



MEDIA RELEASE

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Minister Cox promotes collaboration for swifter disaster recovery

Minister of Social Development and Family Services Senator the Honourable Donna Cox believes that societies impacted by disasters stand to recover more quickly when regional non-governmental organisations collaborate, forge alliances and pool their collective resources together.

“This Summit does not only present an opportunity to network, but it creates a wider avenue for partnership, volunteerism and a more strategic response to natural disasters... We are all aware, I am sure, that a natural disaster or crisis can take a devastating toll on the lives and livelihoods of thousands or even millions of our people,” she told the *‘Response Caribbean Inaugural Summit*.

According to Minister Cox, the Summit, hosted by Is There Not A Cause (ITNAC), presents an opportunity to network and create a wider avenue for partnership, volunteerism and a more strategic response to natural disasters.

She said in recent times, the Ministry has become more intentional in establishing partnerships with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) who are dedicated to ensuring that Trinidad and Tobago’s vulnerable populations are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

“The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services has provided support to Is There Not A Cause (ITNAC) in the past and intends to sustain our assistance, financial and otherwise, to this and other NGOs which play a pivotal role in the lives of those who are most in need among us.

“Whether openly acknowledged or not, you are recognised as valued partners in disaster response, disaster reduction, mitigation and recovery. You help the Governments of each country represented here to serve poor and vulnerable persons who are most severely affected by disasters,” Minister Cox told ITNAC.

The Summit took place on 1 June and 2 June 2023 at the Courtyard by Marriott.

Minister Cox commended ITNAC for their unrelenting efforts towards assisting the vulnerable in disaster relief, community development and poverty alleviation locally, regionally and internationally.

She said that the Ministry continues to examine and review how it can improve the delivery of services to those impacted by disasters and has commenced the development of a comprehensive and revised Disaster Relief Policy, which will formalise and standardise inter-ministerial disaster response collaboration and relief efforts.

In attendance were Avonelle Hector-Joseph, Founder of ITNAC; Dr Roi-Ann Quashie, Interim Co-Lead of Response Caribbean; Mrs Beverley Loobie-Alleyne - Chairman of ITNAC; Executive Members and Volunteers of ITNAC; Delegates from Haiti, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines; and religious leaders.



Minister Cox delivers remarks at the 'Response Caribbean Inaugural Summit'



(l-r) Avonelle Hector-Joseph, Founder of Is There Not a Cause (ITNAC); Minister Cox and Dr Natalie Dick listen attentively during the 'Response Caribbean Inaugural Summit'