



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

**Ministry of Social Development and Family Services**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

April 8, 2020

**Priority: HIGH**

### **Army joins with Ministry to construct temporary Shelter for Street Dwellers**

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services (MSDFS) as the core Government agency charged with the responsibility to serve and protect the vulnerable of our country, continues to seek ways in which all vulnerable populations receive the necessary support during this time. With the most recent measure of extended 'stay at home' for ALL non-essential workers in Trinidad and Tobago our homeless population, necessitating the provision of a facility to assist them during this period.

On Saturday April 4, 2020, the Ministry, together with the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force commenced the construction of a temporary facility on the ground level of the car park at Riverside Carpark, at the Centre for Displaced Persons (CSDP), to provide temporary shelter for street dwellers. Works are expected to be completed by Wednesday April 8, 2020 and following this, beneficiaries will undergo a process of admission to the facility.

In the first instance, this facility will provide beneficiaries with cots to sleep on, bathroom facilities, a dining/recreation facility and three meals daily. Cots will be laid on metal frames on the existing roadway for ease of maintenance and a female dormitory will be separate from the male dormitory, enclosed using sheets of ply board, and secured. The male dormitory, and dining/recreation area will remain open and running water will be provided for washing hands, bathing and personal hygiene. A security fence is also to be erected to prevent illegal/unauthorized entry to the stairs of CSDP.

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services is committed to the health and wellbeing of both staff and beneficiaries of this facility. It should be noted that the facility will also accommodate persons according to social distancing stipulations and guidelines and proper inspections will be undertaken by the Public Health Department to ensure that proper sanitation and living conditions are maintained.



*Permanent Secretary Jacinta Bailey-Sobers (center) and staff from the Ministry's Social Displacement Unit join the Trinidad and Tobago Defense Force for a walkthrough on April 7<sup>th</sup>.*



*Members of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force preparing the temporary shelter for street dwellers.*

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**For more information:**  
Communications Unit  
Ministry of Social Development and Family Services  
(868) 623-2608; Ext 5405/5445/5432  
Website: [www.social.gov.tt](http://www.social.gov.tt)  
[cceu@social.gov.tt](mailto:cceu@social.gov.tt)