



Child Protection is Everybody's Business

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APs	Associate Professionals
CATT	Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
CCRFCNA	Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act
CFSU	Child and Family Services Unit
CHINS	Children In Need of Supervision
CPU	Child Protection Unit of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service
CSA	Children's Services Associate
CSC	Child Support Centre
CTU	Counter Trafficking Unit
DMO	District Medical Officer
DP	Development Programme
ERT	Emergency Response Team
FAHSSE	Facilities, Administration and Health, Safety, Security and Environment
FCDA	Family and Children Division Act
HRIS	Human Resource Information System
HSSE	Health, Safety, Security and Environment
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IT	Information Technology
JIFF	Juvenile Inventory For Functioning
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
L&M	Licensing and Monitoring
MDA	Multidisciplinary Assessment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OJTs	On-the-Job Trainees
OPM (GCA)	Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs)
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PAP	Prospective Adoptive Parent
PEDIC	Psychoeducational, Diagnostic and Intervention Clinic
PMCD	Public Management Consulting Division
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SEPM	State Enterprise Performance Management Manual
SSSD	Student Support Services Division
THA	Tobago House of Assembly
TTPS	The Trinidad and Tobago Police Service
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
YLSCMI	Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory

LIST OF KEY TERMS

Adoption Order

An Adoption Order is made for the purpose of authorising the applicant to adopt a child. The Court will need to be satisfied that the welfare and best interest of the child will be promoted by the adoption and the applicant is a fit person to have the custody and sufficient ability to raise, maintain and educate the child. The application is made pursuant to Section 18 of the Adoption of Children Act, Chapter 46:03 and must be supported by a recommendation from the Authority.

Affidavit

An Affidavit is a written statement of truth and facts. It is signed by a person who is swearing to the statements contained in the document. The affidavit is usually used as evidence in Court.

Care Order

A Care Order is made for the purpose of placing a child under the care of the Authority or a community residence. This order is usually pursued where, upon investigation, the Authority is of the view that the child is in need of care and protection and it would be in the best interest of the child to be received into care by the Authority. The application is made pursuant to Section 25(c) of the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10.

Care Plan

A Care Plan is a written statement of the child's assessment needs. It highlights the social, mental, emotional, spiritual, physical, and medical needs of the child and the supports required in these domains for accomplishing these goals. It is a detailed outline of the specific requirements needed, and in essence, implements the recommendations of the treatment plan. In our setting, this will be done by external social workers assigned to the child or family, and will be guided by the treatment plan sent from the Assessment Centre. The Care Plan would then be monitored by the Children's Authority to determine whether it is being implemented, and to make recommendations for adherence.

Child in Need of Care and Protection

Part III of the Children's Authority Act Chap. 46:10 deals with children who are in need of care and protection. Section 22(1) provides that where the Authority is of the view that a child is in need of care and protection and that its intervention is necessary in the best interest of the child, it shall investigate the matter and it shall be lawful where appropriate for the Authority to receive the child into its care. A child is in need of care and protection where the child under Section 22(1A) of the Children's Authority Act Chap. 46:10 -

- a. has neither parent nor guardian who is fit to exercise care and guardianship
- b. is lost or has been and remains abandoned by his parent or guardian
- c. whose parent or guardian is prevented by:
 - i. reason of mental or bodily disease
 - ii. infirmity or other capacity; or
 - iii. any other circumstances from providing for his upbringing, and there is no available person or persons capable, fit or willing to undertake the care of such child;
- d. is exposed to moral danger
- e. is a child in need of supervision in accordance with Section 50A of the Children Act
- f. is ill-treated or neglected in a manner likely to cause him suffering or injury to health
- g. is destitute or is wandering without any settled place of abode and without visible means of subsistence
- h. is begging or receiving alms
- i. is found loitering for the purpose of begging or receiving alms
- j. is frequenting the company of any criminal; or frequents the company of any common or reputed prostitute not being the mother of the child.

LIST OF KEY TERMS CONT'D

Children in Conflict with the Law

The term "Children in Conflict with the Law" is frequently used as an umbrella to refer to a child who has been suspected, accused, detained for, or charged with a criminal offence in Trinidad and Tobago. The following legislation gives support to this proposed definition:

- Child charged means a child who has been charged with an offence and is awaiting the outcome of a hearing or trial. Section 1A Child Rehabilitation Centre Act, Chap. 13:05
- Child Offender means a child who has been convicted of a criminal offence. Section 1A Child Rehabilitation Centre Act, Chap. 13:05

Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS)

The term "Children in Need of Supervision" replaced the term "Beyond Control". The Family and Children Division Act (Schedule 5) has repealed Section 61 of the Children Act, Chap. 46:01 replacing it with Section 50A which provides as follows:

50A. (1) Where a parent, guardian or person with responsibility for a child alleges that he/she is unable to control the child, he/she may apply to the Court for an Order deeming the child to be a child in need of supervision and the Court shall –

