



Women and Men in CARICOM:

“Capitalizing on windows of opportunity for achieving gender equality in the world of work”

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The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Gender Equality and the World of Work

Four SDGs in particular are relevant for achieving gender equality in the world of work and are outlined below.



SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.



SDG 8 on promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



SDG 4 on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.



SDG 10 on reducing inequality within and among countries.

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CARICOM Economies: Common Challenges

- Small size, limitations re economies of scale
- High vulnerabilities to disaster and economic shocks
- Stagnating economic growth which has resulted in unsustainably high debt-to-gross domestic product ratios
- Difficulties in sustaining government expenditures on social services

Gender Equality and Decent Work in CARICOM: Examining the Evidence

- Women in CARICOM are not experiencing their right to decent work to the same extent as men.
- Women are more likely than men to work in low-wage jobs, and without social protection.
- Women are shouldering a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work as they attempt to balance the demands of their reproductive and productive roles.

Some Limitations with the Data Source: Labour Force Surveys

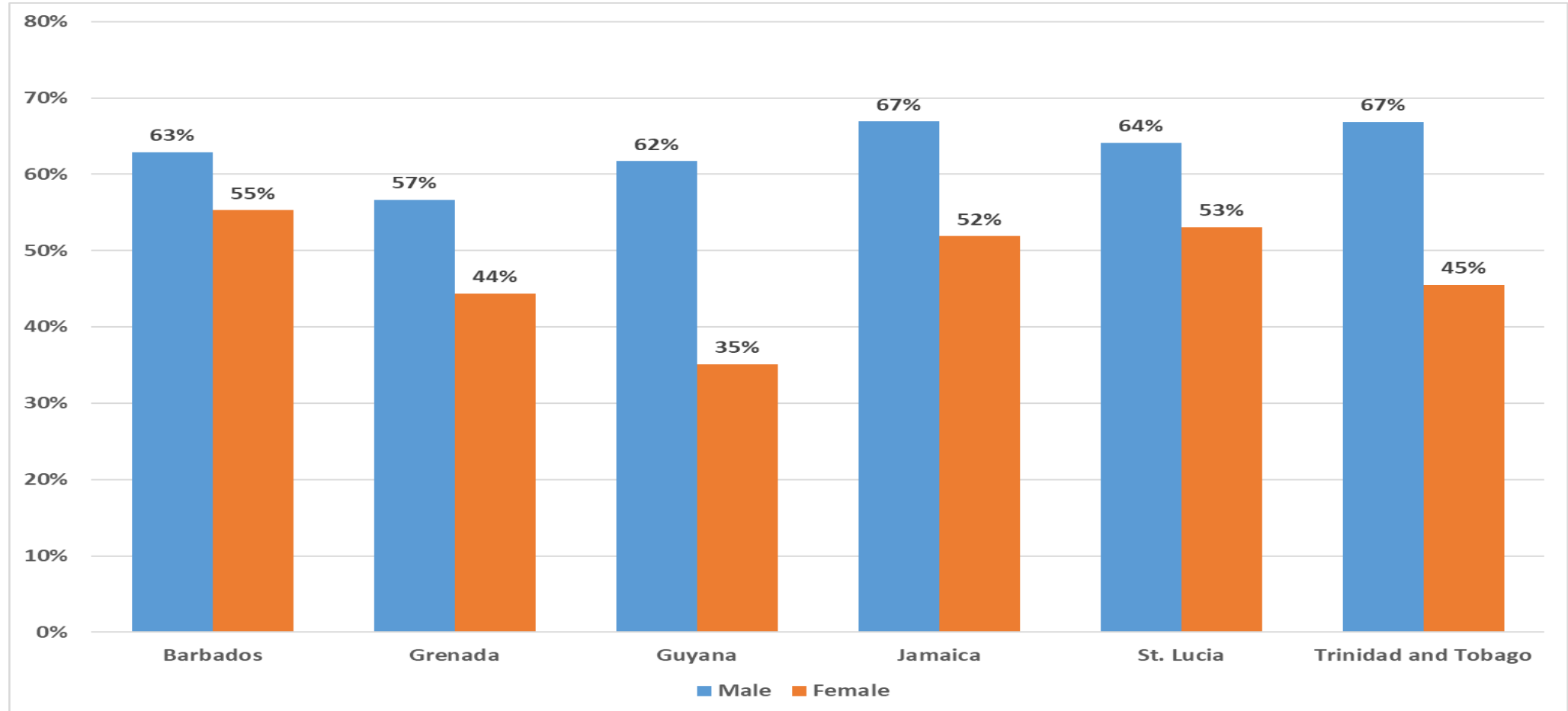
- The LFS' focus on “economic” work - that is, work for pay, profit or gain. They do not ask about work such as cooking, cleaning and other housework, or caring on an unpaid basis for members of one's household and community.
- These types of work, i.e. **unpaid care work**, provide important services that contribute to the well-being of the population and also ensure workers are available and able to work well in the economy.
- Across all countries examined, women perform more than their fair share of this work. Unpaid care work is thus a gender issue.
- Because unpaid work leaves fewer of the 24 hours in a day available, and because there is limited flexibility in the time at which some unpaid care tasks - especially those related to care of children - must be done, responsibility for unpaid care work is likely to place constraints on how women engage in “economic” work.

