

Caribbean Sub-regional Women's Advisory Committee (SUBWOC) Meeting

“Working together for sustainable development”

Tuesday March 1, 2016
GPSU Headquarters

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Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU)
160 Regent Street and Shiv Chanderpaul Drive
Bourda, Georgetown
GUYANA

Meeting documents



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5.1

End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

5.2

Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

5.3

Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

5.4

Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

5.5

Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life

5.6

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences

5.a

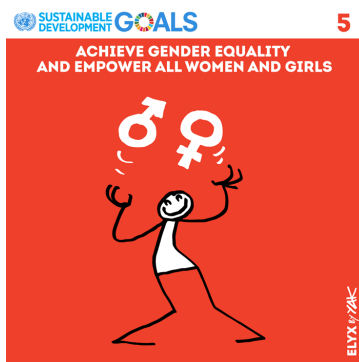
Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws

5.b

Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women

5.c

Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels



PSI Statement of Values

1. The values, policies and actions of **Public Services International** are anchored in a world vision of democratic societies wherein quality public services advance and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, enabling equity, solidarity and prosperity to flourish.
2. **Public Services International** has an historical and deeply rooted commitment to working to eliminate inequality, social injustice and the imbalances aggravated by capitalism and financial profiteering.
3. **Public services are at the core of democratic societies founded on human rights, the rule of law and social solidarity.** Public services provide equitable redistribution of wealth; and in their delivery should ensure that people are treated with equal respect, provided equal protection, and live free of discrimination without regard to age, gender, religion, national identity, race or ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.
4. **Public services are an asset for sustainable development.** Public services are essential for responsible public and private wealth creation and sustainable economic growth.
5. **Public sector workers have a critical role to play in the creation of democratic public policy and the practice of good governance.** Direct public service and public sector unions must ensure the integrity of the public sector. High quality policy and good governance are the foundation of economic growth and development, creation of wealth, expansion of opportunities, and the widest social and economic integration of members of a society. Corruption in all its forms thwarts good governance and the people and should not be tolerated.
6. **Public services are financed by all for the benefit of all.** In practice, public services are paid for by public revenues. These revenues must be raised through fair taxation policies.
7. **Public services are a public good, designed to work in the interest of the people.** Concern for the quality of public services is a mark of a society's self-respect and commitment to caring for all, especially its most vulnerable members.
8. **Public Services International values the common good.** PSI advocates for quality public services, recognizing that public services of the highest level of quality achievable are required for equitable distribution of growth and sustainable development. In accordance with its Constitution, Public Services International promotes quality public services that guarantee access, are affordable, are democratically accountable, provide for social justice, elevate the quality of life, and offer the opportunity of prosperity.
9. The highest quality public services can only be delivered by workers whose rights are fully respected. To this end, **Public Services International defends and advances the fundamental rights and conditions of work including freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining and the health and occupational safety of public service workers across the globe.**



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Caribbean Sub-regional Women's Advisory Committee (SUBWOC) meeting

“Working together for sustainable development”

Tuesday March 1, 2016

GPSU Headquarters

9:15 am to 5:30 pm

Venue

Guyana Public Service Union
140 Regent and Shiv Chanderpaul Drive
Bourda, Georgetown
GUYANA, SOUTH AMERICA
+(592) 225-4811

The **Sub-regional Women's Advisory Committee (SUBWOC)** meets on the day preceding the Sub-regional Advisory Committee (SUBRAC) meeting and comprises the women representatives attending that meeting. The chair is *Sis Jillian Bartlett*, the Caribbean Women's Titular. The SUBWOC meets annually. In accordance with PSI's constitution, the number of representatives attending the SUBWOC meeting must be **at least 50%** of the number of representatives attending the SUBRAC meeting.

During the meeting, the committee deliberates on a wide range of issues and in general advises on:

1. ways to promote the full development of the potential of women in trade unions and in their workplaces;
2. activities and campaigns that would compensate for the results of discrimination against women at all organisational levels within unions;
3. ways that affiliates might work to achieve fair and equitable recognition of women's contributions within unions and in paid employment;
4. ways to support the work of the wider trade union movement in achieving gender equality and equity.

The meeting provides a focussed opportunity for women members to deliberate and make recommendations on the achievement of gender equality and equity. Equally important, members examine and articulate their perspectives on a wide range of issues for discussion at the SUBRAC meeting.

