

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT FOR FISCAL
PERIOD
OCTOBER 2004 TO SEPTEMBER 2005



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INTRODUCTION

The overall goal of the Ministry of Social Development is to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the social sector, geared towards improvement in the standard of living and the well-being of all citizens. This objective is in line with Government's developmental goal of *Vision 2020* which seeks to achieve first world status and self-sustainability through the complete transformation of the social and economic sector. In May 2005 the Ministry underwent a transformation of its own by merging with the Social Services Delivery arm of the Office of the Prime Minister. A new Minister was also assigned to the Ministry in May 2005. This integration required the Ministry to review its purpose and core business, assess its achievements and constraints and seek ways to improve the efficiency of the delivery of its services.

REALIGNMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

In May 2005 the Ministry of Social Development was reconfigured by re-merging with Social Services Delivery arm of the Office of the Prime Minister. The two (2) agencies had been together in the past and were separated for a period of two and a half years. During that time separate mandates, goals, objectives and organizational structures were established. For the merger to be a cohesive one, the operations of both agencies needed to be rationalized.

A Transformation Team - comprising the two (2) Permanent Secretaries, senior level technical and administrative staff and representatives from the Public Management Consulting Division of the Ministry of Public Administration and Information – was instituted in June 2005 to oversee the integration of Social Services Delivery with the Ministry of Social Development. It was decided that the Realignment process would take a phased approach as follows:

- Phase 1 (Short Term)

The Transformation Team would determine an interim structure for the continued functioning of the Ministry with focus being placed on critical divisions such as: Information Technology, Monitoring and Evaluation and Internal Audit. Initial steps would be taken to rationalize support divisions: General Administration, Project Management, Communications, Legal, Research, Human Resource and Information Technology.

- Phase 2 (Medium Term)

A consultant would be contracted to facilitate the strategic realignment of the Ministry and to ensure that the transition would be effected with a minimum of disruption in the operations. The consultant would also, in the context of national social development goals and objectives, assist the Transformation Team in developing a mission, vision and strategic plan for the merged Ministry for effective delivery of services and programmes.

- Phase 3 (Long Term)

Business Process Reengineering of the Ministry. The operations of each Division would be reviewed with the aim of improvement and modernization. The interim structure would be revisited and the final optimal structure would be determined. Implementation of the Ministry's Strategic Plan will begin.

★ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

- The Terms of Reference for the Consultancy were developed and agencies were invited to submit proposals for consideration.
- A Note for Cabinet was submitted seeking approval for the *en bloc* movement of staff from Office of the Prime Minister to the Ministry of Social Development. This measure was required to ensure that staff were paid their salaries as well as to facilitate the lhrIS system.
- An Internal Communications Strategy was devised to keep staff informed of developments during the reintegration process as well as to obtain their "buy-in" and support for the strategic realignment of the Ministry.

The Internal Communications Strategy also intended to promote a corporate brand, image and tag-line.

VISION, MISSION & GOAL

VISION

A results-oriented, client -driven organization, promoting and sustaining the well-being of all citizens through people-centred development.

MISSION

To formulate and coordinate the development, monitoring and evaluation of social sector policies and programmes and to monitor implementation to ensure effective targeting and coverage for the benefit of all citizens.

GOAL

The overarching goal of the Ministry is to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the social sector towards improvement in the standard of living of all citizens.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY

The major roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Social Development include:

- Delivering social services and providing social support for vulnerable groups, towards sustainable enhancement of their well-being;
- Serving as a central coordinating body for the social sector with respect to the conduct of research, policy and programme planning and development and monitoring and evaluation;
- Facilitating networking, information and data gathering and dissemination within the social sector and with external agencies;
- Making recommendations for the effective functioning of the social sector based on continuous assessment;
- Initiating and operationalising programmes for subsequent hand over to relevant social sector Ministries;
- Developing systems, strategies and programmes to realize positive attitudes and behaviour in the citizenry;

- Identifying gaps and making recommendations for the drafting and amendment of legislation relevant to the sector;
- Fostering peace, harmony and social justice through programmes such as community mediation;
- Fostering good governance through the promotion of participatory development approaches;
- Monitoring regional and international conventions and agreements pertaining to the social sector such as: the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Plans of Action emanating from the World Summit on Social Development and on Children and ensuring implementation within agreed time frames.

OVERVIEW

During the fiscal year 2004/2005, the Ministry of Social Development, through the execution of numerous social programmes undertaken by the various divisions, sought to develop areas that contribute to the growth and sustainability of the social sector and alleviate many of the social ills plaguing our society. The Ministry was allocated a total sum of **\$39,558,990.00** for fiscal 2005, \$35,358,990.00 toward recurrent expenditure and \$4,200,000.00 toward the developmental programme.

Some of the key initiatives undertaken in fiscal 2004-2005 were:

- i. The implementation of the Adolescent Mothers' Programme in collaboration with the Child Welfare League;
- ii. The design of a System for the Decentralisation of the Delivery of Social Services to Communities;
- iii. The development of a draft National Policy on Social Development;
- iv. The development of a Monitoring and Evaluation Policy for the Social Sector;
- v. The launch of the Spanish Language Programme as a first foreign language initiative;
- vi. Conduct of a National Sensitisation Campaign on Drugs, Addiction and Substance Abuse;
- vii. Institutional Strengthening of the Ministry of Social Development;
- viii. The preparation of the Social Sector Investment Programme (2006) document;
- ix. The development of a draft National Plan of Action (NPA) for Children.

The Achievements of the Ministry are outlined hereafter according to the respective Divisions.

ADOPTION UNIT

The Adoption Unit serves as the Secretariat to the Adoption Board of Trinidad and Tobago (ABOTT).

✦ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- To perform casework investigations for local and international agencies, on children and family issues;
- To make investigations concerning the adoption of children for the consideration of the Court;
- To act as *guardian ad litem* (provide custodial care) of any child in respect of whom an adoption order is sought;
- To prepare and present to the Court leading evidence in adoption applications;
- To receive applications from birth parents, guardians and adopters in respect of the adoption of persons.

✦ ACHIEVEMENTS

During the fiscal 2004 / 2005 the Adoption Board continued on its campaign to increase the public's awareness on adoption. Several initiatives were undertaken via media coverage. These included:

- Interviews on the *Gayelle Television, Dateline (Trinidad and Tobago Television)*, the *Trinidad Guardian and Daily Express Newspapers* regarding the services offered by the Board;
- Advertisements in the media titled, "Adoption is an Option";
- Collaborative effort with the Family Services Division on a radio talk show, *Radio I 95.5* in April-May, 2005;
- Radio and Television interviews in Tobago.

