



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**

Social Development and UNDP meet to finalize the roll-out of the National Register for Vulnerable Persons

Port-of-Spain --- Earlier today, January 30, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services, met with Mr. Gerardo Noto, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Trinidad and Tobago Interim Resident Representative. The meeting follows a previous discussion held with the UNDP on matters related to the National Register for Vulnerable Persons (NRVP) and the digitization of social services. The meeting took place at the Ministry's Head Office on St Vincent Street, Port of Spain. Joining the meeting was Sharifa Ali-Abdullah, Deputy Resident Representative at the UNDP Trinidad and Tobago Office. Also present at the meeting was Permanent Secretary at the Ministry, Sheila Seecharan, Deputy Permanent Secretaries Ryan Ramcharan and Wendy Guy-Hernandez, as well as other technical officers at the Ministry.

At present, the Ministry's focus is on collaborating with various Agencies and Ministries to form a more responsive and multifaceted social services delivery system. The National Registry for Vulnerable Persons forms part of the policy and research agenda for the MSDFS aimed at addressing critical policy gaps in the Ministry as well as ensuring that decision-making is data-driven. This cutting-edge computerised database will be used to collect, store, and process vital information related to vulnerable persons on a single platform.

The UNDP has provided tremendous support for the implementation of the NVRP. The meeting provided an opportunity for the UNDP and Ministry to identify the specific resources and deliverables needed to move forward.

During the meeting, Minister Cox expressed her gratitude to the UNDP for all the support that the organization has given the Ministry. Minister Cox stated that she was extremely pleased that the project included the E-Payment component. "Fraudulent cheques have been building up to a sizable amount. With E-payments serving as an alternative to cheques, the Ministry strongly believes that this will help address fraud." She further noted the importance of storing all vulnerable persons' identification numbers in the database, and indicated to the UNDP that it will

help the Ministry fast-track payments and also help identify vulnerable families, who are in need of social protection programmes and services.

Mr Gerardo provided pertinent information about the key elements of the proposed NVRP project plan, particularly the required digitization and technical components, and further stated that he looks forward to meeting with the Ministry's Information Technology Division and Project Implementation Unit to finalize the resources needed for the next step.

In closing, both parties assured their commitment towards the successful roll-out of this Register.

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services remains committed to enhancing the lives of vulnerable citizens.



Mr. Gerardo Noto, the UNDP Trinidad and Tobago Interim Resident Representative; Minister Cox and Permanent Secretary Sheila Secharan discuss the proposed key elements of the National Register of Vulnerable Persons

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