The meeting seeks to **Inform, Educate and Motivate/Inspire** committee members.

Our discussions will be strategic. They must of necessity zoom in on what we need to do and how we must do things in order to focus on our strategic priorities and achieve our objectives.

Working methods

The meeting includes presentations, small group activities, and plenary discussions. The draft agenda and schedule is on the next page.

“ Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance ”

Kofi Annan
Former UN Secretary General

PRE-LUNCH SESSIONS		AFTER LUNCH SESSIONS	
9:15 am	Call to order, Welcome, GPSU and GLGWU Women's Chairs Opening remarks, Announcements, Introductions, Excuses for absence Minutes of the 2015 SUBWOC meeting Matters arising (items not otherwise covered in the agenda)	2:15 pm	<u>60th session of United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW 60)</u> Find out who from your country will be attending <u>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)</u> Check when your country is to submit its report Labour and trade union rights for women – Reporting on implementation of ILO Convention <u>C100</u> and <u>C111</u> Check when and if your country has submitted its reports <i>SUBWOC members will complete, review and discuss the responses to the surveys conducted.</i>
10:30 am	NETWORKING BREAK		
11:00 am	Activities and work in progress – moving on to the next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender-based violence at work and in the community: examples of work undertaken, <i>Sister Joyann Inniss (NUPW Barbados); Sis Jillian Bartlett (NUGFW TT)</i> What women members want: collecting the information 	3:00 pm	Reports and plenary discussions
12:15 pm	Understanding PSI's policies on gender equality and equity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mainstreaming gender equality and equity in PSI Regional and global governance and gender policies 	3:30 pm	Some unfinished business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaflet on mainstreaming gender equality and equity <u>Emergencies and Disasters</u> Precarious work in the public service sector – <u>JCSA Briefing note</u> and <u>NUPW Barbados Briefing note</u>
		4:30 pm	Themes and plans for International Women's Day (IWD) 2016 <i>We invite SUBWOC members to advise of their various plans and national or union themes for the day. We will also seek to identify how these activities help unions achieve the goal of mainstreaming gender equality and equity.</i> Closing remarks
1:00 pm	LUNCH	5:30 pm	END OF SUBWOC

There will be no formal afternoon break. SUBWOC members are free to get coffee, tea, juice, water at their leisure.

About this booklet

We have written this booklet to help you prepare for and fully participate in the PSI Caribbean 2016 SUBWOC meeting.

It provides useful background information and references for further reading for each agenda item. We also believe that you will find it a useful addition to your library of trade union information. In fact, we suggest that you use it as a workbook throughout the meeting. And the information in it, as well as your own notes, will help you to brief others in your network as well as follow through with programme and actions in your unions.

The booklet has hyperlinks to other sources of information and therefore is best used online.

Connecting the dots ...

The work carried out by PSI in the Caribbean during the last twelve months is all interrelated. Gender equality and equity are cross-cutting issues and are important aspects of **all** the work that we do. All of the activities that we undertake and the issues involved are all linked. They have as a common thread, PSI's strategic priorities¹, as well as the various priorities established by PSI members at the regional and national/local levels.

Who are you mentoring?

Again we ask this question because the importance of work lies in building a better future for others – creating the future we all want. It is not enough to only focus on the present. We have to work towards building capacities in our organisations. The challenges are many and the skills, talents and competencies required mean that activists and their organisations must always seek “to raise the bar”. It is not enough to maintain the standard.

¹ Fighting privatisation, Advancing trade union rights, Influencing global policy, Organising and growth

**Celebrate what you've
accomplished, but
raise the bar a little
higher each time you
succeed.**

Mia Hamm

An important part of our work as trade unionists is to ensure the sustainability and relevance of the trade union movement. The members of the Caribbean SUBWOC have an important role to play in helping to mentor young trade union women. And this is especially so when we see those who have, and show potential and commitment to taking on roles as activists.

In 2009 SUBWOC drafted a set of [framework guidelines for mentoring young women members](#). We encourage you to use them. We also welcome your input and suggestions as we seek to build on experiences and lessons learnt. [Tell us what you think](#).

