



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 16 June 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Priority: **HIGH**

Minister Cox and Widows Association discuss collaboration for support to Widows

As the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose several challenges including sudden death of loved ones, including spouses; Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator The Honourable Donna Cox, today met with the Widows Association of Trinidad and Tobago. Representing the Association were Mrs Sabrina Joaquin-Phillips, Project Team Lead and Mrs. Nadiage Honore-Wellington, Marketing Team Lead. On the Ministry's side, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry, Jacinta Bailey-Sobers, Deputy Permanent Secretary Esther Soanes and Director of the Division of Ageing, Dr Hyacinth Blake were also present.

The meeting took place at the Ministry's Head Office on St Vincent Street, Port of Spain and began with the Minister expressing how comforting it was for her to know that such an organisation existed in Trinidad and Tobago. According to the Minister "The Ministry recognised that Widows are often a forgotten group, but this should be an area of special interest to the Ministry, as they are among the vulnerable populations in our society",

Sharing on the history and work of the Association to date, Sabrina Joaquin-Phillips indicated that the Association is a non-profit organization that promotes health and well-being for Widows and their children by providing support, counselling and guidance. It is registered under the Companies Act #1670492. The Association was incorporated on May 6th, 2015. While the Association is Christian-based, it provides support to all Widows that reach out or are referred. She also highlighted that in recent times, new members to the Association ranged from ages 30 – 50 years.

Other discussions of mutual interest included:

- Provision of counselling and psychosocial support, through the National Family Services Division of the Ministry;
- Provision of other types of support through the Ministry's NGO Unit;
- A virtual information session on the grants and services offered by the Ministry for Association members;
- The Ministry's participation in International Widow's Day commemoration on June 23, 2021 under the theme: "Invisible Women with Visible Problems";
- Further collaboration and networking for the exchange of ideas and experiences in order to reach and provide support to this vulnerable group.

In closing, Minister Cox indicated that she looks forward to deepening the discussions with the organization that would benefit this segment of vulnerable persons in Trinidad and Tobago.



Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox and members of the Widows Association of Trinidad and Tobago engaged in discussions of mutual interest to benefit their membership .



Looking forward to greater collaboration: Senator, The Hon Donna Cox and members of her Executive Team in photo with representatives of the Widows Association of Trinidad and Tobago.

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