

Caribbean Women in Leadership



ILEAD

Stories of

CARIBBEAN WOMEN

LEADERS





A publication of CIWiL
Written and Illustrated by Oprah C. Francis



All great women deserve their story told, and every child deserves to know them.



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CIWil

Caribbean Women in Leadership

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Caribbean Women in Leadership

CIWIL - Caribbean Women in Leadership is an independent, regional non-partisan organization that applies a multi-partisan approach to promote women's participation in transformative politics, decision and policymaking. CIWIL works with activists, female parliamentarians, development professionals and national gender machineries to train and support women across the region as they seek elected office or assume other positions of leadership. We promote that women must be fully involved in the decision-making processes that impact their lives.

CIWiL is a volunteer-led organization with a committed Regional Board of Directors and an established reputation for empowering women leaders from across countries throughout the English-speaking Caribbean.

The CIWiL Regional Secretariat serves as the coordination and implementation centre for a regional and multi-country programme of work and its related activities.

CIWIL has a network of National Chapters which extends throughout the Caribbean, with nine chapters established in Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, Belize and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada and Jamaica.

For more information visit: https://ciwil.org/about/

Email: info@ciwil.org

FOREWORD

First President of the CIWiL Regional Board of Directors

The publication "I Lead" shares the synopsis of the lives and contributions of iconic Caribbean women leaders. Getting the first volume of this book to publication is indeed one of the highpoints of my tenure at the helm of CIWiL, but also a debt of gratitude is owed to Dylis and her team at CIWiL's Secretariat in making it a reality.

We may be surprised that women transformational leaders have been making "herstories" in many spaces for centuries of our civilization and ahead of their times, often unheralded in the annals of our Caribbean "history." Contained in this book are the stories of some of these remarkable Caribbean women whose stories are similar to those of the many untold heroine sisters of our region. While we always aim to be inclusive, the publication could not be all-encompassing, due to the scope of this project and resource limitations.

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Thus, we consider this the first volume of I Lead, with a focus on women from CARICOM countries in politics and public life.

May we embrace the best lessons of their journeys, the best of their examples of leading with courage, daring, determination and resilience. May these life stories inspire the future aspirations of our own Caribbean girls and boys, so that they value the lessons of gender equality and gender equity, through the striving, sacrifices and leadership depicted by these women icons.

May their eternal legacies be the transformative efforts which inspire our collective futures as we continue to forge a sustainable, adaptive and resilient Caribbean people.

Founding Member and President of the CIWiL Regional Board of Directors (2018 – July 2023)



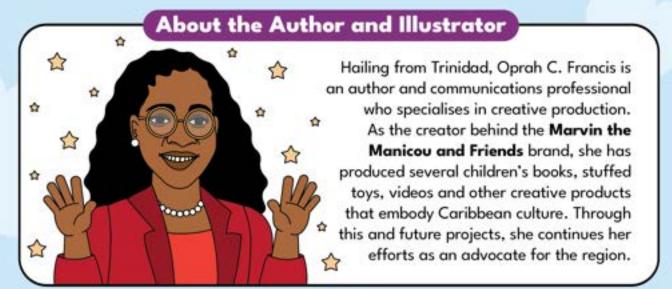
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We are grateful for our stakeholders and Chapter members who submitted suggestions for the book during the early stages. We are equally grateful to those who participated in and helped facilitate our focus group exercises.

Thank you to the members of our children's book committee who helped to steer this project, and to Lady Anande Trotman Joseph, Linnette Vassell and Dr. Rosina Wiltshire in particular, whose guidance proved instrumental at various phases.

Special thanks to our writer and illustrator, Oprah Francis. Your insights into the writing process and artistic talents transformed CIWiL's vision for this book into a final product that exceeds our original expectations. It was a pleasure working with you.



IN DEDICATION TO Dr. Hazel Brown

For Dr. Hazel Brown, who was not only a member and patron of CIWiL, but a friend, mentor, sister and mother figure to so many of us who had the privilege of knowing her and working alongside her. Hazel, you were in our thoughts and hearts guiding and motivating us throughout the writing process.

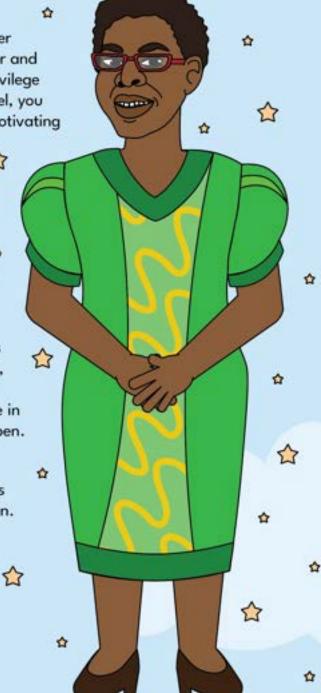
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Hazel lived her life in steadfast service to women and children. In honour of this legacy, we also dedicate this book to every child who pores through its pages. It is for every girl, who must know that she deserves an equal place in society and that her voice matters.

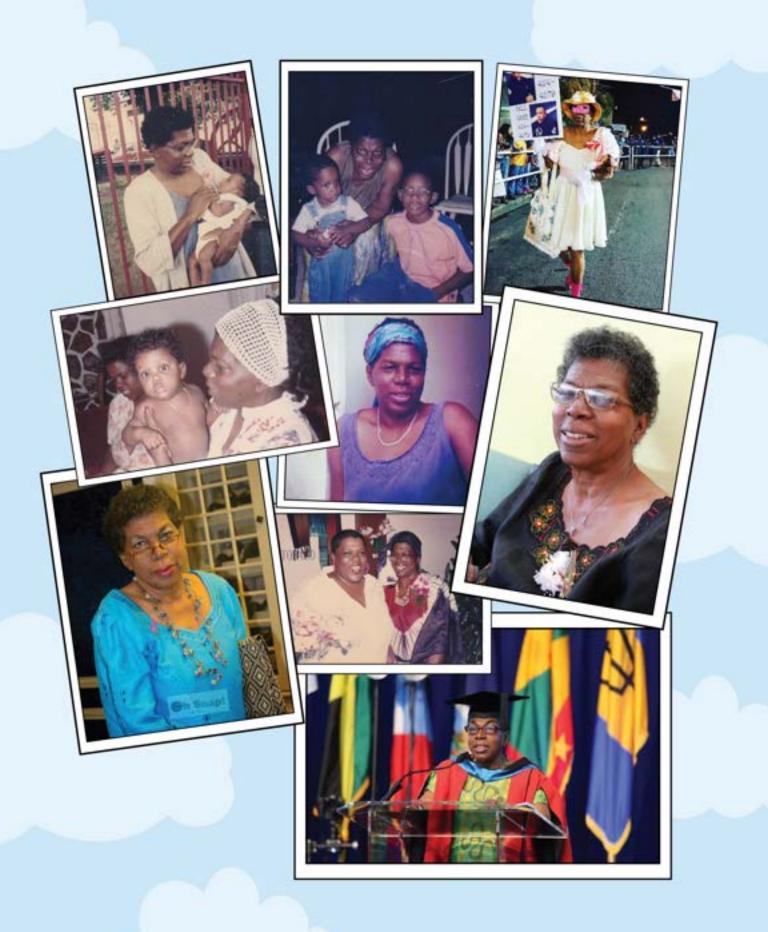
We hope that you will be inspired by the stories of changemakers like Hazel to imagine a better, brighter world. Hazel would want you to know that these worlds are possible, your dreams are in reach, and you have the power to make it happen.

Hazel Brown was a mother of four - three girls and one boy. She also had eight grandchildren.



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Welcome!

Thank you for reading this book. We are happy to share with you exciting stories about the Caribbean and some of its brave and visionary women leaders. But before we begin, here are a few tips to help you along the way.

Use the Glossary.

Some words may be new to you and there may be others you do not yet fully understand. Those words are **bolded and highlighted in purple**. When you encounter a word like that, flip to the 'Glossary' at the back of this book. There, you will find the word and its meaning.

Be curious.

There are many different ideas, events, places and people mentioned in this book. If you are interested in learning more, ask a responsible adult to help you find more information.

Talk to a responsible adult.

Go to a responsible adult like a parent or teacher whom you trust and ask for help if anything in the book makes you feel upset or unhappy.

Try the fun activities!

This book includes fun activities that will help you remember what you have read. Visit the website, ciwil.org, to print and download more activities. If you cannot remember something while doing an activity, flip through the pages and you will find the information you need.



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Find out what this book is about.

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Teachers and Knowledge-Makers





INTRODUCTION About this Book

The Caribbean is a beautiful region made up of countries in and around the Caribbean Sea. It is known for its vibrant culture and unique blend of food, languages, music, festivals, folklores, and traditions. Each country has its own identity and history shaped by people from all over the world, including the Tainos, Kalinagos and other first people of the region, and later settlers from Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. This book is about women leaders from fifteen (15) Caribbean countries.

These countries are all members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).



A leader is someone who makes decisions and takes actions that affect others. This can include their family, a group, a community, an organisation, and even a country. But being a good leader is not just about being in charge or having power. It is about using your power to help others and motivating them to do the same. To better understand the work of Caribbean women leaders, let's first take a look at major events in history.



Much of Caribbean history is about the journey to freedom and equal rights which are the things that all people deserve and are entitled to. This includes food, education, health care, free speech and being treated fairly. To better understand the achievements of Caribbean women leaders, let's first take a look at major events that helped shaped their work.

Colonisation of the Caribbean

The Caribbean was first home to communities like the Tainos and Kalinagos, called the first people. But from the late 15th century, Europeans formed colonies there. This means that they took control of each country and settled across the region. Many first people lost their homes and were taken as slaves.

The African Slave Trade

During the African slave trade, millions of Africans were taken from their homes to work as slaves on plantations in the Caribbean. They fought for their freedom for over 300 years and in the 19th century, they were freed. Slavery is now against the law because it takes away the rights of others.

Indentureship of Workers from Asia

When slavery ended, the indentureship system was created to replace it. Workers from Asia were brought to the Caribbean to work on plantations. The system lasted for over 50 years.



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VOTE

The Right to Vote

Suffrage is the right to vote in elections. In the Caribbean, many people were not allowed to vote because of their race, gender, wealth, and family history. As more countries took action for freedom, Caribbean people were given the right to vote so that they could help choose their own leaders.

Independence

Although Caribbean people gained the right to vote, they were still ruled by European governments. The People of the Caribbean did not have a say in the way their countries were led. So, they took action to change this. Beginning with Haiti in 1804 and, continuing throughout the late 1900s, countries in the Caribbean gained their independence. This means that they formed their own governments and were free from being ruled by other countries.

Movements for Equal Rights

Because Caribbean people have not always been treated fairly and equally, different groups worked together to defend their rights. This is called a movement for equal rights and can include speeches, protests, debates, peace walks, writing books and other activities to help others understand important issues. There have been movements to protect the rights of women, children, workers, poor people, people of different races and religions, and many other groups in society.

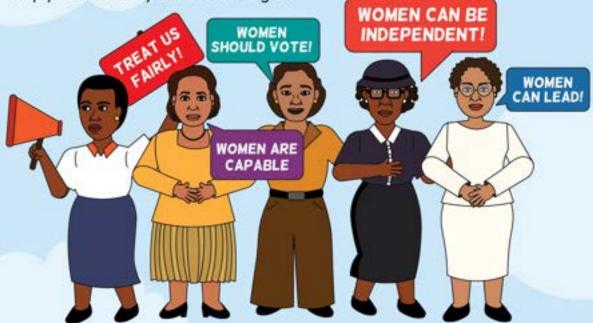
Because of the hard work and sacrifices of its people, most Caribbean countries are now independent and have laws to protect their rights and freedom.



Women play an important role in leading the Caribbean.

During colonial rule in the Caribbean, many women stepped up as leaders and encouraged people in their communities to seek freedom. Even before this and indeed afterwards, women were leaders in their homes and they made decisions about raising their families and helping their communities.

Still, many people thought that only men could be good leaders. They believed that women should be housewives and mothers with limited opportunities for careers outside of the home. Because of this, girls were not given many opportunities to get a formal education. Women who got jobs did not earn much and they still had to take care of their families after work each day. This is a form of gender discrimination or sexism when people are treated unfairly simply because they are women or girls.



But many Caribbean women knew their worth and they **empowered** one another to be more confident, independent and to learn new skills. They formed important friendships and organisations so that they could have a stronger voice to speak up for **gender equality**. This is when women, men and all people have fair opportunities to succeed in life and equal access to **rights** like education, jobs, healthcare, voting and taking part in **politics**. Gender equality helps everyone and having more women leaders can lead to greater peace and prosperity.

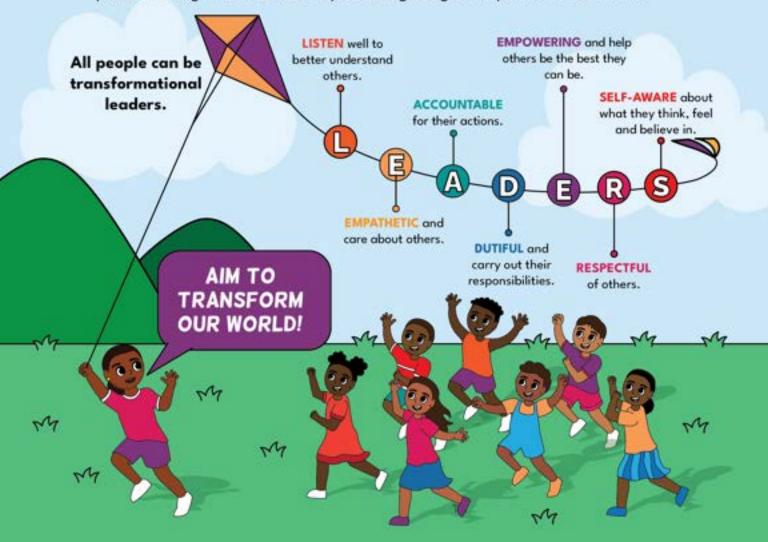


Though these women were ordinary people such as mothers, teachers, scholars, activists, business women, politicians and artists, their compassion for those around them and their strong sense of justice made them extraordinary leaders. Now, women and girls have more opportunities than before. We owe much of this progress to our foremothers. As we continue to work towards full gender equality where all women can live free from violence and more women are leaders in parliaments and large organisations, let the shining examples of the women in this book guide our way.



Caribbean women are Transformational Leaders.

Many Caribbean women are transformational leaders who dream of a society where all people are treated fairly regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, religion or abilities. Because some people have more power and privilege than others, they take action to ensure that everyone has fair opportunities. Many transformational leaders are also feminists who take action to ensure that women and men are treated equally. Transformational leaders care more about the wellbeing of people and our planet than personal gain. They use any influence and authority they have for the greater good and they share their knowledge with those around them. They motivate others to reach their highest potential, inspire positive change and find new ways of doing things to improve the lives of all.



THEY ARE PRESIDENTS, PRIME MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT WHO LED THEIR COUNTRIES.

THEY ARE MOTHERS AND MOTHER FIGURES WHO CARED FOR THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.

THEY ARE SCHOLARS, WRITERS, AND TEACHERS WHO EDUCATED PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD. THEY ARE ACTIVISTS AND ADVOCATES WHO DEFENDED THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS AND INSPIRED POSITIVE CHANGE.

THEY ARE ARTISTS
WHOSE WORK AND
CREATIVITY SHAPED
CARIBBEAN CULTURE

THEY ARE WOMEN WHOSE ACHIEVEMENTS OPENED NEW DOORS FOR OTHERS TO GROW.

Stories of Caribbean women leaders

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HALL OF HONOUR Transformational Leaders

Transformational leaders from the Caribbean inspired positive change in the region and around the world. This Hall of Honour celebrates thirty-six (36) of those leaders who have been committed to making the lives of others better. Flip to their pages to read their stories.



ANDAIYE Guyana



ANNE LIBURD Antigua and Saint Kitts and Nevis



AUDREY JEFFERS Trinidad and Tobago



DAME BILLIE MILLER Barbados



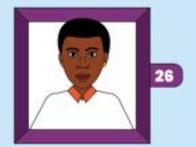
CARLA BAKBOORD Suriname



DR. CARLA BARNETT Belize



CRISTINA COC Belize



ELMA FRANCOIS Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago

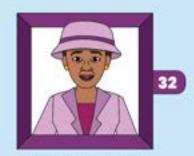


DR. ERNA BRODBER Jamaica





GEMA RAMKEESOON Trinidad and Tobago



DAME GEORGIANA ROBINSON Antigua and Barbuda



GERTRUDE PROTAIN Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



GWENDOLYN LIZARRAGA Belize



HAZEL BROWN Trinidad and Tobago



DR. HILDA ROSEMARY HUSBANDS-MATHURIN Saint Lucia



IONE ERLINGER-FORD Saint Lucia



BOSTWICK
The Bahamas



JEAN LA ROSE Guyana

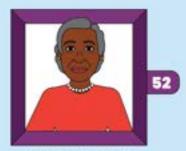
HALL OF HONOUR Transformational Leaders



JOAN FRENCH Jamaica



DAME MAIZIE BARKER-WELCH Barbados



MAGDA POLLARD Guyana



MARION BETHEL The Bahamas



MIA MOTTLEY Barbados



MONICA COC MAGNUSSON Belize



QUEEN NANNY OF THE MAROONS Jamaica



PROFESSOR PALOMA MOHAMED Guyana



DR. PEGGY ANTROBUS Grenada





RENE BAPTISTE Saint Vincent and the Grenadines



PROFESSOR RHODA REDDOCK Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago



ROBERTA CLARKE Barbados and Dominica



DR. ROSINA WILTSHIRE Trinidad and Tobago



DR. SANDRA
DEAN-PATTERSON
The Bahamas



SHEILA ROSEAU Antigua and Barbuda



SHIRLEY PRYCE Jamaica



TINA ALEXANDER Dominica





Born in Guyana in 1942, Andaiye was an author, politician and activist who defended the rights of poor people, women and children. She also helped create a group called the Red Thread to help women across the Caribbean.

Independence from England, a new government was formed, and across the land, new leaders emerged. One of those leaders was Andaiye. All around her, Andaiye saw the way people were treated differently because of their race, religion and family history. Often, women and girls were treated differently to men and boys. Some groups were even given better opportunities than others. But Andaiye believed that all people should be treated equally. This inspired her to become an activist for equal rights.





Andaiye became a leader in a group called the **Working People's Alliance**, which was first started to encourage people of different races to work together in leading the country. There, she defended the rights of women and children, and called on other leaders to think about the issues women face when making decisions, not just in Guyana, but across the Caribbean. Andaiye also helped form a group called the **Red Thread** to create jobs and other opportunities for women.

To help others understand the history of Caribbean people and the importance of their rights, Andaiye wrote many essays about the journeys to freedom and independence. Her book, 'The Point is to Change the World,' includes some of her writings. Andaiye inspired many and in 1997, she was awarded Guyana's fourth highest national award - the Golden Arrow of Achievement. Andaiye died in 2019.

Anne Liburd

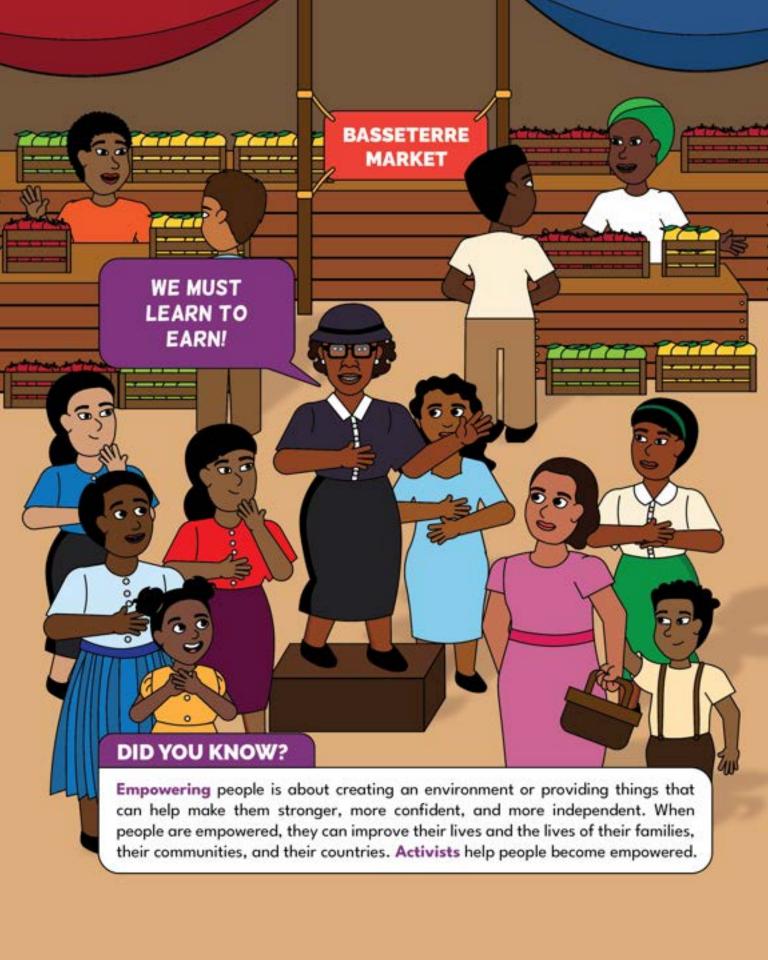


Born in Antigua in 1920, Anne Liburd moved to Saint Kitts and Nevis where she became an activist who helped women become empowered. She led many organisations that motivated women to become leaders in their communities. By doing this, she helped women improve their lives and the lives others, including their families, their communities, and their countries.

