



Social Policies in Grenada

Patsy Lewis



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Published by the Commonwealth Secretariat
Edited and designed by Wayzgoose
Cover design by Tattersall Hammarling & Silk
Printed by Hobbs the Printers Ltd, Totton, Hampshire

Prepared for the joint Commonwealth Secretariat and UNRISD Project on Social Policies in Small States. Support for this paper was also received from the UNICEF Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean.

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Copies of this publication may be obtained from
Publications Section
Commonwealth Secretariat,
Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 7747 6534
Fax: +44 (0)20 7839 9081
Email: publications@commonwealth.int
Web: www.thecommonwealth.org/publications

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN: 978-1-84929-025-8 (paperback)
ISBN: 978-1-84859-074-8 (downloadable e-book)

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Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the support of the following in conducting this study: Petipha Lewis-Smith, who helped with setting up appointments and providing transport to conduct interviews in Grenada; Angela Lewis, who was instrumental in helping me gain access to interviewees inside the public service; and Halim Brizan and Cassandra Julien of the Department of Statistics, Ministry of Finance, Government of Grenada, who were generous with their time in providing me with data. I also wish to thank those who granted me interviews. Thanks to the UNICEF Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, particularly Koen Rossel-Cambier, who provided guidance for the study and advice on data sources; the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, particularly Naren Prasad, for his role in conceptualising and co-ordinating the project; and the Government of Grenada, which supported the project and whose officials made themselves available for interviews. I am also grateful to the independent reviewers who made comments on various versions of the paper.

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Foreword

During the 1960s and 1970s, increased interest was shown by some international organisations, such as the United Nations and the Commonwealth Secretariat, in small states, notably small islands, and the development challenges they faced during the decolonisation period. The Commonwealth Secretariat, with over a third of its members classified as small economies, is committed to the study of small states. The issue of their vulnerability, for example, was first given formal expression within the Commonwealth at the 1977 Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting in Barbados. Having noted the special characteristics of small states – in particular their reliance on trade, high dependence on capital inflows and, in some cases, their lack of natural resources – ministers urged the international community to adopt a more flexible approach to their requirements, as well as special measures to assist them. In response, the Secretariat designed a programme to assist in overcoming ‘the disadvantages of small size, isolation and scarce resources which severely limit the capacity of such countries to achieve their development objectives or to pursue their national interests in a wider international context’.

In 1983, with the political repercussions of the US invasion of Grenada still resonant, Commonwealth leaders meeting in New Delhi expressed their belief that the problems of small states ‘deserved consideration on a wider basis, including that of national security’. A Commonwealth Consultative Group was therefore commissioned to carry out such an examination. Its report, *Vulnerability: Small States in the Global Society*, published in 1985, was the first to highlight the inherent vulnerability of small states to external interference. In reasserting the vulnerability of and threats to small states, and outlining economic and foreign policy measures to mitigate these, the report was important in raising the political profile of small states in international forums.

Following this publication, the Ministerial Group on Small States was formed to continue the discussion of issues of importance to small states. At their second meet

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