- (a) refer the child to the Children's Probation Officer;
 - (b) notify the Authority; and
 - (c) request that the Solicitor General appoint a Children's Attorney for the child.
- (2) The Court shall require a report from the Children's Probation Officer.
- (3) Upon receipt of the report referred to in subsection (2) the Court may make the following orders:
- (a) order that the child be deemed a child in need of supervision and refer the child to the Authority who may recommend an appropriate intervention;
 - (b) order that the child be deemed a child in need of care and protection and make an appropriate order pursuant to section 25 of the Children's Authority Act;
 - (c) make an order for the care and placement of the child and refer the child to the Authority;
 - (d) order that the child be referred for counselling or any other rehabilitative intervention or treatment;
 - (e) order that the parent, guardian or person with responsibility for the child be referred for counselling;
 - (f) order that any family member, members of the child's household or persons connected to the child be referred for counselling; or
 - (g) make any other order including an interim order that the Court deems fit.
- (4) Nothing in subsection (3) shall preclude the Court from making an interim order prior to receiving the report referred to in subsection (2).
- (5) In this section "a child in need of supervision" means a child so deemed by the Court pursuant to subsection 3(a).

Children's Home

Children's Home: means a community residence for the care and nurturing of children as outlined in Section 2 Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act, Chap 46:04.

Community Residence means a Children's Home or a rehabilitation centre, as outlined in Section 2 Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act, Chap 46:04, as outlined in Section 2 Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act Chap 46:04:

Rehabilitation Centre means a community residence for the rehabilitation of:

- (a) Child offenders who –
 - (i) Have been convicted and committed to serve a custodial sentence; or
 - (ii) Are remanded in custody pending sentence; or
- (b) children who have been charged with an offence and are in custody pending a hearing"

LIST OF KEY TERMS CONT'D

Closed Adoption

In a Closed Adoption, the biological parents and adoptive parents do not share a relationship; neither party has any identifying information about the other and there is no contact. In this type of adoption, the child is matched with the prospective adopter based on the profile of the child requested. Closed Adoptions provide birth parents with a sense of closure.

Fit Person Order

Fit Person is defined under Section 3 of the Children's Authority Act, Chap 46:10 as a relative of the child or such other person, including a body corporate, authority, agency or society established for the reception of children to whom this Act applies and who is found by the Court to be a suitable person to care for the child but does not include a Children's Home.

Foster Care Order

A Foster Care Order is made for the purpose of placing a child in foster care, which is defined as the assumption of temporary care, maintenance and parental obligations by an approved foster parent. This Order can be pursued where the Authority deems that a child is in need of care and protection. The application is made pursuant to Section 25(i) of the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10.

Home Study

A home study is the comprehensive screening of the Prospective Adoptive Parent (PAP), their family and their home environment. It seeks to educate and prepare the prospective parent for adoption and evaluate their capability and suitability to adopt.

Multidisciplinary Assessment

A multidisciplinary assessment is an evaluation of the child and parent/guardian/family to ascertain psychosocial functioning, with the view to determining appropriate placement and treatment. It comprises:

- Social Work Intake
- Psychological Evaluation
- General Medical Examinations
- Psychiatric Evaluation, if required

The result is a Treatment Plan which outlines all assessment findings, placement and treatment recommendations

An Order Freeing a Child for Adoption

Under Section 15 (1) of the Adoption of Children Act, the Authority is mandated to apply to the Court for an Order declaring a child to be freed for adoption where the Authority accepts an application made by a person to place that child for adoption and (2) under Section 25 of the Children's Authority Act, where the Court is satisfied that a child brought before it by the Authority is a child in need of care and protection, the Court may make an Order freeing a child for adoption.

An Order freeing a child for adoption made under Section 25(j) of the Children's Authority Act, shall make the child available for adoption under the Adoption of Children Act, 2000. This is sought where the Authority accepts an application made by a person to place a child for adoption. Upon the grant of the Order, the Court will make a declaration that the child be "freed for Adoption", following which the Authority can then match the child with such prospective adoptive parents as are approved by the Authority taking into account the child's needs.

Open Adoption

In an Open Adoption, the biological parents and the adoptive parents share a relationship. The adoptive and biological parents can agree to have an arrangement that allows the biological parents to maintain a relationship with the child. An Open Adoption may often involve the adoption of a godchild, niece, nephew, grandchild, neighbour's child or the child of a spouse.

LIST OF KEY TERMS CONT'D

Rehabilitation Centre

Section 2 Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act Chap 46:04:

Rehabilitation Centre means a community residence for the rehabilitation of-

a) Child offenders who –

- (i) Have been convicted and committed to serve a custodial sentence; or
- (ii) Are remanded in custody pending sentence; or

(b) Children who have been charged with an offence and are in custody pending a hearing

Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment is the administration of a specialised tool used to determine the possibility of the child engaging in future pro-criminal behaviour (in the case of a child in conflict with the law) or engaging in risky/challenging behaviour (in the case of the CHINS). The tool and its user also identify strengths and needs, to generate a plan that will address the child holistically. These reports and their recommendations are submitted to the Children Court for the Judicial Officers consideration.