Anne was born to a humble family in Antigua and moved to Saint Kitts after getting married. There, she raised her six children and, at the same time, she made history as a leader who empowered Caribbean women. Anne's passion for helping others led her to join the group of people who defended the rights of workers in Saint Kitts and Nevis. She taught poor women about being good parents, finding jobs and opening their own businesses.

As she continued her journey to motivate women to be independent and to seek better opportunities for themselves, Anne became the first president of a group called the **Caribbean Women's Association (CARIWA)**. This group brought organisations together to help women and girls across the region. She also taught women in politics different ways to communicate better. Anne led the **National Council of Women** in Saint Kitts where she continued to teach women about running their own businesses and becoming leaders.

Anne shared her views at events where governments and activists from across the world agreed on plans to protect and promote the rights of women. She also worked with schools and universities to teach others about the history of Caribbean women and their contributions to society. In 1996, Anne was honoured by the British government and in 2004, she was also honoured with a "Woman of Great Esteem" award for her efforts towards empowering women.



Audrey Jeffers



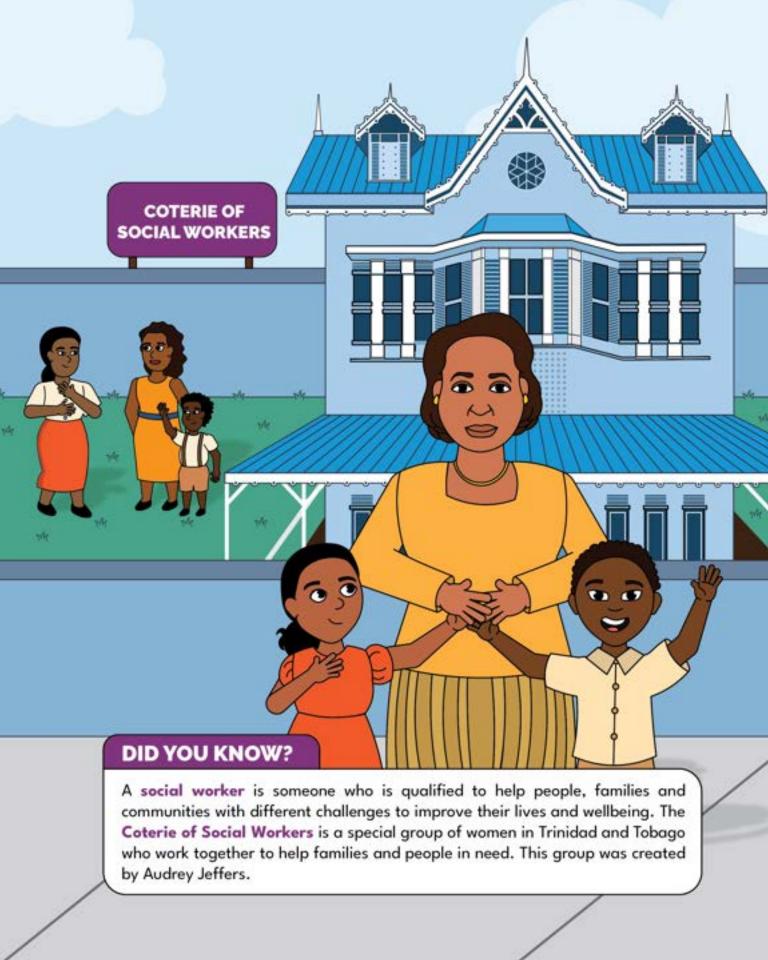
Born in Trinidad and Tobago in 1898, Audrey Jeffers helped pave the way for many Caribbean women to become leaders in society. She empowered women by encouraging them to be more independent and confident. She promoted their rights and worked with the government to improve laws in her country.

Audrey Jeffers wanted to help others. Upon returning home to Trinidad from her studies in England in 1920, she used her family's home to open a school for needy children. But Audrey soon realised that the children's families needed help as well. So, when she was 23 years old, she created the Coterie of Social Workers.

At the time, the Coterie of Social Workers was a group like no other. It was led by women of colour and it supported women of colour. The group helped families, children, and people in need. They also encouraged the government and other organisations to create better opportunities for women and girls. This included better jobs and education, especially for women and girls of colour.

The Coterie of Social Workers became one of the most important organisations for women in Trinidad and Tobago. With Audrey as their leader, they fed children across the country through "Breakfast Sheds." They began Mother's Day celebrations in Trinidad and Tobago. They also encouraged the government to give women the same jobs as men, such as being police officers. Audrey cared about single mothers, the elderly, and the blind. Because of this, she helped open day-care nurseries and homes. Audrey also worked with the government to improve the laws of the land.

For her commitment to helping others, Audrey was honoured by the British government in 1959 and she received one of Trinidad and Tobago's highest awards in 1969, one year after she died. One of Trinidad's most well-known highways as well as the **Audrey Jeffers School for the Deaf** were named in her honour.



Dame Billie Miller

Born in Barbados in 1944, Dame Billie Miller was the first woman from Barbados to lead her country as a government minister and Deputy Prime Minister. She also worked with other governments and organisations to help people around the world, especially women and girls. This included the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the United Nations (UN).

As a little girl, Dame Billie went to the city with her father to listen to Sir Grantley Adams speak to workers. Sir Grantley Adams was the head of government at the time. Even at that age, she was inspired to lead her country and so she did! At just 25 years old, Dame Billie became one of the first women lawyers in Barbados. The direction of her life changed in 1976 when she was invited to become a politician. Although it was the last thing on her mind at the time, Dame Billie was both dutiful and capable. So, she accepted the invitation and won her seat in the elections that year.

Dame Billie was the first woman to become a government minister in Barbados and she made decisions in matters of health, education, culture, trade, tourism, transport, and foreign affairs. In 1994, she became Deputy Prime Minister of Barbados. As a leader, Dame Billie also shared her wisdom with others and became a mentor to many, including Barbados' Prime Minister Mia Mottley.

DID YOU KNOW?

A lawyer is someone who knows the laws of the land and gives advice based on those laws. An attorney-at-law is a type of lawyer who defends people in court. An ambassador is someone chosen by the government to speak on their behalf in meetings and events with other governments, countries, and global leaders.



DID YOU KNOW?

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is a group of governments that work together to build the Caribbean and unite its people. The United Nations (UN) includes governments and organisations from around the world that work together for peace, safety, and the wellbeing of people.

Being the hardworking and passionate leader that she was, Dame Billie did not limit her service to Barbados. She cared deeply about the lives of others and worked with organisations such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the United Nations to help communities in the Caribbean and around the world. In 2018, she became the **Ambassador** for Barbados. For her outstanding service, she received many national and international awards including the Barbados Centennial Award and the Order of the Caribbean Community. In 2003, she was also made a Dame of St. Andrew (DA) of the Order of Barbados.

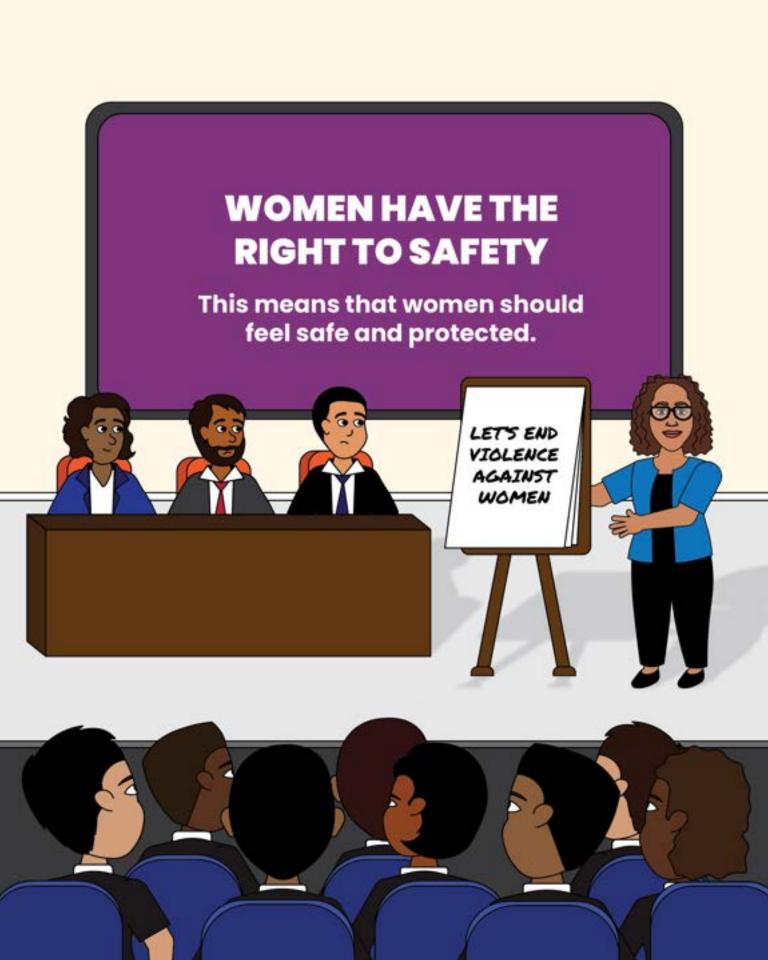
Carla Bakboord



A right is something that all people deserve and are entitled to, such as safety and being treated fairly. An activist works or organises with others to change unjust conditions. Born in Suriname in 1959, Carla Bakboord is an activist who works to protect the right of women to be safe and treated fairly. She helped create the Stop Violence Against Women Foundation and the Women's Rights Centre in Suriname to help women in her country.

A life without violence is every woman's right. But sometimes women and girls are mistreated by those around them. As a woman from Suriname, Carla cared about the safety and wellbeing of women in her country. She knew that they deserved to be protected against harm. So, in 1991, Carla helped create an organisation called the **Stop Violence Against Women Foundation**. Along with other activists who cared about the safety of women, Carla worked with the **government** and other organisations to create plans to protect women. They offered counselling to people who experienced violence and they led activities to help communities better understand the harm caused by violence. They knew that women who survived violence should be heard and taken seriously. Because of this, the foundation trained police officers and court workers to better help people.

Carla also helped create another organisation called the **Women's Rights Centre**. There, she educated others about the rights of women and encouraged them to treat women fairly. She led **research** projects, lectures, and training for women and government workers. Carla also motivated people across Suriname to work together to protect women from being harmed. In 2019, Carla was awarded a Golden Gavel Award by the Platform for Politically Active Women, for her work in defending the rights of women.



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Dr. Carla Barnett

Born in Belize, Dr. Carla Barnett is the first woman to lead CARICOM as Secretary-General. Even before to this, she broke barriers by becoming the first female Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Belize. Dr. Barnett was also a politician and supports women and girls in leadership.

Dr. Carla learned the value of being an independent woman at a young age. Her mother was a homemaker but also one of the best seamstresses she knew. This business helped support her family and showed Dr. Carla that women can earn and manage their own money. It also showed her the important and different roles women play. Just like her mother, women can care for their families and run a successful business at the same time. Dr. Carla wanted to learn more about earning and managing money, not just in her family but across communities and countries. So, she studied economics in Jamaica and Canada. But for Dr. Carla, creating wealth was not just about earning money. It was also about creating opportunities for people to grow and be independent so that they can give back to society. Because of this, she also studied social sciences at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Jamaica. This allowed Dr. Carla to better help her country.

In 1997, Dr. Carla became the first woman to lead the Central Bank of Belize as Deputy Governor. There, she played a leading role in managing her country's financial and banking services. Then, at a time when her country had many debts, Dr. Carla worked with the **government** to manage its budget and successfully created a plan to grow the **economy**. In 2015, she became a senator and leader in government. Dr. Carla also worked with other organisations to build the Caribbean. These include the **United Nations** (UN) and the **Caribbean Development Bank**. She was also the first woman to lead CARICOM, first as Deputy Secretary-General in 1997, then as Secretary-General in 2021.

Indeed, Dr. Carla achieved great things. For her, women are just as capable as men, and can achieve anything they set their minds to. To encourage Caribbean women and girls to be leaders and more independent, she led the **Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)** in Belize and helped set up the **Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWiL)** in her country. For her service, Dr. Carla was honoured by the British government and received many other awards.



Economics is the study of the economy. The economy is the way people spend and earn money. Social sciences are the fields of study about human life and behaviour. A Central Bank is the national bank of a country. It issues currency and provides financial and banking services for the government, other banks and businesses. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is a group of governments that work together to build the Caribbean and unite its people. The Secretary-General leads CARICOM.

Cristina Coc and Monica Coc Magnusson

Born in Belize, Cristina Coc and Monica Coc Magnusson defended the land rights of indigenous people in Belize. Their bravery and hard work also helped put an end to activities that threatened the environment in Belize.

In the heart of Central America, there lives a group of indigenous people called the Maya. Having lived there for centuries, the Maya share a deep connection with their homeland and believe that humans must respect the natural environment and live in harmony with all living things on earth. So, when the government of Belize began logging the rainforest and exploring for oil, two brave sisters from the Mayan community - Cristina Coc and Monica Coc Magnusson, quickly sprang into action. Cristina and Monica grew up in the small Mayan village of Laguna in the Toledo District of Belize, where their relatives were Mayan leaders. Because of this, they knew the challenges their community faced in protecting their land.



Monica went on to be the first indigenous woman lawyer from Southern Belize. Cristina became a spokesperson for the group called the **Maya Leaders Alliance**, and they prepared a lawsuit against the government to stop drilling for oil. Belizean lawyer, Antoinette Moore, defended them in court and Monica used her legal knowledge to help their case.

In 2015, the Maya Leaders Alliance scored a historic victory against the government of Belize. It was the first time a group of indigenous people won a case for indigenous land rights in the Caribbean. For their achievement, they were awarded the Equator Prize by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Since then, both sisters continued to protect the rights of indigenous people in Belize – Monica, through her work as a lawyer, and Cristina, as an activist with the Julian Cho Society which she created and named in honour of her late brother-in-law and fellow Mayan activist, Julian Cho.



Elma Francois



Born in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in 1897, Elma Francois moved to Trinidad and Tobago where she became a labour activist. She defended the rights of workers and poor people and helped form many trade unions.

In Saint Vincent, there once lived a brave young girl named Elma Francois. Growing up in a poor family, she saw her parents struggle as labourers. Most women and girls on the island stayed at home or worked as servants or cotton pickers. So, when Elma left primary school, she worked with her mother picking cotton. In search of better opportunities, Elma ventured off to Trinidad at the tender age of 22. Although, she found work as helper in the home of a wealthy family in Port of Spain, Elma soon observed that even in Trinidad, there were many homeless, unemployed and underpaid people. She could not turn a blind eye to it.

At a time when people thought that women should be seen and not heard, Elma became a lioness in the crowd as activist for the rights of workers. She was brave, outspoken, and led hunger marches to show how some workers were treated unfairly. She also gave speeches around the capital city to inspire others to stand up for themselves. In 1934, she helped create a group called the National Unemployed Movement which stood up against government decisions that did not help benefit poor people. The group was renamed the Negro Welfare Cultural and Social Association and they formed trade unions to defend workers' rights.

In 1937, oil field workers began a **strike** because they were not being paid fairly. When the police tried to arrest the leader of the strike, Tubal Uriah 'Buzz' Butler, riots broke out across the country. Elma was also arrested. Elma was accused of encouraging others to rebel against the government, and she became the first woman in Trinidad and Tobago to be charged and brought to trial for such actions. But she showed great courage and defended herself in court. Elma was found not guilty and after the trial, she continued to be a champion of the people until her death in 1944. In 1987, she was named a National Heroine of Trinidad and Tobago.



Dr. Erna Brodber

Born in Jamaica in 1940, Dr. Erna Brodber is an author and historian who kept the histories and traditions of her country alive through her books. As a university lecturer, she also taught others about Caribbean history.

Since a child, Dr. Erna understood the importance of history. Even still today, she could recall the stories her parents shared about their family's **heritage** and the way those stories affected how she understood the world around her. From her mother's accounts of her grandfather fighting in the Ashanti Wars to her father's lectures about the **government** and slavery, young Erna enjoyed these tales and learnt many lessons of struggle, sacrifice, strength, and perseverance. Indeed, she was inspired and this began her journey towards becoming a Caribbean author and historian.



An author is someone who writes books. A historian is someone who studies and records history. A university lecturer is someone who teaches at university. Research is about collecting information about a subject to make new discoveries or to verify facts. A novel is a book that tells an imaginary story. Literature is a collection of written work that people consider to be art.



While studying history and lecturing at university, Dr. Erna realised that much of Caribbean history was not documented properly. Most stories were passed on by word of mouth and because of this, many details were lost and even changed over time. So, Dr. Erna began visiting elderly people in rural communities in Jamaica to document their stories from the past. By doing this, Dr. Erna helped preserve many histories that may have otherwise been lost.

She wrote many books and articles, and her research also inspired her novels, Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home, Myal: A Novel, Louisiana, The Rainmaker's Mistake and Nothing's Mat. Today, Dr. Erna's work is used by schools and universities across the world as credible sources of Caribbean history and truth. For her outstanding contributions to Caribbean literature, Dr. Erna received many awards such as the Commonwealth Writers' Prize in 1989 and the Musgrave Medal in 1999 from the Institute of Jamaica, the main organisation in Jamaica that promotes and celebrates literature and culture.

Gema Ramkeesoon



An activist works to create positive change in society. This can include taking action to ensure that all people are treated equally. Born in Trinidad and Tobago in 1910, Gema Ramkeesoon was a human rights activist who helped disadvantaged people and women become empowered. She took action to end racial discrimination and taught women that they were stronger when they worked together.

Gema's journey began when she was just a schoolgirl. Her role model was Beatrice Greig, one of the first activists for women's rights in Trinidad and Tobago. Beatrice's passion for helping others and supporting women inspired Gema to do the same. After getting married to an Anglican priest, Gema went on to lead the largest group of Anglican women in Trinidad and Tobago. She also joined a group called the Coterie of Social Workers which brought women of colour together to help families, children, and people in need access food and shelter.

Gema's service to humanity did not stop there. She led many other groups which accomplished incredible like creating homes for the visually impaired and feeding children in schools. At the **Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)**, Gema encouraged women and girls of all backgrounds to get an education.

Throughout her journey, Gema's most important message was for women to unite and support each other, regardless of their race, skin colour, or income level. She encouraged women across the Caribbean to work together and led many meetings with other activists and organisations throughout the region. For her efforts, Gema was honoured by the British government in 1950, and received the golden Hummingbird Medal from Trinidad and Tobago in 1976. Gema died in 1999 and is remembered as a feminist who made a positive difference in her country and across the Caribbean.



DID YOU KNOW?

A right or a human right is something that all people deserve and are entitled to such as food, an education, health care, free speech, and being treated fairly. A human rights activist defends the rights of people by taking action to help them. A feminist is someone who believes that women and girls have human rights and should be treated fairly and equally to men and boys. Racial discrimination occurs when people are treated unfairly because of their race or the colour of their skin.