Countries

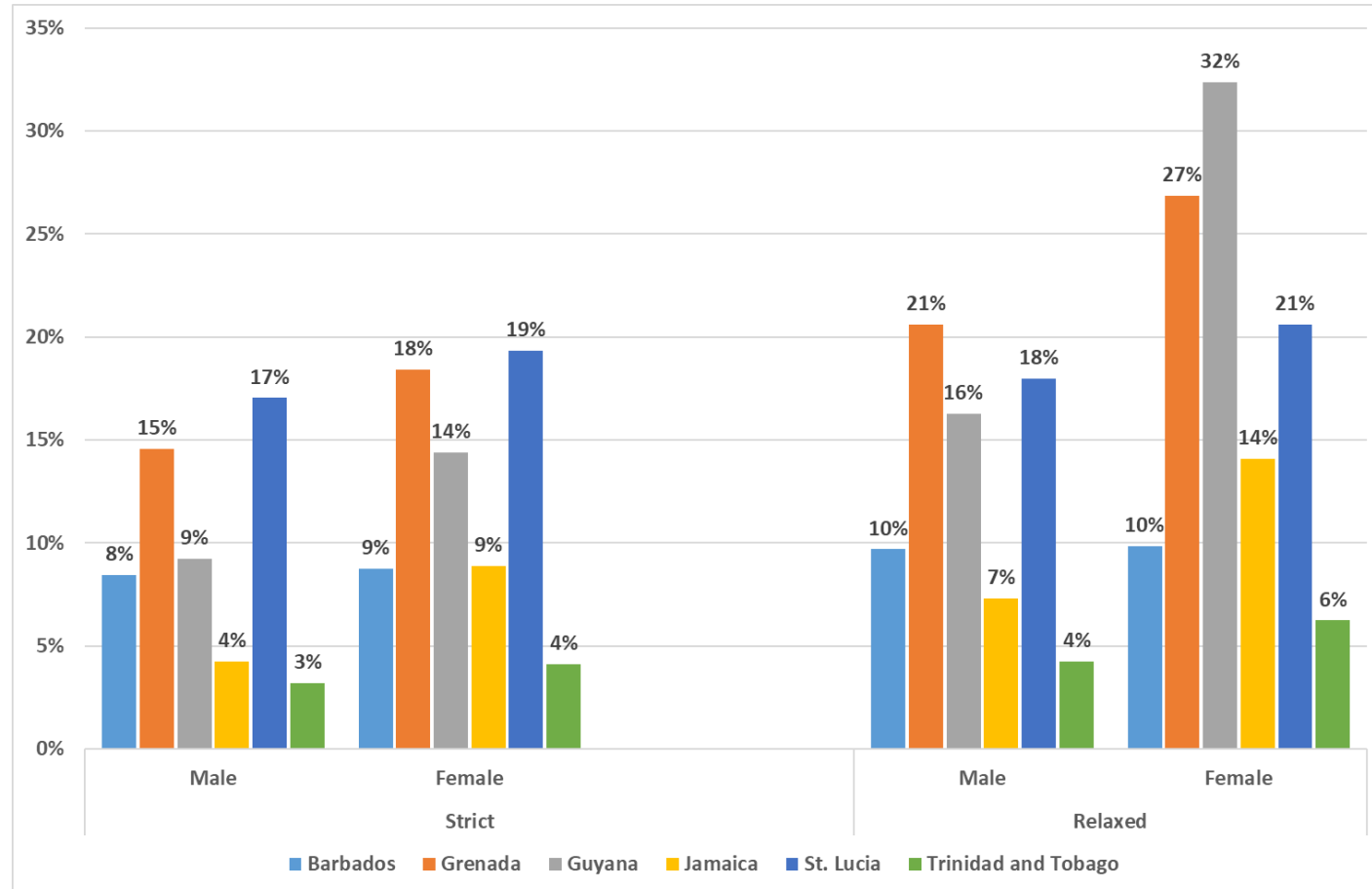
- Barbados
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Jamaica
- St. Lucia
- Trinidad & Tobago

THE EVIDENCE

Employment Rate by Sex, 2017



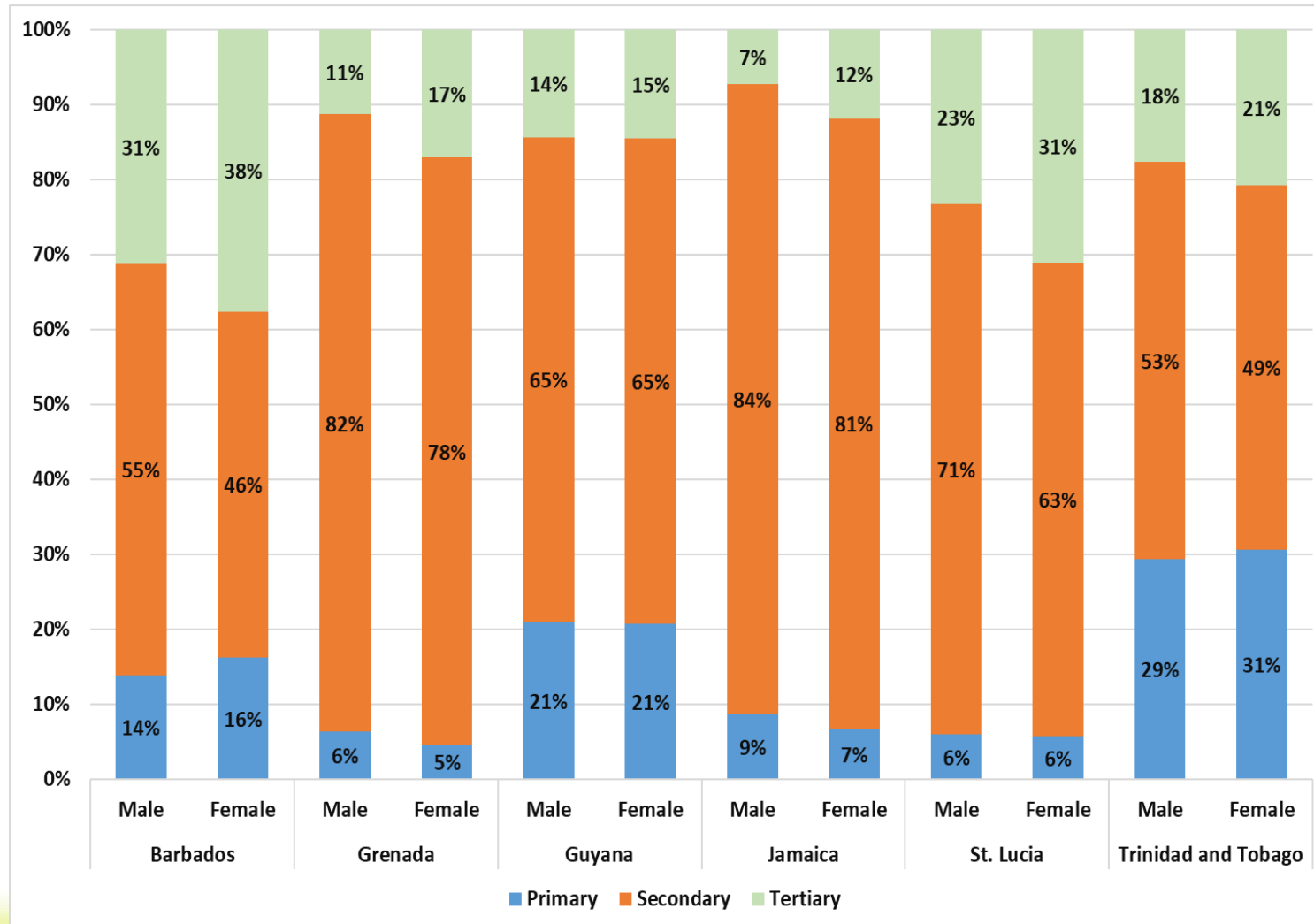
Strict and Relaxed Unemployment Rate by Sex, 2017



