



MEDIA RELEASE

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Human trafficking is both crime and a public health issue says Minister Cox at Heal Empower Rise Counter Trafficking In Persons (HER CTIP)

“We must all acknowledge that human trafficking is both a serious crime and a public health issue” said Minister of Social Development and Family Services Senator the Honourable Donna Cox at the launch of *Heal Empower Rise Counter Trafficking In Persons (HER CTIP)* Project hosted earlier today, September 7, 2022, at the Brix Hotel.

The HER CTIP Project is a multi-sector initiative of the United States Agency for International Development, Mission for Eastern and South Caribbean (USAID/ESC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and The United Nations Development Programme, and is designed to strengthen the enabling environment that provides protection and support services to survivors of trafficking.

During her remarks, Minister Cox stated that the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services has recognized the complexity and seriousness of human trafficking and thus has drafted a Manual on Victims Care for Social Service Providers. According to Minister Cox, “The Manual provides comprehensive information on the importance of adopting a victim-centred approach, the victims’ need for care and protection and the relevant agencies to contact, other basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter, the need for legal representation, the repatriation and reintegration of the victim, the role and importance of collaborating and cooperating with law enforcement, other Government Agencies and NGO service providers and referral to international bodies for victim”. Minister Cox further stated that the manual will be circulated to stakeholders who provide services to victims of human trafficking following cabinet-approval.

Minister Cox further stated that through the National Family Services Division, victims of human trafficking can access psychological assessment and counselling and once eligible, can also access the food support, rental assistance and clothing grants offered through the Social Welfare Division of the Ministry.

The Honourable Ayanna Webster-Roy, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs), Shante Moore, Charge d’Affaires, Embassy of the United States of America to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Clinton White Regional Representative United States Agency for International Development (USAID) / Eastern and Southern Caribbean (ESC), Jewel Ali, Head of Office, International Organization for Migration also delivered remarks and pledged their joint commitment to provide support to victims of human trafficking.

The ‘HER CTIP’ project is expected to be implemented over a two-year period and will seek to expand and promote trauma-informed, age-appropriate, and gender and culturally sensitive psychosocial services and support to TIP survivors, improve the availability of other support services to survivors who are in select residential care and/or shelters and provide technical support to the Government to develop a TIP Roadmap/ Strategy that supports survivors of trafficking.

The Ministry remains committed to developing partnerships in an effort to ensure that the most vulnerable are not left behind.



Minister Cox is joined by (l-r) Jewel Ali, Head of Office, International Organization for Migration, The Honourable Ayanna Webster-Roy, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs), Shante Moore, Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of the United States of America to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and Clinton White, Regional Representative United States Agency for International Development (USAID) / Eastern and Southern Caribbean (ESC)



Minister Cox symbolically signs in support of Heal Empower Rise Counter Trafficking In Persons.

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