Dame Georgiana Robinson

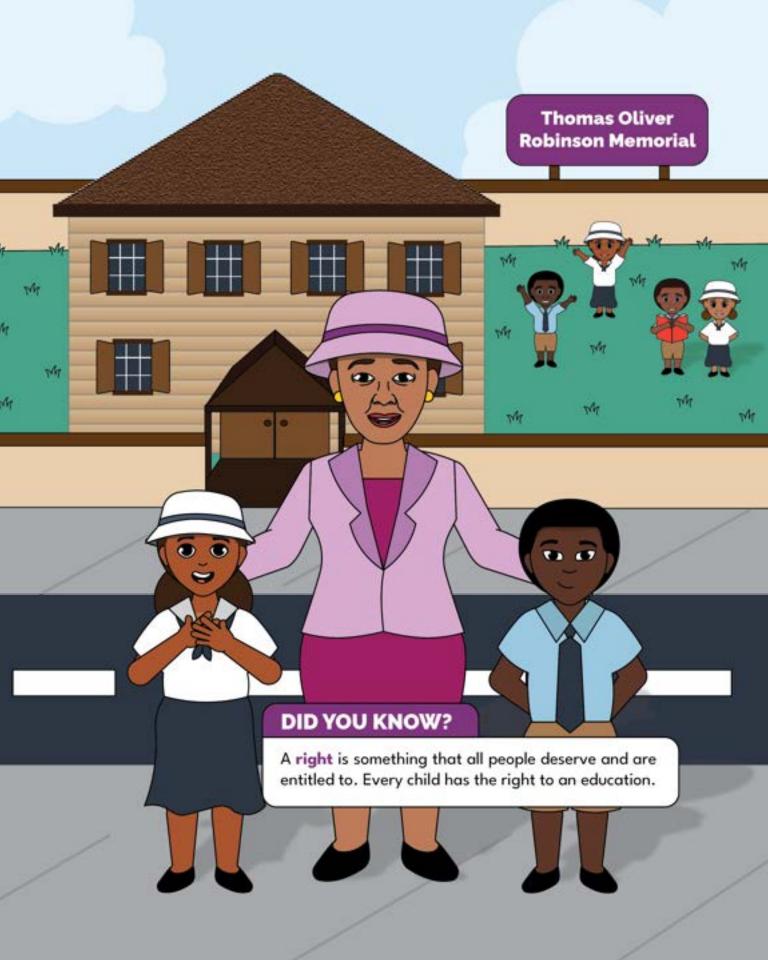


Born in Antigua in 1880, Dame Georgiana Robinson opened the first secondary school in her country that welcomed all children, regardless of their race, religion, or family history. Her hard work helped pave the way for all children in Antigua and Barbuda to receive an education.

Dame Georgiana attended school abroad. When she returned home at the age of 14, she continued to study and passed her exams. This was a major achievement because Dame Georgiana received what many other black and brown children in her country were not able to – a secondary school education. Often, they were treated unfairly because of their race and the families they came from. Some people thought they did not deserve to go to school. But Dame Georgiana believed that everyone should be treated fairly, and that education was for all. Her brother, Thomas Oliver Robinson, encouraged her to open her very own school. In 1898, that dream became a reality.

At just 18 years old, Dame Georgiana began teaching her siblings and the children of some family friends. Soon after, children began to enrol from across the country and from the wider Caribbean. All children were welcomed, both boys and girls, regardless of their race or religion. Her school was also the first in her country to welcome children whose parents were not married. By accepting all children, Dame Georgiana set the example for others to follow until all children in her country were given the chance to get a secondary school education. She named the school **Thomas Oliver Robinson Memorial**, in honour of her brother.

Dame Georgiana was also a member of many government groups that made decisions to help her country. Because of this, she was able to help communities get access to water. Dame Georgiana also led the first Arts and Cultural Committee in Antigua and her decisions in this group helped Carnival to grow. She died in 1972 and in 2006, she was named a Dame Companion of the Order of the National Hero, an honour given to persons in Antigua and Barbuda for their service to humanity.



Gertrude Protain



Born in Saint Vincent in 1914, Gertude Protain moved to Grenada where she helped create opportunities for hospitality workers. Because of this, tourism in her country grew. She also defended the rights of women in the Caribbean.

Gertrude Protain was a powerful voice in the movement to **empower** women in Grenada. After moving to the island in 1933, she worked with other women and leaders to protect and promote the rights of women. Gertrude was the first woman to join the council that made laws in Grenada. While there, she focused on creating better opportunities for women to get an education, including scholarships for girls.

Gertrude was also one of the first women to play a major role in shaping tourism in Grenada. She worked with an organisation called the Grenada Board of Tourism and helped create the **Grenada Hotel Association** to unite and improve businesses and people who worked in hospitality.

She represented Grenada at many international events and worked at the Ministry of Tourism to educate and train tourism workers, including taxi drivers and street vendors. Through her hard work, Grenada became a popular place for tourists to visit, especially visitors from Carnival cruise ships. This created more jobs across the island and helped businesses get more customers from around the world.

For her service to Grenada, Gertrude received many awards, including the Order of the British Empire, the Grenada Board of Tourism Award, the Grenada Independence Award, and the Grenada Silver Jubilee Certificate of Honour. Gertrude died in 2005.



People who work in hospitality welcome guests and visitors to their country and create a friendly environment during their stay. This includes hotel workers, taxi drivers, tour guides, and entertainers. This is a part of tourism which is about welcoming, entertaining, and sharing your culture with visitors. A right is something that all people deserve and are entitled to such as food, an education, health care, free speech, and being treated fairly. Empowering people is about creating an environment or providing things that can help make them stronger, more confident, and more independent. When people are empowered, they can improve their lives and the lives of their families, their communities, and their countries.

Gwendolyn Lizarraga

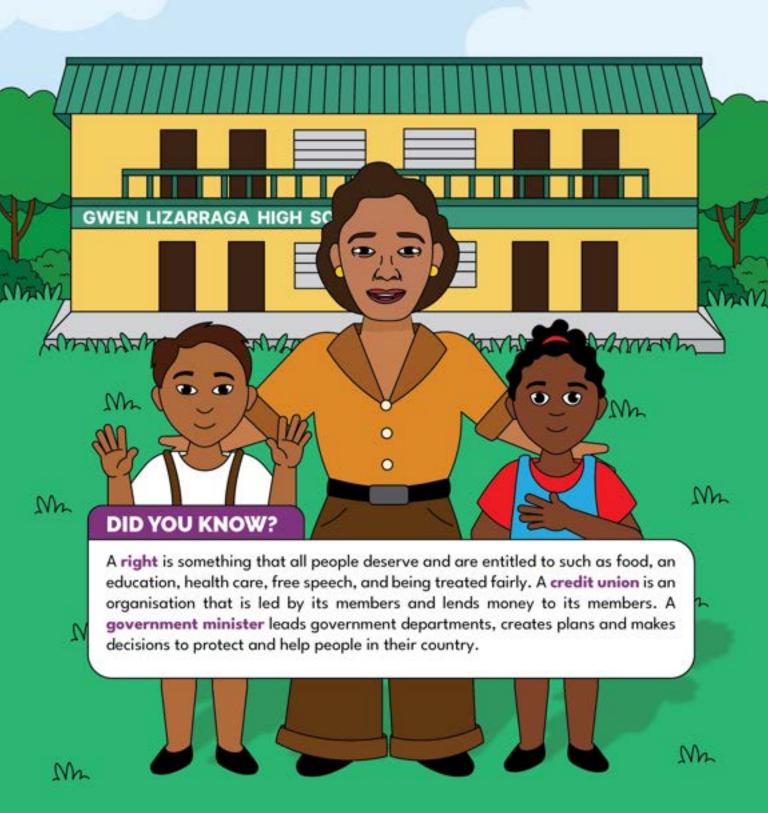


Born in Belize in 1901, Gwendolyn Lizarraga empowered women and motivated them to be the best that they could be. She was also the first woman in Belize to become a government minister and improved education for children.

Gwendolyn lived at a time when women were not expected to have jobs outside of the home or to be leaders and decision makers in their community. But Gwendolyn dared to be different.

Her responsibilities as a wife and mother of five children did not stop her from becoming a business owner and government leader. At a time when people needed to own land to vote, Gwendolyn helped many women become landowners so that they would be allowed to vote in Belize's national elections. She also created the **United Women's Group** in Belize and led over 5,000 other members to stand up for the **rights** of women workers. They encouraged leaders to give women fair opportunities to work and earn enough money to support themselves. This included paying women the same salaries as men. They also created a **credit union** to help women save money.

At the age of 60, Gwendolyn competed in her country's national elections for the first time. She was voted into office by the people of Belize and became the first woman in her country to serve as a government minister. In this role, Gwendolyn continued to help her community in many different ways. She led projects to build more homes for families and schools for children. Gwendolyn also worked to make the education system better for children. For her service to her country, Gwendolyn was honoured by the British government. In Belize, the Gwendolyn Lizarraga High School and several streets throughout the country were named after her, like the Madam Liz Avenue and Gwen Lizarraga Street. Gwendolyn died in 1975.

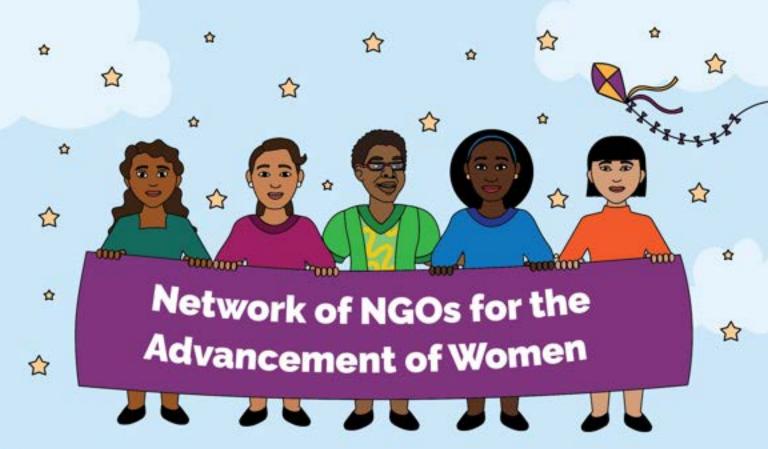


Dr. Hazel Brown

A right is something that all people deserve and are entitled to, such as food, free speech, and being treated fairly. Born in Trinidad and Tobago in 1942, Hazel Brown was an activist who defended the rights of women, children and consumers.

Hazel believed that all voices matter and because of this, the people of a country should have a say in decisions that affect them. This motivated her to become a voice for people whose voices were often unheard, especially women in the Caribbean. In the 1970s, Hazel was among a group of women who defended the rights of women and their families to have proper health care, food, education, jobs, and opportunities to grow. She joined a group called the **Housewives Association of Trinidad and Tobago** and led activities to stop businesses from misleading customers. Hazel called for fair food prices and encouraged businesses to share truthful information about the products they were selling. She was even part of a group that persuaded the government and businesses to stop advertising food products that could harm babies. To protect people who earned low salaries, Hazel also became a member of a government group called the **National Minimum Wages Board** which ensured that workers were not underpaid.





In 1985, she helped form the **Network of NGOs for the Advancement of Women**. This was a group that brought different activists together to help and **empower** women. As its leader, Hazel encouraged other organisations to create more opportunities for women to become leaders in society. This prompted her to create the network's 'Put A Woman' project to prepare women to compete in national elections while helping society to accept women as leaders. Hazel also helped create the **Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWIL)** to support Caribbean women who wanted to enter into **politics** and guide them to be **transformational leaders**.

For over 50 years, Hazel led groups, projects and activities to protect the rights of others. She worked with organisations around the world to create plans and projects to improve lives. The **United Nations (UN)**, the **Commonwealth**, and the **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** are a few of those organisations. In 2011 she received Trinidad and Tobago's Medal for the Development of Women (Gold) for her dedication to empowering women. Hazel Brown was also awarded an honorary Doctoral Degree by the University of the West Indies in 2017. Hazel died in 2022.

Dr. Hilda Rosemary Husbands-Mathurin

to be and inspired her to help others achieve excellence.

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Born in Saint Lucia in 1956, Dr. Hilda Rosemary Husbands-Mathurin was the first woman to become President of the Senate in Saint Lucia. She also

Growing up, Dr. Hilda's parents motivated her to be a leader and to put her best foot forward in everything she did. As her father would often say, "you be the one and take it to excellence!" They encouraged her to be responsible, hardworking, and to care for those around her. This shaped the extraordinary woman she grew

opened a school for children with learning disabilities, and she helped create the Parliament of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).



Dr. Hilda started her journey as a teacher and later received a scholarship to study in England. When she returned home in 2000, Dr. Hilda became a senior lecturer at the teachers' college in Saint Lucia. At work, she helped other lecturers improve their skills and become better leaders. At home, Dr. Hilda also encouraged her children to be the best that they could be. So, when she found out that one of them had a learning disability, she quickly sprang into action to help him overcome it. Dr. Hilda also wanted to help other families with similar problems. So, in 2006, she opened the Educare Learning Centre to help children with learning disabilities in Saint Lucia. She joined charities and opened an organisation called Moving Mountains to help families in need.

Dr. Hilda became a leader in her community and was called upon to serve as a Senator in 2007. Shortly after, she became the first woman in her country to become President of the Senate. She then became Speaker of the House in the Parliament of Saint Lucia in 2009. Dr. Hilda also helped create the Parliament of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and she worked with Prime Ministers across the region to create agreements between different countries. In 2017, she became Saint Lucia's Parliamentary Commissioner, a role which gave her responsibility for investigating complaints against the government. For her service to her country and the Caribbean, Dr. Hilda was honoured by the British Government in 2022.



A Parliament is part of the government that debates issues and makes laws for a country. The Speaker of the House maintains order in Parliament and ensures that it operates smoothly. The Senate is a group of people called senators, in Parliament, who make laws and meet to discuss plans to improve their country. The President of the Senate oversees this group.

Ione Erlinger-Ford

Born in Saint Lucia, lone Erlinger-Ford was an activist who defended the rights of women and worked to end violence against them. She helped pave the way for the Saint Lucia Crisis Centre, the Family Court, and the Shelter for Abused Women and Children in Saint Lucia to be opened. She also encouraged the government to pass laws to help families and protect people who were experiencing violence.

As the leader of the Saint Lucia Business and Professional Women's Club, lone wanted to improve the lives of women in her country. But she soon realised that many of them were being abused by their partners, their families, and other members of their household. She also realised that many women struggled to support their children on their own. Indeed, these were major problems and lone was determined to help these women. She listened to their stories and encouraged them to speak up. At the same time, lone encouraged the government and other organisations to work together to find solutions. In 1986, the government opened a special department to deal with the issues.





lone, together with other women activists, proposed a plan to create a centre that would provide important services for women and children who experienced violence. The plan received overwhelming support and within two years, the Saint Lucia Crisis Centre was opened. But lone's work did not stop there. She encouraged the government to pass laws to protect victims of violence, and laws to deal with the payment of child support through the court. Ione also gathered support for the creation of the Family Court and the Shelter for Abused Women and Children.

Throughout her life, Ione spoke up for families in need and for women who were told to remain silent about their painful experiences. She helped them find their own voice by educating them about their rights. Her passion for helping women and families motivated many others in Saint Lucia and the Caribbean to do the same. Ione died in 2013.





Born in Bahamas in 1939, Dame Janet Bostwick was the first woman to become Attorney General, a Member of Parliament, and Acting Prime Minister in her country. As a leader, Dame Janet used her voice to defend the rights of others, especially women and children.

Some leaders dedicate their lives to helping others and their passion inspires those around them to do the same. This has certainly been the case with Dame Janet Bostwick, the first woman in the Bahamas to lead her country as acting Prime Minister, the first woman to become Attorney General and a Member of Parliament in the Bahamas' House of Assembly, and the first woman to serve as President of the Bahamas Bar Association – the organisation for attorneys-at-law in her country. Indeed, Dame Janet achieved many firsts as a woman in the Bahamas. But she is respected as a leader not just because of the many hats she wore, but also because she used her platform to advocate for others or speak up on their behalf, especially women and children when their voices were not heard.

Dame Janet encouraged employers to treat women fairly by giving them the same salaries and job opportunities as men. At the time, women could lose their jobs if they became pregnant and had to take time-off from work. So, Dame Janet urged employers to protect the jobs of pregnant women during and after pregnancy and childbirth. She then called upon men to share responsibilities with women in the home for raising their children. Dame Janet was also saddened by violence between family members in the Bahamas. Her determination to change this motivated her to work with the government to change the laws of the land so that people who experienced violence could have better protection and justice.

Dame Janet is great example of a **transformational leader** because her success was driven by her concern for people and desire for them to be treated equally and fairly. She received many awards including the Dame Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in 2019, and the CARICOM Triennial Award for Women for her contributions to the Caribbean.



The government is the group of people who lead the country. The Parliament is composed of people in government who debate issues and make laws for a country. They often belong to different groups, such as the Senate and the House of Assembly or 'House' for short. A Member of Parliament is a member of the House who is voted in by the people of a community to represent them in parliament. The Attorney General represents the government in all legal matters and works to improve the laws of the land.

Jean La Rose

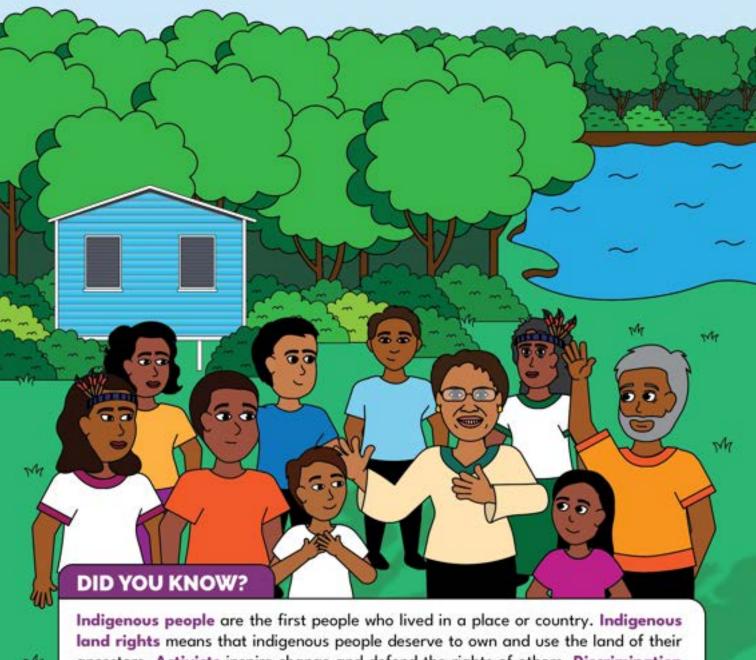


A right is something that all people deserve and are entitled to, such as participating in their traditional culture, heritage and way of life without discrimination. Indigenous people are the first people who lived in a place or country. Because of this, they have land rights which means that they are entitled to own and use the land of their ancestors. Born in 1962, Jean La Rose is a passionate defender of the rights of Indigenous or Amerindian people in Guyana.

The Amerindians were among the first people to live in the Caribbean and South America. From the Taino tribes of the northern islands to the Lokono people of the southern mainland, the Amerindian community is vast. For centuries, they worked to protect their homeland and this journey continues even today with the hard work and dedication of people like Jean La Rose. While at university in Guyana, Jean learned about laws that protect the rights of indigenous people around the world. But she quickly realised that the laws in her country did not protect Amerindians in the way that they should. As a member of the Amerindian community herself, Jean wanted to make a difference. So, along with other activists who shared her passion, Jean travelled to Amerindian communities across Guyana to teach them about their rights.

Jean joined an organisation called the **Amerindian People's Association**. There, she worked to protect the rights of indigenous people, especially their right to own and use the land of their ancestors. For many indigenous people, land is much more than just property. It is an important part of their culture and relationship with one another. Jean brought communities together and organised activities to protect indigenous lands from mining, logging and projects that could harm the environment. Jean also encouraged the government to update the laws of the land to better protect the rights of indigenous people. Through her work, Jean encouraged the government to create a group called the **Indigenous Peoples' Commission**.

The Indigenous Peoples' Commission would allow the government to cooperate with indigenous people so that better decisions could be made to improve the wellbeing of indigenous communities. In 2002, Jean received the Goldman Environmental Prize for her commitment to protecting indigenous land rights and the environment.



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ancestors. Activists inspire change and defend the rights of others. Discrimination occurs when people are treated unfairly because of things like their race or culture. Heritage is what someone has inherited from their ancestors, including traditions, languages and property.

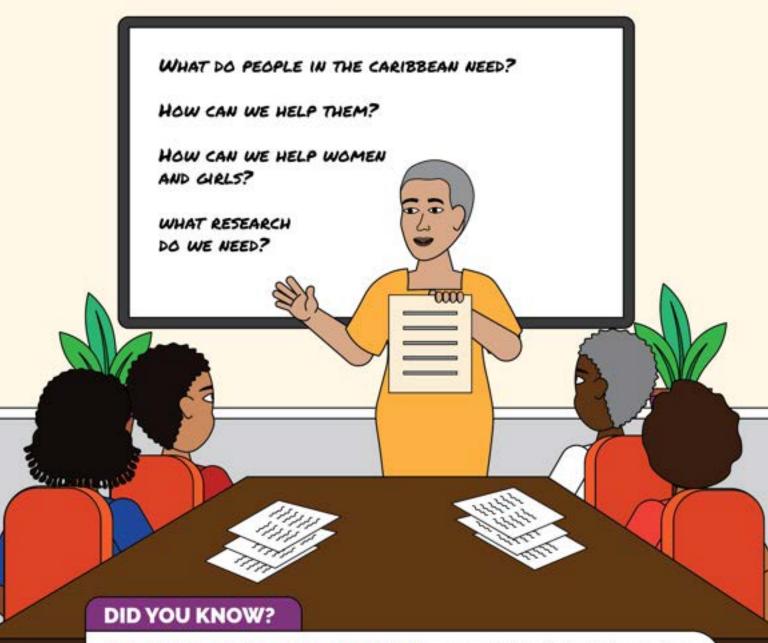
Joan French



Access to education, safety and being treated fairly are rights that all people deserve and are entitled to. An activist defends the rights of others and takes action to help them. Born in Jamaica in 1934, Joan French spent most of her life defending the rights of women and children around the world. Her work inspired others to follow her example.