Supervised Access

Supervised Access refers to supervised visits between parents/guardians/families and their children. This can either be Court-ordered or recommended on an individual basis. The Child and Family Services Unit facilitates transport of children to these visits. In some cases, the Unit also provides supervision during the visits.

Supervision Order

A Supervision Order is made for the purpose of requiring either the child; the parents or guardians of the child; any person with care and control of the child; or any teacher or instructor of the child, to meet with the Authority or any probation officer, social worker or counsellor designated by the Authority, so that the manner in which the child is being cared for may be supervised by the Authority. This Order is pursued in the case where the Authority wishes to intervene and provide the necessary counselling to the child and sometimes to the adults who are present in the child's life or to monitor the child's upbringing in cases where the child has been reintegrated with his or her family. The application is made pursuant to Section 25(k) of the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10 as amended by Schedule 3 paragraph 6 (b) and (c) of the Children Act, 2012.

Treatment Plan

The formulation and implementation of treatment plans fall within the responsibility of the Children's Authority, as stated in Section 14 (4) (a) and (c) of the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10. A Treatment Plan refers to an individualised treatment guide that is formulated by a multidisciplinary team after the initial assessment and diagnostic summary of a client's case. In our setting, it refers to the deliverable of the multidisciplinary case conference at the Assessment Centre. This Plan outlines the overarching presenting problem, a breakdown of the problems related to this larger problem, the therapeutic goals and objectives for the child as they relate to the solution of the problems identified, therapeutic interventions to achieve the objectives and goals, as well as a time estimate to achieve those. These would then inform the necessary referrals, and provide recommendations to such agencies about the needed interventions that are to be further developed. The Treatment Plan therefore forms part of the larger care plan.

Wardship Order

A Wardship declaration mandates that any fundamental decision which would affect the child must be made with the consent of the Court, including any change to the current residence/placement of the minor. The application is made pursuant to Section 35 of the Family Law (Guardianship of Minors, Domicile and Maintenance) Act, Chapter 46:08 and Part 34 of the Family Proceedings Rules, 1998.

VISION

The Vision of the Children's Authority is an enduring aspiration, which guides every aspect of the organisation's operations. It is the destination point for where the Authority is headed and serves to aspire, inspire and motivate.

TO DEFEND AND SUPPORT CHILD RIGHTS AND MAKE CHILD PROTECTION EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

MISSION

The Roadmap of the Children's Authority starts with its Mission, which declares the purpose of the organisation and serves as the foundation on which actions and decisions are made. The Mission Statement reflects what the Authority does, why it is done, and who benefits from the organisation's work.

TO PROMOTE THE BEST INTEREST OF CHILDREN THROUGH ADVOCACY, PREVENTION, INTERVENTION AND COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES BASED ON MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

The Authority's mandate is outlined in the Children's Authority Act Chap. 46:10, Section 5 (1):

The Authority may have and exercise such powers and functions as are conferred on it by this Act and in particular may –

- (a) provide care, protection and rehabilitation of children in accordance with Part III of this Act;
- (b) investigate and make recommendations with respect to the adoption of children in accordance with the Adoption of Children Act, 2000;
- (c) investigate complaints made by any person with respect to any child who is in the care of a community residence, foster home or nursery, that the said residence, home or nursery failed to comply with the requisite standards prescribed under the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act, 2000 and any incident of mistreatment of children in such places;
- (d) investigate complaints or reports of mistreatment of children;
- (e) upon investigation, remove a child from his home where it is shown that the child is in imminent danger;
- (f) monitor community residences, foster homes and nurseries and conduct periodic reviews to determine their compliance with such requirements as may be prescribed.
- (g) issue, suspend and revoke licences of Children's Homes and Nurseries as provided under the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act 2000;"
- (g-a) issue, suspend and revoke licences of Children's Homes and Nurseries as provided under the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act 2000;
- (h) advise the Minister on matters relating to the operation of this Act; and
- (i) do all such things as may be necessary or expedient for the proper performance of its duties.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago continues to focus on its mandate to care, protect and rehabilitate children who are at risk, or have been victims of abuse or neglect. However, for yet another year, the Authority has recorded sexual abuse, neglect and physical abuse as the highest reported types of abuse meted out to children across the twin island Republic.

The reality remains that the Authority was designed to accommodate less than 1,000 cases per year, however the organisation is perennially receiving an average of 4,000 to 5,000 cases per year. In fact, the caseload continues to be more than the resources received or the organisation's staff capacity. This Fiscal 4,914 reports of abuse were received, with more than 55 percent of them in the age group of 10 to 17-year-olds.