Key Facts: Employment and Unemployment

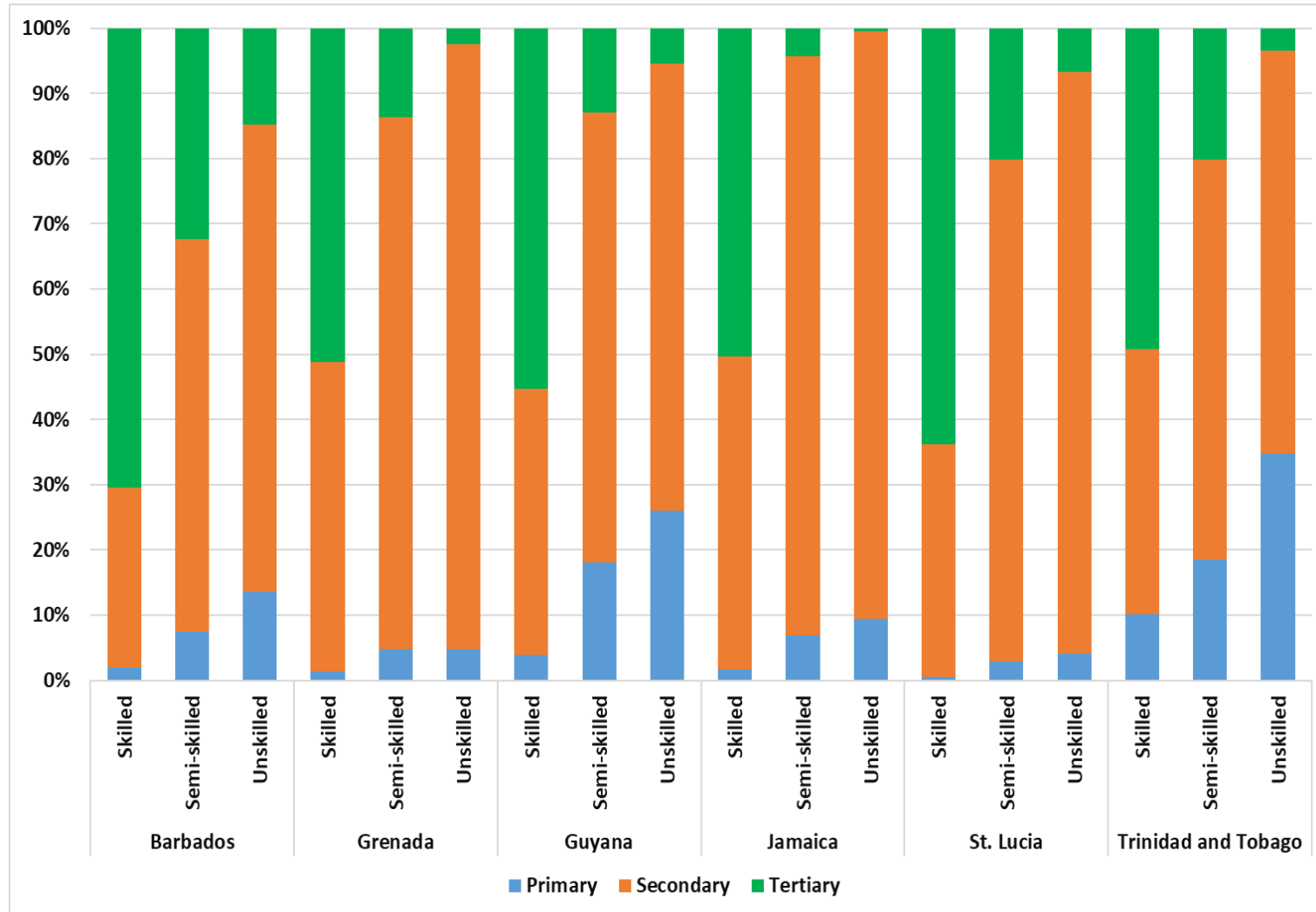
- In all countries, the employment rate is lower for women than for men.
- In all countries the unemployment rate is higher for women than for men.

Education: Highest Education Level by Sex, Population Aged 15 Years and Above, 2017