The Adoption Board was also responsible for hosting a dinner based on Health and Community Development in Tobago. Booths were stationed at both the NIHERST Science Fair at Barrackpore in April 2005 and at the Youth Information Rally in June 2005 to increase the public's awareness of the services and activities offered by the Adoption Board.

COMMUNITY MEDIATION DIVISION

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has embarked on the provision of free Community Mediation Services in selected communities throughout the country as an alternative to the litigation/court process and as a way to address some of the behavioural issues that give rise to conflict in our society.

✚ **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

- To provide solutions to current conflicts in a non-threatening atmosphere that encourages mutual respect, understanding and compromise;
- To work with communities and individuals to positively impact on the attitudes and behaviours that give rise to conflict;
- To work with communities, collectively or individually according to their needs, towards a more peaceful society, thereby becoming part of and partners with the communities;
- To implement outreach programmes which would assist in ensuring sustained positive behavioural change in communities and the restoration of good quality relationships among individuals in families and communities;

✚ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

In July 2004, Cabinet approved the New Community Mediation Programme consistent with the Mediation Act of 2004. This programme aims to address issues of threat and harassment, workplace conflicts, community disputes, juvenile delinquency, family separation issues (such as custody and visitation rights) and neighbourhood conflicts. The new programme will facilitate conflict resolution in a harmonious manner, through the empowerment of individuals, groups and communities to resolve disputes through mediation in a non-threatening environment.

In July of 2005, some of the staff was recruited for the head office including an Executive Director and an Assistant Executive Director. Facilities for four (4) Mediation Centres were acquired in Point Fortin, San Juan, Couva and Cunupia.

In keeping with the drive to promote a culture of peace and harmony by fostering behavioural change within society, a number of training sessions were conducted in **Leadership, Anger Management and Conflict Resolution** throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Training sessions were conducted in Laventille, Diego Martin, Point Fortin, Enterprise, Toco, Maloney, Morvant and Tobago with one thousand, two hundred persons benefiting from the exercise.

CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS & EDUCATION UNIT

The mission of the Corporate Communications and Education Unit is to:

“Add value to the Ministry's Corporate Image through the creative and judicious use of Communications and Public Relations Strategies, that increase awareness of the Ministry's programmes and achievements among its internal and external publics, and establish the Ministry as a proactive institution, responsive to the needs of all its clients”

It also seeks to promote and support a culture of effective communication between the heads of division and other employees within the Ministry.

↓ **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

- Strategic Communications Planning
- Public Awareness
- Media Relations Support services
- Reputation Management
- Protocol and Event Planning services
- Capacity Building in Communication and Media relations
- Advisory services

↓ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

During the integration process of the Ministry of Social Development and the Social Services Division of the Office of the Prime Minister, the Communications Division was instrumental in lending technical assistance in the development of an *Internal Communication Strategy* to facilitate the merger.

They also provided technical assistance to various Divisions of the Ministry in the areas of advertising, media campaigns and event planning for occasions such as;

- ✓ Launch of the Princes Town Multipurpose Community Based Telecentre
- ✓ Poverty Reduction Week
- ✓ Nadapp – Carnival 2k5

- ✓ Disability Awareness Week

The Corporate Communications Unit co-ordinated the Ministry's attendance at five (5) Community Outreach events;

- ✓ St. George East District Youth Council **Youth Informational Rally** on **Sunday June 5th 2005** at the Eastern Regional Indoor Sporting Complex.
- ✓ Arima-Fest Committee and the Arima Santa Rosa Lions Clubs **Health Fair** on **Friday August 12th 2005.**
- ✓ Point Fortin Corporation 25th Anniversary Celebration, Victor Chin Park, Point Fortin **May 4 2005**
- ✓ Biche Village Council Annual Sports and Family Day on **Wednesday 31, August 2005**
- ✓ Barrackpore Secondary School, NIHERST Science week **April 25th to 29th 2005**

In partnership with the National Family Services Division, the Communications Division assisted in the production of ten (10) radio features on family issues entitled "*It's Family Time Lets Talk*". This initiative which began in 2005 was developed to highlight the growing concerns in the breakdown of the family structure within our country. The topics featured on the radio scripts were;

- ✓ Family Values

- ✓ Good Communication and Listening skills
- ✓ Effective Discipline
- ✓ Effective discipline for 5-12 yr. olds
- ✓ Effective discipline for teenagers
- ✓ Child abuse
- ✓ Good parenting
- ✓ Domestic Violence

DISABILITY AFFAIRS UNIT

The Disability Affairs Unit was established in 1999 and has continued to provide services that directly address the needs of persons with disabilities. It serves as a resource and referral centre for information pertaining to disability matters.

↓ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- To provide technical support and referral for persons with disabilities, their families and all other persons interested in learning about disabilities;
- To evaluate requests for assistance from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and individuals;
- To network with relevant NGOs, mass media and international organisations to collect and disseminate information on disabilities;
- To implement programmes that empower persons with disabilities;

- To sensitise and increase public awareness of issues pertaining to persons with disabilities;
- To conduct research and collect data on persons with disabilities;
- To co-ordinate and monitor implementation of the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities.

↓ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

In an attempt to create and maintain a caring society, Government continued to place emphasis on the needs of the socially disadvantaged and marginalized during the fiscal year 2005. In keeping with one of the key functions of the Disability Affairs Unit, a Public Exposition titled '*A Voice of your Own*' was held at the Naparima Bowl on December 3rd 2004, to sensitize persons from the wider community about the programmes and services available from the public sector and non-governmental organisations, for persons with disabilities. Three hundred (300) persons were targeted.

The Disability Affairs Unit partnered with the University of the West Indies to establish an office for students with disabilities at the St. Augustine Campus.

The Disability Assistance Fund was established in December 2003 to assist persons with disabilities and/or organisations associated with persons with disabilities. The objective of this fund is to support and empower NGOs and CBOs that focus on the needs of persons with disabilities. Through the Fund, grants were provided in fiscal 2005 to

approximately ten (10) organizations totaling \$220,040.00 to assist those in need. This Fund also: sponsored participants in a wheelchair sport tournament in Canada titled "PARROT"; provided wheelchair accessible Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC) buses to disabled persons; and provided assistive technology to three (3) disabled persons locally. Sensitisation workshops were also conducted for the drivers of the wheelchair accessible PTSC buses.