Over the period, the highest reports in Trinidad were from San Juan-Laventille; Tunapuna-Piarco; and Couva-Tabaquite-Talparo. While in Tobago, the highest reports were received from St. Andrew (Carnbee, Bethel, Orange Hill, Scarborough and Bacolet); St. George (Mt. St. George, Mason Hall and Providence); St. David (Plymouth, Moriah and Arnos Vale); and St. Patrick (Black Rock, Grange, Buccoo, Lambeau and Canaan). The data continues to speak to a society that has very little regard for the protection of its most vulnerable – children.

While Government funding has been steadily increasing, the Authority's expenditure is beyond the actual funding received. This was exacerbated over the period by increasing Court Orders for the Authority to provide placement for children; insufficient cash flow to meet critical obligations such as Foster Care payments, gratuities and essential services and supplies for child care; increased number of children placed in the Authority's direct care, and the organisation operating as an essential service during the COVID-19 pandemic with no additional financial support.

Despite these challenges, the Authority was able to expand its services into Chaguanas as it opened a Regional Office and Assessment Centre, as well as provided a wider range of services in Tobago to meet the needs of children and their families. Since the business of child protection is not a job for the Authority alone, Fiscal 2020 also saw increased collaboration with a variety of agencies which included Government, Embassies, Non-Governmental Organisations, the financial sector and the media.

A significant development during Fiscal 2020 was the approval of a new Strategic Plan for the period 2020-2023. It will see the roll-out of a new Case Management Model, the upgrade of the Call Centre Case Management Information Systems – partially funded by UNICEF, and the Implementation of a geographically-based organisation structure to enhance timely service delivery to children and their families. The Plan also places emphasis on reducing the incidence of child abuse, effective stakeholder collaboration, delivering good governance and service excellence and increasing financial sustainability.

This 2019-2020 Annual Report also identifies how each Unit was able to attain its targeted Key Performance Indicators. While each Unit had a great measure of success in achieving their goals, these were as a result of a spirit of innovativeness and commitment on the part of each member of staff towards the children who come to the attention of the Authority.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Nichola Harvey-Mitchell



Our collaborative efforts continue to epitomise the vision to which the Authority aspires - "To defend and support child rights and make child protection everybody's business".

As the new Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Authority, Fiscal 2019-2020 was an eventful, challenging but purposeful year. The year felt like a "Perfect Storm" with managing through the myriad of operational and economic challenges, achievements and successes and not forgetting the global pandemic, that hit us all at once.

I joined the organisation five months into the Fiscal Year. As a matter of fact, quite timely was my arrival, as the Board, Executive Management and Staff had just begun to develop the Strategic Plan for the period 2020-2023.

While the learning curve was steep, there was no honeymoon period as COVID-19 made its way to the shores of our twin-island Republic. As an essential service provider, the Authority had to quickly assess its risks, develop mitigating strategies and ensure that staff were well equipped to continue to offer critical services to abused, neglected and at-risk children, while observing all the COVID-19 guidelines.

Fears were expressed by many in the child protection sector

that the closure of schools and Day-Care Centres would lead to more children being sexually and physically abused. This fear came about as the data continues to show that the main perpetrators of reported abuse over the years are persons known to the child. As a preventative measure, the Authority increased its public education through social media about the signs of child abuse, the rights of the child and the role of families in the care and protection of their children. Virtual sensitisation sessions were conducted to children and adults; and media engagement and collaboration with partners in the child protection sector were also intensified.

During the initial months of COVID-19, the number of cases of abuse kept steady. However, after careful analysis for the comparative period March to Sept 2017-2020, increases were evident. It must be noted, that the increases recorded were not as suspected, but in the areas of emotional abuse and lacking care and guardianship. CATT also saw a marked increase in the number of children being brought before the Courts by their parents, as being in need of supervision, due to their unmanageable and risky behaviours.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR CONT'D

This action by parents and the Court's response resulted in an increase in CHINS and Recovery Orders, which exacerbated the existing placement crisis faced by the Authority; since there were often no other suitable relatives who would and could provide care for the child. The growing family problem now requires that CATT adopt a more Socio-Ecological approach to prevention of child abuse, by seeking to understand the child and the resources available to assist with their development in the context of the family, the institutions which serve the family, the community and society. In addition, it requires that parents be given the tools to effectively discharge their roles and responsibilities of parenthood.

While no one could have anticipated the unprecedented circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, it brought to the fore the fact that everyone needs to be more aware about the signs of child abuse. Indeed, the Authority's new vision statement and tag line, "Child Protection Is Everybody's Business" has become more critical at this juncture, since a fully knitted blanket of support is required below and over the nation's children, in order to completely care for, protect them and preserve their rights.

Child protection is not for the faint of heart. The number of abused children with varying traumatic experiences, the associated mal-behaviours witnessed on a day to day basis, the multiple and time consuming interventions, the process of removal, placement and reunification and the consistent stress levels caused by high volumes of work load coupled with personal sacrifices made, call for employees who are extremely loyal, committed, resilient, flexible and at all times ensuring the best interest of the children who come into their care.