Call to order

Welcome - *GPSU and GLGWU Women's Chairs*

Opening remarks, Announcements, Introductions,

Excuses for absence

Minutes of the 2015 SUBWOC meeting - *(Circulated separately)*

Matters arising *(items not otherwise covered in the agenda)*

Activities and work in progress – moving on to the next steps

- **Gender-based violence at work and in the community: examples of work undertaken**, *Sister Joyann Inniss (NUPW Barbados); Sis Jillian Bartlett (NUGFW TT)*
- **What women members want: collecting the information**

Committee members will update SUBWOC on their continuing work on gender-based violence as well as new initiatives.

Of particular interest here is the agreement by the ILO's Governing Body to discuss a [new international standard on gender-based violence at work](#). It will be included in the agenda of the 2018 International Labour Conference (ILC).

This is the result of proposals and lobbying led since 2014 by the Workers' Group in coordination with the ITUC and Global Union Federations including PSI. The road is still long; however, we have marked a first milestone!

We invite SUBWOC to discuss the issue and:

- 1. endorse and support the actions that affiliates have initiated;**
- 2. identify how affiliates in the sub-region can contribute to PSI's campaign to promote the new standard on gender-based violence at work**

References

[Framework guidelines for addressing workplace violence in the health sector: The training manual](#) – manual developed by the ILO, PSI and the ICN

[Opinion of the EESC in favour of an ILO standard on Gender Based Violence](#)

[Gender-based violence in the world of work](#) - ILO

Knowing and meeting the needs of members and potential members

In various discussions with affiliates' women's networks and committees, we recognised that a common challenge was that many of the unions did not have a well-defined or standard method of identifying those members and their needs. Other than some basic information, the databases (manual as well as computerised, need updating. This means that in trying to identify needs and plan programmes and activities, networks and committees depended on their personal views alone and did not have enough information to realistically try to meet the needs of members and potential members.

One of the agreed solutions is to conduct surveys of women workers to find out their views of the current union activities and what they wanted from the unions. Members agreed that these surveys should include all workers in the respective workplaces. Growth is an important aim and it is therefore necessary to find out the views of potential members.

The process started with two (2) pilot surveys in the Dominica Public Service Union (DPSU) and the Public Service Union of Belize (PSU of Belize). Other affiliates have signaled their interest in conducting similar surveys in their unions.

We invite SUBWOC members to review the analyses of the pilot surveys. In addition, we invite members of the committee to:

- 1. Agree on guidelines and the process to prepare for conducting the surveys and undertaking the follow-up action;**
- 2. Agree on which affiliates will conduct the next set of surveys.**

Reference

[Women in Unions Survey 2014](#) – Australian Council of Trade Unions

PSI and gender equality (50/50 rule)

There must be at least 50% representation of women on all PSI's decision-making bodies and working groups. This also applies to all PSI activities, events, programmes and projects.

PSI and young workers

There must be at least 30% representation of young workers on all PSI's decision-making bodies and working groups. This also applies to all PSI activities, events, programmes and projects. The 50/50 rule also applies.

The Role of Trade Union Women's Groups/Networks and Committees

- ✓ If unions are to attract and retain women members, then unions must campaign and negotiate on the things that women care about and which reflect their priorities.
- ✓ We must find ways to help women to participate fully and meaningfully in union structures so that union policies reflect women's concerns.
- ✓ The long-term success of a recruitment campaign will depend on how successful a union is in involving women in the union and its responsiveness to their needs.
- ✓ If unions are to reverse the declines in union membership, unions must attract women to join and ensure that they feel part of the union.
- ✓ To do this, we must take a critical look at what women want from unions and how unions recruit and organise. We must find ways ***to help women participate in union structures so that union policies reflect women's concerns.***

Some Aims and Objectives for Trade Union Women's Groups/Networks

The overall aim/objective is ***to help women participate in union structures so that union policies reflect women's concerns.*** Other aims/objectives are:

- To provide a 'space' for women members
- To educate and empower women members of the union
- To increase women members' knowledge of trade unionism and trade union issues
- To ensure that women's voices and concerns are heard on issues which specifically or directly affect them
- To participate fully in the union's collective bargaining activities
- To ensure that women's concerns are reflected in the union's collective bargaining agenda
- To act as a support system or group for other women members
- To organise and celebrate national, regional and international events relating to women
- To promote the involvement of women in trade union education and training programmes
- To organise education and training programmes for women members
- To identify, encourage and prepare women members for leadership positions in the Union
- To recognise and reward the contribution of women members to the development of trade unionism

Specifically, the Women's Group/Committee will/can focus on:

- identifying strategies to get women members more involved in union activities and programmes
- being a direct link between the Executive Committee (or decision making bodies) and women members
- planning activities to recruit more women into the union
- sensitising women members on key issues (national, regional and international)
- advising the Executive Committee on issues for Collective Bargaining/Negotiations

Understanding PSI's policies on gender equality and equity

- Mainstreaming gender equality and equity in PSI
- Regional and global governance and gender policies

Mainstreaming gender equality and equity policy in the PSI

PSI's higher international political profile, a sector-based structure and a policy of mainstreaming gender means that the work to promote gender equality and the women's structures themselves face enormous challenges.

