



## **Remarks**

**Mr. Paul Kanneh - ICT Director  
Ministry of Social Development and  
Family Services  
DIA Year 2 Graduation Ceremony**

Monday October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

10:00 am

Good Morning,

I am delighted to address you today, on this very special occasion, on behalf of the Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services. The Ministry continues to support the work of CARIRI in this initiative titled: “Democratizing the Innovation in the Americas(DIA)”.

I must applaud the DIA Organization for their continued commitment to the essential development of our youth. Furthermore, CARIRI must also be commended for their consistent efforts towards business development and youth entrepreneurship. Initiatives such as this, which seek to train and empower young innovators and entrepreneurs, are necessary and most welcomed, as in recent times, there has been a redirection towards strengthening the capacity of individuals towards sustainable livelihoods and self-sufficiency.

This graduation ceremony entitled: *Upskilling the Youths of Trinidad and Tobago for the age of Digital Transformation* is indeed timely, as the Government pushes ahead with its digital transformation agenda for the country in general, and the public sector. In this regard, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services has been identified as a priority Ministry for digitization in order to create greater efficiency in the delivery of social services.

Participants, as you work towards setting and achieving entrepreneurial goals, I encourage you to be mindful of the advantages that the digital landscape can offer. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises(MSMEs) were noted to have adopted

an agile response to the changes in the global economy, consequently re-inventing themselves for a more sustainable and secure future. As a result, many businesses are now relying heavily on digitalization of operations and services for business productivity and continuity.

Research has highlighted several benefits of digital transformation to entrepreneurs. In addition to reduced transaction costs, digitalization provides better and quicker access to information, and facilitates improved communication between staff, suppliers and networks. Moreover, digital transformation can aid small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with integrating into global markets and enables access to resources.

Similarly, as we at the Ministry advance in the process of digitalisation, within recent times, we have implemented several initiatives to improve the delivery of social services to the vulnerable. For example, The Integrated Social Enterprise Management System, known as ISEMS, is an Enterprise Resource Planning and Case Management solution will provide a single door approach for accessing social services. It is the single most important digitisation project which will allow for the consolidation of the major programmes/delivery units in the Ministry as well as data sharing capabilities across Government agencies. The Ministry's clients will benefit from 24-hour access to services, improved efficiency and ease of usage of social services.

In addition, the Social Services Client Management System (SSMIS) is a solution that addresses the operational and technological challenges that negatively impact the current social services delivery. This

solution will provide end-to-end processing and deliver functionality such as Grant Management, Case Management, Payment file creation, and Cheque Printing. It is intended to capture client information associated with all services provided by the Ministry.

These are just a few of the Ministry's strategies to enhance access and create a faster processing time in the delivery of social grants and services.

In this regard, I encourage all gathered here, not just the students, to continue to pursue avenues which will enhance your skill set in digitalization. Locally, there are several institutions which offer basic to advanced level courses in technology, which are easily accessible and affordable. The recent budget presentation has referred to the emergence of a Digital Society as an area of priority for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, therefore it is promising, that the opportunities for qualified persons in this area are many.

I again applaud CARIRI and DIA for this initiative, and on behalf of the Minister and Executive of the Ministry, pledge our full support to you in your endeavours. I congratulate the participants of this Cohort of the Programme and look forward to your continued development as you work towards building a better future for yourselves, your loved ones, you communities and our beloved country.

I Thank you.