Joan came from a family of teachers in Jamaica. This inspired her passion for helping children in her community to achieve their highest potential. Joan became a teacher and at the same time, she joined a group called the **Sistren Theatre Collective**. Through drama, this group made people more aware about the struggles women faced. By doing this, they motivated people across Jamaica to value, respect, and listen to women. When the organisation that represented teachers began to disagree with the work of the Sistren Theatre Collective, Joan joined an organisation called the **National Union of Democratic Teachers** where she defended the rights of teachers, especially women. While there, she encouraged the government to give teachers paid time-off to study and, for pregnant women teachers, paid time-off to prepare for childbirth.

Joan also helped create a group called the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA). This group worked with governments and other organisations across the Caribbean to protect and promote the rights of women. Joan lectured at the University of the West Indies as well, and helped her students understand different issues that affect women and girls. Through her work with the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), Joan led projects that looked at the needs of Caribbean people so that plans and policies could be created to better help them. With the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), an organisation which helps children across the world, Joan led offices and projects in the Caribbean and Africa. She also helped countries better understand the different issues facing girls and boys so that special plans could be created to help them. In Burkino Faso, she helped create more opportunities for girls to get an education. For her noble service, Joan received awards from SISTREN, CAFRA, PLAN INTERNATIONAL, the Pan-African Organisation of Women, and the United Nations (UN).



United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is an organisation in the United Nations that helps children around the world. The United Nations (UN) is an organisation of countries and governments from around the world that work together for peace and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others. The Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) works with organisations across the Caribbean to understand the needs of Caribbean people and help create plans and policies to improve their lives. A policy is a set of guidelines that organisations and countries can follow to ensure they are meeting their goals.

Magda Pollard



Magda Pollard believed that women and girls are just as capable as men and boys at achieving great things. Born in Guyana in 1931, she became a teacher, author and pioneer for women's rights in the Caribbean.

Magda's parents, who were both teachers, inspired her love for learning. At school, Magda excelled in her studies and enjoyed singing, learning new skills and taking part in activities such as the Girl Guides. She quickly became a leader among her peers and was motivated to continue her journey in education. This led Magda to become a teacher.

While she enjoyed her first teaching job, Magda wanted to achieve more. So, she went to Scotland to study nutrition, health science and home economics at university. When she returned home, she became the principal of the Carnegie School of Home Economics. Leading the school gave Magda great joy because she saw the importance of education for young women. It could help them learn new skills, open doors for better opportunities in life, and help them become more independent. Still, Magda knew that more needed to be done.

Magda saw how the work women did in the home was undervalued by society. This included tasks like caring for children, cooking and cleaning. To prove this, Magda conducted research to learn more about their experiences. Her research showed that less women had leadership jobs than men, women were paid less than men, and it was difficult for women to get loans from the bank. It was clear that women and men were not treated equally and Caribbean leaders began to pay more attention to this problem.

In 1979, concerned leaders from many countries met to discuss and find solutions to the **discrimination** that women around the world were facing. They created a document called a **convention** which was a guide that everyone could agree upon and follow to improve the lives of women. It was called the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).** Caribbean leaders at this meeting signed the convention.

Because of this, their governments now had the great responsibility of putting their promises into action and they turned to Magda for help. Magda worked with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and led the office that was responsible for protecting the rights of women across the region. She worked with many governments to create national plans of action to ensure that women and men were treated equally and fairly. She helped create examples of good laws to protect women's rights and governments used these examples as a guide to create national laws in their countries. CARICOM recognised Magda's contributions to the region by presenting her with the Triennial Award for Women. She was one of the first women to receive this honour. She also received many national awards in Guyana, including the Cacique Crown of Honour. Magda died in 2019.



A convention is an agreement among countries that outlines how certain things should be dealt with. Women's rights are the rights and opportunities that women and girls are entitled to. These rights are equal to men and boys. This includes equal opportunities for jobs, education, health care, and to lead and be heard. Discrimination occurs when people are treated unfairly because of things like their gender, age, family history or the colour of their skin.



Dame Maizie Barker-Welch

Born in Barbados in 1927, Dame Maizie Baker-Welch has long been a champion for women, their rights, and their growth in society. She is an activist who has given her life to service to her community, her country and the Caribbean.

Dame Maizie grew up in the countryside of Barbados. Her family was very active in the community and her parents taught her the importance of education and caring for others. Her father was a principal and often taught people in their village for free. Her mother taught her skills like sewing and encouraged her to share her knowledge with others. These lessons inspired Dame Maizie's work as a politician and community leader. For her, it was about helping people and communities.

Dame Maizie began her journey as a schoolteacher. She taught Spanish and dress making at schools and even used her skills in playing the piano to help children learn Spanish. She also created groups to teach young people skills like sewing and decorating. In 1986, Dame Maizie won her seat in the Barbados general election. As a government leader, she spoke up to help her community and led projects to help women and workers. Dame Maizie also led organisations that defended the rights of others. She was the President of the National Community for Aging and encouraged others to respect and care for the elderly. In support of women, Dame Maizie led organisations that worked to protect their rights. These included the National Organisation of Women and the Business and Professional Women's Club. Dame Maizie even represented her country at United Nations (UN) meetings where leaders from governments around the world gathered to agree on plans to help and empower women.

Dame Maizie became a leading voice on issues affecting women not just in Barbados but around the world. She led the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), an organisation which brings together over 30 Latin American and Caribbean countries to ensure that women are treated fairly, and their rights are protected. At the CIM, she played a major role in creating an agreement between these countries to help end violence against women.



At the CIM, she played a major role in creating an agreement between these countries to help end violence against women. This agreement was called the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women. For her service, Dame Maizie was awarded the Companion of Honour (CHB), and the Barbados Centennial Honour (BCH). In 2014, she was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) for her work in improving the lives of women, both in her country and around the world. She was also awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD) by the University of the West Indies that same year.

Today in the year 2023, at the age of 96, Dame Maizie wishes to share with young girls and boys, some advice from the teachings that helped her in her own life: "love our neighbour as ourselves" and "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Dame Maizie believes that it is important at every stage of your life, as a young girl or boy, and as an adult, that you try always to make good choices – of your friends, of the company you keep, of the books that you read, and of the things that you do, so that you can always be proud of yourself. She recalls a quote from Dumbledore in the famous Harry Potter series: "It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."

Marion Bethel

Born in the Bahamas in 1953, Marion Bethel is an attorney-at-law, writer, filmmaker and activist who uses her art to educate others about the Caribbean, especially the journey and achievements of Caribbean women.

Leaders can inspire people in many different ways. For Marion Bethel, essays, poetry and film are powerful tools to inspire those around her. While studying to become an attorney-at-law, Marion also began writing her first collection of poems called **Guanahani**, **My Love**. The poems give readers a magical glimpse into the history and culture of the Caribbean and The Bahamas and are celebrated across the region. Her book won the Casa de Las Americas Prize in 1994, making Marion one of the few Caribbean writers to win this award. Her second book, **Bougainvillea Ringplay**, also received praiseworthy reviews. Through her writing, Marion inspired the work of other Caribbean authors and changed the way many people see her country.





After publishing her books, Marion turned her attention to film. She produced and directed a documentary in 2012 called **Womanish Ways: Freedom, Human Rights & Democracy, The Women's Suffrage Movement in The Bahamas – 1948-1962**. Through this film, Marion shone a light on the struggles Bahamian women faced in their journey to gain the **right** to vote. She also showed the strength and courage of women, their contributions to building the Caribbean, and their power to transform their communities. The documentary received many awards including the 2013 Film Award at the Urban Suburban International Film Festival in Philadelphia. It was also celebrated as a symbol of women's rights, progress, and freedom in the Caribbean.

Marion was an active member of the women's organisation called Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA). This group is instrumental in promoting the rights of women in the Caribbean. For her inspirational work as a writer, filmmaker, women's rights activist and human rights lawyer, Marion received the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Triennial Award for Women in 2014. She was the first Bahamian to receive this honour. Marion continues to be a champion for women and girls. In 2017, she became an expert member on the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This Committee holds governments accountable for commitments they made to promote, respect and fulfill the human rights of women and girls.

Mia Mottley



Born in Barbados in 1965, Mia Mottley was the first woman Prime Minister of Barbados. She also led the way for her country to become a republic. By doing this, Barbados was no longer led by British Kings and Queens. Now, the people of the country can choose their own President. In this new government, Mia Mottley became the first Prime Minister of Barbados.

Mia's love for Caribbean culture and people runs deep. Even as a little girl, she often took photos to capture Caribbean beauty and enjoyed singing calypso. Mia was also a great debater in school, a talent which matched her choice to study law at university. Mia completed her first degree at just 20 years old and not long after, she became a government senator. This allowed her to help create laws and plans to improve her country. Mia then became one of the youngest government ministers in Barbados and led projects to improve education and job opportunities for young people. In 2001, Mia made history as the first woman in Barbados to become Attorney General. In this role, she represented the government in all legal matters and continued to improve the laws of the land. Mia was also a member of many groups that made decisions about her country's security, defence, education, technology, trade, and relationships with other countries.

In 2018, Mia scored a victory like no other at her country's general elections and became the first woman Prime Minister of Barbados. Indeed, this was a major achievement, but Mia was just getting started. She cared about the environment and the wellbeing of others, not just in Barbados but around the world. Because of this, she became a champion for efforts to stop climate change and encouraged other global leaders to do the same. Mia also saw the potential of Caribbean people to achieve great things. So, she worked with other leaders to improve relationships between Caribbean countries and, at the same time, she led projects to improve jobs, education, and opportunities for growth in Barbados and across the wider region. In 2021, Mia led the way for Barbados to take control of its leadership by becoming a republic. From that moment on, Barbados was no longer led by British Kings and Queens. Instead, the people of the country could choose their own leader. In this new government, Mia Mottley became the first Prime Minister.



DID YOU KNOW?

The government is the group of people who lead a country. The Prime Minister leads the government. Climate change describes changes in the weather and our environment over a long period of time. This includes temperature and rainfall. Climate change can happen naturally, but sometimes human activities like pollution can have bad effects on the weather and environment. Mia has been encouraging world leaders to join together to stop this.

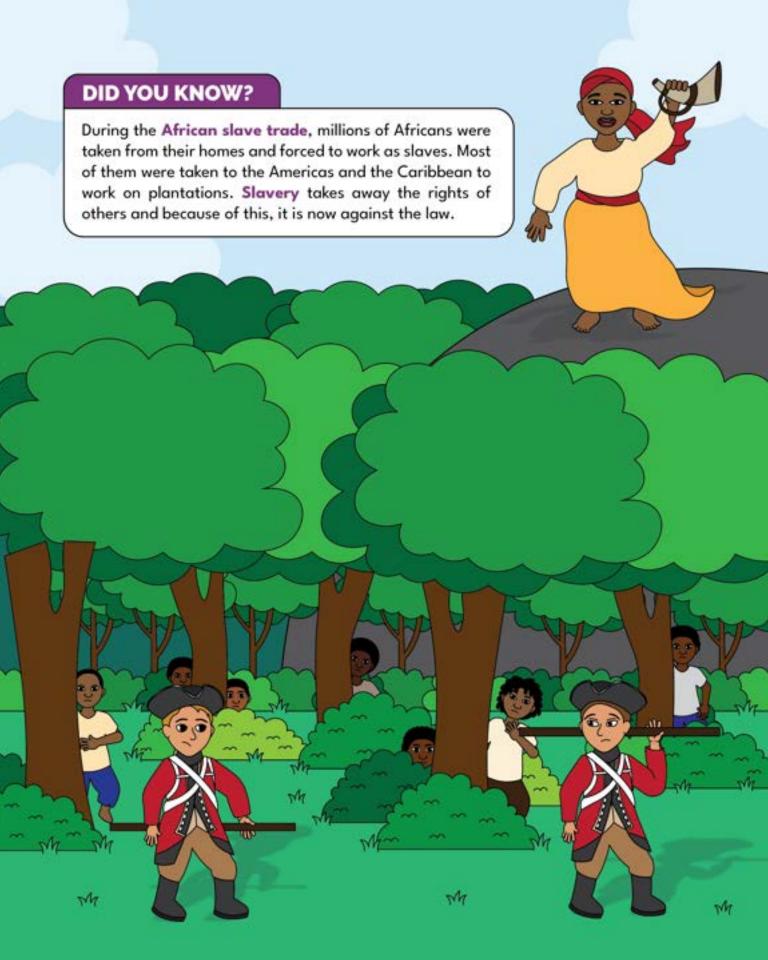
Queen Nanny of the Jamaican Maroons



During the African slave trade, millions of Africans were taken from their homes and forced to work as slaves. Most of them were taken to the Americas and the Caribbean to work on plantations. Born in Ghana around 1680, Queen Nanny was a fierce leader of a community of people who escaped slavery in Jamaica. They are called the maroons. Through her skill and determination, she led hundreds of people to their freedom.

Hundreds of years ago in the Caribbean, there were small communities of people who escaped slavery. They were known as maroons. Many of them spent their lives running from captivity. Others died fighting for their freedom. But deep in the mountains of Jamaica, one fierce maroon led her people to victory. They called her Nanny of the Maroons. Nanny was the leader of a maroon community called Nanny Town. There, she protected her people against slavery, inspired them to fight for their freedom, and encouraged her village to celebrate their African culture. She was also very clever and during the First Maroon War, she trained her warriors to outsmart the British soldiers. Because of this, they won many battles and helped rescue hundreds of enslaved people. They defended the hills where their village stood and set hidden traps for their enemies. Nanny was soon known throughout the land and her troops were even feared by the British.

Although the British destroyed Nanny Town in 1734, they still could not defeat the maroons. Nanny escaped to another maroon settlement with other survivors, and they continued their pursuit for freedom. The maroons declared their independence from the British and in 1739, the British agreed to peace. Five hundred acres of land was given to Nanny and her followers. The village built on that land still exists and is now known as Moore Town or New Nanny Town. Nanny was declared as a Jamaican National Hero in 1975 and a statue was erected in her honour.

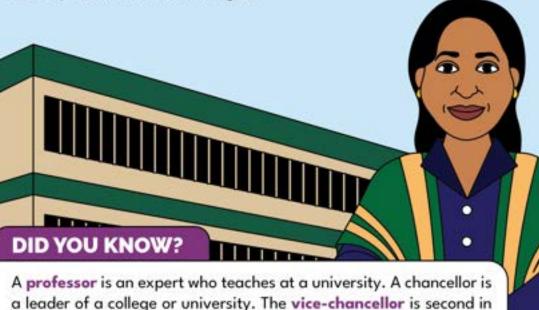






Born in Guyana in 1967, Professor Paloma Mohammed is a leader in education, film, and Caribbean culture. She was the first woman to lead the University of Guyana as Vice-Chancellor and she also helped create opportunities for filmmakers across the region.

At the tender age of 16, Professor Paloma got her first job at a radio station in Guyana. However, her mother insisted that she continue her studies instead. So, Professor Paloma enrolled at the University of Guyana. She also studied at Harvard University and the University of the West Indies, before returning to Guyana where she became one of the Caribbean's leading voices in education. At the University of Guyana, Professor Paloma led departments, programmes, research projects, and fundraising activities. She also taught students from across the world about culture, human behaviour, and communication. In 2020, Professor Paloma became the first woman and youngest person to lead the university as Vice-Chancellor. She also wrote many books, articles and plays, and her work is used by students across the region.



command and oversees students, staff, courses, facilities, and other

operations.



Professor Paloma is also a leader in film and television. She produced many films, including the first Guyanese full-length movie, and Guyana's first children's talent show for television, called **KIDSTAGE**. Professor Paloma led efforts to create a company called **CineGuyana Inc** to help filmmakers in Guyana. Since then, CINEGuyana has created many jobs for filmmakers and opportunities for their work to be shown around the world. For her inspiring work, Professor Paloma received the Guyana Prize for Literature on three occasions, the City of New York Award for Culture, and she was the first woman to receive the ANSA Caribbean Laureate for Excellence in the Arts and Letters, which is one of the highest awards in the region. In 2014, she was named one of the top five most influential women in the country by the US Embassy in Guyana.

Dr. Peggy Antrobus



Women's rights are human rights which all people are entitled to. They include things like being protected by the law and having the same opportunities as men to lead governments, large organisations and countries. An activist defends human rights and takes action to ensure that all people are treated equally. Born in Grenada in 1935, Dr. Peggy Antrobus is one of the Caribbean's leading activists for gender equality. She spent years working with governments and other organisations across the world to help women and girls live with their full rights and freedoms.

In 1974, Dr. Peggy began working with the government of Jamaica to improve the lives of women, especially those who did not have the same opportunities as men to rights like jobs and education. Though the role was new to Dr. Peggy, she gave it her all because she believed that women should be treated fairly and equally. She soon noticed that many projects being put in place across the country only benefitted some people instead of the wider community. So, Dr. Peggy encouraged the government to listen to what all citizens had to say, including women and children. By doing this, the government could better understand their needs and create projects that could truly help them.

Dr. Peggy became a feminist which is someone who sees how women and girls have less power in society and takes action to empower them. She created the Women and Development Unit (WAND) at the University of the West Indies to help women through training, research, and community activities. Dr. Peggy also helped create the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) and the Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN). These organisations seek to understand and find solutions to the issues affecting the lives of women in the Caribbean and other countries. Dr. Peggy had become a transformational leader who gave advice to governments across the region on how to protect and promote women's rights. In 2004, she published her book, The Global Women's Movement: Origins, Issues and Strategies. It is one of the best sources of information which documents the challenges, triumphs and brave actions of women around the world.



DID YOU KNOW?

Empowering people is about creating an environment or providing things that can help make them stronger, more confident, and more independent. When people are empowered, they can improve their lives and the lives of their families, their communities, and their countries. Gender equality is when women, men, girls, boys and all people enjoy the same rights, opportunities and protections. A movement is a group of people who share similar beliefs and work together to achieve the same goals. A women's movement is when people work together to ensure that women are treated fairly and equally to men.

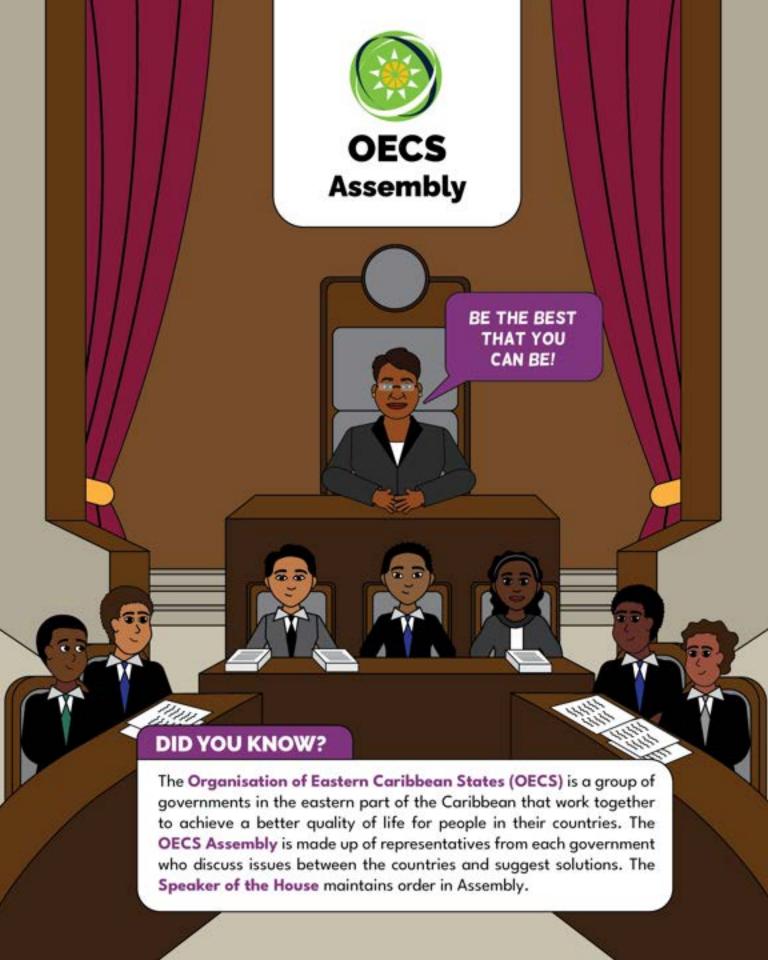
René Baptiste



Born in Saint Vincent in 1951, René Baptiste was the first woman attorney-at law to be voted into the Parliament of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. She was also the First Speaker of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Assembly.