At the 2013 SUBWOC meeting, members examined the experiences of gender mainstreaming in their respective unions. The results were mixed but highlighted the need for greater awareness and education about gender mainstreaming. Understanding and figuring out how to implement it were also key needs.

With the 2017 World Congress around the corner, we assume that parity in gender participation in the PSI's statutory leadership bodies has been achieved. But this is not the case with representation on other PSI bodies. Similarly, no country or workplace has managed to achieve full equality between men and women. It is therefore strategically important to have a fresh look at this issue at this time.

Globally, support for a mainstreaming approach to gender is gathering pace. The issue was first raised in 1995, at [the 4th World Conference on Women](#) held in Beijing. It has been a long time for this approach to be adopted and it requires an examination of the local relations between men and women, in theory and in practice; as well as the acceptance that men are equally responsible with women for the construction of gender equality.

We invite SUBWOC members to discuss and give their views on a number of issues relating to the mainstreaming of gender in PSI and in affiliates.

To help us generate the widest possible discussion, we will work in small groups. We will circulate the activity during the meeting.

References

[Definition of gender mainstreaming](#) – ILO gender equality tool

[Gender Mainstreaming](#) – UN Women

Regional and global governance and gender policies

Every year, the PSI and the other global union federations (GUFs) – ITUC, EI, ITF – take a joint approach to the United Nations Commission on the Legal and Social Status of Women (UNCSW). The main focus of the 60th session in 2016 is the economic empowerment of women. The GUFs want to see greater recognition of trade unions' role as defenders of women's rights, both at the workplace and in society.

Along with the women's movement and NGOs that share the same principles, the GUFs also want to increase their influence on the decisions made by the government actors that meet at these global forums. It will only be possible to have real influence if we are able to show our strength at the national, regional and global levels.

In parallel to this, the PSI is a member of a range of social coalitions that challenge the dominant financial power of groups operating within global government bodies. In 2015, the process of setting Sustainable Development Objectives (SDOs) until 2030 ([Agenda 2030](#)) and taking decisions on [Financing for Development](#) in international forums showed that transnational capital uses its immense corporate power to promote a privatisation agenda.

PSI has argued that development is impossible without universal quality public services. It has put forward a range of mechanisms to finance development including fiscal justice and anti-corruption measures. Coalitions in the women's movement are also very active in this field at both the local and global levels. One of the key mainstreaming proposals on this agenda is the need to provide gender-sensitive public services.

We invite SUBWOC to discuss the development agenda and identify the key issues of specific importance to them so that the WOC can raise them in its global lobbying work and campaigns on tax justice, corruption and alternatives to privatisation.

References



- [Addis Ababa Action Agenda](#)
- [CSO FfD Forum Declaration](#)
- [International Business Forum Summary](#)

[Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) – Outcome document

60th session of United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW 60)

Around 180 representatives from a wide range of unions throughout the world will participate in the UNCSW 60. There are 20 members on PSI's delegation which includes representatives from PSI's sub-regions and regions. The Caribbean has two members on this year's delegation. Juneia Batista, WOC President, will be in the delegation representing the Brazilian government, which gives the trade union movement an opportunity to participate in official meetings and have a higher profile and greater influence.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

