



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

MEDIA RELEASE



Tuesday, 8 August 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Priority: HIGH

Social Development collaborates with the UWI and Caribbean Development Bank for situational analysis of persons with disabilities in T&T

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services in collaboration with the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISAS) supported the conduct of a study to assess the situation of persons with disabilities in Trinidad and Tobago. The Study was commissioned by the Caribbean Development Bank to assess the situation of persons with disabilities in four borrowing member countries of the CDB namely Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Lucia, Grenada, and Jamaica. It was undertaken by researchers at The University of the West Indies. The assessment was carried out using a mixed method approach: quantitative research (a household disability survey) and qualitative research (a desk review, an institutional assessment and focus group discussions). The household survey was conducted by a private contractor in 2023 and the qualitative research was conducted in 2021. The most recent CSO report noted there are 52,244 persons with disabilities representing 3.93% of the population of Trinidad and Tobago.

The institutional assessment was conducted by the researchers of the project. It consisted of elite interviews with representatives from various Ministries, Disability Associations, Private Sector Organization and Schools. The focus group discussions were conducted with adults and children with disabilities. The focus group discussions revealed that the pandemic has had a negative impact on persons with disabilities and has significantly increased their vulnerability.

Moreover, the study highlighted the need to address the gaps spanning financial support and access to services for persons with disabilities. Some of the particular gaps identified were the need for adequate physical infrastructure and health facilities; access to a range of psycho-social support, various levels of education; and additional options for educational advancement for children with disabilities. The report also outlined high levels of stress among caregivers for persons with disabilities; invisibility; “voicelessness” of persons with disabilities, as well as concerns with timeliness, format and frequency of communication between persons with disabilities and the providers of services.

During the period August 9, 2023, to August 11, 2023 consultative workshops will be held in Trinidad and in Tobago, in collaboration with UWI-SALISES, and the CDB to focus on the preliminary findings of this study. During these sessions, the researchers will propose some short, medium and long solutions for the improvement in the quality of lives of persons with disabilities. The public is invited to attend the sessions and provide feedback the following venues:

- Wednesday 9th August, 2023 at NALIS, Abercromby Street, Port of Spain 8:30 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.
- Thursday 10th August, 2023 at the San Fernando City Corporation, Harris Promenade San Fernando, 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
- Tobago {TBD}



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