1951 was a historic year for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. For the first time, all women and men, regardless of their race, **gender**, or family background, had the equal right to vote. That same year, René was born. Growing up, René understood what it was like to be treated unfairly because of one's family background. She was raised in a single parent home and because of this, many people looked down on her. But her mother taught her to be strong, independent, and to hold her head high regardless of what obstacles she faced. René's mother also taught her the importance of believing in yourself and knowing that you could achieve anything you worked hard for. In time, these lessons shaped the fierce leader René grew to be.

René aimed for excellence in everything she did and in 1976, she became the fifth woman in Saint Vincent and in the Grenadines to become an attorney-at-law. René even opened her very own private law firm and later became the President of her country's association for attorneys-at-law. René also worked with the government to create systems for international banks and shipping companies to do business in the Caribbean. Despite her success, many people doubted René's strength as a leader because she was a woman. But René remained focused. She was determined to prove them wrong. René joined a political party and before long, she was voted into government by the people of Saint Vincent and in the Grenadines. As a Member of Parliament, she led projects and made decisions on matters of tourism, culture, trade, and business. René also listened to the concerns of citizens and created new and modern systems to help them. In 2011, René was honoured by the Queen of England for her service to her country. The next year, she became the first Speaker of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Assembly.



Professor Rhoda Reddock



Born in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 1953 to a Trinidadian mother and a Vincentian father, Professor Rhoda Reddock is a leading author, researcher, university professor and feminist activist in the Caribbean and internationally. Her research helped people around the world better understand women, their history, their rights and the issues they face. She also worked with organisations, governments, schools and other groups to educate people and contribute to the human rights of women and girls.

Growing up, Rhoda was quite a tomboy and experienced firsthand the inequalities faced by women and girls. Her mother was the first to let her know that she should be proud to be a woman, especially when she complained about restrictions of dress and riding outdoors. Rhoda's mother also introduced her to stories of European women who had persevered such as Madame Curie the scientist and Ana Pavlova the ballerina. Most of all, her mother taught her to love reading. Young Rhoda joined the library as soon as she was old enough and continued to love libraries and books all her life. She was also concerned about fairness and equality in society and her feminist consciousness grew with time. Rhoda studied social sciences to understand the way societies work in order to make a difference. She attended the University of West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad and Tobago and in Jamaica. She also studied at the Institute of Social Studies and the University of Amsterdam in The Netherlands where she taught students from many countries. Professor Rhoda helped her students better understand the unique issues women and girls face and how we could work together to improve their lives. She soon realised the need to do the same back home.

In the Caribbean, Professor Rhoda worked with other scholars to create similar programmes. Her hard work helped pave the way for the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at the UWI to be created. Under her leadership, this department led programmes and produced new knowledge that helped people across the region better understand, value and respect women and their contributions to society. It also inspired many future leaders to think about the issues women face before making decisions.

Professor Rhoda wrote many books and articles about women and their history in the Caribbean. She was a founding member of the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA) which promotes women's rights. Professor Rhoda was the first person from Trinidad and Tobago to serve on the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which holds governments accountable for ensuring gender equality. She received many awards for her hard work, including awards from the UWI, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the US Department of State.



Many countries around the world signed an agreement called the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This agreement guides governments on what actions they must take to improve the lives of women in their countries. For example, governments are required to take action to ensure that laws are fair to all, women have equal job opportunities to men, and women can participate in politics and sports. A group of experts keeps track of actions taken by governments and provides recommendations. This group is called the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). A feminist is someone who supports women and girls having equal rights to men and boys.

Roberta Clarke



"Believe in your own power to make a difference in your world. Accept your responsibility to do your part to make life kinder, easier and more just for others. Nothing changes for the better without effort and determination." These are the words of Roberta Clarke. Roberta Clarke is an activist for social justice and gender equality.

Roberta's mother was from Dominica and her father was a Barbadian. Her husband and four (4) children are Trinidadians. As Caribbean people, Roberta believes we should all work together to make our home a fairer and more just place to live. We should all understand the struggles of our ancestors for **equal rights**, freedom and development. Some of Roberta's most valuable lessons came from her family. From her father's life she understood that when people cannot stand up by themselves or for themselves, we are all interdependent and must help and support one another. From her mother, she learned that kindness and honesty are the first virtues. Her four (4) siblings showed her the value of friendship, how to resolve conflict, and how to be empathetic and dependable. Her family also encouraged her to be proud of her African ancestry and to value the **diversity** of Caribbean people.

Roberta worked in shops as a teenager where she got a close-up glimpse into the lives of working women. She saw that many of them were raising children by themselves on low wages. Roberta became motivated to study social sciences at the University of the West Indies in Barbados. Her studies gave her a better understanding of the Caribbean and its people. She learned that although a few people had good opportunities for development, many were excluded and lived in poverty. Her studies and her childhood experiences inspired Roberta to dedicate her life to equal rights and development in the Caribbean. Roberta's first job after finishing her degree was as a Research Assistant at the Institute for Social and Economic Research where she worked on the Women in the Caribbean Project (WICP), the first research project of its kind in the region. Roberta was given the opportunity to write about women in politics. Her research findings helped her shape her contribution to the formation of the Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWIL). Roberta also went on to complete a Master of Arts in Sociology and become a lawyer, with a focus on human rights law. Roberta spends her time working for gender equality together with women all over the world.

As a lawyer, Roberta represented many women seeking protection from domestic violence. She also worked at UN Women in the Caribbean, in Asia and the Pacific, and in East and Southern Africa. She contributed to the development of laws addressing violence against women and has trained judges and court staff so that women get a fair hearing, free from discrimination. Roberta has advocated for better financial support to low-income households and worked with parliamentarians for laws and policies that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. She is an advocate to end all forms of discrimination including against LGBTI people. Roberta has learned that everyone can help someone and has been a volunteer and member of many civil society organisations. She believes that civil society organisations are vital for holding governments accountable for using resources to help all of society. She was the President of the Coalition Against Domestic Violence of Trinidad and Tobago (CADV). In 2022, Roberta became the Commissioner to a human rights group called the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) where she continues her journey to promote and protect rights of others while inspiring people across the world to do the same.



A human right is something that all humans deserve and are entitled to such as food, free speech, and being treated fairly. An advocate is someone who speaks up to support a group of people or a purpose they care about, such as human rights. Diversity is having or including different people with different family backgrounds, ethnicities and gender. A researcher gathers information to better understand a subject or issue, and to learn new facts about how different groups of people are affected.

Dr. Rosina Wiltshire



'Be the change you want to see!' says Dr. Rosina Wiltshire, a Caribbean scholar who has been on a lifelong journey to improve the world around her. Born in 1946, in Trinidad, Dr. Rosina is a champion for women and led many projects to help them become leaders who could change our societies.

Dr. Rosina was born right after the end of the Second World War, at a time when stories about peace and freedom could be heard far and wide. Independence, equal rights and better opportunities for all were just a few of the many topics people spoke about. Dr. Rosina also knew what it was like to be treated differently because of your race and sex, since she was judged unfairly many times as a girl of colour. Her parents, however, reminded her that all human beings are equal and should be treated fairly. They also encouraged her to be independent, become well-educated, and to stand up for what is right. This inspired Dr. Rosina's longing to make the world around her a better place, especially for women and girls who were not valued, heard, or treated fairly.

After studying in Jamaica, France, and the United States of America, Dr. Rosina became a university lecturer. She later worked for the United Nations. Dr. Rosina mentored leaders around the world about global politics, gender equality, and ways to improve society.

In Jamaica, she led a survey to uncover the harsh struggles faced by domestic workers and used the findings to persuade the government to include them in the law so that they are protected. In South Africa, when apartheid was about to end, Dr. Rosina served as an advisor to the new government led by President Nelson Mandela. She travelled across the country to learn about the challenges women faced and what they wished to see in the country's new Constitution. She urged the Mandela team to save at least one third of their positions in parliament for women, so their views and opinions could be represented. Dr. Rosina later supported projects to help more women become leaders.



Gender is about the roles, responsibilities and behaviours that society determines is appropriate for males and females. Gender equality is when women, men, girls, boys and all people enjoy the same rights, opportunities and protections. Gender justice is about achieving gender equality and creating a world where people are not limited by ideas about gender. Apartheid was a system that forced people of different races to live separately. Global politics includes the activities of governments and organisations that influence the way that countries and regions are led around the world.

Dr. Rosina is passionate about caring for nature. She helped write the Earth Charter which encourages countries to care for the environment and to create peaceful, fair communities. She met with over a thousand activists from around the world to draft an action plan to protect and conserve the environment. It was called Women's Action Agenda 21. They later presented it at the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Dr. Rosina was a member of an organisation called Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) where she worked with other women to create imaginative solutions to problems such as poverty, environmental destruction and gender inequality.

Dr. Rosina was a member of the UN Secretary General's team that led the Fourth World Conference on Women, Development and Peace in Beijing, China in 1995. At this event, activists from around the world came together to set goals and create plans to improve education, health care, and other opportunities for women and girls. In 2010, Dr. Wiltshire became the first Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Advocate for Gender Justice and has since led research and projects to end violence against women in the Caribbean.

Dr. Sandra Dean-Patterson



Born in the Bahamas, Dr. Sandra Dean-Patterson is a psychologist who worked to end violence against women in her country. She created the Bahamas Crisis Centre, which was the Caribbean's first centre for women who experience abuse.

If something does not exist to help others, why not create it yourself? This was the case with Dr. Sandra Dean-Patterson. She cared about the wellbeing and safety of women in the Bahamas, especially those who suffered violence. So, in 1982, she created the Bahamas Crisis Centre to help them. Dr. Sandra motivated people across the country to work at the centre as volunteers, including psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and attorneys-at-law who offered counselling to people affected by violence. There were also volunteers who ran the centre's 24-hour hotline, met victims and survivors at the police station and accompanied them to court if needed. The centre educated communities across the country about the hurt and pain caused by violence, especially between families and couples. This was the first organisation like this in the Caribbean and it inspired other countries to do the same. Today, the centre has grown tremendously and it now helps men and children as well.

Dr. Sandra also encouraged the government to pass laws to help victims and survivors of violence, and she created the Bahamas Council for the Disabled to help people with disabilities. She was the first woman to lead the Bahamas Mental Health Association, and she brought social workers together from across the country to form the Bahamas Association of Social Workers. Dr. Sandra also wrote many books and articles, including a handbook on different types of violence which is used by the Royal Bahamas Police Force. For her efforts in helping others, Dr. Sandra was awarded the Bahamas Order of Merit in 1997, the Bahamian Icon Award for Humanitarianism in 2014, and the United States of America State Department's International Woman of Courage Award in 2011.



A social worker is someone who is qualified to help people, families and communities with different challenges to improve their lives and wellbeing. A psychologist is someone who studies the human mind, emotions and behaviour to help people with mental and emotional disorders. A psychiatrist is a medical doctor who helps people with mental and emotional disorders. Violence or abuse is a serious crime. It is when a person mistreats or causes harm to another person's physical or emotional wellbeing. People who experience violence are called victims or survivors.

Sheila Roseau



A right is something that all people deserve and are entitled to, such as being treated fairly and equally. An activist works or organises with others to change unjust conditions. Born in Antigua and Barbuda in 1957, Sheila Roseau is a champion for the rights and safety of women and children in the Caribbean and beyond.

Sheila was an inquisitive and caring child who listened to the world news on the radio. When she heard stories about war and suffering, she could sense that it was unjust. As her longing for helping others grew, Sheila began having visions about becoming a nurse and teaching nursing. She knew that people could accomplish whatever they set their minds to. So, Sheila set high standards for herself and worked hard to achieve her dream. As she would often say to her cousins and friends, "Never say I can't. Always say I'll try!" Sheila went off to the United Kingdom. There, she furthered her studies and became a nurse. Though she achieved her dream, she also faced challenges along the way. Many people treated her unfairly because of the colour of her skin. This is called racial discrimination. But Sheila held her head high and continued to help those around her. She began to focus on children whose parents and grandparents were from the Caribbean. Many of them did not have families to care for them so Sheila helped find them homes. She also worked on many other projects to improve her community and soon returned home to make a difference in the Caribbean.

rights and opportunities between women and men in Antigua and Barbuda. She also worked with the government to pass the country's first law to punish people who commit human trafficking. This crime happens when a person forces or deceives others to do things against their will, such as working without pay. After the law was passed, Sheila encouraged organisations, community groups and the government to protect and help victims of human trafficking and abuse. Sheila received many awards for her efforts, including Antigua and Barbuda's Commander of the Most Illustrious Order of Merit and the Hero Acting to End Modern Day Slavery Award from former US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton.

Sheila joined the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) where she led projects in the Caribbean, Latin America and Namibia to stop violence against women and girls, and to improve their access to health services at every stage of their lives – from childhood to teenage years, adulthood and motherhood. Today, Sheila continues to mentor young women and encourages them to get a good education. She is motivated by seeing how the young women she helps are able to turn their lives around for the better. Sheila started the organization called the Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWiL). There, she helped others understand that women who are interested in politics should have an equal chance and that all leaders should work to to ensure that men and women are treated equally.



The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is an organisation that works with countries across the world to promote safe childbirth, increase the freedom of women and girls to make decisions that affect their bodies and health, and ensure every young person's potential is fulfilled. Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWiL) is an organisation that provides women and girls with the knowledge and skills to become transformational leaders.

Shirley Pryce



Born in Jamaica, Shirley Pryce is known for defending the rights of women and domestic workers in Jamaica and across the Caribbean. Domestic workers include people who are hired to work in people's homes as maids, cooks, gardeners, caretakers and babysitters. Shirley created Jamaica's first trade union to protect them.

Shirley was a domestic worker for over thirty (30) years and she often faced the harsh reality of not being respected or taken seriously because of her job. Many people did not value her hard work or care about her wellbeing as a worker. But Shirley was determined improve her circumstances and eventually got a scholarship to attend university to study **Social Work**.

Shirley's experiences motivated her to create the first ever domestic workers trade union in Jamaica to help and protect the rights of people who were also in her situation. The union is now called the **Jamaican Household Workers Union** and represents over 50,000 domestic workers. Shirley also created a similar union in Antigua and a Caribbean-wide network. As leader of the **Caribbean Domestic Workers Network**, she taught domestic workers about their rights and encouraged governments across the region to pass laws to protect them. Shirley also worked with the **Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC)** to educate domestic workers about jobs and other opportunities throughout the Caribbean.

Shirley cared about the wellbeing of women. So, she worked with different organisations to support them and protect their rights, including the United Nations (UN). She also became a leading member of the Association of Women's Organisation of Jamaica (AWOJA), and the global human rights organisation called the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID). For her service to the Caribbean, Shirley received many awards including Jamaica's Badge of Honour and Order of Distinction, as well as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Triennial Award for Women.



Tina Alexander



Born in England, Tina Alexander moved to Dominica where she created an organisation called Lifeline Ministries to help communities in her country. She works with many different local organisations to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged people, women, and children with disabilities.

Tina is a social worker whose journey began in England where she helped people with mental health challenges. After visiting the Caribbean with her church, she fell in love with the island of Dominica and decided to stay. There, she met her husband, started a family, and began working to help communities across her new home. Tina believes that every person deserves to have good quality food, housing, education, and healthcare, regardless of their age, race, gender or religion. So, she created and continues to lead an organisation called **Lifeline Ministries** to help people whose lives are affected by violence, **discrimination**, disability or difficult circumstances.

Tina's Lifeline Ministries helps people who experience violence by offering them counselling and safe places to live. They train volunteers and police officers to help victims and survivors at police stations and at court. Lifeline Ministries also helped bring together a large group or coalition comprising many other organisations working to protect children and youth in Dominica. When new laws were created to protect victims of violence, this group carried out activities to share information with people in communities and help them understand and accept the new laws. They also encouraged the government to create a Family Court to help protect children and victims of violence.

Tina also believes that children have the right to be safe and protected from harm. Her organisation works with other groups to help children learn and grow. They educate children about recycling and how to make beautiful crafts from things that people normally throw away. Tina believes that children who are deaf, blind or use wheelchairs should have equal opportunities to go to school, so she worked with organisations, like the **Dominica Association of Persons with Disabilities** (DAPD), to offer scholarships for children with illnesses and disabilities. They also created the **Dial A Ride** bus service which helps children with disabilities get safe transportation.

"I am concerned when things are unfair and I stick up for people who experience discrimination," says Tina. This is clear to see because Tina always rises to the occasion to help people in need. After she realised that the indigenous Kalinago people in Dominica were not receiving good healthcare, she started working with an organisation to help them. When Hurricane Maria happened and most people's houses got badly damaged, she went on boats and helicopters to help rescue people. She helped people with British connections to go and stay with their relatives in the United Kingdom. The Queen of England awarded Tina a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) medal for this work.

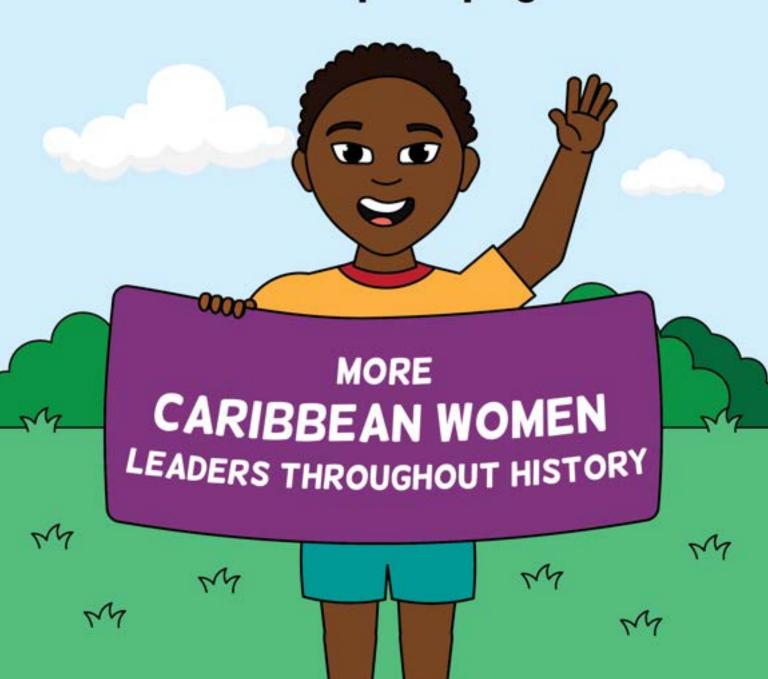


A court is where disputes between people and organisations are heard so that a decision can be made. The decisions made are based on the law. A Family Court is a special court that hears disputes between members of a family.



There are many Caribbean Women Leaders.

Let's learn more about some them. Flip the page!



CARIBBEAN WOMEN LEADERS Trailblazers for Equality and Freedom

A trailblazer is someone who creates positive changes in society. Many women in Caribbean history were trailblazers who defended the human rights of their communities against being treated unfairly due to their race, religion, gender or poor backgrounds. Although men had more power in society to make decisions and get involved in politics, women too had their own views about how their countries should be run. They believed that Caribbean people should have the right to lead their own countries, so they took part in movements to gain Independence from the European rulers who limited their freedom. Once the right to vote came into effect in the 1940s and 1950s, women encouraged each other to vote. Their bravery to stand up for what is right paved the way for Caribbean people to be free and set an example for future generations to continue to work towards achieving equality.

Amy Bailey

Amy was an educator and advocate for equal rights. Her work encouraged the government to change its laws and improve opportunities for people of colour in Jamaica, especially women.

Amy Jacques Garvey

Amy was a Jamaican journalist, author and activist who encouraged people of African descent to seek Independence and equal rights. She also encouraged women of colour to become leaders in society.

Claudia Vera Jones

Claudia was a Trinidadian journalist and activist who defended the rights of women and people of colour to be treated fairly. She also created a newspaper called the West Indian Gazette in Britain to share the voices and views of Caribbean people. In the 1950s, Claudia helped create the Notting Hill Carnival to unite them and to promote their culture.





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Elfreda Reyes

Elfreda was an activist who defended the rights of women, workers and poor people in Belize. She encouraged the government to create laws to protect workers' rights and she led activities to empower women to vote.

Elizabeth Hart Thwaites and Anne Hart Gilbert

Born in Antigua, these sisters were two of the first women of African descent to become Caribbean writers. They also educated enslaved and free coloured people and encouraged them to seek freedom from slavery.

Flore Bois Gaillard

Flore encouraged African slaves to seek their freedom and led them in a revolt against French rulers in Saint Lucia.

Leonora Pujadas-McShine

Leonora was a champion for women's rights in Trinidad and Tobago. She encouraged them to vote and to become more active in politics. She also defended their right to be paid equally to men and to be treated fairly.

Marie Sainte Dédée Bazile

She was a leader who supported Haiti's independence from the French in 1804.

Sarah Ann Gill

Sarah was the first national heroine of Barbados. In the 1800s, she helped pave the way for people of different religions to practice their faith freely.