DIVISION OF AGEING

The mission of the Division of Ageing is to educate and sensitize key stakeholders and the general public on ageing issues; and to enhance the quality of life of older persons throughout Trinidad and Tobago by providing an enabling environment for their continued development.

↓ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- To develop standards of care for older persons and facilitate compliance;
- To monitor and coordinate the implementation of the National Policy on Ageing;
- To organize and conduct training programmes, seminars and workshops for care providers of older persons;
- To develop and implement programmes and projects for the benefit of older persons;
- To conduct research on matters pertaining to ageing and older persons;

- To conduct public sensitization programmes nationwide on issues regarding ageing and older persons;
- To establish and operate an Older Persons Information Centre (OPIC) to provide information on products and services available to older persons;
- To network with social-sector Ministries, the private sector, and civil society in the interest of older persons.

✦ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

On August 12th 2005, the **Older Persons Information Centre (OPIC)** was established within the Division of Ageing. The Centre is open to the public on a daily basis and provides information and referrals regarding the services offered/available to older persons via written requests and telephone and to 'walk-in' visitors to the Division of Ageing. The aim of this Centre is to disseminate accurate information on the issue of ageing and the services available to the public.

In September 2004, the **Draft National Policy on Ageing** developed by the Ministry, was laid as a Green Paper in Parliament and subsequently presented for public comment at two consultations, one hosted in Trinidad on March 15, 2005 and the other in Tobago on April 22, 2005. The policy aims at creating a sustainable environment for older persons by providing adequate community-based services, affordable healthcare and greater accessibility to recreational facilities. It seeks to promote the preservation of

dignity and independence of older persons and encourages continuous research on ageing issues.

The **International Day of Older Persons** was commemorated in October 2004 with a cultural programme which served to display the various performances in the arts by persons over the age of sixty (60). This event was intended to sensitise the public to the indigenous art forms of Trinidad and Tobago; and to create positive attitudes towards older persons.

The first **Caribbean Ageing Symposium**, which was held in Trinidad in November 2004, was hosted by the University of the West Indies in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development through the Division of Ageing, PAHO, ECLAC and the Ministry of Health. The outcome was the establishment of a Caribbean Network on Ageing with an Interim Steering Committee, chaired by the Director, Division of Ageing (Trinidad and Tobago).

As part of a **Public Education Programme on Ageing** in Trinidad and Tobago approximately twenty (20) lecture sessions and interviews were held in 2004 and fifty (50) lecture sessions/interviews in 2005 with various governmental and non-governmental agencies, the media and schools.

EUROPEAN UNION-SPONSORED POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMME

The European Union-Sponsored Poverty Reduction Programme supports the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in formulating a National Poverty Reduction Strategy to address the needs of the most vulnerable groups in society.

✚ **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

- To improve the delivery of poverty reduction services by the decentralization of poverty interventions through the mechanism of the Regional Social and Human Development Councils (RSHDCs);
- To strengthen the institutional framework for poverty reduction through the establishment of the Network of Civil Society Organisations;
- To strengthen the information base on poverty and poverty reduction programmes through the conduct of Surveys and Poverty Profiles

✚ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

In an attempt to gather relevant data to assess the living conditions and the level of poverty of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, a **Survey of Living Conditions (SLC)** commenced in 2005 under the EU-Sponsored Poverty Reduction Programme. The purpose of this survey is to improve the availability of and to provide access to information on poverty. The results of the survey are to be used as a guide to social

policy programming and development. It is expected that the survey will be completed in fiscal 2006.

In October 2004, the **Micro Project Fund** which is managed under the EU-Sponsored Poverty Reduction Programme was implemented to provide funding to NGOs and CBOs to undertake and implement projects that will meet the needs of the vulnerable in communities throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

In fiscal 2005, six (6) **Regional Social and Human Development Councils (RSHDCs)** were established throughout Trinidad and Tobago. The establishment of the RSHDCs is intended to improve the delivery of poverty reduction services and address the developmental needs of vulnerable citizens and communities.

In fiscal 2005, a **Network of Information Resource Centres (IRCs)** was established under the EU Poverty Reduction Programme. Fifteen (15) IRCs were established over this period with the aim of interacting with each other and sharing information about their activities. This information was also provided to RSHDCs. This initiative is geared towards improving the coordinated approach to the implementation of social programmes.

HUMAN RESOURCE DIVISION

The Human Resource Division of the Ministry of Social Development was responsible for a number of training and development programmes held over the past fiscal year. The Division was also instrumental in the recruitment of staff as part of the Ministry's thrust in institutional strengthening.

✦ **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

The Human Resource Division has responsibility for human resource planning, training and development, employee relations and the Integrated Human Resource Information System (IhRIS). The Division is charged with the task of developing policies and procedures which ensure the recruitment and retention of staff with the relevant competencies to assist the Ministry to achieve its mandate. The Division is also responsible for developing systems which facilitate monitoring and evaluation of staff by Section Heads.

✦ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Division achieved the following:

- **Training of staff** at various levels in areas such as:
 - Leadership / Supervisory Skills
 - Strategic Management / Thinking
 - Computer Literacy and Basic / Intermediate Computer Training
 - Customer Service Delivery / Customer Relationship Management

- Certificate Course in Social Work
- Alternative Dispute Resolution / Mediation Skills
- Team Building Skills
- Communication Skills
- Presentation Skills
- Image and Personal Presentation / Office Etiquette
- Auditing and Financial Management
- Disaster Preparedness
- Stress Management
- Project Management Skills
- Report Writing
- Managing change and innovation
- In-house Training – Performance Management, Managing Discipline

- **Tuition Assistance** to its members -

A training policy was developed within which consideration is given to the grant of financial assistance to staff members who, of their own volition, pursue studies which are intended to enhance their self development as well as positively impact the work of the Ministry.

- **Spanish Initiatives** -

- Training in Conversational Spanish – Basic and Intermediate Levels

- Spanish / English signage
 - Purchase of games and CDs
- **Establishment of a IhRIS System** that included the-
 - Installation of Integrated Payroll application software for the Accounting Unit.
 - Development of training programmes for staff members.
 - Commencement of work on the computerization of HR systems – development of a database on staffing establishment and Personnel Data.

