



CCB/EYE CARE CARIBBEAN

CARIBBEAN COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND

&

THE FOUNDATION FOR EYE CARE IN THE CARIBBEAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Regional Governments urged to place more emphasis on women who are blind and visually impaired

St John's Antigua and Barbuda - March 7, 2012: President of the **Caribbean Council for the Blind (CCB)**, Lola Marson, has called on Governments across the Caribbean to place more emphasis on highlighting the plight of women who are blind and visually impaired .

In an interview to mark **International Women's Day**, the **CCB** President, who is also the Executive Director of the Jamaica Society for the Blind, appealed to groups representing the disabled to increase their visibility.

"I don't think that groups representing persons who are disabled are doing enough advocacy work. In times gone by we used to be more visible, but now people are focused on getting bread on the table, therefore some things get swept under the table. We are not focusing enough on issues relating to women, in particular."

She pointed to another area of concern - that of rehabilitation (adjustment to blindness) for women who have lost their sight.

"There are a number of issues that women face, for instance, (usually) there are more males than females being rehabilitated, when research has found that the majority of persons who are blind tend to be women."

The **CCB** President noted that public education must continue to play a major role in highlighting the challenges facing women who are blind or visually impaired.

"If you have no sight and you have not adjusted to the situation; if you are not able to get out and know that there are training institutions and you do not seek help, you won't be able to liberate yourself. You have to try and access all that is there" she said.

The **Caribbean Council for the Blind** estimates that there are more than sixty thousand (60,000) persons living with blindness across the Anglophone Caribbean. A further one hundred and eighty thousand (180,000), though not blind, have lost enough sight to be classified as visually handicapped.

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As we celebrate **International Women's Day 2012**, **CCB** remains committed to fulfilling its purpose of preventing blindness and visual impairment while restoring sight and creating opportunities for those whose sight cannot be restored.

Contact: Lola Marson (C.Sw, B.Sc-Sw (Hons) DPA, M.Sc)
President of the Caribbean Council for the Blind
ph: 876-505-1525

Video/Audio attachment

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvBn_0yJS5s

PURPOSE

"Preventing blindness and visual impairment; while restoring sight and creating opportunities for persons whose sight cannot be restored".

Lower All Saints Road - P.O. Box 1517 - Antigua, and Barbuda, West Indies
Tel: 1-(268)-462-4111/462-6369/562-2216
Fax: (268)-462-6371