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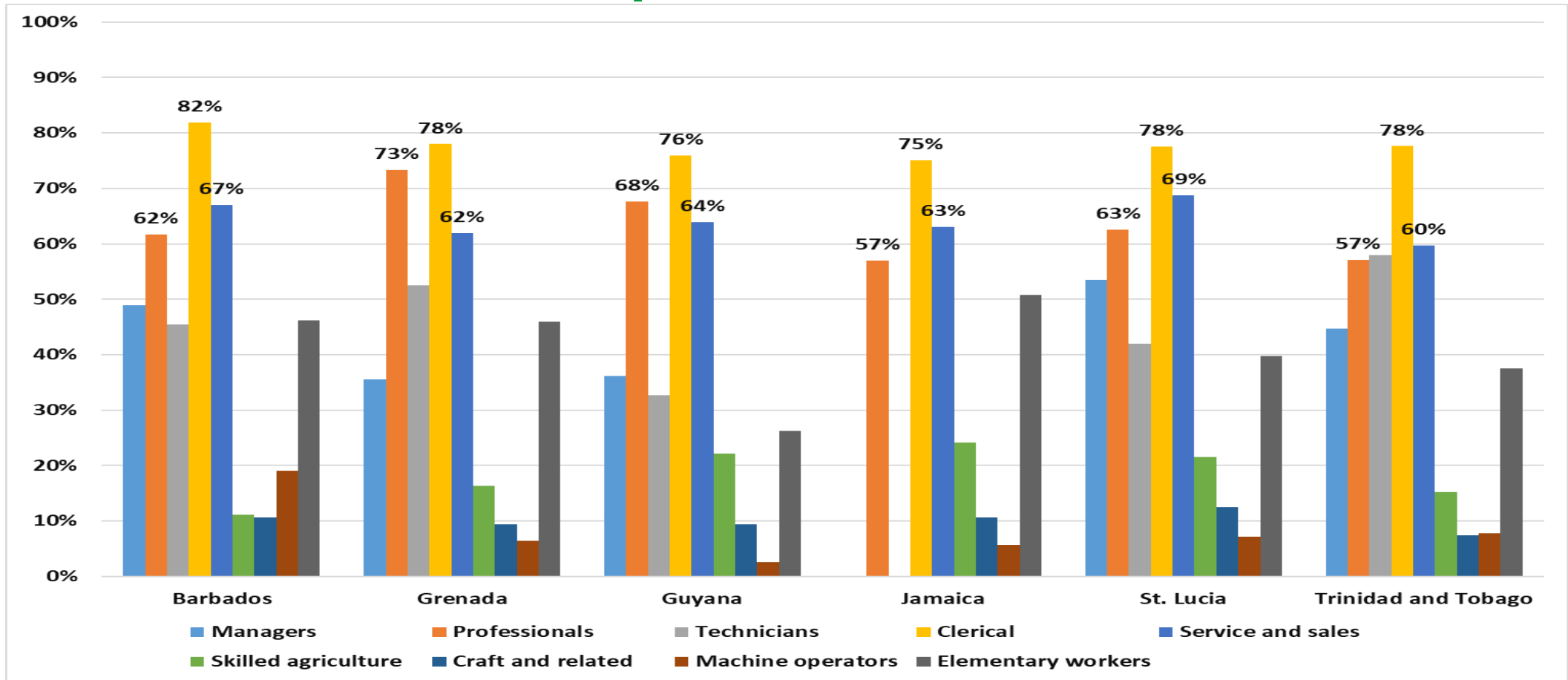
Education by Skill Level



CARICOM Women, Educational Attainment and Position in the Labour Force

- Women are more likely than men to have tertiary education.
- Those who stay longer in the education system are likely to begin doing economic work later, but - once employed - one would expect them to have better jobs with higher earnings....
- In all cases, the rate of employment increases with increasing education.
- employment rate is lower for women than men at each of the three levels of education. The gender difference in this respect tends to be smaller for those with tertiary education than for those with only primary education.
- Given that, as noted above, women tend to be more highly educated than men in these six countries, the lower employment rates for women suggest the economy is not taking full advantage of the available human resources. Conversely, many women are not reaping the full potential benefit of their education.

Occupation: Women as a share of total employed in occupation, 2017



Gender and Occupation

- Sales and service workers constitute the single largest occupation for both sexes.
- The three other large occupations are elementary workers, craft and related, and professionals.
- The ranking of these three occupations relative to each other differs across countries.
- However, in all six countries **55% or more of all employed people are in one of these four occupations.**

