



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

**Ministry of Social Development and Family Services**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Priority: HIGH**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Disability issues high on the agenda of the Ministry of Social Development for 2020**

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services has signalled that disability issues will be given high priority on its agenda for 2020. This was revealed by the Ministry's Permanent Secretary, Jacinta Bailey-Sobers, during a television interview on the Unique Not Different series hosted by Ms. Shamla Maharaj on TTT, where she shared on several of the initiatives being undertaken by the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services to serve the population of persons with disabilities.

According to PS Bailey-Sobers, following the revision and approval of the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities in 2019, several partner Ministries that are responsible for carrying out various aspects of the policy, namely: accessibility, education, health, the right to work and employment, women and children with disabilities, the right to equal justice, have been requested to request the necessary funding to enable implementation of the various short-term requirements outlined in the Policy.

Mrs. Bailey-Sobers outlined the Ministry's role with respect to the community of persons with disabilities as, among other things, programming, policy development, research and data collection and advocacy. Ms. Sharon Rogers, Director of the Disability Affairs Unit, shared on Division's work and interaction with the organisations of and for persons with disabilities. The public was also informed of a Cabinet-appointed Committee, which was formed to advance the actions contained in both the national policy and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Permanent Secretary also indicated that the Ministry is looking forward to the upcoming census and the conduct of the survey of living conditions, two important exercises, which would provide necessary information on the number of persons with disabilities in the population. She also anticipated that through the Child Registry Project of the Gender and Child Development Division of the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry would receive data on children born with disabilities.

Among the projects targeted for this year by the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services are:

- Full operationalization of the National Empowerment Centre Community Therapeutic Services
- Assessment of the Disability Sector in collaboration with the Caribbean Development Bank
- Respite Care for Persons who care for Persons with disabilities
- Improvements to the ELDMAO Service



*Permanent Secretary, Jacinta Bailey- Sobers (C) and Ms. Sharon Rogers, Director of the Disability Affairs Unit (L) join Ms. Shamla Maharaj on Unique Not Different where they share on initiatives undertaken by the Ministry to serve the population of persons with disabilities.*

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