



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Tuesday July 14, 2020

Priority: **HIGH**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Ministry of Social Development and Family Services forges ahead with implementation of the National Social Mitigation Plan**

*Tuesday July 14, 2020* --- On Tuesday July 7, 2020 the *Ministry of Social Development and Family Services* (MSDFS) entered into contract for the implementation of *Phase I* of the *National Social Mitigation Plan for Trinidad and Tobago*, with Ernst and Young (Trinidad and Tobago).

The National Social Mitigation Plan (NSMP), which was approved by Cabinet in October 2017, was crafted as a direct response to the potential psychosocial, economic and social effects that were experienced by vulnerable households in 2015, when global energy prices plummeted to unprecedented levels. Its primary objectives and focus include strengthening this country's social protection system, the promotion of community and civil society action against poverty, as well as, the growth of an enterprising and innovative society. The Plan, which has as its theme, *Building Resilience to Secure Our Nation*, is viewed as timely and relevant in the context of the current pandemic and the transition to the recovery period. The commencement of the consultant for the implementation of Phase I will serve to assist the Ministry to advance the major projects included in the Plan.

Prior to the consultancy, a number of key deliverables were achieved by the Ministry in support of a multi-dimensional approach to the implementation of Phase I. Amongst these have been the appointment of the *Inter-Sectoral Advisory* and the *Policy and Programmatic Oversight Committees* for the implementation of the Plan. Additionally, between August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020, twenty-nine community outreach exercises have been conducted by the MSDFS in collaboration with various other Ministries, State agencies, Non-governmental Organisations and Programmes. Such efforts are representative of a *whole of government approach* to social service delivery and a commitment to *leaving no one behind* in the course of this country's development agenda.

Following the signing, Permanent Secretary of the *Ministry of Social Development and Family Services*, Jacinta Bailey-Sobers, in response to a question about the relevance of the NSMP in a post Covid-19 environment, remarked that now more than ever, the MSDFS has a commitment to ensure that the social

well-being of the most vulnerable is given priority. She further advised that the focus of the NSMP will now include retooling persons and building a culture of resilience particularly among vulnerable populations. These focal areas were aligned to those identified in the Government's National Recovery Plan.

The Ministry looks forward to a productive partnership with Ernst and Young for the implementation of this important project.

**-End-**

**For more information:**

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Figure 1: Permanent Secretary of the MSDFS, Jacinta Bailey-Sobers and Consultant Cassandra Ramkerrysingh review and sign the documents.



*Figure 2: (L-R) Permanent Secretary Jacinta Bailey-Sobers of the MSDFS with Hema Narinesingh and Cassandra Ramkerrysingh of Ernst and Young (Trinidad and Tobago).*