In addition, it also calls for an organisation whose culture embodies positive cultural change and practices individual and collective self-care. To this end, the Authority's new Core Values in the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, speak to a culture that is respectful, collaborative and transparent. The Core Values also promote actions which are founded on evidence and data; creativity and innovation; and are child and family focused.

With the above in mind, I am pleased to report that the Authority is on its way to creating this culture change. In addition, the organisation's ability to weather the perfect storm during the COVID-19 period of March to September 2020, certainly showed the capacity of the organisation's staff.

An area of particular concern for the organisation over the past five years, has been the considerable number of backlogs or unattended cases which occur at each stage of the case management process. This amounts to approximately 16,000 cases. However, I am pleased to report that a Backlog Reduction Project began in August, which seeks to reduce the backlog of cases and ensure that children receive the necessary services and intervention required.

The Registry Unit has been a key team in the conduct of the first phase of the project and has been reviewing, listing all backlog cases and making interim recommended actions for intervention in the second phase. To date, the team has listed and reviewed over 50 percent of the backlog cases. The first phase of the project is projected to be completed by the end of the first quarter of 2020-2021.

The start of this project is a huge accomplishment for the Authority since it will improve service delivery, prepare the organisation for the implementation of the new Case Management Model and the Child Protection Information Management System (PRIMERO), which is partially funded by UNICEF.

The period under review, also saw the end of the three-year term of the Board of Management in July 2020. I wish to take this opportunity to thank the 10-member Board, which was chaired by Mr. Hanif E. A. Benjamin and co-chaired by Dr. Gillian Wheeler who provided tremendous support to the organisation during their tenure and specifically during COVID-19. They established a Special COVID-19 Committee, chaired by Dr. Gillian Wheeler who ensured that the Authority was fully prepared to operate during a pandemic. The Board of Management also reviewed and approved the Strategic Plan, which will take the Authority through the next phase of its life cycle - dubbed "**Growth Phase**".

According to Social Enterprise gurus, CATT would have gone through its visionary phase, set up phase and now is in its growth phase. This journey is one that the Authority should be proud of, as it is now able to provide services through- managing the 24-hour Call Centre; responding to emergency reports; assessing children medically and from a psycho-social perspective; finding placement options for children who need to be removed from dangerous situations; facilitating direct and indirect interventions, managing the Adoption and Foster Care systems; licensing and monitoring Community Residences and supporting the Youth Justice System.

However, the journey still continues and as I reflect on four critical questions which I asked myself upon arrival at the Authority

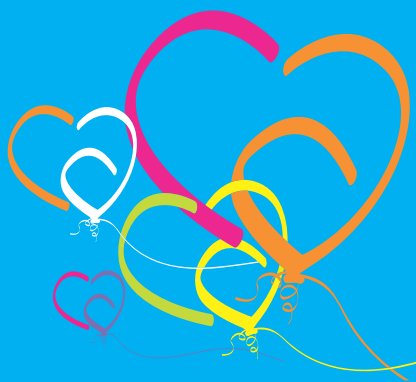
1. *Is the mandate of the Authority too expansive?*
2. *Can we really fulfill this mandate of caring, protecting and rehabilitating the 4000+ cases received annually?*
3. *How do we know we are fulfilling this mandate?*
4. *How do we measure our success?*

I wish to ask you to carefully read and assess the remaining parts of this report, with those questions in mind and remember the staff, whom I salute and thank for their yeoman service. I also wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the former Director, Ms. Gail Sooknarine, who passed the leadership baton to me.

As I end, I wish to thank the Minister of Gender and Child Affairs, Ayanna Webster-Roy, Permanent Secretary, Ms. Jacqueline Johnson, the former Board, other partners in the child protection sector, as well as those in the private sector, who provided the necessary support and made innumerable contributions over the Fiscal Year to the work of the Authority.

Our collaborative efforts continue to epitomise the vision to which the Authority aspires - "**To defend and support child rights and make child protection everybody's business**".


Nichola Harvey-Mitchell





CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

INTRODUCTION





Fiscal 2020 was a year of growth and challenges. It was the year that COVID-19 changed the way the world will forever do business.

The period under review also marked several highlights for the Authority - the appointment of a new Director/CEO; the development of the organisation's new Strategic Plan with a roadmap designed to take it to 2023; the fifth Anniversary of the organisation in child protection; the development of a new Vision and Mission; and the end of the term of office of the Board of Management, which is why this Annual Report does not have a Message from the Chairman.

As you peruse the 2020 Report you will see the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) established for each Unit and whether that target was achieved. The achievements of each Unit are a testament of the hard work of each employee of the organisation, who places devising positive outcomes for clients as their number one goal.