The Division in collaboration with the Information Technology and Accounts Divisions successfully implemented the Integrated Human Resource Information System (IhRIS) and the Integrated Global Payroll System (IGP) within the Ministry.

- **Conduct of motivational programmes** and events geared towards strengthening employee relationship -

A social agenda was developed with the assistance of the former Public Relations Officer II, which resulted in the communication of information to members of staff on varied topics which included: HIV/AIDS, Vision 2020, Cancer (Prostate/Cervix), Health and Safety (Fire Prevention).

- Ninety percent (90%) of the **Pension and Leave Records** of staff of the Ministry who are due to retire within the next five (5) – ten (10) years was completed and work continues on updating the records of all staff members.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

The Information Technology Division is the backbone of the Ministry's communications activity and continues to play an integral role in the day to day operations by providing support to the divisions.

↓ **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

The Information Technology Division is responsible for: the development of a professional information technology infrastructure; providing a client system and business application services; and IT planning and administration for the Ministry. The functions of the IT Division are as follows:-

- develop and implement specific IT policies;
- prepare needs assessments for divisions of the Ministry and procure the appropriate IT requirements;
- develop procedures for the acquisition of new hardware and software and peripheral equipment;
- organise and participate in the training of technical and support staff of the Ministry;
- establish Local Area Networks;
- provide User Support Facilities;
- establish and maintain Website for the Ministry;
- provide Software Training;

- provide Internet Research Facility;
- establish appropriate data bases in collaboration with the various Technical Divisions;
- develop and implement a Management Information System;
- procure Hardware Maintenance and ongoing Services;
- co-ordinate the development and implementation of a Strategic Information Technology Plan for the Ministry.

✦ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

Some of the key activities which were completed by the Division in fiscal 2005 were:

- Network Infrastructural Improvement Projects in areas such as –
 - Implementation of the IHRIS & IGP connectivity
 - Network link from Head Office to Division of Ageing
 - Telecom link from Head Office to Division of Ageing
 - Networking for Call Accounting Software
 - Older Persons Information Centre (OPIC) Helpdesk Networking

- Technology Training Initiatives which provided a framework to address the need to provide end-user training from the operational level to the strategic level of the organization. The following **training initiatives** were successfully completed:
 - Orientation to Technology Workshop

- SAS End-user Training Workshops
 - SAS Online Training
 - Outlook 2003 Training (1 Day)
 - MS Productivity Tools (2 Days)
- The following Client and Server Side Implementation and Upgrades were successfully completed:
 - MS ® Systems Management Server Implementation
 - E-Policy Orchestator Upgrade
 - G.O.R.T.T Help Desk Implementation
 - MS ® SQL Upgrade
 - Microsoft Internet Security and Acceleration (ISA) Server
 - Mc Café 7.0 Migration & Upgrade
 - Arch Serve Backup Systems
 - Exchange Server 2003 ®Migration
 - IhRIS & IGP Server Configuration.
 - CISCO ® Orphanage
 - Call Accounting Software
 - SAS® Enterprise Deployment
 - Data Base Design for Older Person's Helpdesk
 - The following Inter-Divisional and Ministry-wide projects were undertaken:
 - OPIC Database Management System (1st Phase)

- MSD Website Design & Implementation (Under Review & Integration)
 - Design Phase of the Social Sector Data Centre
- The following state-wide G2C and G2G Local implementation were completed in all of its phases:
 - E-Government Backbone Local Implementation to Acceptance & Final Stage.
 - IHRIS Local Implementation to Acceptance & Final Stage.
 - IGP Local Implementation to Acceptance & Final Stage.
 - Re-tooling based on user requirements:
 - Achieved a 95% re-tooling of current staff from all divisions with new systems.
 - New technology staffing requirements were completed and approved.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION DIVISION

The Monitoring and Evaluation Division (MED) was established in April 2003. The overall mandate of this Division is to co-ordinate monitoring and evaluation activity in the social sector, and to facilitate the provision of timely and reliable evidence-based information for decision making and enhancement of social interventions.

✦ **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

- To develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation policy for the social sector;
- To strengthen the monitoring and evaluation capacity of social sector Ministries and Agencies;
- To evaluate specific social programmes, projects and policies to determine relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability;
- To establish a comprehensive management information system for social programmes;
- To develop a monitoring and evaluation system for the social sector and for specific social programmes.

✦ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

The major responsibility of the Monitoring and Evaluation Division is to promote effective functioning of the social sector by continuous assessment of its operations. This division is also responsible for developing institutional systems and organisational structures to facilitate formalised monitoring and evaluation within divisions and programmes within the Ministry of Social Development as well as throughout the social sector.

The Monitoring & Evaluation Policy for the Social Sector was approved by Cabinet in June 2005 and will be implemented over a fifteen (15) month period. This policy outlines

the structures and standards required to ensure an effective monitoring and evaluation system of the social sector, inclusive: of capacity building, classification of social interventions and the roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Social Development and all other social sector ministries.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Division developed a **Draft Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Social Sector Interventions**. This manual seeks to ensure the effective functioning of the social sector on a continuous basis by providing self-assessed templates for the review of interventions undertaken. The introduction of a monitoring system will result in co-ordinated and updated information on the progress on activities within the social sector with emphasis on the achievement of developmental objectives.

A Management Information System for Social Programmes and Projects (MISSP) was also developed by the M & E division. This system provides for the monitoring, maintaining and managing of information on social sector programmes. This is a critical function in today's dynamic working environment where the ability to access and transfer information in an efficient and effective manner in the shortest time possible is imperative. Given that the Ministry of Social Development is the source of information for decision and policy makers, it is imperative that current data is available as necessary. Therefore, although the MISSP was developed in fiscal 2004 it is continuously updated to provide relevant and current information for all users.

The Development of a **Monitoring & Evaluation System for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)** Programme was undertaken by the M & E Unit to improve the management and accountability of the programme. This programme is a social initiative used to alleviate the situation of 'youth at risk' who are unemployed or unemployable. The implementation of the results-based monitoring and evaluation systems would enable programme managers and implementers to obtain continuous feedback on the performance of the programme during its various phases. This information would then inform modifications for the enhancement of the overall operations of the programme. A draft report was finalised in July 2005 and submitted to the Ministry of National Security for comments.

The Division also published its first semi-annual newsletter on monitoring and evaluation titled "*On the Move*" aimed at supporting and building a monitoring and evaluation culture in the social sector.

NATIONAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMME

The National Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programme (NADAPP) is the coordinating agency geared towards reducing the use and abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs in Trinidad and Tobago.

✚ **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

- To develop a research capability for continuous assessment of the extent and peculiarities of the problem of alcohol and other drug abuse;
- To develop a cohesive and well-coordinated partnership among Government agencies, non-governmental organisations, community groups, international agencies and foreign governments, in the offensive against alcohol and other forms of drug abuse;
- To effect improvement in the health and well-being of the population by instituting appropriate alcohol and other drug-related policies and legislation;
- To reduce demand by the nation's population for alcohol and other drugs through the development of a Public Education and Information Programme, a Community-based Prevention Activities Programme, a School Prevention Programme, a Treatment and Rehabilitation Programme, and an Employee Assistance Programme.

✚ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

During fiscal 2005, a **School Drug Prevention Programme** was implemented to sensitize the public and specifically school children, on the use and abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs and ways that consumption of these substances can be reduced. Four (4) non-governmental organisations facilitated several drug and alcohol sensitisation lectures at nine (9) schools throughout the country including primary, secondary, tertiary and private schools. Four (4) anti-drug workshops were also conducted with several school officials.

A **National Sensitisation Campaign on Drugs, Addiction and Substance Abuse** was also undertaken to sensitize the public on issues involved in the use and abuse of alcohol and illicit drugs. Information dissemination was pursued targeting special events and public holidays including Christmas, Carnival, Easter, Labour Day and the Pt. Fortin Borough celebrations. Various media such as the newspapers, radio and television were also utilised in support of the awareness campaign and NADAPP printed and distributed calendars and desk pads with anti drug information during the Christmas season.

NATIONAL FAMILY SERVICES DIVISION

The National Family Services Division provides a range of programmes and services that promote healthy family functioning.

✦ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- To manage cases of children, individuals and families at risk;
- To provide individual, group and family counselling;
- To research, analyse and disseminate information on issues affecting the family in Trinidad and Tobago;
- To develop and conduct public education programmes, including sensitization on Child Rights;
- To provide consultancy services;

- To network and collaborate with local, regional and international agencies to promote healthy functioning families;
- To design and implement training programmes on topics affecting family functioning;
- To provide practicum placements for university students.

✚ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

In 2005, the Division pursued activities to promote healthy functioning families in communities. These included the conduct of two (2) **Family Life/Parenting Workshops**, facilitated by The Petherton Trust, in La Horquetta and Point Fortin and two (2) additional sessions on Family Violence. Altogether, fourteen (14) sessions were completed which benefited approximately four hundred and twenty seven (427) individuals.

The Division also engaged in the **conduct of a radio programme, "It's Family Time: Let's Talk"** to increase the awareness to the role of the family and address issues that may pose a challenge to its members.

NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR CHILDREN SECRETARIAT

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago became signatory to the 1990 World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991. These actions obligated this country to the formulation and implementation of a National Plan of Action (NPA) for Children, and to undertaking of all the steps necessary for implementing the CRC in Trinidad and Tobago.

In order to facilitate these activities, a National Committee to monitor implementation of the NPA and CRC was established. The NPA Secretariat supports the activities of this Committee, and assists the Ministry in representing the interests of the nation's children at local, regional, and international levels.

✦ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- To sensitize key stakeholders on the NPA and CRC
- To monitor implementation of NPA and CRC specific projects/programmes in Trinidad and Tobago

✦ ACHIEVEMENTS

In keeping with this country's obligations as a signatory to the 1990 UN Declaration on the Protection, Survival and Development of Children, and to chart national activities and

outputs to improve the situation of children in Trinidad and Tobago by the year 2010, the NPA Committee, in collaboration with key stakeholders, drafted a **National Plan of Action for Children**. The Plan which was approved by Cabinet in principle, addresses areas that are pertinent to promoting healthy lives, providing quality education, protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence; and combating HIV/AIDS. Two (2) consultations, one in Trinidad and the other in Tobago, were held with a view to finalising the document for resubmission to Cabinet.

POLICY AND PROGRAMME PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION (PPPDD)

The Policy Programme Planning and Development Division has overall responsibility for the development and coordination of social sector policies, projects and programmes that are culturally relevant, economically viable and sustainable. The Division operates on the basis that policy development and programme planning and development are ultimately linked and must be undertaken in a holistic manner. It pursues its mandate using collaborative and participatory approaches to ensure a safe, healthy, productive and caring society for all.

↓ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- Developing social sector policies in keeping with the national macro-planning framework **and in particular, to achieve the socio-economic goals and objectives of Vision 2020.**
- Developing appropriate programmes and projects based on social research;
- Assessing current policies of the social sector to determine their performance and relevance;
- Facilitating establishment of formal and informal networks for collaboration among Ministries and with other external agencies such as the Central Statistical Office (CSO) the Social and Economic Policy Planning Unit of the Ministry of Planning and Development, the National Library Information Services (NALIS), the University of the West Indies (UWI), and the National Institute of Higher

Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST), as well as international development and multilateral agencies, the private sector, Non-governmental Organizations and Community Based Organizations;

- Establishing and maintaining structures for participatory development through continuous dialogue with civil society organizations;
- Reviewing planning and policy agendas of external agencies to identify areas of collaboration.

✦ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

Acknowledging the positive impact that strong family ties have on society, the Ministry of Social Development, recognised the need to conduct **Research on the Status of the Institution of the Family in Trinidad and Tobago** inclusive of the range of social issues impacting on families. Research was continued from work already started in 2004, whereby a number of recommendations were proposed. The findings of the research were expected to inform the development of a National Policy on the Family and the restructuring of the National Family Services Division.

In fiscal 2005 extensive work was carried out on the development of a **Comprehensive Proposal for Ex-Prisoners and Provision of Halfway House Facilities**. The first draft of the Proposal was completed in March 2005. A study on the Status of Ex-Prisoners was also undertaken and informed the development of the proposal for support to ex-prisoners. The results of this proposal are expected to be useful in making recommendations to treat with the re-introduction and rehabilitation of ex-prisoners into

society as well as identifying their basic needs for health care, housing and employment. In fiscal 2005 grants were provided to four (4) Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to improve/expand the facilities for ex-prisoners inclusive of physical infrastructure and capital works.