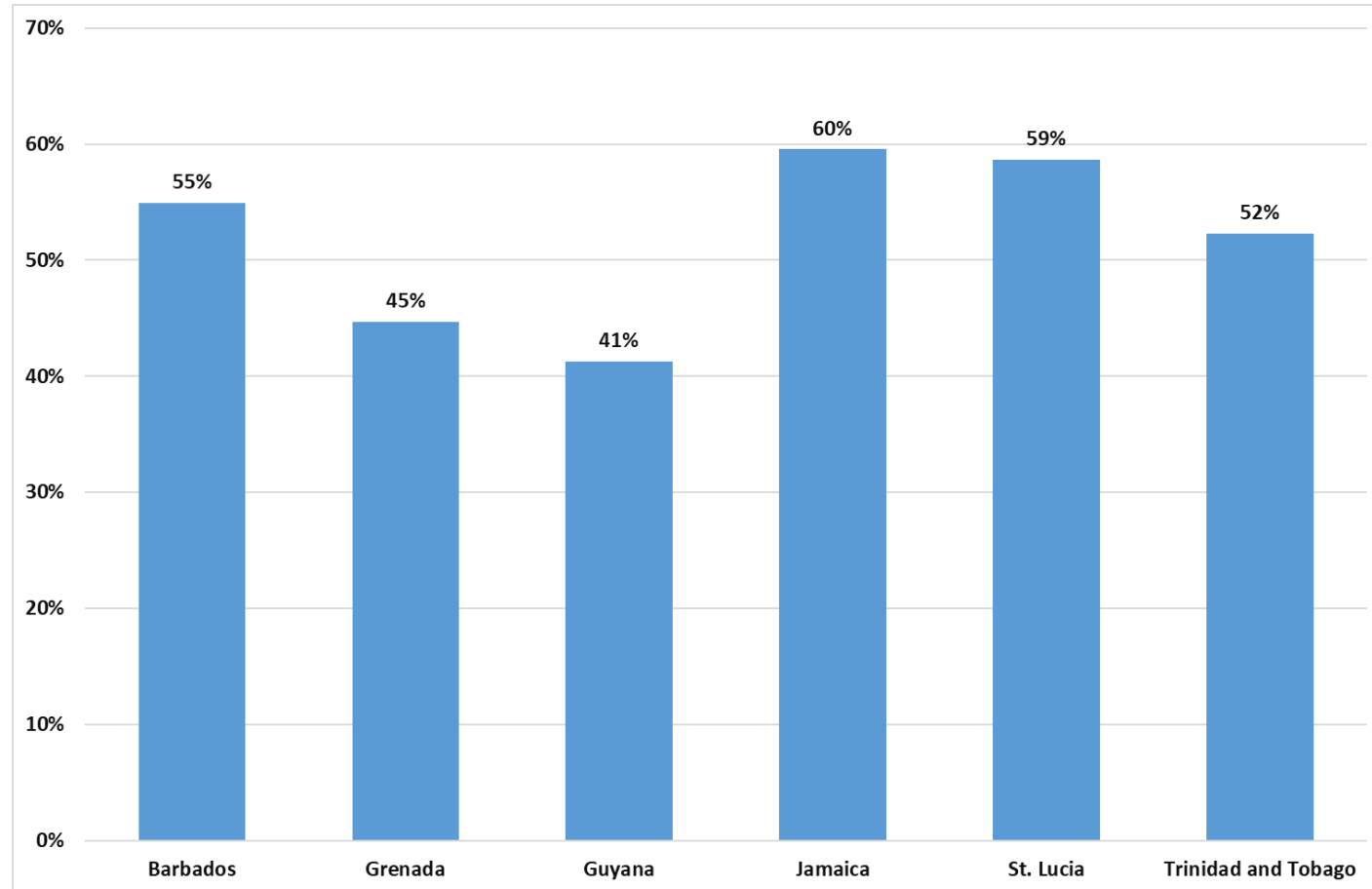
Occupational Sex Segregation

- In all six focus countries, women are most strongly over-represented in the clerical category.
- Women also account for well over half of all jobs in the professional and services and sales work categories. Women reach these levels despite accounting for less than half of all workers.
- The two occupations in which women are least well represented are craft and related trade workers and plant and machine operators.
- All these patterns reflect a situation in which men are more likely to work with physical machines, tools and objects whereas women are more likely to work with and for people.

Women in Management

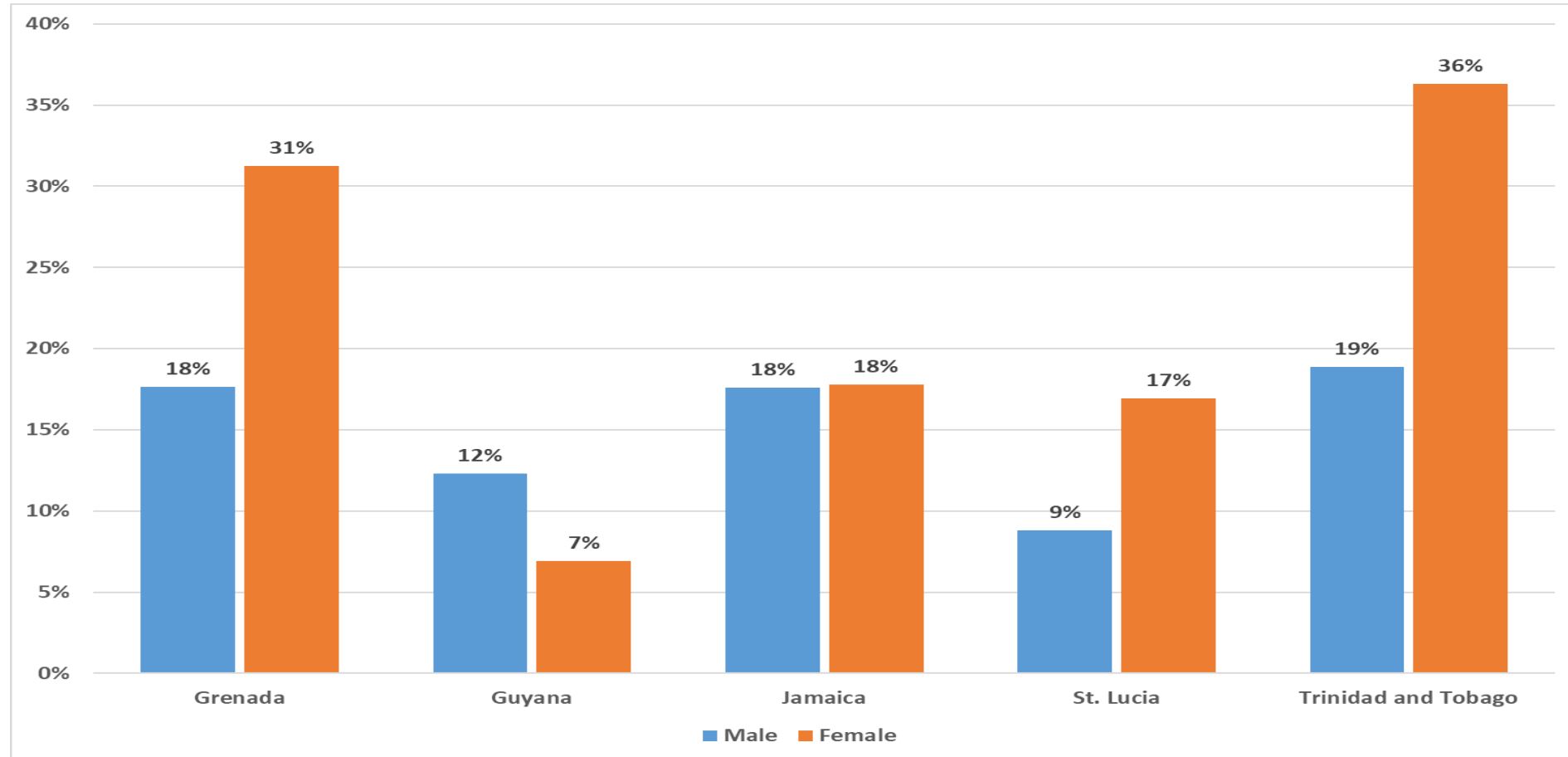
- Women account for a relatively high proportion of managers in some of the six countries:
 - Barbados: 49%
 - Grenada: 35%
 - Guyana: 36%
 - St. Lucia: 54%
 - Trinidad & Tobago: 45%
- In four of the six countries, women account for more than half of all employees in managerial positions:
 - Barbados: 55%
 - Grenada: 45%
 - Guyana: 41%
 - Jamaica: 60%
 - St. Lucia: 59%
 - Trinidad & Tobago: 52%