There continues to be a worrying increase in the number of children who require placement. This was especially exacerbated during the COVID-19 period of March to September 2020 as parents and guardians sought Court Orders to remove their children from their care, asking that those children be placed in the care of the Authority because of risky and unmanageable behaviour. In many instances these children present with psychiatric disorders, which require a range of treatment options and interventions by the Authority and other stakeholders in the child protection sector, over a period of time. Solutions to these and other challenges require an all-of-society approach, which is why the Authority's new tag line is "Child Protection is Everybody's Business" and it will continue to pursue collaborations that will redound to the benefit of children and their families.

With the closure of schools, Day-Care Centres and Nurseries as part of Government's COVID-19 health protocols, there was an increased fear that children would be exposed to further abuse, since they would be confined to existing in the same space with their abuser. In order to mitigate this, the Authority increased its sensitisations and messages about child protection.

The Authority also did a comparative analysis of reports during the period when schools and nurseries closed, March – September over the period 2017 to 2020, to gauge what was happening with the nation's children. While reports of sexual abuse, neglect and physical abuse continued to be the highest reported types of abuse, it was reports of emotional abuse and children lacking care and guardianship which showed the greatest increase. There was also an increase in children displaying suicidal ideation.

To say the data recorded by the Authority is troubling, is an understatement. We must all take ownership for the protection of children. Our communities must become safe spaces for children. The home must be a place of love and nurturing of a child. Children must not be seen as the property of their parents but as a person with the right to achieve his or her true potential.

The Authority will complete and rollout the Inter-Agency National Child Abuse Protocol – while this document is long overdue, it is essential to the support necessary for our nation's children and the Authority will again engage partners so this document becomes a reality. It is time for all agencies to commit to the protection of our nation's children.



CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

THE BOARD'S ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Management

The Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10 states that the Authority "shall be managed by a Board of Management (also referred to as the Board) which will be in charge of the administration of the Act. It must be noted that there was an amendment to the Children's Authority Act, Chap. 46:10 which is stated in the Miscellaneous Provisions (Supreme Court of Judicature and Children) Act, 2018. It provides that "The Board shall comprise a minimum of nine members but not more than fifteen persons appointed by the President." This increase will take effect during the new term of the next Board of Management.

Section 7(2) Children's Authority Act, Chap 46:10: The Board shall comprise a minimum of nine members but not more than fifteen persons appointed by the President.

(2A) Four members of the Board shall be –

- (a) A person under the age of twenty-eight years representing the youth who possesses one of the qualifications listed in section (2B) (a) to (h), appointed by the President.
- (b) A person nominated by the Tobago House of Assembly with qualifications in or related to child development, appointed by the President;
- (c) A representative of a Non-Governmental Organisation which promotes the welfare and protection of children; and
- (d) The Director of the Authority appointed under section 10, who shall be an ex officio member of the Board.

(2B) The other members of the Board shall be selected from among persons with the following qualifications and skills:

- (a) child psychology;
- (b) social work;
- (c) paediatrics;
- (d) education;
- (e) accounting;
- (f) family law;
- (g) management or administration; or
- (h) psychiatry

At the beginning of Fiscal 2020, the Board comprised the following members:

1. **Mr. Hanif E. A. Benjamin, Chairman, Social Work**
2. **Dr. Gillian Wheeler, Deputy Chairman, THA Representative**
3. **Ms. Ruth Van Lare, Member, Family Law**
4. **Dr. Christine Descartes, Member, Psychology**
5. **Dr. Natalie Dick, Member, Paediatrics**
6. **Ms. Laura Davis, Member, Social Work**
7. **Dr. Freddy James, Member, Education**
8. **Mr. Mitra Aitai, Member, Accounting**
9. **Ms. Dawn George, Member, NGO representative**
10. **Ms. Shurdelle Jennings, Member, Youth Representative**

As of 1st November 2019, Mrs. Sharon Morris-Cummings assumed the position of Corporate Secretary of the Authority.

BOARD COMMITTEES

During the period, the Board directed the affairs of the Authority via 15 Committees¹. The number of Board meetings held for Fiscal 2020 were: 12; 10 monthly meetings and 2 special meetings. It should be noted that when the country was faced with the challenge of COVID-19 from March, 2020, the Board quickly established a Committee to address this issue. The Board seamlessly directed the affairs of the Authority through the use of a board portal software with support from the IT Unit to enable the convening of meetings remotely.

The main Committees of the Board are as follows:

The Adoption Committee is responsible for the Adoption of children. The Committee's composition and functions are set out in Section 7A (1) of the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10 (as amended), which provides, inter alia, that when a decision with respect to the adoption of a child arises, a committee of the Board to be known as the Adoption Committee shall sit to take such decision, which must then be ratified by the Board of Management. Over the period under review, the Committee held 10 meetings.