The Division also conducted activities related to the establishment of a **Remand Home for Young Female Offenders** and a **Remand Home for Young Male Offenders**. The facilities are intended to serve as places of safety and custody for young females and young males on remand. The services that will be offered would address developmental needs as they seek to equip the clients with basic life skills and the tools to assist them in becoming productive and independent members of society.

A design brief for the Home for Young Female Offenders was completed and a site for construction of the building at Aripo was approved by the Town and Country Division. In the case of the Home for Young Male Offenders, a structure exists and the appointment of a management team was pursued. Terms of reference and evaluation criteria for selecting an agency to manage the Home were completed and members of an Assessment Team selected.

Since May 2004, the Ministry of Social Development has served on the Cabinet-appointed Multi-Sectoral Committee established under the Ministry of National Security, to address the issue of deportees in Trinidad and Tobago. The work of this committee resulted in the preparation of the **Draft National Policy and Action Plan to address the**

Socio Economic Impact of Deported Persons to Trinidad and Tobago. The Division was also responsible for overseeing the implementation of other relevant strategies aimed at re-introducing deportees into society in an attempt to reduce social displacement, crime and recidivism among these persons.

In an attempt to provide a support network for teenage mothers, the Division continued to work with the Child Welfare League to implement the **Adolescent Mothers' Programme.** This programme is designed to assist teenage mothers in coping with the challenges of motherhood by providing them with counselling, remedial and continuing education, skills training, child care and nursery services. Currently, there are four (4) operational centres in Laventille, Woodbrook, La Horquetta and Arima.

PROBATION SERVICES DIVISION

The role and functions of the Probation Services Division are defined by the Probation of Offenders Ordinance Chapter 13:51. Other laws which govern the work of this Division are the Family Law Act No. 15 of 1981 and the Community Services Orders Act No. 19 of 1997.

Probation Officers serve as Social Workers to the Courts of Trinidad and Tobago. They supply social history reports in both criminal and family matters such as domestic violence, child maintenance and custody and supervise those persons placed on probation by the Courts.

✦ **ROLE AND FUNCTIONS**

- To prepare social history reports on persons facing criminal charges and who are remanded for report;
- To supervise and facilitate the rehabilitation process of such persons when they are placed on Probation;
- To prepare social history reports in Legal Custody and Access Applications;
- To supervise access orders in accordance with the Family Law Act No. 15 of 1981;
- To mediate in Maintenance and other Matrimonial Applications;
- To counsel and prepare reports in Domestic Violence matters;
- To counsel parties referred by the court in all family related matters;
- To prepare suitability reports and supervise persons placed on Community Service;
- To prepare Probation Reports in all matters referred by the Juvenile Court e.g. reports on children liable to be sent to Orphanages and Children's Homes;
- To supervise children at risk;
- To counsel and refer 'walk-in' clients not referred by the court.

✦ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

In fiscal 2005 Remedial therapy programmes were designed to rehabilitate young offenders by means of group counselling and lectures were carried out. Approximately 20

persons benefited from the group counselling sessions and 300 youths from the remedial therapy programmes and lectures on “Family Life Values” and “Gangs and Violence”.

Through the Community Service Orders, approximately 28 persons provided community service facilitated by community based organisations and non-governmental organisations.

RESEARCH / SOCIAL INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION (SID)

The Research / Social Investigations Division has the mandate to serve as the central coordinating research unit for the social sector. The Division is therefore the Centre for information exchange on all research-related activities of the social sector Ministries.

✦ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- To undertake research into major social issues and conduct investigative and specialized research for the purpose of identifying social problems;
- To monitor socio-economic trends and indicators; and keep abreast of current local and international research studies relevant to the Social Sector;
- To determine in collaboration with social sector Ministries a research policy and agenda for the Sector, and to monitor implementation of same;
- To liaise with regional and international funding agencies to identify areas for collaboration;
- To develop and maintain a central database on socio-economic indicators;

- To conduct annual reviews of socio-economic performance; and prepare reports examining social conditions, problems and needs at the regional, national and community levels.

↓ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

Research commenced on a **Survey of Socially Displaced Persons** in fiscal 2004/2005.

The survey report was completed and will be sent to Cabinet for approval.

In June 2005 Consultants were contracted to conduct a **Survey on the Causes and Effects of Alcoholism** on our society. Preliminary research was being carried out at the end of fiscal 2005.

A proposal for the conduct of a **Survey on Gambling in Trinidad and Tobago** was finalised. The purpose of this survey is to determine what portion of the population engages in gambling and the social and economic consequences that it has on society.

Proposals were also prepared for the following studies:-

- **Survey on the Status of Males in the Society**
- **Survey to Evaluate Levels of Functional Literacy among Young Persons**
- **National Survey on the degree of Conformity to Socially Accepted Norms and Values.**

Given the Ministry of Social Development's mandate to oversee research in the social sector, there was need to establish a **Social Sector Research Agenda** which would serve to coordinate projects amongst Ministries and ensure that there would be no duplication of research. In 2004, the Ministry commenced work on the development of a Social Sector Research Agenda and Policy. Several meetings were held with Heads of Research in the various social sector Ministries and several Ministries submitted information on their research activities. Upon submission by all Ministries, it was envisaged that the finalized Research Agenda would be submitted to Cabinet early in fiscal 2006.

This Division in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was responsible for the establishment of the **Micro Enterprise Loan Facility (MEL)**. This mechanism aims to reduce the level of poverty in communities through the promotion of sustainable livelihoods among the needy. This loan facility allows individuals to access micro-credit through designated communities based organisations (CBOs) within their communities. During the fiscal 2005 a number of workshops were conducted with CBOs in the Diego Martin area. Five (5) CBOs received the sum of \$ 140,000.00 each for disbursement. These groups operate in San Juan/Laventille, Four Roads-Tamana, Las Sciva-St. Joseph, Mayaro and Tobago.

The **Micro Enterprise Training and Development Grant (METDG)** is available to persons interested in starting a small business or furthering their skill capacity. The METDG is available to clientele of the various Divisions of the Ministry and persons referred by social workers. For the fiscal period 2005 thirty-eight (38) females and

twenty-two (22) males received grants for training and the purchase of equipment for the business.

Over the period 2004/2005, four (4) **Multi-Purpose Community-Based Telecentres (MCTs)** were established in Piparo, Princes Town, Couva and Tobago. The Telecentres are designed to provide access to information and computer-based training to members of the community for their personal growth and development. During 2005, approximately 800 individuals accessed the services and training provided at the centres at no cost to them.