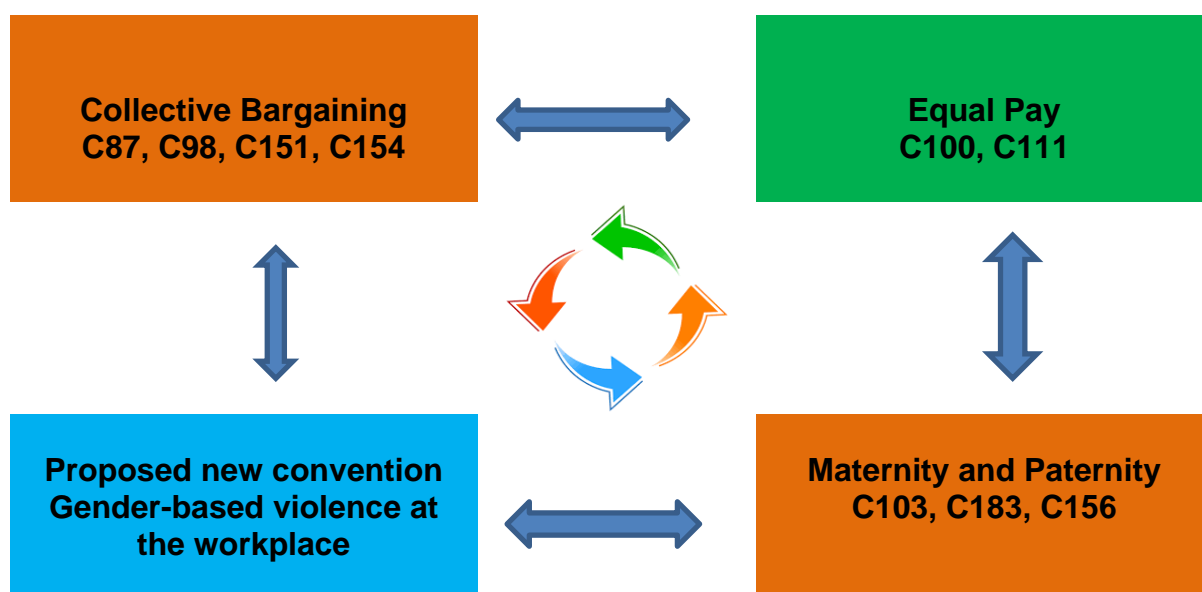
This year, some Caribbean countries are expected to report on the implementation of CEDAW: Haïti, Antigua & Barbuda, Trinidad & Tobago, Netherlands. Barbados has been scheduled for future sessions.

The experience in the Caribbean is that few trade union organisations participate in the consultation process. The contradiction here is that in a number of instances, it is the members of public service sector unions who are involved in the preparation of the reports. The reports are prepared by the government agencies and departments that are responsible for gender equality or women's affairs.

Labour and trade union rights for women – Reporting on implementation of ILO Conventions C100 and C111

The attack on labour and trade union rights in the public sector shows no sign of abating and is increasing in many countries. Collective bargaining has lost ground in some places and women have consequently seen significant conquests reversed, for example, equal pay. The ILO's International Labour Standards (ILSs) are an essential reference for the defence of labour and trade union rights. Continuous monitoring of their implementation by the ILO's supervisory bodies, such as the Committee on Freedom of Association (CLS) and the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR), are strategically important. The unions themselves have done very little to monitor and manage implementation of ILSs from a gender perspective.

In 2015, the Governing Body of the ILO agreed to discuss a new convention on violence at the workplace, also to cover gender-based violence, at the 2018 International Labour Conference (ILC). It is essential that trade unions get involved, consult their members and formulate proposals on the content of the new convention.



The ILO will celebrate its centenary in 2019. The organisation will be organising a series of tripartite dialogues on the Future of Work. These dialogues will also have a gender dimension and focus on the future of women's work.

We invite SUBWOC members to review and analyse the information collected from the [survey](#) circulated for completion by all SUBWOC members.

References

[Organising for Women's Social and Economic Empowerment by 2030](#)

[Presenting our political position](#)

[The 2030 agenda for sustainable development](#)

[ILO publishes the annual report on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations](#)

Some unfinished business

- [Leaflet on mainstreaming gender equality and equity](#)
- [Emergencies and Disasters](#)
- [Precarious work in the public service sector – ICSA Briefing note and NUPW Barbados Briefing note](#)

SUBWOC members initiated work in a number of areas during the period under review. We have already reviewed and examined the results of some of those actions. There are three other areas of work that we need to complete this year.

We invite SUBWOC members to review the work and help us to:

- **Finalise important tools and materials for affiliates to help women and their unions improve the implementation of gender mainstreaming;**
- **Discuss and agree how, as unions, we can improve our engagement with affiliates in times of emergencies and disasters, where that engagement goes beyond humanitarian efforts;**
- **Take a close and critical look at precarious work in the public service sector in the Caribbean.**

Regional action plans

Some members of the SUBWOC attended and participated in IAMRECON 2015.