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FREEDOM



Ground Breakers

A ground breaker is someone who changes the way things are done, especially by becoming the first person to achieve something. Many Caribbean women are ground breakers whose hard work and achievements created new opportunities for others to grow. For a long time, people thought that women could not lead countries, governments and large organisations. But this slowly began to change when women started speaking up for themselves and their right to be heard. They received more opportunities to get a proper education and better jobs. When Caribbean women gained the right to vote in the 1940s and 1950s, they actively used that right to help choose their leaders. Over time, many of them became leaders as well. Between the 1970s and 1990s, leaders around the world came together and decided that having more women leaders would benefit everyone in society. Since then, more Caribbean women have felt empowered to become leaders. Many of them became ground breakers who were the first women to lead governments, countries, and large organisations in the region and around the world. These ground breakers have gone down in history and inspired young girls and boys to dream big, knowing that their dreams are possible.

Dame Constance Mitcham

Dame Constance is a lawyer and politician who became the first woman to be elected into Parliament in Saint Kitts. She helped pass laws to make women's jobs fairer and more secure and improve children's rights. She also took part in talks that led to national Independence.

Justice Desiree Bernard

Justice Desiree is the first woman to become Chief Justice of Guyana and a Judge of the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). She is also the first woman to lead the Judiciary of Guyana as Chancellor.

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Dame Dr. Doris Sands Johnson

She was a Bahamian politician, teacher and the first woman in her country to become a government minister and President of the Senate. She also encouraged the government to allow women to vote and participate in making the country's laws.

Dame Eugenia Charles

Dame Eugenia was the first woman in Dominica to become a lawyer and the first woman in the Caribbean to become Prime Minister.

Eva Sylvester

Eva was born in Petite Martinique – one of the islands which is part of Grenada. She was a politician who became the first woman to be elected to the Legislative Council in 1952. The Legislative Council is the group of people in the government who makes laws for the country.

Ertha Pascal-Trouillot

Ertha was the first woman to become President of Haiti and the first woman to become a judge on the island.

Heraldine Rock

In 1974, she became the first woman in Saint Lucia to be elected to Parliament. As Minister, she created a government office to help women.







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Dame Hilda Bynoe

Dame Hilda was the first woman in Grenada to become **Governor**. She was also a medical doctor who improved health care for many across Grenada, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.



lvy was the first woman to become a Member of Parliament in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. She defended the rights of workers and helped the poor.

Jacqui Quinn

Jacqui is the first woman to be elected to the Lower House of Parliament in Antigua and Barbuda.



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Janet Jagan

Janet was the first woman to become both President and Prime Minister of Guyana. She also opened health clinics, created laws to protect workers, and helped women get better access to public services.

Kamla Persad Bissessar

Kamla is an attorney-at-law and the first woman to become Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago. She is also the first woman of Indian descent to be Prime Minister of a country outside of India.

















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Mabel Moir James

Mabel was the first woman to become a government minister in Dominica. She defended the rights of women to be safe from violence and helped citizens get housing, clean water and other services.

Baroness Patricia Scotland

Born in Dominica, she is a lawyer and the first woman of African descent to become a Queen's Counsel. This is one of the highest posts for a lawyer in the United Kingdom. She was also the first woman to become Commonwealth Secretary-General.

Phyllis Shand Allfrey

Phyllis created the first political party in Dominica. She is also an author who wrote a famous novel about three Dominican sisters called 'Orchid House.'

Portia Simpson-Miller

Born in Jamaica, Portia is a politician and the first woman from her country to become Prime Minister.

Rosie Brown

Rosie led the first government office in Dominica that was created to protect the rights of women. In this role, she created more services for women.

Sylvanie Burton

A politician who became President of Dominica in 2023. She is the first woman and first indigenous person in this role.









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CARIBBEAN WOMEN LEADERS Public Service Leaders

The public service is the group of services that all citizens of a country need. These services are managed by the government of a country. Different government offices and departments are responsible for public services such as access to schooling and hospitals, transportation, clean water and electricity, and keeping law and order in the country. The public service includes people who work in a country's parliament, judiciary, government ministries and offices. Public service leaders also work at international organisations like the United Nations (UN) and regional ones like the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), to improve the wellbeing of people. Public service leaders make important decisions and create laws and plans that can affect a community, a country or a region. Caribbean women were great public service leaders who worked to improve the quality of life for people, including women, children, persons with disabilities and important groups who are sometimes overlooked.

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Anette Sanford

Anette is a nurse and politician who led projects to help the communities in her indigenous Kalinago Territory of Dominica.

Beverley Manley Duncan

Beverley is a leading advocate for women and children in Jamaica and encouraged the government to give women paid time off for childbirth and pregnancy. This is called maternity leave.

Catherine Sealys

Catherine helped create and leads an organisation called Raise Your Voice Saint Lucia (RYVSLU) that empowers women and children, especially those who experienced violence.

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Ambassador Dessima Williams

Ambassador Dessima is a leader who became the President of the Senate in Grenada. She is also an educator and has long been decision maker at many organisations in her country and abroad.

Dame Edna Ermyntrude 'Ermie' Bourne

She was a teacher, a politician and the first woman to be elected to the House of Assembly in Barbados. She spoke up and took action to help poor people in her country get better access to public utilities and she also defended the rights of workers. She paved the way for other women like Dame Billie Miller and Senator Elizabeth Thompson to be politicians.







Ambassador Elizabeth Thompson

She was awarded by the United Nations (UN) as "Champion of the Earth" and uses her expert knowledge in renewable energy to help her country reduce climate change. She is also an attorney-at-law, a former government minister in Barbados and a motivational speaker.



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Faith Marshall Harris

Faith is a Barbadian who uses her knowledge as an attorney-at-law and her leadership role at the United Nations (UN) to protect the rights of children in the Caribbean and around the world.



Hazel Brandy Williams

Hazel Brandy Williams is a former government minister in the Nevis Island
Administration who led projects to improve healthcare, communities and to
empower women and young people.











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Dr. Jacinta Higgs

She is a Bahamian politician who has led projects to improve the wellbeing of families in the country.

Joan M. Purcell

Joan is a Grenadian politician who organised a group or 'caucus' of women politicians to promote gender equality in Parliament.

Ambassador Dr. June Soomer

She is a Saint Lucian who led many organisations and was the first woman to become Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS). She also represented the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) on a global group that promotes the health and wellbeing of African people.

Margaret Mary 'Annie' Dyer-Howe

She was a businesswoman and politician who helped improve the lives of many people in communities across Montserrat. She helped change the rules to allow children in need a fair chance at attending secondary school.



Muriel Donawa-McDavidson

She is a politician who also led projects to empower women and to promote their right to be treated equally to men. At the age of 25, she became the youngest woman to be elected in any local election in Trinidad and Tobago.

Muriel Greaves

Muriel was a nurse and businesswoman who cared about improving Barbados. She believed that women should have a greater say in politics and helped create the political party that is today led by Prime Minister, Mia Mottley. She helped start a women's group in the party so that they could highlight issues affecting women her the country.

Dame Nita Barrow

She was the first woman to become Governor-General of Barbados. She also created more opportunities for people to get better health care and health care education in the Caribbean, especially women.

Ambassador Rosalyn Hazelle

She is a former politician from Saint Kitts and Nevis who represents the government in other countries and advocates for women's empowerment.

Dr. Virginia Albert-Poyotte

She is a government minister in Saint Lucia who works with fellow leaders to make better decisions that can improve the lives of women and girls. She helped pass the country's law which protects people from domestic violence.













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CARIBBEAN WOMEN LEADERS Social Justice Activists

To have social justice is to have a society where everyone, regardless of their differences, has access to the opportunities and material things they need to live a fulfilling life. All people have human rights. This includes living without violence, being able to learn and express themselves, being treated fairly at work, and having a safe place to live. But sometimes the decisions that leaders make, our laws, and the way we do things do not allow all people to enjoy their full human rights and freedom. A social justice activist is someone who takes action to correct this. Women across the Caribbean worked together to ensure that all people are treated fairly and equally. Many joined movements and formed organisations that work to protect the rights of people, including women, children, workers and poor people. They worked with women in politics and women who were researchers at universities. Some of them were also feminists who were aware of the discrimination women faced, and spoke up to defend women's rights. They empowered women to stand up for themselves.

Aggie Bernard

Aggie was a Jamaican champion of workers whose support helped them get better wages and working conditions in the 1930s.

Alexandrina Wong

Alexandrina is a nurse from Antigua and Barbuda who created an organisation that provides food, clothing, shelter and counselling for women who experience violence.

Audrey Christiaan

She is a champion for the recognition of indigenous peoples in Suriname's Constitution. She also encouraged the government to consider their views and ways of life, including their care and protection of the environment.



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Beatrice Greig

Beatrice was a writer and activist who defended the rights of Indian women and girls in Trinidad and Tobago, including girls' rights to education and opportunities for women to participate in politics and have jobs as leaders.

Clotil Walcott

Clotil was a champion for the rights of poor people and workers. In 1974, Clotil helped create a trade union that defended domestic workers.

Diana Mahabir-Wyatt

Diana is an advocate and former parliamentarian who helped write new laws in Trinidad and Tobago and encouraged the government to pass them. These laws protected the rights and wellbeing of women, children and workers.

Dorla Bowman

Dorla dedicated her life to promoting peace, human rights and gender equality in Belize. She is remembered for her work in teaching women about their rights according to the law.

Immaculata Casimero

She is a community leader who created the Wapichan Women's Movement (WWM) which brings indigenous women together to learn about their human rights, climate change and their power to speak out against injustice.











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Social Justice Activists



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Iris Adderley

Iris works to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and ensures that they have equal opportunities to contribute to society.



Judith Wedderburn

Judith is a human rights advocate for gender equality who helped people understand the importance of women leaders in government and politics.



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Judy Williams

"Sister Judy," as many Grenadians called her, dedicated her life to improving opportunities for adults, including poor people and those who lived in rural communities. She helped many of them learn skills like reading and writing.



Karen DeSouza

Karen worked together with Andaiye and others to create the **Red Thread**, an organisation in Guyana that works with women and children to rise above the difficulties in their lives such as **poverty** and **domestic violence**.



Kerryann Ifill

Kerryann is an advocate for the rights of women and people with disabilities.

She was the first woman and youngest person to become President of the

Senate in Barbados.





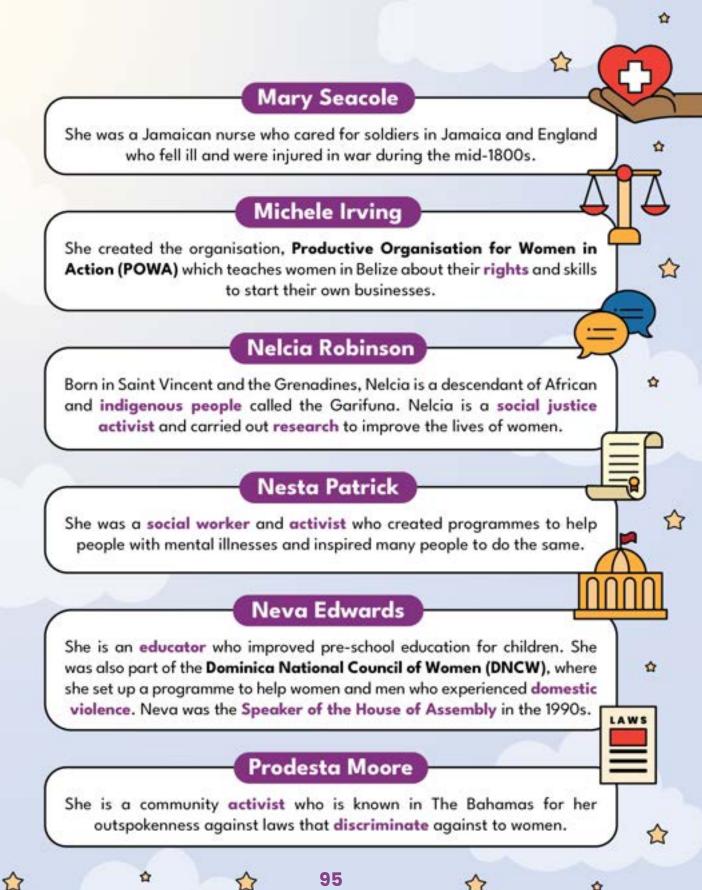












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CARIBBEAN WOMEN LEADERS **Cultural Champions and Creatives**

The Caribbean is made up people from all over the world. From the Caribbean's first people to people from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, they all settled across the region and brought their native language, food, and culture. They all had their own styles of music, drama, dance, art as well as myths and stories about their homelands. Many women kept their traditions alive by teaching younger generations. They also played important roles in creating new Caribbean traditions such as Carnival. Young women dared to be different and followed their dreams to become artists, even when there were not many jobs in the arts and women were not expected to sing or perform for a living. They became writers, poets, painters, playwrights, filmmakers, fashion designers, costume designers, actors, singers, and musicians. Their work showed the beauty of the region and helped others understand what life in the Caribbean is like. They also used their art to make people aware of important issues.

Bertha Higgins

She was an artist, musician, teacher and politician. She promoted steelband music in Antiqua and Barbuda and taught music and art to young people.

Beryl McBurnie

Beryl is known as "The First Lady of Dance" and her work inspires many local musicians. She opened Trinidad and Tobago's first theatre, The Little Carib Theatre, where she showcased folk art and steelband music. THEATRE

Beverly Swasey

She is an actor and dancer who also directed many plays. She is known in Belize for teaching drama and other performing arts. Beverly also served the city of Belmopan as a local government official and she created a group for women to work together to improve the lives of people in their city.



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Calypso Rose (born 'McCartha Sandy-Lewis)

In 1978, Rose became the first woman to win the major singing competition in Trinidad and Tobago called "Calypso King." In her honour, the name of the competition was changed to "Calypso Monarch" in recognition of women's talents and equal rights to compete.

Camille Selvon Abrahams

Camille is a world-renowned animator who owns a company that creates cartoons and movies. She also started the Animae Caribe Animation Festival which is an event where people from companies like Cartoon Network and Pixar can meet and exchange ideas with Caribbean animators. Camille created a university programme to teach young people animation and she believes that all people should have computer skills and devices which can empower them to help themselves and their communities.

Dr. Eastlyn Kate McKenzie

Known for her commitment to preserving Tobago's dramatic artforms and folk heritage, she was a teacher, government leader and activist who defended the rights of people with disabilities, children and the elderly.

Edwidge Danticat

Edwidge is a Haitian American author who uses writing to describe how women and girls in Haitian society are seen and treated. Her stories also describe Haitian culture and unjust events in Haitian history.

Eulalie Spence

Born in Nevis, Eulalie wrote many plays, acted and taught drama in England and in the United States of America in the 1920s. Her plays often showed the daily lives of African American characters.











































CARIBBEAN WOMEN LEADERS Cultural Champions and Creatives

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Dame Gwendolyn Tonge

She is known as "Auntie Gwen" in Antigua and Barbuda for her TV show that taught home economics. She also worked with the government and helped improve healthcare and education for women, children and the elderly.

Heather Doram

Heather is an artist, painter, actor, activist and educator, who is known for designing Antigua and Barbuda's national costume in 1992.

Keva Joan Margetson

Keva is an activist for culture who organised and created many mas and cultural performance groups. She was also a champion of working women.

Mahadai Das

Mahadai is a dancer, teacher and writer, best known for her poetry which highlighted the culture and history of Indo-Guyanese people in the Caribbean and their experiences from Indentureship to Independence.

Dr. Margaret Gill

She is a writer and visual artist who uses her talents to help others appreciate Caribbean drama and poetry.





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Dr. Merle Hodge

She is a teacher and writer from Trinidad and Tobago who is known as the first black Caribbean author of a major novel. Dr. Merle uses fictional stories to discuss real issues about girlhood and life in the Caribbean. Her two most read novels are Crick Crack, Monkey and For the Life of Laetitia.

Meta Davis Cumberbatch

"Mother of the Arts" is how most Bahamian people know Meta. She helped organise many events that exposed people to the arts and culture. She also launched a festival to showcase local craft.

Miss Booty (born 'Euralis Ethel Therese Bouty')

Euralis was known as the spirit of Saint Lucia's Carnival and was the first woman to become president of the Carnival Development Committee.

Jamaica Kincaid (born 'Elaine Potter Richardson')

Born in Antigua, Jamaica Kincaid moved to the United States of America where she became a writer for magazines. This included a feminist magazine that was started by American social justice activist, Gloria Steinem, and the famous magazine, The New Yorker. She also wrote many stories and books about colonialism and mother-daughter relationships.

Miss Lou (born 'Louise Bennett Coverly')

She is a Jamaican cultural icon who used her talents in poetry and performing to highlight the realities of people in Jamaica. She wrote in the local dialect spoken by Jamaicans.













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CARIBBEAN WOMEN LEADERS **Cultural Champions and Creatives**

Marina Salandy Brown

Marina is a cultural champion and journalist from Trinidad and Tobago. She studied in the United Kingdon (UK) where she produced radio shows at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and advocated for more people of colour to be hired there. When Marina returned to her home country, she started the NGC Bocas Lit Fest, which is an event that celebrates books and authors from the Caribbean.

Myrna Manzanares

"To become a person of worth, you must know who you are; culture is part of who you are," says Myrna, a Belizean activist who played an important role in preserving the Kriol culture. She also promoted harmony among people of all cultures in Belize.

Olive Senior

She is a Jamaican author renowned for her poems which discuss the lasting effects of colonialism on the Caribbean.

Ophelia Marie

"Dominica's Lady of Song" who helped make "Cadence-lypso" popular. This is a style of singing from her home country. She writes lyrics that send positive messages about women and family.



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Robin 'Rihanna' Fenty

She is a world-renowned Barbadian who has broken barriers with her music and businesses in beauty and fashion. Rihanna is also an advocate for racial and gender justice who often raises money for people in need.



Toto Bissainthe

She is a Haitian actress, singer, songwriter and composer who wrote and performed original music that highlighted the struggles and determination of Haitians.



Tracy Assing

Inspired by nature and her family heritage, Tracy tells stories about the Caribbean and everyday people through writing and filmmaking. "The Amerindians" is a film created by Tracy to show the history and customs of indigenous people in Trinidad and Tobago.



Una Marson

This journalist, playwright and poet was the first Jamaican woman to publish her own magazine. She wrote about issues affecting women and worked with international organisations in the 1930s to help end racial and gender discrimination. Una also created a fund for children in Jamaica. In 1938, Una Marson became the first black female broadcaster to work at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).



Zelma 'Zee' Edgell

Zee was an English professor, newspaper journalist and author from Belize.

One of her most popular works is the novel, 'Beka Lamb,' a story from the eyes of a high school girl living during the period when Belizean people were advocating for the country's independence.



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CARIBBEAN WOMEN LEADERS Teachers and Knowledge-Makers

Once girls in the Caribbean were allowed to attend school, they seized every opportunity to learn. Education was a pathway for them to get the knowledge and skills needed to find good jobs and earn their own money. After completing primary and secondary school, some young women furthered their studies at universities abroad. But this could only be done by the few who got scholarships and those whose families could afford it. When the University of the West Indies (UWI) opened its doors in the late 1940s, more women were able to study there. Women who studied at university were able to learn more about their favourite subject and become specialists in that field. Many of them who studied history, culture, law and social studies became experts and educators who passed on their knowledge to others. They carried out research to find new information about the Caribbean and they had fresh ideas and views on topics that they wrote about in essays and books. Since the 1970s, feminists in the Caribbean worked with other leaders to introduce the topic of gender at universities in the region. This created opportunities for students to learn about and research how women, men, girls and boys experience the world differently and the issues that affected them the most.

Many Caribbean women have dedicated their lives to leading research, creating new knowledge and teaching others at universities. They are called 'women in academia' and the most accomplished of them are known as 'scholars.' The women in academia who focus on gender are often called upon as experts to give advice to governments and other organisations. Their research about different issues and groups of people help leaders write laws and create plans that are fair to all people.

Professor Barbara Bailey

She is a Jamaican leader who advised Caribbean governments on how to create plans for women and men to be treated equally. She is also a teacher and researcher who worked to improve education for all by highlighting the differences in the experiences of girls and boys in school.



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Professor Bridget Brereton

Professor Bridget is a historian who lectured at universities and wrote books that explore the history of the Caribbean and the different ways European rule affected the way Caribbean people interact with each other today, especially people of different races and religions.

Professor Cynthia Barrow-Giles

Born in Saint Lucia, Professor Cynthia leads departments and projects at the University of the West Indies (UWI) that teach people about leading countries, communities and large organisations. She helped improve laws in her country and is known for her writing about governments, voting and Caribbean women in politics.

Professor Elsa Goveia

Professor Elsa was a Guyanese teacher and author of Caribbean history. Her work helps us to better understand the journey of Caribbean people and the effects of slavery. She was also the first woman to become a professor at the University of the West Indies in Barbados.