SOCIAL DISPLACEMENT UNIT

The Social Displacement Unit is responsible for coordinating activities associated with the rehabilitation of socially displaced persons.

✚ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- To encourage socially displaced persons to leave the streets;
- To refer socially displaced persons to appropriate care facilities;
- To inform and advise on policies and programmes for socially displaced persons;
- To develop and coordinate rehabilitation programmes and services for socially displaced persons;
- To carry out public sensitization campaigns about persons who are socially displaced;

- To network with local, regional and international agencies;
- To monitor and evaluate services and programmes for the socially displaced.

✚ **ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Social Displacement Unit sought to treat with the negative **Impact of Deportees in Trinidad and Tobago** through the establishment and provision of reception services at Piarco International Airport. With support from the Trinidad and Tobago Police and the Immigration Department during fiscal 2005 approximately two hundred and twenty (220) deportees were received and assisted.

Focus was also placed on the services available for the **Rehabilitation and Treatment of Socially Displaced Substance Abusers**. Over the fiscal period, approximately 15 clients were assessed and referred to the Piparo Empowerment Centre for rehabilitation. Effort was also made towards the reduction of the number of females found on the streets.

In fiscal 2005, a **Literacy Programme** for residents at the Centres for Socially Displaced Persons and Drug Rehabilitation Centres was conducted to provide persons with literacy and numeric skills that would prepare them for their transition to becoming more independent members of society. Approximately forty (40) persons from Centres in Trinidad received training in social skills and literacy over a six (6) month period.

In the period under review, the Social Displacement Unit in collaboration with the Project Implementation Unit commenced refurbishment of the **Facility for the Elderly at Hernandez Place** in Arima. The facility is being established to increase the capacity for care and treatment services of the elderly. The facility was partially equipped and preliminary action was taken to recruit an organisation for the management of the facility.

Seventeen (17) facilities for the **Elderly** were visited and assessed for suitability of the delivery of services to elderly socially displaced persons. Four (4) of these facilities were willing to admit socially displaced persons and deliver their services and programmes at acceptable standards. Nine (9) elderly persons were referred to these facilities during the fiscal period 2005; the Ministry provided partial financial support for their care at these facilities.

The Unit continues to provide **social work services** four (4) days per week to all the residents at the Centre for Socially Displaced Persons. In addition, the **service of a Registered Nurse** is provided two (2) days per week for residents at the Centre.

Collaborative work commenced with the Ministries of Health and National Security in an attempt to address street dwelling in Port-of-Spain. With the assistance of the Police Service, the Unit increased its street outreach activities to include **Removal of Street Children**. The Ministry of Health agreed to refurbish their facility at Tumpuna Road, Arima to increase accommodation for socially displaced persons.

SOCIAL HELP AND REHABILITATIVE EFFORTS

The Social Help and Rehabilitative Efforts (S.H.A.R.E) Secretariat aims to provide poverty reduction and rehabilitative programmes in partnership with NGOs, CBOs and FBOs (Faith-Based Organisations) in Trinidad and Tobago.

✦ ROLE AND FUNCTIONS

- To provide temporary alleviation of hunger through:
 - I. A hamper distribution programme for needy families on a monthly basis during a six-month cycle
 - II. Emergency Food Hampers
- To rehabilitate clients through opportunities that help them acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and entrepreneurial resources to become self-sustainable.

✦ ACHIEVEMENTS

During the period 20,000 households benefited from the distribution of food hampers. The population of persons who are HIV positive was also included among SHARE's targeted beneficiaries.

There was also the implementation of a Skills Training Programme delivered by NGOs, to encourage S.H.A.R.E recipients to increase their skills and employability. Certificates were issued to 1,089 persons upon completion of this programme.

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SOCIAL WELFARE

The Social Welfare Division offers a range of financial assistance/grants to persons in need. In fiscal 2005, the following areas were key to the development of the Division.

✦ ACHIEVEMENTS

In order to increase the Ministry's capacity to provide key services to disadvantaged and vulnerable persons, the **Computerisation of the Social Welfare Division** was undertaken as a priority project. Thirty (30) Systems and Servers were purchased for the Central Office and Princes Town and Point Fortin Local Boards. In addition, fifteen (15) printers were acquired and a network design for Princes Town Local Board was installed.

The Ministry also facilitated an increase of \$150.00 to the disability grant with 13,190 individuals benefiting over the period.

Under the **Public Assistance Programme**, 21,846 individuals under the age of 65 years benefited over the fiscal period. There was also an increase from \$1,000.00 to \$1,150.00 under the **Old Age Pension Programme** to all old age pensioners over the age of 65 years during the fiscal year.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

The Ministry was able to successfully produce for another year the Social Sector Investment Programme (SSIP) document for presentation with other Budget documents. This document outlines the impact of social programmes and the level of Government investment in the social sector and for the first time, sections on the social situation of Trinidad and Tobago and other countries in the region were included in the document.

In terms of training, members of staff participated in various types of training sessions as follows:

- i. Purchasing Fraud – Institute of Internal Auditors, Trinidad & Tobago
- ii. Workshop “The Effective Employee” – Carillo Institute
- iii. International Employee Assistance Programme – Behavioural Management Solutions Ltd.
- iv. Impact of Trade Negotiations FTAA and CSME - Institute of Internal Auditors, Trinidad & Tobago
- v. Indoor Air Quality, Employee Well-Being & Productivity Seminar – Caribbean Industrial Research Institute
- vi. Effective Public Speaking & Presentation Skills – U.W.I. Institute of Business
- vii. A New Beginning – Public Services Association
- viii. Administrative Professionals Workshop - U.W.I. Institute of Business
- ix. Research Methodology Programme - U.W.I. Institute of Business
- x. Creative and Analytical Skills - Institute of Business

- xi. Team Building Programme – Franklyn Dolly and Associates
- xii. High Performance Business Writing – RBTT/ROYTEC
- xiii. Developing Global Competitiveness – Caribbean Industrial Research Institute
- xiv. Principles of Leadership – Leadership Consulting Group Ltd.
- xv. Seminar on Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity – Aaron Technology Group
- xvi. Leadership and Management Training Programme – The Cascadia Hotel and Conference Centre
- xvii. Microsoft Training Programme – BorderCom International Trinidad
- xviii. Forensic Accounting - Institute of Internal Auditors
- xix. American Fellows Programme – Washington D.C. USA
- xx. International Programme for Development, Evaluation and Training – Owatta Canada
- xxi. U.S. Census Bureau's Measuring Techniques and Methods Regarding Poverty Course - Washington D.C. USA
- xxii. Information Storage and Retrieval Systems – Hyberdad, India
- xxiii. Training Programme for the Creation of A Child and Family Information Network – U.W.I. Jamaica

