



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Priority: **HIGH**

Minister Cox takes first-hand tour of affected Chase Village residences;

Endorses sense of community.

Port-of-Spain --- With a vow to help expedite the processing of relief efforts through her Ministry, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox assured residents of Ragoonanan Road West in Chase Village, that her Executive and staff will continue to work expeditiously towards *restoring a sense of normalcy* to all affected families, following the destruction caused by a mini tornado in the area last Wednesday. The Minister made these remarks during her visit to the family and neighbours of Beharry Crowe earlier today.

Minister Cox was accompanied by Deputy Permanent Secretary, Vijay Gangapersad, as well as, the Directors of the Ministry's National Social Development Programme and National Family Services Division, as she toured the homes of all those who were affected; empathizing with the families and offering support towards their recovery.

In speaking with members of the media, Minister Cox highlighted that it was important for the Ministry's Executive and staff to take a first-hand look at the disaster, so that *appropriate technical and fiscal support* could be redirected to the community. She confirmed however, that site visits are a mandatory part of grant eligibility. Noting that the day was also committed to the annual global observance of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, Minister Cox sought also, to emphasise on the importance of a multi-faceted approach to relief and sustainability for all affected persons. To this end, she highlighted the involvement of staff from the Ministry's National Family Services Division, who engaged relatives of the Crowe family, inclusive of several children and young adults, for preliminary discussions about the psycho-social aspects of recovery. She noted that in this regard, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services continued to employ a holistic response to eradicating poverty and supported government's vision for ensuring that *no person is left behind*.

As she toured the affected homes, Minister Cox explained that through the National Social Development Programme, affected families could receive up to \$20,000 TTD to assist in the purchase of building materials for roofing and minor structural repairs, electrical works and sanitary plumbing. She further stated that they could also be eligible for the Ministry's household assistance grant, which was specifically designed to help victims of man-made or natural disasters replace items such as stoves, refrigerators and furniture.

Minister Cox and her team were warmly thanked by the Crowe Family and members of the community, who expressed their elation at the Ministry's support to date. In turn, Minister Cox during the exchange of a complimentary care package and food support to the Crowes, praised affected residents for the bravery that they continue to show and encouraged them to work together, for the benefit of all.

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For more information:

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Figure 1: Minister Cox and Deputy Permanent Secretary, Vijay Gangapersad present Khadene Crowe and her son Braden, with a care package and food card support from the Ministry.



Figure 2: Minister Cox listens to Khadene Crowe's account of the panic and devastation that was caused by the passage of the mini-tornado last Wednesday.



Figure 3: Minister Cox and members of the Ministry's Executive debrief following their site visits to affected households in Chase Village earlier on Saturday.