Professor Eudine Barriteau

She is a scholar, teacher and activist for the right of women to be treated equally to men. She was also the first person to lead the Centre for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies in Barbados.



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CARIBBEAN WOMEN LEADERS Teachers and Knowledge-Makers

Dr. Gabrielle Hosein

She is a Trinbagonian lecturer who leads research projects to find out more about the experiences of women in the Caribbean who are of Indian descent. She also leads public discussions to help communities understand the harm caused by violence against women and girls and ways to make our societies safer and more peaceful.

Dr. Halimah Deshong

Born in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dr. Halimah is a feminist and a researcher who studies violence that is committed against people because of their gender. She also teaches students about research methods that pay attention to the different experiences of men and women. She currently leads the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Barbados.

Dr. Lucille Mathurin Mair

Dr. Lucille was a Jamaican diplomat and activist for the rights of women. A diplomat is someone who represents their country abroad. She advised the government on how to create plans and projects that help empower women.

Professor Maureen Warner Lewis

She dedicated her career to researching the African languages, traditions, cultures and histories of the Caribbean that can be traced back to Africa.



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Professor Patricia is a Trinbagonian scholar, activist and artist who helped introduce 'gender' as a subject so that university students could learn about the different ways gender affects people and society. She helped create plans to help Caribbean governments ensure that women and men are treated equally. Professor Patricia also creates paintings and films which show the lives of Caribbean women.

Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine

Professor Rose-Marie is an attorney-at-law who drafted laws to protect the rights of workers in the Caribbean. She also worked with leaders across the world to help protect the rights of children and refugees. In 2022, she became the Principal of the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad.

Tracy Robinson

Tracy is an attorney-at-law and a law lecturer at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Jamaica. She led the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and helped improve laws in the Caribbean to protect the rights of children and the rights of women to be treated equally to men.

Professor Verene A. Shepherd

Prodessor Verene is a Jamaican historian whose research and writing highlighted the important roles of women in Caribbean history. She believes that people of all races should be treated fairly and is an advocate for Caribbean countries to be paid by their former European rulers for the losses they suffered through slavery. This is a kind of justice called reparations.











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Young Changemakers

Throughout history, brave Caribbean women worked to change laws and culture so that the girls and women of today have more opportunities to learn, work and lead. Despite the challenges they still face, the legacies of our foremothers inspire and empower young women to speak up about issues that affect them. They are creating their own solutions and sharing their views. They are educating themselves about their rights and passing this knowledge on to younger girls. They understand that their voices matter and they are proving that a girl is never too young to lead and make a positive difference in the world.

Amina Doherty

She is a Nigerian-Antiguan who helped create the **Black Feminist Fund** and **FRIDA – The Young Feminist Fund**. Amina is a creative **activist** who brings people and ideas together to create positive change that leads to a more just and equal world.

Ashlee Burnett

She is a gender equality activist from Trinidad and Tobago who created the organisation, Feminitt Caribbean which helps young women and girls to take care of themselves and know their rights as they go through puberty and grow into adults.

Ayesha Constable

Ayesha is an activist and scholar who researches the role of youth and gender in protecting the environment. She created the organisation, GirlsCARE or Girls for Climate Action for Resilience and Empowerment which teaches girls how to take action to stop climate change.







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Chelsea Foster

In 2013, at just 17 years old, Chelsea created an organization called **Girls of a Feather** which mentors and tutors girls, especially those in disadvantaged
circumstances.



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Christine Samwaroo

As a girl, Christine saw the way women were treated unfairly despite the important role they play in society. So, she created an organisation called **The Breadfruit Collective**, where she and other youth educate people and encourage their **government** to have greater respect for women and nature, and to create more opportunities for women to help solve the climate crisis.



Firhaana Bulbulia

She is a community activist who created an organisation to help Muslim women and girls in Barbados access an education and jobs. Firhaana also uses her voice to stand up for the rights of children to be safe and protected and enjoy a good quality of life.



Kristal Ambrose

Kristal is dedicated to protecting the marine environment. The **Bahamas Plastic Movement (BPM)** is an organization she created to help people understand the harm caused by plastic **pollution** in the Bahamas and beyond.







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Lakeyia Joseph

In 2022, Lakeyia became the youngest Member of Parliament in Dominica's history. Even before this, Lakeyia wanted to improve the lives of the less fortunate in her country, so she created a charity called Golden Opportunities which donates clothes and school supplies to children from poor families.

Madison Pearl Edwards

At only 12 years old, she spoke up at a UNESCO meeting about the importance of protecting Belize's Barrier Reef and the harm that could be caused by drilling for oil in the ocean. Madison cares deeply for nature and continues to use her voice to inspire others to care for the environment.

Maria Marshall

In 2021, at just 12 years old, this Barbadian became UNICEF's youngest Youth Advocate in the Eastern Caribbean. Maria was chosen for this role because of her outspokenness about the rights of children and our responsibility to protect the environment. Maria's message is, "We only have one environment, and we must protect it."



Michelle Alexander

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Having experienced abuse as a child, Michelle found the strength within her to keep studying and believing in herself. She became an activist and business professional who speaks to people and groups around the world about ways to create better societies that are free from violence. She is an inspiration to many and even wrote a book about her life, called Helpless Cries: A young girl's memoir of struggle, courage and renewal in her abusive world.

Phylicia Alexander

She is a teacher and activist who created the organisation, RedRootSVG Inc. that provides opportunities for women in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to learn life skills. Through her organisation, Phylicia also raises funds and encourages others to help their communities.

Ronelle King

After her own experiences of being harassed on the street, Ronelle started a movement online using the hashtag **#lifeinleggings**. It empowered women from around the Caribbean and the world to share their experiences of violence and support one another.

Sarah-Anne Gresham

She is a feminist activist, scholar and educator from Antigua and Barbuda. She helped create the organisation, Intersect Antigua, which helps people across the Caribbean connect with one another to support human rights and share their art, stories and essays.











Activities!

Let's have some fun! These activities will help you remember what you have learned. Before you begin, here are some tips to help you along the way.

Read the instructions.

Read the instructions for each activity carefully. They will help you understand what you need to do and where you can find the information you need.

Use the glossary.

The **glossary** has a full list of words from this book and their meanings. It is also organised alphabetically.

Read the stories.

Many of the answers you need can be found throughout the stories and descriptions of the women leaders mentioned in this book. Read them carefully and you will find the answers you need.





Word Search Puzzle

Do you remember the **seven (7) qualities of transformational leaders**? Look at the kite on page 6 and you will find them. When you find those seven (7) words on page 6, point them out with your finger or circle them in the word puzzle below.

- **0** ______ **0** _____
- 6 ____
- V D S R E S P E C T F U L D K Z K Y

 Q L E B A C C O U N T A B L E I A R

 M I L M Q D F J V V K S D Z M X U C

 S S F O P X U S C J Y Q J K P A F H

 L T A Z X O B T B K B H T Y A I O H

 U E W D N U W M I E G Q D A T I G C

 A N A K P M G E F F S T G R H J L A

 J W R M Z Z B Z R M U X O H E J M N

 K E E O I T K G V I B L R L T E Q Q

 Z L O M P C G G Y E N V U F I F N C

 D L U M N Z A W O F C G H H C J Z W

 L R Y U H W I L J N R P F E U S G H

Words are hidden straight across, downwards and diagonally.

Can you say, in your own words, what these **seven (7)** qualities mean? What are some other qualities you think transformational leaders should have?

Fill in the blanks

Many transformational leaders defended the human rights of communities around the world so that all people can be treated fairly and equally. Let's take a closer look at this. Fill in the blanks to complete the sentences. The glossary can help you!

0	Many transformational leaders are F_MITS or people who are aware of gender discrimination and sexism, and take action to increase equality between women and men.
2	$G_{}$ E $Q_{}$ is when women, men and all people can live free from violence, have fair opportunities to succeed in life, and equally access $R_{}$ S like education, employment, healthcare, as well as the ability to vote and take part in politics.
3	S J is when all people have access to fair and equal rights, the things they need and opportunities, regardless of their gender, age, family history, religion or the colour of their skin. Many transformational leaders work hard to achieve this.
0	Transformational leaders seek to E themselves and others. This is about creating an environment or providing people with the means to help make them stronger, more confident and more independent.
6	A M is a group of people who share similar beliefs and work together to achieve the same goals. Many transformational leaders participate in these to advocate for the rights of women and common issues they care about.
	What other kinds of actions did transformational leaders take?

Who am !?

Do you know the names of the transformational women leaders shown below? Read the clue next to each picture and see if you remember the name of the leader. When you think you know the answer, say it out loud or write it in the space provided. **HINT:** Go back to the thirty-five (35) stories in the book to jog your memory.



I am the first Bahamian to receive the CARICOM Triennial Award for Women for my work to promote women's rights in the region. I am also an attorney-at-law, author and filmmaker who made a documentary showing the strength, courage and contributions of Caribbean women.



I created a group called the Coterie of Social Workers which started out by feeding poor children at breakfast sheds. In my country of Trinidad and Tobago, there is a highway and a school for the deaf in my name.



My organization, Lifeline Ministries, helps to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged people, women and children with disabilities in Dominica.



My research showed how women faced discrimination such as unequal pay and access to loans, and I worked with CARICOM leaders to create national plans of action to increase gender equality. When I was younger I studied home economics and taught the subject to women in school.



I am an activist for women's rights and my work helped to establish a crisis centre, family court and shelter for women and children in my country, Saint Lucia.



Through my work with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), I led projects in the Caribbean, Latin America and Namibia to stop violence against women and girls, and to improve their access to health services at every stage of their lives.



My message to women is that they are stronger when they work together and empower one another, regardless of their race or skin colour.

Who am !?



I am a Bahamian psychologist who opened the first crisis centre in the Caribbean to offer services like counselling to women.



I was leader of the National Council of Women in Saint Kitts where I taught women how to open and run their own businesses.



In the 1700s, I led the Maroon community in Jamaica to defend themselves against the British and stand up for their freedom.



I advocated for the rights of consumers and fair wages for people. I created the Network of NGOs for the Advancement of Women, which supported women to become leaders.



I helped women and girls in Belize to become empowered by improving the education system and promoting equal pay for women and men. In Belize, there is a high school named after me.



I am a lawyer who became the first female government minister in Barbados.



I played a major role in creating an agreement between countries to help end violence against women. It was called the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women.



I am a filmmaker and leader in education who teaches students across the world about culture, human behaviour and communication. I am the youngest person and first woman to lead the University of Guyana as Vice-Chancellor.

What did I achieve?

How much about these transformational women leaders do you remember? Fill in the blanks below to complete the sentences about each leader. **HINT:** Go back to the thirty-five (35) stories in the book to jog your memory.



CRISTINA COC



MONICA COC MAGNUSSON

We helped defend and secure the **L** _ _ _ **R** _ _ _ _ of indigenous Mayan people in Belize.



PROFESSOR RHODA REDDOCK

I am a university professor, feminist author and researcher who became the first person from Trinidad and Tobago to serve on The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, known as the C _ _ _ COMMITTEE. This is a group of experts that keeps track of actions taken by governments to improve the lives of women.



DR. HILDA ROSEMARY HUSBANDS-MATHURIN

I am the first woman to become President of the Senate in Saint Lucia. I also helped to create the Parliament of the **ORGANISATION OF E**_____ **C**____ **S**____ (**OECS**) which allows governments from the region to work together to achieve a better quality of life for people in their countries.



I formed an organisation called the **R__ T____** to create jobs and other opportunities for women.

ANDAIYE



ELMA FRANCOIS



SHIRLEY PRYCE

We are labour activists who spoke out against unfair working conditions and helped form **TRADE U** ____ to defend the rights of workers.



DR. CARLA BARNETT

I am the Secretary-General of **C**____, a group of governments that work together to build the Caribbean and unite its people.



MIA MOTTLEY

I am the first woman Prime Minister of Barbados and I am known for being a champion for efforts to stop climate change in the Caribbean. Under my leadership, Barbados became a R _ _ _ _ _ , a form of government where a country is led by its own people instead of a foreign king or queen.

What did I achieve?



JOAN FRENCH



DR. PEGGY ANTROBUS



PROFESSOR RHODA REDDOCK

We cooperated with other women activists to create an organisation called the CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR F _____ R____ AND A____ (CAFRA), which works with governments and other groups in the Caribbean to protect and promote the rights of women.



DR. ROSINA WILTSHIRE

I helped write the **E**_ _ _ **CHARTER** which encourages countries to care for the environment and to create peaceful and fair communities.



ROBERTA CLARKE

I am a social scientist and lawyer who became the Commissioner to a group called the INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON H____R___, an organization in the OAS that promotes and protects the human rights of people in the Americas.

Where am I from?

Each clue describes a different leader from this book. Can you figure out who they are? When you know the answer, say it out loud or write it down. Do you know where each of these women are from? Circle the right country from the three (3) choices (A, B or C) or say it out loud.

일반 경기를 내용하는 데, 자연하면 기능 회에서 가장되는 경에서 하는 사람들이 되었다. 하는 이 그는 사이 모든 사이를 받는 것이다.	e Against Women Foundation v and educated police officers on	그 일반 그는 그 원인 그런 어린 아이를 하게 되었다.
I am		and I am from:
Saint Kitts and Nevis	The Bahamas	© Suriname

I opened the Thomas Oliver Robinson Memorial school to give children from all backgrounds an opportunity to get an education.

I am ______ and I am from:

A Saint Lucia

B Antigua and Barbuda

C Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

I was both a politician and author. I created the first political party in my country and I also wrote a novel about three sisters called 'Orchid House.'

I am ______ and I am from:

A Dominica

B Belize

G Guyana

Where am I from?

		and I am from:
A Saint Kitts and Nevis	B Haiti	© Barbados
Most people remember me for ournalist and activist who def		
I am		and I am from:
A Trinidad and Tobago	B Dominica	G Grenada
was born in Saint Vincent an country my home, where I he scholarships for girls. I also ta	elped to make decisio	ons about laws and created tourism and hospitality new
skills and hel		

I broke many barriers by becoming the first woman Member of Parliament, Attorney General and Acting Prime Minister of my country. I used my power for positive change by encouraging employers to treat women fairly in the workplace and I worked with my government to change the laws to better protect people from violence. _____ and I am from: Trinidad and Tobago Jamaica The Bahamas I taught the people of indigenous communities in my country about their rights. I created the Amerindian People's Association which works to protect indigenous lands, and I also cooperate with the government to help leaders make better decisions for indigenous communities. I am _____ and I am from: Grenada A Belize Guyana I was a businesswoman and politician who improved the lives of people in communities. One of my achievements was helping to change the rules to allow children in need in my country to have a fair chance at attending secondary school. and I am from: Dominica Jamaica Montserrat

Where am I from?

1 am		and I am from:
A Saint Lucia	B Saint Vincent and the Grenadi	nes G Suriname
eadership and I write at	University of the West Indies whe bout governments, voting and Caril b helped to improve laws in my cou	bbean women in politics.
I am		_ and I am from:
A The Bahamas	B Trinidad and Tobago	G Saint Lucia
worked to process V	riol culture in my country and en d to live in harmony. I believe that	
: [1] [1] [1] [1] [1] [1] [1] [1] [1] [1]	you are.	
backgrounds in my land	you are.	and I am from:

I am		and I am from:
A Montserrat	B Haiti	© Suriname
am a lawyer and no	olitician who became the	first woman to be elected into
ani a lawyer and po		
Parliament in my cour	ntry. I helped pass laws to	make women's jobs fairer and took part in talks that led to my

How did transformational leaders help their communities?

Fill in the blanks to complete the story about how women leaders contributed to the Caribbean. Say the words out loud or write them in.

Caribbean women leaders were trailblazers who defended the \mathbf{H}_{-} \mathbf{R}_{-} of their communities against mistreatment due to their race, religion, gender or poor backgrounds. They were champions for freedom and equality among people. One example is \mathbf{A}_{-} JACQUES \mathbf{G}_{-} from Jamaica who encouraged people of African descent to seek national Independence and equal rights. Once the right to vote came into effect in the mid-1900s in the Caribbean, women too were able to vote. It is called adult or universal \mathbf{S}_{-} when all adult citizens can vote in their country's elections. \mathbf{E}_{-} \mathbf{R}_{-} \mathbf{E}_{-} was an activist from Belize who encouraged women to vote.

As women became more empowered, many of them went on to be become groundbreakers – the first women to lead in their government or head an organisation. One example is Mabel Moir James who became the first woman government minister in the country of _____ A. Another groundbreaker is J____ yho was the first woman to serve as both President and Prime Minister of Guyana. Both women used their roles to support women's rights and help people in their countries get better access to public services that all citizens need, such as schooling, hospital services and clean water. Public service leaders make decisions that affect communities and countries. They include people like Dame N ___ B ____, the first Governor-General of Barbados who improved health care in the Caribbean.

Despite the hard work of these women, there was still injustice in society. So many Caribbean women formed their own organisations and movements to improve the
lives of people in their communities. These women are social justice A C
unfairness. They can be described as A D S who spoke up for the rights of different groups of disadvantaged people in society or championed a purpose
they care about. For example, Aggie Bernard from Jamaica and Clotil Walcott from
Trinidad and Tobago advocated for the rights of $W_{}$ S in their countries.
Audrey Christiaan championed the rights of I P in Suriname
and others like I Adderley and Kerryann Ifill advocated for the rights of P with D S W is about improving the wellbeing of
people, families and communities. Many people like Shirley Pryce and Nesta Patrick were SW

Young people in the Caribbean are also social justice activists and advocates for different causes. Many of them speak out about the importance of protecting the environment and take action to stop climate change. This includes activists like Maria Marshall, and several others like ________. They are proof that no one is too young to be a leader.

Creative women such as writers, filmmakers and artists used their craft to advocate for positive change in society. For example, the author named Edwidge Danticat used her writing to tell stories about the culture, history and life of people in the country of _ _ _ _ I. MISS _ _ _ from Jamaica used poetry to highlight the realities of people in Jamaica. Women like MISS B _ _ _ from Saint Lucia and Keva Joan Margetson from _ _ _ _ and _ _ _ _ helped to enhance arts and culture in their countries.

These remarkable contributions were possible because women became more empowered. One of the main ways they did this was by seizing the opportunities they had to get a good education and find better jobs. Some women attained a high level of education and became experts or S C H _ _ _ _ in different subjects. Women such as Dr. Halimah Deshong from SAINT _ _ _ AND THE _ _ _ and Jamaican Professor V _ _ _ A. SHEPHERD continue to work with universities where they educate students. Their work also involves gathering information to better understand different issues and learn new facts about how different groups of people are affected. This is called R _ _ _ _ . The women in academia in this book created new knowledge in areas such as law, history, economics, politics and S O _ _ _ _ S C _ _ _ , which are the fields of study about human life and behaviour.

Some women in academia are also feminists. Their work helps students and leaders to understand how people with different backgrounds and characteristics experience the world differently and how we can all make better decisions to improve **E Q**_____ among people. One example is Professor **P A T**____ **M** ____ from Trinidad and Tobago who played an important role in introducing gender as a subject at universities in the Caribbean. Transformational women leaders from the Caribbean had many different professions and skills, but the one thing they had in common was that they were all advocates for human rights and social justice.

What new words did you learn from this book?

Get a piece of paper or notebook and make a list of all the new words you from this book. In your own words, say or write down what each word me	

Which Caribbean women leaders inspired you?

Who are the women leaders in this book that you most admire? What qualities or achievements do they have that inspire you? Think about these questions and fill in the spaces below. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

I feel most inspired by the stories about They achieved things such as	
Their contributions were important to society because	
They possessed qualities of which I admire. These women leaders motivate m	
	I would like to help my My voice

Glossary

Academia

Academia is the part of society that has to do with education, teaching, learning and the activities that are promoted by schools. It describes education at a higher level and the activities of scholars from institutions like universities. These activities can involve studying or teaching subjects at an advanced level, writing essays and doing research to find new information about an issue or subject. 'Academic' is an adjective used to describe any activity in the field of academia. Scholars, teachers and knowledge-makers in the field of academia are sometimes called 'academics.'

Accountable

Being responsible and able to provide answers to a person, group or organisation to explain your actions.

Act

An Act is a written law that is passed by Parliament. Examples are a Minimum Wages Act and Maternity Leave Act. Every country has their own Acts.

Activist

Activists inspire change and defend the rights of people. They work or organise with others to change unjust conditions. This can include trying to make the government change its laws, or inspiring people to change the way they think or the things they do. Activists also help people become empowered by encouraging them to be more independent and confident. By doing this, they help them improve their lives and the lives of others, including their families, their communities and their countries.

Adult suffrage

Adult suffrage is the right of all adults in a country to vote in elections regardless of their race, gender, wealth, and family history. Adult suffrage is also called universal suffrage.

Advocate

Advocates speak up to defend the rights of people or to support a purpose they care about.