The conference agreed on an action plan for the next 5 years. And during the women's meeting, there were discussions and agreement on plans for gender equality.

It is essential to respect the specifics of each region, but it is also necessary to improve coordination between regional work and the WOC agenda.

The Inter-American regional women's committee (IAMWOC) will discuss this item during its meeting in San Juan in late March. Your input into the discussions will be valuable.

We invite SUBWOC to give an opinion and make proposals about:

- a) Coordinating the regional plan with the WOC agenda.**
- b) Regional planning priorities for 2016 and implementation mechanisms.**

References

[Inter-American regional Plan of Action](#)

[Report of the Women's meeting submitted to IAMRECON 2015](#)

[Detailed report of women's committee meeting at IAMRECON 2015](#)

Themes and plans for International Women's Day (IWD) 2016

In 2015, the World Women's Committee chose Pay Equity, which is necessary for the economic empowerment of women, as its main theme for International Women's Day (IWD) in 2016. This is linked to the UNCSW focus on women's economic empowerment.

We invite SUBWOC members to advise of their various plans and national or union themes for the day.

We will also seek to identify how these activities help unions achieve the goal of mainstreaming gender equality and equity.

Some useful information on feminism – from a Caribbean perspective

Summary of notes from [Lilieth Dunn, PhD](#), Senior Lecturer/Head of the Institute for Gender and Development Studies Mona Unit, UWI

Definition of feminism

- Women and men acting, speaking and writing on women's issues and rights and identifying social injustice in the status quo.
- The doctrine of advocating social, political, and all other rights of women equal to those of men.
- An organised movement for the attainment of such rights for women.
- Feminine character.

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/feminism>

The [three waves of feminism](#)

1. The first wave (1830's – early 1900's): Women's fight for equal contract and property rights
2. The second wave (1960's-1980's): Broadening the debate. This is where we have the emergence of Caribbean feminism
3. The third wave (1990's – present): The “micropolitics” of gender equality

Relevance of feminism

It promotes:

- a variety of particular moral and political claims,
- new ways of asking and answering questions,
- constructive and critical dialogue with mainstream philosophical views and methods,
- new topics of inquire,
- awareness of injustice and inequality against women,
- and clarifies how women are oppressed and identifies strategies to eliminate them.

Types of feminism

- Liberal
- Radical
- Socialist
- Post-modern
- Post-colonial, including Caribbean feminism; womanism

Note the main elements of selected contemporary feminisms in the table on next page.

Summary of main elements of selected contemporary feminisms

Type of Feminism	World view	Key concepts	Goals (primary preoccupations)	Who	View of state
LIBERAL	Women and men are essentially equal; women's status due to lack of opportunity	Inequality Choice Freedom	Promote the realisation of the rights of women in the public sphere; (equal pay, open up education & training opportunities)	Tend to address need of (white) middle class women and girls Ignores diversity	State is neutral; Guarantor of women's rights
RADICAL	All women are oppressed	Patriarchy Oppression/domination	Unite all women; make world more women centred; (rape, pornography, homophobia)	Primarily white women; has influenced other strands of feminism	State reflects the dominant patriarchal culture
SOCIALIST	Capitalism and patriarchal structure social relations of gender, race & class	Capitalist patriarchy; domination; production & reproduction	Social transformation; (cumulative impact of poverty on women; wages for housework)	White women; women of colour in north & south)	State contributes to women's oppression
POST-MODERN	"Women" cannot be spoken of in any collective sense	Difference; Subjugated knowledge	Reveal and deconstruct gendered assumptions of the dominant discourses (language, text)	French women; women in north and south; heavily academic	An expression of gendered social relations
CARIBBEAN (Anglophone)	Women's subordination linked to other forms of subordination: race,	Gender Anti-imperialism Identity	Social transformation; (women's social & economic status; violence against women and girls; globalisation and debt; masculinity)	Primarily Afro-Caribbean women; some Indo-Caribbean women; some men	Shaped by global capitalist patriarchy but a site of struggle

Based on: Barriteau, 1995 & 1998; Browne, 1998; Lengermann & Nieubrugge, 1996; Mohammed, 1998; Parpart & Marchand, 1995; Saulnier, 1996