Female share of all employees in managerial positions



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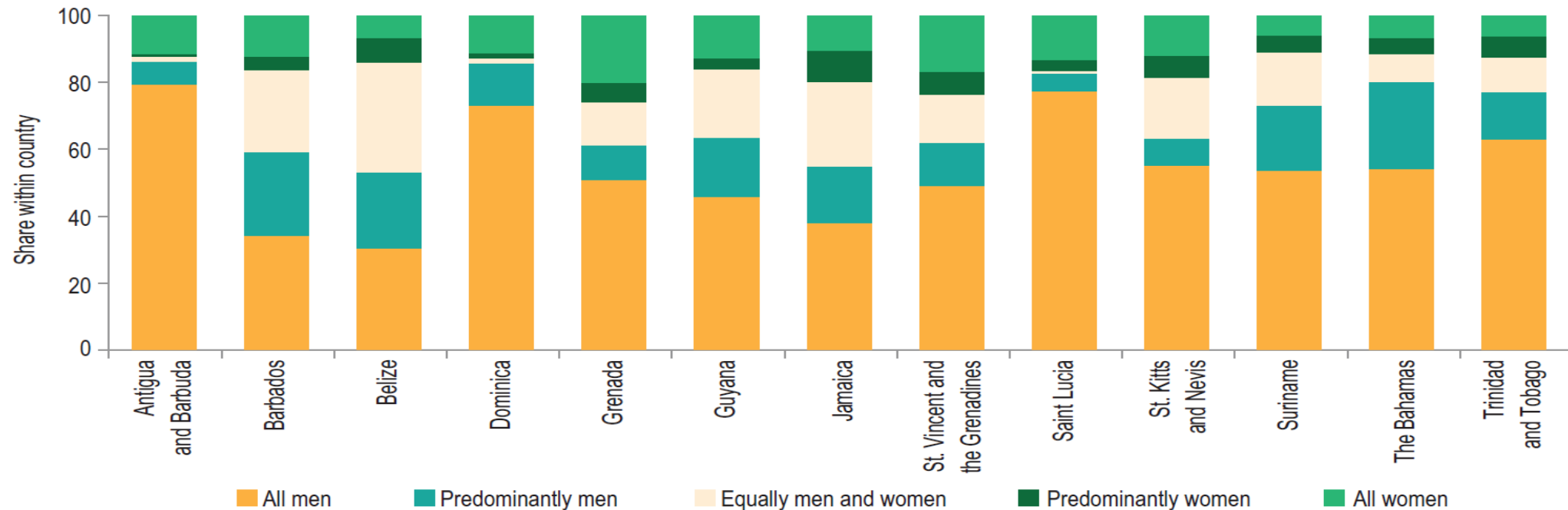
Percentage of managers in one-person establishments by sex, 2017



Some Key Facts about Women as Managers

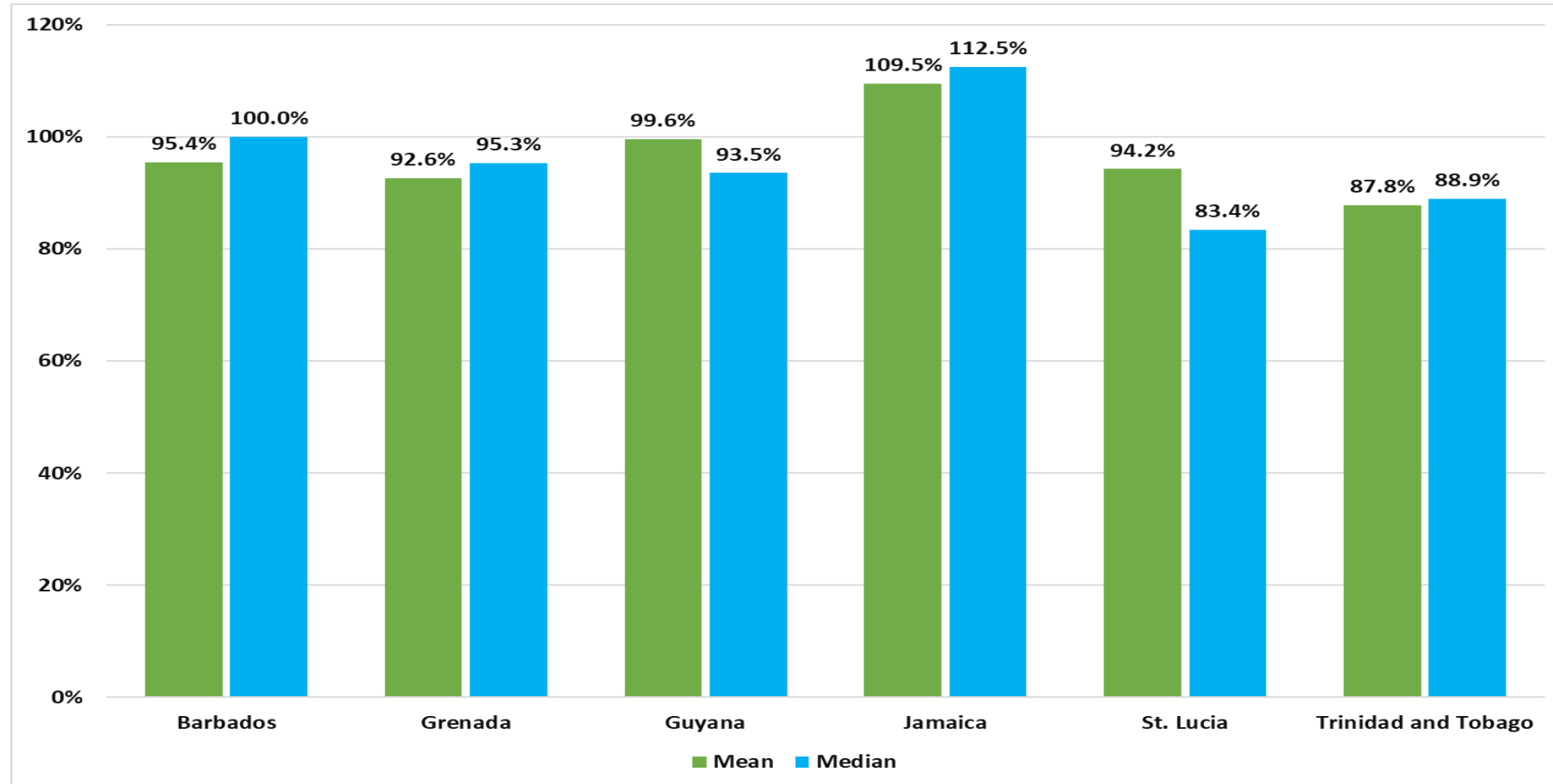
- Women account for a relatively high proportion of managers in some of the six countries.
- The percentage is important as many managers are presumably not managing people and should perhaps not be classified as managers at all.

