



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 22 June 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Priority: HIGH

Minister Cox meets with Vision On Mission

In an effort to generate greater engagement and closer collaboration and partnership with NGOs and civil society organizations, Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, today, met with representatives of the Vision On Mission (VOM) organization.

Minister Cox, joined by Permanent Secretary Jacinta Bailey-Sobers and Deputy Permanent Secretaries Vijay Gangapersad and Esther Pilgrim-Soanes, met with Vision On Mission's CEO, Giselle Chance and Chairman, Gerard Wilson at the Ministry's Head Office on St Vincent Street Port of Spain, to discuss and identify key focal areas for greater collaboration and support by the Ministry. Some of these areas included collaboration as it pertains to the families of inmates, in the remand facility, ex-inmates and at-risk youth accessing social services. The representatives shared on two of the organisation's new projects, targeting batterers, families of inmates and women leaving the prisons.

Minister Cox indicated that the mandate of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, is to ensure that no group, individual or family is left behind. She added that the Ministry is willing to assist with counselling via the National Family Services Division and transitional housing for persons leaving the prison to prevent homelessness. The Minister also committed to strengthening the Ministry's relationship with the Prison Service's Social Welfare Department and the Ministry, since it is critical for clients to be aware of the relevant grants and services available to them. In this regard, it was agreed that the Ministry will arrange for the conduct of a Public Information Education and Sensitization (P.I.E.S) Session for both the Vision on Mission organisation and the Prisons Service Social Welfare Department.

According to the VOM group, they are committed to serve as a bridge between their clients and the services available through the Ministry. Additionally, CEO Giselle Chance indicated: "VOM would like to do internal assessments of the clients and also focus on the children and spouses of inmates. We are seeking a referral system where Vision on Mission can identify families in need and then recommend it to the Ministry's welfare and counselling Officers. While we focus on rehabilitative programmes, we believe that preventative programmes are what will truly break the cycle. It is very important to find an integrated approach to help treat with the psychological nature of our clients."

Chairman Gerard Wilson was very happy with the suggestions offered by Minister Cox and agreed that the Ministry is a key stakeholder with an integral role to play in the lives of VOM's clients.

The Ministry believes that in keeping with its mandate, there is an obligation to partner with NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure that vulnerable individuals, groups and families receive the assistance they require. Minister Cox commended Vision on Mission for their great initiatives and hopes that the outcome

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of today's meeting will result in a favourable alliance with them on the delivery of their rehabilitative and preventative initiatives.



(l-r) VOM Chairman, Gerard Wilson, Permanent Secretary Jacinta Bailey-Sobers, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox and VOM CEO, Giselle Chance



In Keen Discussion: Senator The Hon Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services and Executive team meet with Vision on Mission Chairman and CEO.

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