



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services



## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday October 16, 2020

Priority: **HIGH**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Ministry launches Month Long Activities to commemorate International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2020**

**Port-of-Spain** --- On Saturday October 17, 2020, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services will join the world to observe the United Nations' *International Day for the Eradication of Poverty*. This day has been reserved to highlight, among other things, the impact of poverty on vulnerable and marginalised populations, with a view of inspiring greater collective action, in support of the rights and dignity of such households and communities. On Friday October 16<sup>th</sup> the Ministry took the opportunity to roll out some of its planned activities for Poverty Month which will be observed from October 16<sup>th</sup> to November 13, 2020. A brief launch ceremony took place at the Ministry's Head Office on St. Vincent Street in Port-of-Spain, under this year's theme, "*Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all*".

During her remarks at the launch, Minister Cox congratulated staff for hosting the event and emphasised on the strategic role of such activities, in elevating the levels of national consciousness and support for Government's poverty reduction initiatives. She reminded the audience, which was inclusive of staff and clients of the Ministry; that it was important for all citizens to understand that poverty is not merely the responsibility of Government, but of all persons and groups within society. According to the Minister: "*Given its multi-dimensional nature, poverty eradication requires not only a robust socio-economic response by the State, but also the passion and dedication of experienced professionals in all sectors of national development*". Minister Cox was also mindful of the impact of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic on this country's most vulnerable and as such, she urged staff to continue to work towards the implementation of the National Social Mitigation Plan in support of the National Recovery Plan.

Acting Permanent Secretary Sheila Seecharan, who also addressed the audience, described the activity as *one of the many creative ways* in which the Ministry seeks to ensure that all staff are cognizant of the *various parts of the whole*. She noted that it was important for every member of the Executive and staff to share in the same vision, so that the Ministry remains a *client-centered and high performance organisation*. She also highlighted the importance of evidence-based research, monitoring and evaluation in realizing the Ministry's objectives.

Following the official ceremony, the Minister joined the Executive team on a tour of the information display booths which depicted the multi-dimensional views of poverty as well as some of the activities scheduled for Poverty Month 2020. Among these will be a series of webinars and inter-active activities via social media, in collaboration with other stakeholders from the social services sector.

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**For more information:**

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*Figure 1: Minister Cox speaking at the launch of Poverty Week 2020 at the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services on Friday.*



Figure 2: Minister Cox and representatives of the MSDFS Executive officially commemorate the launch of Poverty Week 2020.



*Figure 3: Members of the Executive visit the HIV /AIDS Coordinating Unit's Display at the launch of Poverty Week 2020. The community of Persons Living with HIV are amongst the most at-risk and marginalised in the fight against social injustices and inequalities worldwide.*