African Slave Trade

During the African slave trade, millions of Africans were taken from their homes and forced to work as slaves. Most of them were taken to the Americas and the Caribbean to work on plantations. Slavery takes away the rights of others and because of this, it is now against the law.

Ambassador

An ambassador is someone chosen by the government to speak on their behalf in meetings and events with other governments, organisations and global leaders. An ambassador is the official representative of a country and they voice the decisions of the government they represent.

Animator

An animator is someone who uses digital technology to create moving scenes or cartoon films from still images, photos, drawings or puppets. They work in the field of Animation.

Apartheid

Apartheid was a system that forced people of different races to live separately.

Association

An association is a group of people or organisations that come together for a common purpose.

Attorney-at-law

An attorney-at-law is a type of lawyer who defends people in court.

Attorney General

An Attorney General is one of the highest positions in government. An Attorney General represents the government in all legal matters and works to improve the laws of the land.

Author

An author is someone who writes books.

Bar Association

A bar association is the professional organization for lawyers and attorneys-atlaw in a country or region.

BBC

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a radio and television company that is owned by the British government.

Broadcaster

A broadcaster is a person whose job is to present radio or television shows or programmes.

CAFRA

CAFRA stands for Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action. This is an organization that supports the rights of women and their growth in the Caribbean.

Called to the Bar

Called to the Bar means that a person is qualified as a lawyer and has completed the training needed to practice law in a particular country.

Captivity

Captivity is being trapped or confined. A person who is in captivity has limited access to their rights and freedoms.

CCJ

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) is a court where disagreements between people from different CARICOM countries are heard so that decisions can be made. Also, if a person from CARICOM is unhappy with a decision made by a court in their country, they can make a request for the Caribbean Court of Justice to hear about the matter and make a final decision.

CPDC

CPDC stands for Caribbean Policy Development Centre. It is an organisation that works with many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) across the Caribbean to understand the needs of Caribbean people and support the creation of plans and policies to improve their lives.

CARICOM

CARICOM stands for Caribbean Community. It is an organisation that helps Caribbean countries work together and carry out projects to improve the lives of their citizens. CARICOM is led by the Secretary-General.

CEDAW

CEDAW stands for **The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**. This is an agreement which guides governments on what actions they must take to improve the lives of women in their countries. For example, governments are required to take action to ensure that laws are fair to all, women have equal job opportunities to men, and women can participate in politics and sports. A group of experts keeps track of actions taken by governments and provides recommendations. This group is called the CEDAW Committee or the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

Central Bank

A Central Bank is the national bank of a country. It issues currency and provides financial and banking services for the government, other banks and businesses.

Chief Justice

A Chief Justice is a judge who holds the highest position in a court of law.

Civil right

A civil right is something all citizens of a country deserve and are entitled to, such as food, an education, health care, free speech, and being treated fairly. A civil rights activist promotes and defends the civil rights of others.

Civil rights movement

A civil rights movement occurs when a group of people come together and use different activities to promote equal rights and the fair treatment of persons who face discrimination. These activities can include speeches, protests, debates, peace walks, writing books and newspaper articles, and many other activities that can help people become aware of important issues.

Civil society organisation

Organisations such as community groups, labour unions and charitable organisations that advocate for various human rights and social causes. Civil society organisations are separate from government organisations and they often hold governments accountable for their actions and duties to society.

CIWiL

Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWiL) is an organisation that provides women and girls with the knowledge and skills to become transformational leaders.

Chancellor

A chancellor is a leader of a college or university. The vice-chancellor is the second in command and oversees students, staff, course, facilities and other operations.

Climate change

Climate change describes changes in the weather and our environment over a long period of time. This includes rainfall and temperature, especially rises in temperature. Climate change can happen naturally, but sometimes human activities like pollution add too much carbon dioxide to the atmosphere and this has bad effects on the weather and environment.

Climate crisis

The climate crisis describes the current situation around the world where climate change continues to have harmful effects on people, animals and the environment. In the Caribbean, it is causing very hot weather and natural disasters like hurricanes and floods. Though climate change affects everyone differently, the climate crisis shows that people need work together to care for the earth and end pollution.

Colonisation

Colonisation occurs when one country takes control of another country and sends its people to settle there. The country that is taken over is called a colony. This system is called colonialism

Commonwealth

The Commonwealth is a group of over 50 countries that were ruled by the British Empire. The Commonwealth Secretariat is an organisation that helps these countries work together and carry out projects to improve the lives of their citizens. The Commonwealth Secretary-General leads the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Constitution

The constitution of a country is a set of written rules and laws that guides leaders on how the country should be governed.

Consumer

A consumer is someone who buys and uses goods and services.

Convention

A convention is an agreement among countries that outlines how certain things should be dealt with.

Coterie of Social Workers

The Coterie of Social Workers is a group in Trinidad and Tobago that was formed by Audrey Jeffers to help families and people in need. 'Coterie' is a word meaning a small group of people who share common interests.

Court

A court is where disagreements between people and organisations are heard so that a decision can be made. The decisions made are based on the law.

Credit union

A credit union is an organisation that is led by its members and lends money to its members.

Crisis centre

A crisis centre is a facility where people can go to get help for a particular problem. This includes victims and survivors of violence.

DAWN

Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era (DAWN) is a network of women activists and scholars from many different parts of the world. They believe that when leaders are making decisions that affect people around the world, they must consider the needs and views of poor or disadvantaged women who are sometimes excluded. This includes women living in regions such as Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Pacific and the Caribbean. DAWN gives women from these countries the opportunity to work together to advocate for a better world. This world they envision is one where leaders are not motivated by greed but instead, they work with citizens to end violence and poverty, to ensure that all people are treated fairly, and that the environment is respected.

Deputy

Deputy is used to describe jobs that are second in command to the chief leader or head of an organisation.

Development

Development occurs when the leaders in a country take actions to make the things people need like clean water, food and housing available to all. But development does not stop there. It involves improving education, employment, health care, transport, trade, agriculture, science and technology. Sustainable development occurs when leaders make decisions about development that put human life, future generations, nature and peace first.

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when a person or group of people are treated unfairly because of things like their gender, age, family history, religion or the colour of their skin.

Doctorate

A doctorate is the highest award a student can achieve at university.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence includes violence between couples, families, and persons living in the same household.

Domestic Workers

Domestic workers are people who work in the household, and their duties can include babysitting, taking care of elderly or sick family members, cleaning, cooking, laundry and ironing, gardening, shopping for food and other errands.

Economics

Economics is the study of the economy.

Economy

The economy is the way people spend and earn money.

Educator

An educator is a teacher or person who has a job in education. An educator can be someone at a primary school, a high school or even a lecturer or professor at university.

Flection

An election occurs when the people of a country vote to choose someone to be their political leader or representative in government.

Empathy

Empathy is being aware and understanding of people's feelings and emotions. Empathetic persons listen well to others when they are speaking and show them support, care and compassion.

Empowerment

Empowerment is about creating an environment or providing people with the means that can help make them stronger, more confident, and more independent. When people are empowered, they can improve their lives and the lives of their families, their communities, and their countries.

Equal rights

Equal rights is about ensuring that all people are treated fairly, regardless of their race, skin colour, religion, gender, family history or abilities.

Equal rights movement

A movement for equal rights occurs when a group of people work together to defend and protect the rights of people to be treated fairly and equally to everyone else. The group also leads many activities to help people understand why equal rights are important. These activities can include speeches, protests, debates, peace walks, writing books and others.

Family court

A court is where disagreements between people and organisations are heard so that a decision can be made. The decisions made are based on the law. A Family Court is a special court that hears disputes between members of a family.

Filmmaker

A filmmaker is someone who creates movies.

First People

First people are also called 'indigenous people'. They are the people who lived in a place or country before other groups arrived there. There are many different groups and communities of first people across the Caribbean and the world. They have different beliefs, languages, lands and traditions. This is why sometimes, the plural term 'first peoples' is used when speaking about more than one group.

Feminist

A feminist is a someone who supports equal rights for women. Feminists encourage people to treat women and girls fairly and equally to men and boys.

Gender

Gender is about the roles, responsibilities and behaviours that society determines are suitable for men and women. Ideas about gender vary across different countries, societies and periods in time. This includes our ideas about how men should behave compared to women or what types of jobs women can or cannot have. These ideas affect the rights and freedoms of people in both positive and negative ways. Understanding gender and how it affects people helps us to see where there is gender equality or inequality. Gender is often confused with sex. Sex is about biology and the differences in human bodies which make people male or female whereas gender is about society's ideas about what it should mean to be male or female.

Gender discrimination

Gender discrimination occurs when people are treated unfairly, excluded or denied opportunities because of their sex and society's ideas about gender. Usually women and girls experience gender discrimination more often than men and boys.

Gender equality

Gender equality is when women, men, girls, boys and all people enjoy the same rights, opportunities and protections. This includes being able to live free from violence, have fair opportunities to succeed in life, and equal access to rights like education, employment, healthcare, as well as the ability to vote and take part in politics. To achieve gender equality, society must change any ideas about gender that limit the rights and freedom of people.

Gender justice

Gender justice is about achieving gender equality so that women, men, girls, boys and all people have access to their rights and freedoms. It is about creating a world where people are not limited by ideas about gender. Gender justice is when masculinity (qualities expected from men and boys) and femininity (qualities expected of women and girls) are equally valued.

Global politics

Global politics includes the activities of governments or the people who try to influence the way countries and regions are led around the world.

Governor

A governor is the chief leader or head of an organisation.

Governor-General

A Governor-General is a someone who represents the King or Queen as the leader of a country which is still ruled by another country in Europe. In the year 2023, there are still Governor-Generals in Caribbean countries such as Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Usually, when a country becomes a Republic, the Governor-General is replaced by a President.

Government

A government is the group of people who lead a country. In many countries, the government is led by a Prime Minister.

Government ministers

Government ministers are leaders in government. They report to the Prime Minister and lead government departments, create plans, and make decisions to protect and help people in their country.

Ground breaker

A ground breaker is a person who is among the first to create or achieve something. Their accomplishments open doors for more people to follow.

Health science

Health science is the study of the health and the wellbeing of humans.

Heritage

Heritage is what someone has inherited from their ancestors, including traditions, languages and property.

Historian

A historian is a person who studies and records history.

Home economics

Home economics is a subject about how to run a home well.

Hospitality

People who work in hospitality welcome guests and visitors to their country and create a friendly environment during their stay.

House of Assembly

The House of Assembly is a group of people in Parliament who meet to discuss and make laws. It is sometimes called "The House" for short. The Speaker of the House oversees the House of Assembly.

Human right

A human right is something that all humans deserve and are entitled to such as food, free speech, and being treated fairly. There are many documents and agreements which describe what our human rights are. They set standards for how people should act in order to respect one another. The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** is a document which outlines the human rights of all people. The **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)** is an agreement which describes the rights of women and girls. The **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** is an agreement which describes the rights of children.

Human rights activist

A human rights activist defends the rights of people by taking action to help them.

Human trafficking

Human Trafficking is a crime which happens when a person manipulates or forces others to do things against their will. It is a form of slavery.

Indentureship

When slavery ended, the indentureship system was created to replace it. Workers from Asia were brought to the Caribbean to work on plantations.

Independence

When a country gains independence, the people of that country form their own government and become free from being ruled by other countries.

Indigenous people

Indigenous people are the first people who lived in a place or country. There are many different groups and communities of indigenous people across the Caribbean and world. They have different languages, lands and traditions. This is why sometimes, the plural term 'indigenous peoples' is used when speaking about more than one group.

Indigenous land rights

Indigenous land rights means that indigenous people deserve to own, use and control the land of their ancestors.

Injustice

Injustice is when people are not treated fairly or equally, and their rights are not respected.

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is an organisation in the OAS that promotes and protects the human rights of people in the Americas.

Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women

The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women is an agreement signed by countries in the Americas. It says that violence against women is a crime and it holds governments accountable for taking actions to end violence against women.

Inter-American Development Bank

The Inter-American Development Bank is an organisation that works with governments and other organisations to build the region and improve the lives of its people.

Journalist

A journalist is someone who writes stories for newspapers, magazines or television and radio programmes.

Judge

A judge hears disagreements between people in a court and make decisions.

Judiciary

The judiciary is the includes all the country's courts of law and judges.

Justice

Justice is when people are treated fairly and their rights are respected. This includes a person's right to be treated equally to everyone else.

Labour activist

A labour activist defends the rights of workers and takes action to encourage employers to treat them fairly.

Lawsuit

A lawsuit is a disagreement between people or organisations that is brought to court for a decision.

LGBTI people

LGBTI stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex, a diverse community of people.

Leader

A leader is someone who makes decisions and takes actions that affect people. This can include their family, a group, a community, an organisation, and even a country. But being a good leader is not just about being in-charge or having power. It is about using your power to help others and motivating them to do the same.

Legislative Council

The legislative council was the group of people during the British Empire who would meet to discuss and make laws. When Caribbean countries gained independence and formed their own parliaments, the Legislative Council was replaced by the House of Assembly or National Assembly.

Lifeline Ministries

Lifeline Ministries is an organisation in Dominica that was created by Tina Alexander to help children, families, and people in need, especially from poor communities.

Maternity leave

Maternity leave is the time off from work that a woman can take before and after giving birth to or adopting a child. The laws of a country will state the amount of time she is allowed to take and whether she is paid during that time. Every country has different laws on maternity leave. Some countries also offer paternity leave for fathers.

Mayor

A mayor is a member of government who leads a city or town.

Member of Parliament

A Member of Parliament is a member of the government whom people in a community have voted for to represent them in parliament. This person debates issues and make the laws for a country.

Minimum wage

Minimum wage is the lowest amount of money that a worker can be paid. Every country has their own minimum wage laws. Having a minimum wage can protect workers against low pay, unfair treatment and discrimination in the workplace.

Motivational speaker

A motivational speaker shares their wisdom, personal stories and lessons they learned to inspire people to improve their lives.

Movement

A movement is a group of people who share similar beliefs and work together to achieve the same goals.

NGC Bocas Lit Fest

The NGC Bocas Lit Fest is a yearly festival held in Trinidad and Tobago which showcases books and celebrates authors, writers and poets from the Caribbean.

NGO

NGO stands for non-governmental organisation. This type of organisation usually does not make any profit. Instead, NGOs focus on activities and services that help people and society.

Nutrition

Nutrition is mainly about food and eating healthy.

OECS

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is a group of governments in the eastern part of the Caribbean that work together to achieve a better quality of life for people in their countries.

OECS Assembly

The OECS Assembly is made up of representatives from each government within the OECS. Members of the Assembly meet to discuss issues between countries and suggest solutions.

Parliament

Parliament is part of the government. It includes people called parliamentarians who debate issues and make the laws for a country. Parliaments in the Caribbean are often divided into two sections – the Senate and the House of Assembly or National Assembly. Some countries have only a House of Assembly or National Assembly.

Pioneer

A pioneer is a person who is among the first to create or achieve something.

Policy

A policy is a set of guidelines that organisations or countries can follow to ensure they are meeting their goals.

Politics

Politics includes the activities of the government or the people who try to influence the way a country is led.

Politician

A politician is a person whose job is in politics.

Political party

A political party is a group of people that work together to influence the government. If a political party wins an election, they become in charge of the government.

Poverty

Poverty is when people do not have enough money and the basic things they need to survive and live well. This includes food, clothing and shelter.

President of the Senate

The President of the Senate oversees the Senate which is a group of people in Parliament who meet to discuss and make laws.

Prime Minister

A Prime Minister leads the government. The government is the group of people who lead a country.

Privilege

Persons are said to have privilege in society when their family background, ethnicity, nationality, wealth or other qualities give them an advantage over other groups of people. People who have privilege often face less obstacles to accessing their human rights to things like education, jobs and being treated fairly.

Professor

A professor is an expert who teaches at a university.

Psychologist

A psychologist is someone who studies the human mind, emotions, and behaviour to help people with mental and emotional disorders.

Psychiatrist

A psychiatrist a medical doctor who helps people with mental and emotional disorders.

Queen's Counsel

A Queen's Counsel is the title given to a lawyer in the United Kingdom (UK) when they are appointed by the Queen. It is one of the highest positions a lawyer in the UK can hold and it is awarded to those persons with many years of experience and excellence in law. When there is a King instead of a Queen, the position is called 'King's Counsel.'

Reparations

Reparations is a form of justice that occurs when the governments of countries that colonised other countries and enslaved people take action to repair the harm that was caused. This can include apologising and repaying the losses suffered by many generations of people. Repayment can happen in different ways. It can be paid using money or by helping countries that were past colonies.

Republic

A republic is form of government where a country is led by its people and not a foreign king or queen.

Researcher

A researcher is someone who gathers information to better understand a subject or issue, and to learn new facts about how different groups of people are affected. This process and the information gathered is called 'research.'

Right

A right is something that every person deserves and is entitled to. This includes food, education, health care, free speech, and being treated fairly. In this book, we use 'right' to mean the same thing as 'human right.'

Scholar

A scholar is a person who has done advanced study in a special field or subject.

Scholarship

A scholarship is an award that helps to pay for a student's education. Scholarship can also mean the academic work and research done by people on a subject.

Self-aware

A person who is self-aware understands their own feelings, thoughts, values and why they behave the way they do.

Senate

The Senate is a group of people in Parliament who meet to discuss and make laws. The President of the Senate oversees this group.

Senator

A senator is a leader in government who helps create laws and plans to improve their country.

Sense of justice

When people have a sense of justice, it means they understand what is right and wrong, and what the rights of people are.

Sex

Sex is about biology and the differences in human bodies, where people are categorised as either male, female or intersex based on biological differences in organs, hormones and genes.

Sexism

This is a belief that men and women are not equal and that one group is better than the other.

Slavery

Slavery occurs when one human being owns another. The African slave trade was a system where millions of Africans were taken from their homes and forced to work as slaves. Slavery takes away the rights of people and because of this, it is against the law.

Social justice

Social justice is when all people have access to fair and equal rights, the things they need and opportunities, regardless of their gender, age, family history, religion or the colour of their skin.

Social justice activist

A social justice activist believes in social justice and takes action to defend the rights of people who are being treated unfairly. They encourage people to change the things they do or believe, especially when their actions cause harm. Many social justice activists take action to end things like racial discrimination and the climate crisis.

Social sciences

Social sciences are the fields of study about human life and behaviour.

Social work

Social work is about improving the wellbeing of people, families and communities.

Social worker

A social worker is someone who is qualified to help people, families and communities with different challenges to improve their lives and wellbeing.

Speaker of the House

The Speaker of the House maintains order in Parliament and takes the lead in ensuring that it operates smoothly.

Strike

A strike is when people refuse to work because they are unhappy with how they are treated at work.

Suffrage

Suffrage is the right to vote in elections.

Tourism

Tourism is about welcoming, entertaining, and sharing your culture with visitors.

Trade Union

A trade union is an organisation that helps protect the rights of workers.

Trailblazer

A trailblazer is someone who is among the first people to believe in something or take action which creates a positive change in society.

Transformational leader

Being a transformational leader starts with becoming more aware about what you feel and believe in and how you treat people and the environment. It involves learning to be respectful and empathetic or caring towards people. Transformational leaders listen to people to understand their unique experiences and needs, and they use their power to support equal rights for all people. They create positive changes in society and empower people to be the best they can be. Their achievements open new doors for people to grow.

UNICEF

UNICEF stands for United Nations Children's Fund. It is an organisation in the United Nations that helps children around the world.

United Nations

The United Nations (UN) is an organisation of countries and governments from around the world that work together for peace and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others.

UNDP

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is an organisation in the United Nations. It works with countries around the world to help them develop, meet the needs of citizens, and end poverty.

UNESCO

UNESCO stands for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It is an organisation in the United Nations that helps people of different cultures around the world to connect with one another and exchange ideas on how to improve education, science and peace in all societies.

UNFPA

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is an organisation in the United Nations. It works with people across the world to promote safe childbirth, increase the freedom of women and girls to make decisions that affect their bodies and health, and ensure every young person's potential is fulfilled.

UN Women

UN Women is an organisation in the United Nations that helps women and girls around the world.

University of the West Indies (UWI)

The University of the West Indies is one of the oldest and largest institutions in the Caribbean that provides education to students after they leave high school or secondary school. The university has locations in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda and other islands.

Welfare

Welfare is health, happiness and safety. It is when people can access their rights to things like food, healthcare and other services that they need to live well.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is when people feel safe, comfortable, healthy and happy.

Women's movement

A women's movement is when people work together to ensure that women are treated fairly and equally to men.

Women's Resource and Outreach Centre

Women's Resource and Outreach Centre is an organisation that supports women's rights and helps communities in Jamaica.

Women's rights

Women's rights are the rights and opportunities that women and girls are entitled to. These rights are equal to men and boys. This includes equal opportunities for jobs, education, health care, and to lead and be heard.

Women's suffrage

Women's suffrage is the right of women to vote in elections.

Writer

A writer is a person who creates stories, essays or other types of written content.

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