MEMBERSHIP ON COMMITTEES

Officers of the Ministry served on at least fifteen (15) external committees as follows:

- i. The Child Indicators Monitoring System (CIMS) Coordinating Committee and the Social Indicators Committee under the aegis of the Ministry of Planning and Development (Central Statistical Office);
- ii. The Child Labour Steering Committee and the 144 Tripartite Committee under the aegis of the Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro-Enterprise Development;
- iii. United Nations Development Programme Small Grants Programme Steering Committee;
- iv. The Multi-Sectoral Committee for the Retirees Adolescent Partnership Programme under the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs;
- v. The Civilian Conservation Corps Steering Committee;
- vi. The Multi-Sectoral Committee to Address the Impact of Deported Persons to Trinidad and Tobago under the Ministry of National Security;
- vii. The Life Skills Steering Committee under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education;
- viii. The Transition Action Task Force to oversee the phased implementation of the MY-PART Programme of the Specialized Youth Services Programme under the Ministry of National Security;

- ix. Vision 2020 Core Committee and sub-committees on Poverty and Social Services, Labour and Social Security, Population and Culture under the Ministry of Planning and Development;
- x. The Intersectoral Community Care Working Group and the Committee to Develop a National School Health Policy under the Ministry of Health;
- xi. Committee to Develop an Economic Development Plan for Tobago, under the Tobago House of Assembly;
- xii. The National Coordinating Committee on Disability and the EU-Poverty Reduction Programme Steering Committee under the Office of the Prime Minister, Social Services Delivery;
- xiii. Steering Committee for Seamless Education and Training in Trinidad and Tobago under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education;
- xiv. The National AIDS Coordinating Committee under the Office of the Prime Minister;
- XV. The Inter-Ministerial Consultative Committee on the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and the Summit of the Americas Inter-Ministerial Committee under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

ATTENDANCE AT REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

Officers of the Ministry attended a number of Conferences and Seminars during fiscal 2004/2005 as follows:

- i. Regional Conference on Social Protection and Poverty Reduction – Barbados
- ii. Programme on Micro Planning for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development – India
- iii. 43rd Session of the Commission for Social Development – United Nations Headquarters, New York
- iv. Participation in South Africa/Unions/Caribbean Diaspora Conference – Kingston, Jamaica
- v. United Nations Economic and Social Council Special Annual High-Level Meeting - U.N. Headquarters, New York
- vi. Technical Consultations on Overcoming Hunger and Malnutrition for an Equitable Social Development in the Caribbean States – Panama
- vii. Regional Technical Consultation on Monitoring and Evaluation – Cartagena De Indias, Columbia
- viii. Regional Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey Workshop on Survey Design – Panama City, Panama
- ix. Ministerial Dialogue on the Draft Social Charter of the Americas – Caracas, Venezuela

- x. 12th Annual Conference of the Social Network of Latin America and the Caribbean – Cusco, Peru
- xi. 7th Meeting of the Expert Group on Demand Reduction – Ottawa, Canada
- xii. 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly – New York, USA

CONSTRAINTS OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Some of the constraints that were identified by Heads of Divisions and which were observed during the period under review included:

- i. Inability to replace staff over long periods when posts became vacant or during vacation periods;
- ii. Deadlines and targets were unmet or were delayed in some Divisions when contract officers left the Ministry and there was a period of adjustment for new staff with respect to the execution of projects;
- iii. Urgent and *ad hoc* assignments hampered the functions of some divisions as this situation necessitated that key staff members defer normal duties to carry out other assignments;
- iv. Merger of the Social Services Delivery arm of the Office of the Prime Minister with the former Ministry Of Social Development, resulted in temporary disruptions in some of the Ministry's operations as adjustment initiatives were being undertaken;

- v. Varying levels of knowledge and skill of staff led, in some instances, to an inequitable assignment of tasks;
- vi. The need to acquire vital information from external sources slowed down the progress of certain projects under the PSIP and the completion of the Social Sector Investment Programme;
- vii. Disruption in the I.T operations, though unavoidable, to permit upgrade of the System also led to delays in completing assignments.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE WAY FORWARD FOR FISCAL 2006

The merger of the Ministry of Social Development with the Social Services Delivery arm of the Office of the Prime Minister necessitated a transition process which caused some temporary disruption in operations the Ministry. In light of the reconfiguration of the Ministry and its expanded size, the following recommendations are put forward for improvement in the Ministry's performance for fiscal 2006:

- 1) There is a need for Heads of Divisions to ensure that there is continuous monitoring and evaluation of the performance of staff members in achieving their quarterly work plan and priority projects;
- 2) Regular meetings with staff members are necessary in an attempt to assess the status of projects, identify problems and find solutions with a view to achieving established targets effectively and efficiently;

- 3) A staff orientation module should be developed and implemented as soon as possible to assist new staff members in understanding Ministry systems and procedures;
- 4) The Training Plan should be finalised and implemented as soon as possible to build staff capacity in the identified areas;
- 5) There is a need to improve communication between the Human Resources Department and the Service Commissions Department as to increase the level of efficiency in recruiting staff to the Ministry on a timely basis.

APPENDIX I

DIVISIONAL LISTING

The Ministry comprises the following Divisions / Units:

- ADOPTION
- COMMUNITY MEDIATION
- CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATION UNIT
- DISABILITY AFFAIRS
- DIVISION OF AGEING
- EUROPEAN UNION-SPONSORED POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMME
- GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
- HUMAN RESOURCE
- INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
- LEGAL
- MONITORING AND EVALUATION
- NATIONAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAMME
(NADAPP)
- NATIONAL FAMILY SERVICES
- NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR CHILDREN

- POLICY AND PROGRAMME PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (PPPDD)
- PROBATION SERVICES
- PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION
- RESEARCH / SOCIAL INVESTIGATIONS (SID)
- SOCIAL DISPLACEMENT
- SOCIAL HELP AND REHABILITATIVE EFFORTS PROGRAMME (SHARE)
- SOCIAL WELFARE