Gender Composition of Firm Ownership

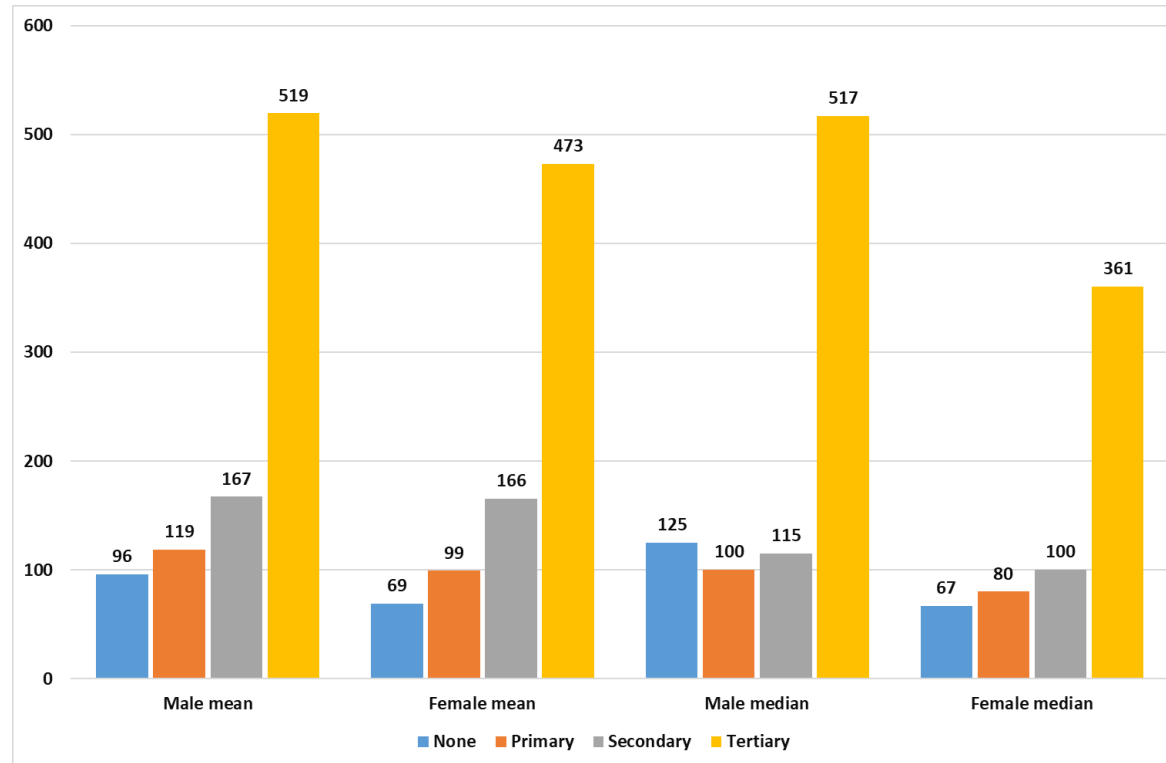


Source: PROTEqIN in Moore et al. (2017)

Mean and Median of Female Hourly Pay as Percentage of Male Pay, 2017



Hourly Pay by Level of Education and Sex, Jamaica, 2017



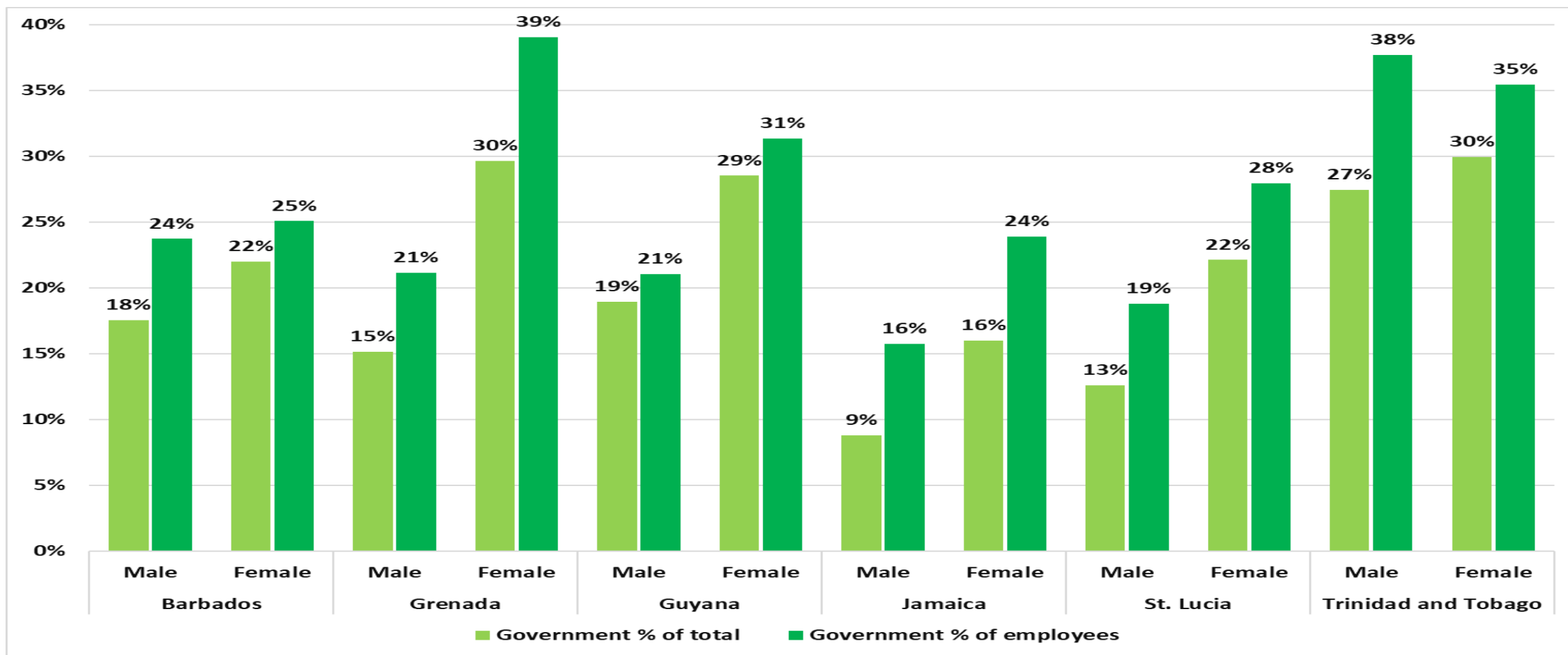
Despite the fact that overall women earn more than men in Jamaica, they earn less than men when the analysis is carried out for each level of education separately.

