



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

May 12, 2022

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Priority: **HIGH**

### **Constituency Offices benefit from Virtual Information Session on Social Grants and Services**

*Port of Spain---* The Constituency Offices of Arouca/Maloney, D’Abadie/O’Meara and Arima benefited from an engaging and informative session hosted by the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services earlier today, May 25. Led by Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services, the Virtual Public Information, Education and Sensitization Series (PIES) delivered relevant and pertinent information about the Ministry’s various programmes, grants and services. The session included representatives of the core delivery units such as Social Welfare Division, National Family Services Division, Division of Ageing and the National Social Development Programme (NSDP), where the SEED Programme, as well as grants for housing repairs, sanitary plumbing and electrical wiring were highlighted.

Delivering opening remarks, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services stated that the Ministry continues to place emphasis on developing and executing programmes and services that protect and assist vulnerable and marginalized groups in society.

According to Minister Cox, “We at the Ministry remain committed to developing a more resilient and sustainable society through collaboration and deeper partnerships with non-governmental, faith-based and civil society organisations towards the achievement of human and social development. Hence, we continue to prioritize engagement with key stakeholders, ensuring that up to date information is shared, so that you all can assist us in reaching those we are unable to reach.”

Minister Cox also took the opportunity to shed light on a new service under the ambit of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, *Citizens Engagement and Outreach Service*, which would allow for a more direct interaction and engagement with Members of Parliament and the public, understanding their needs and responding positively to their concerns, in an efficient manner. She noted that the service will contribute significantly to the communication and

engagement arm of the Ministry, which will grant greater access, build more positive, enduring relationships and facilitate the transformation of the image and delivery system of the organization.

Also present at the session were the Honourable Penelope Beckles, Minister of Planning and Development and Member of Parliament for Arima and the Honourable Lisa Morris-Julien, Minister in the Ministry of Education and Member of Parliament for D'Abadie/ O' Meara.

During the engagement, several issues were raised concerning the eligibility for grants and special circumstances where exceptions may be given for the access to grants. These concerns were noted for follow up action to be undertaken. The Honourable Penelope Beckles commended the Ministry on its informative initiative. "I am grateful for this session, as it will help with service delivery to my constituency. There are many areas in my constituency, such as Blanchicheusse, faced with challenges accessing social services, due to transportation."

In response, Minister Cox reassured Minister Beckles that the Ministry will be embarking on some outreach services to rural communities soon, in an effort to directly assist citizens in need.

The Ministry remains committed to collaborating with all sectors to ensure that no one is left behind. For more information on how a PIES session could be conducted for your NGO, FBO or CBO, persons may contact the Corporate Communication and Education Unit via email, [cceu@social.gov.tt](mailto:cceu@social.gov.tt)

**-END-**

**For more information:**

Corporate Communications and Education Unit  
Ministry of Social Development and Family Services  
(868) 623-2608; Ext 5403/5404  
[cceu@social.gov.tt](mailto:cceu@social.gov.tt)



Minister Cox delivers remarks during the Virtual Public Information, Education and Sensitization Series (PIES)