised scores that compare the child’s performance to norms for their age group. It includes percentile ranks, standard scores, and age-equivalent scores.</p>
<p>Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children Fifth Edition (WISC-V)</p>	<p>6 years - 16 years, 11 months</p>	<p>60-90 mins.</p>	<p>The WISC-V is a norm-referenced assessment tool designed to evaluate a child’s cognitive strengths and weaknesses. It comprises ten primary tests organised into five composite scores: verbal comprehension, perceptual reasoning, working memory, processing speed, and fluid reasoning. The WISC-V yields a Full Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ) and index scores for each composite.</p> <p>Results from the WISC-V can offer insights used to diagnose intellectual disabilities and specific learning disorders. This information can be used to guide clinical interventions and educational planning. While intelligence tests like the WISC-V provide valuable data on cognitive abilities related to learning and academic abilities, they do not capture all dimensions of intelligence or an individual’s full potential. IQ scores should never be interpreted in isolation. It’s essential to consider these scores alongside</p>

			other relevant information to gain a complete understanding of a person's intellectual and learning capabilities, especially in the absence of Caribbean norms.
Wide Range Achievement Test-Fifth Edition (WRAT-5)	5 years - 85 years +	12-25 mins. for children 5-7 years	<p>The WRAT-5 can be used to measure academic achievement, which measures reading, spelling, and maths skills. It can be used to monitor skills and helps to identify possible learning disabilities. The WRAT-5 includes two equivalent forms (blue and green) for shorter test-retest periods.</p> <p>The WRAT-5 produces scores and interpretation for four subtests: Word Reading, Sentence Comprehension, Spelling, and Maths Computation. A reading composition can be obtained by combining the standard scores for Word Reading and Sentence Comprehension.</p> <p>Results from the WRAT can be used to help identify those requiring more comprehensive academic achievement evaluation.</p> <p>The WRAT-5 is norm-referenced and provides information about a child's performance in relation to other children's performance.</p> <p>The SEU uses the fourth and fifth editions: WRAT-4 and WRAT-5.</p>