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Employment by Government

- Government employment is generally likely to provide decent work - in the sense of adequate earnings, conditions of work and social protection.
- The percentage of employees working for government is therefore an important indicator of decent work.
- This indicator also gives an indication of the likely impact on women and men of changes in the size of the civil service during periods of austerity or expansion.

Government Employment by Sex, 2017



Some Key Facts: Gender and Government Employment

- Women are more likely than men to be employed by government across all countries except Trinidad and Tobago.
- The standard pattern is the expected one given that women account for the majority of teachers and nurses in most countries, and also constitute the majority of clerical workers.
- In Trinidad and Tobago, 38% of all male employees work for government as against 35% of women. However, when non-employees are included, the female percentage in government is higher than the male one.

Summary and Overview

- **Women in CARICOM are more educated than men but are employed at lower rates:** Globally, similar patterns obtain.
- **Gender pay gaps, although not as wide as in previous years, have proven resistant to equal pay legislation**
- **Violence and harassment in the workplace:**
 - Data from National Prevalence Surveys on Gender-Based Violence in Jamaica (2016) have revealed that 24.1% of women have experienced sexual harassment during their lifetime. In the 12 months prior to the conduct of the survey, women experienced sexual harassment at a rate of 13.6%.
 - In Trinidad and Tobago, where the survey was also fielded, 13% of women reported experiencing sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey (2018).
 - In both countries, women who had experienced intimate partner violence reported high rates of ill health overall and problems with concentration while at work. Comparable data for the other countries are not available. Nevertheless, sexual harassment and violence hinder women's employment prospects and their productivity while at work.

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Recommendations

1. Undertake research, data collection and analysis for evidence-based and gender-responsive policy and programme development.

- one of the largest gender data gaps in CARICOM is on SDG 5.4.1 on Unpaid Care and Domestic Work.

2. Establish formal mechanisms for inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral dialogue (Gov't, Unions, Women's/Gender Equality Orgs, Private Sector) on gender equality and decent work.

- Re the private sector, there are the Women's Empowerment Principles, a joint initiative of the UN Global Compact and UN Women. Signatories to these commit to advancing gender equality through their recruitment, retention and promotion policies; work-life balance measures, such as maternity and parental leave; and promotion of equal pay for work of equal value. They enforce zero tolerance policies for violence and sexual harassment at work; and introduce measures to ensure workplace health and safety. <https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/weeps/about>

Recommendations (Cont'd)

3. Gender-responsive legal, policy and service delivery reform

- Parental leave
- Legislation on sexual harassment and other forms of workplace violence.
- Reviewing current legislation on wage equality to reflect equal pay for equal work of equal value
- Policies and programmes to deliver subsidized childcare services for children aged zero to three.
- Promoting and monitoring the implementation of policies of flexible work schedules for both women and men, while ensuring protection from discrimination.
- Addressing sex stereotyping and training in new skills (including technology and occupations in the “green and blue economies”) in order to address occupational segregation.
- Creating an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs, including interventions such as access to lifelong learning and training, increasing access to markets, financing and productive resources.
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Recommendations (Cont'd)

4. Mainstreaming gender in poverty reduction and social assistance programmes:

- *Ensure the development and implementation of poverty reduction programmes pay special attention to the different vulnerabilities of women and men throughout the lifecycle:* The possible introduction of conditions for cash transfers should take into account the total work burden, including time and resources spent on childcare. For example, if women beneficiaries with children are expected to participate in skills training in order to receive the benefit, the costs and time spent on domestic responsibilities, including childcare, should be recognized and accounted for.
- *Target active labour market programmes to increase women's employment:* A gender analysis of current active labour market programmes is recommended in order to assess if they are taking into account the specific needs of unemployed and underemployed women.
- *Address the specific needs of the most vulnerable women workers:* Encourage the adoption of Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. Programmes to support the most vulnerable of women workers, such as domestic workers, sex workers, rural women, temporary and night workers and those in the informal economy, should be reviewed to ensure they are correctly designed to address the needs of vulnerable workers.

Final Thoughts

What is most striking are the structural inequalities that persist.

Access to education alone will not address the gender inequalities in employment, wages, sexual harassment and other forms of violence in the workplace.

What is required is a shift in norms towards widespread acceptance that the structural barriers to women's empowerment must be eliminated, for both women and men to enjoy, *de facto*, the full range of their rights. In other words, when women remain disadvantaged, a society continues to undervalue the full potential of all of its people.

THANK YOU

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