The Audit Committee provides oversight of the Authority's governance, risk management and internal control practices by reporting to and advising the Board of Management on the Authority's operations in relation to compliance with laws and regulations, adherence to and adequacy of policies and procedures and overall operational effectiveness and efficiency. The Committee also appraises the efforts of the internal audit activity, the external auditors and any other assurance providers. During the period under review, the Audit Committee held 4 meetings.

Internal Audit

The mission of the Internal Audit is to enhance and protect organisation value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice, and insight. The Internal Audit function helps the Authority to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of governance, risk management, and control processes.

During the Fiscal Year, several steps were taken in furtherance of the Internal Audit function. For instance, the Internal Audit Function Charter was adopted at the beginning of Fiscal 2020. The Corporate Governance Audit which was initiated in Mid-June 2019 progressed with a view to completion in mid-Fiscal 2020. The purpose of this audit was to review the Governance Framework of the Authority, to evaluate and assess its adequacy in relation to meeting the strategic compliance and risk requirements of the organisation. However, the progress of the Audit was delayed due to the requirement to recruit a new Internal Auditor after the resignation of the then incumbent effective 22nd February, 2020. This notwithstanding, work done relative to the Audit Plan informed strategies to enhance the case management system, and formulation and implementation of recommendations arising out of a previous audit.

Subsequently, the Board of Management on the advice of the Audit Committee, took the decision to hire an Internal Auditor with the view of establishing the Internal Audit Function at the Authority. The Internal Auditor is expected to commence work at the start of the new Fiscal Year, and it is the Board's firm belief that this decision would go a long way towards enhancing the overall corporate governance structure at the Authority.

¹ This included three (3) Ad hoc Committees

BOARD COMMITTEES CONT'D

The Board Governance Committee is responsible inter alia, for the review of all Terms of References of Board Committees; overseeing the evaluation of the annual performance review of the Board, the Chairman, Board Members, Committee Chairs, and Committees; the review of ethical and conflict of interest issues and making recommendations to the Board to address such issues. During the period under review, the Committee held 8 meetings.

The Care Committee is responsible, inter alia, for the approval of Treatment Plans which identify the optimal placement of the child and the rehabilitative interventions to accompany such placement. In addition, matters relating to the licensing and monitoring of Children's Homes and Nurseries, and the monitoring of Rehabilitative Centres are considered. During the period under review, the Committee held 10 meetings.

The Facilities Committee is responsible for overseeing the acquisition and maintenance of physical accommodations for the Authority and for ensuring that the Authority is in compliance with the required standards set out in the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act 2004 (as amended). During the period under review, the Committee held 9 meetings.

The Finance Committee is responsible for monitoring the financial status of the organisation through the reports submitted to the Board and other financial information provided to governmental bodies or the wider public. The Committee also has oversight of the Authority's system of internal controls regarding finance, accounting, legal compliance and ethics that Management and the Board have established. The Committee also closely examines the Authority's auditing, accounting and financial reporting processes. Over the period under review, the Committee continuously encouraged financial discipline and prudence, given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy. During the period under review, the Committee held 7 meetings.

The Foster Care Committee is responsible for the approval of persons to the Register of foster parents, based on recommendations of the Foster Care Unit in instances where an applicant is successfully screened to become a foster carer. During the period under review, the Committee held 10 meetings.

The Human Resources Committee is responsible for ensuring that there is an effective human resources strategy in line with industry and market trends, which will enhance employee and Board effectiveness. During the period under review, the Committee held 11 meetings.

The Procurement and Tenders Committee is responsible for the implementation of policies on tendering, procurement and contracting. It ensures that accountability, integrity, transparency and value for money are achieved in all matters pertaining to the tendering and procurement of goods and services; that the selection of all contractors and service providers is made on a sound, transparent, fair and cost-effective basis. During the period under review, the Committee held 2 meetings.

BOARD COMMITTEES CONT'D

The Stakeholder Engagement Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Children's Authority has an effective and Board-approved Stakeholder Engagement Strategy which makes sure appropriate processes are in place for the engagement and re-engagement of stakeholders. In addition, the Committee encourages co-operation and accountability between the Authority and its key stakeholders. It also determines initiatives that will enhance stakeholder relationships and engagement. During the period under review, the Committee held 10 meetings.

The External Funding Committee was established at the beginning of this Fiscal period by Board Resolution dated 25th October, 2019. This Committee was responsible for engaging with various potential sponsors, to source funding for the Authority's strategic projects. Proposed projects include mobile caravan to conduct outreach activities in communities and capacity building internally and externally. During the period under review, the Committee held 7 meetings.

The Transformation Committee was formalised and approved by the Board on 25th April, 2020. This Committee spearheaded the completion of the theoretical aspect of the Authority's Strategic Plan 2020-2023. This Committee was also tasked with developing and monitoring the implementation of the plan to facilitate the achievement of the Authority's strategic objectives.



CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

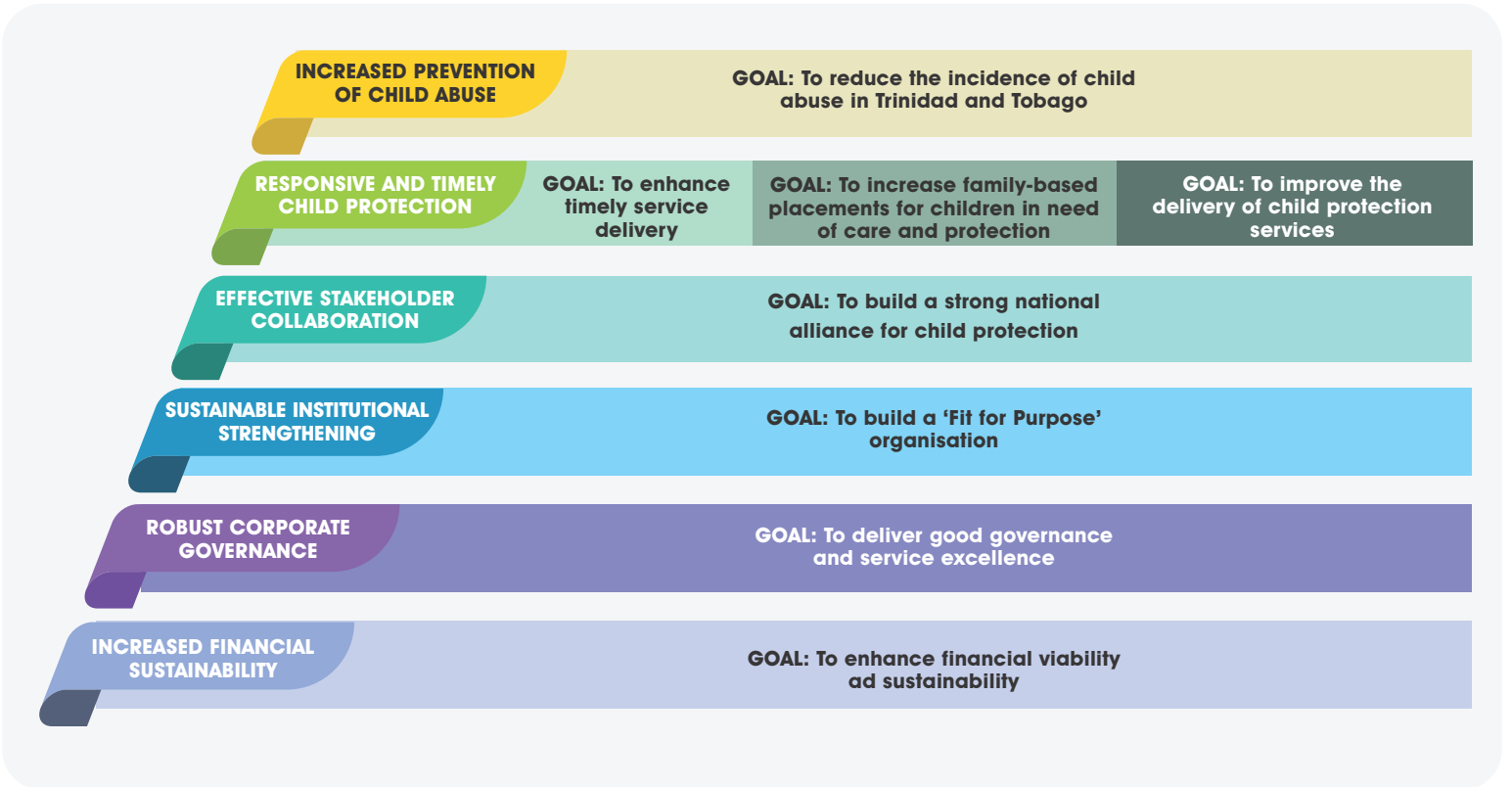
STRATEGIC GOALS



STRATEGIC GOALS

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & GOALS

Figure 1: Strategic Priorities and Goals





CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

FULFILLING THE LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

The legislative mandate of the Authority can be summarised under five overarching headings:

- (i) Care and Protection**
- (ii) Child Justice**
- (iii) Community Residences and Foster Care**
- (iv) Adoption**
- (v) Advocacy**

CARE AND PROTECTION

The core functions of the Authority include the provision of care, protection and rehabilitation of children, in accordance with Part III of the Children’s Authority Act. The Act further requires the Authority to investigate complaints or reports of mistreatment of children; and upon investigation and where it is shown that the child is in imminent danger, receive the child into care.

The following, highlights the key achievements of the Authority during Fiscal 2019-2020 in meeting the legislative function of care and protection.

REGISTRY FUNCTION

The Child Protection Registry (CPR) Unit is charged with the responsibility for the receipt, documentation, triage, and forwarding for intervention, reports received relative to children who are deemed to be in need of care and protection. In most instances, the CPR is the first point of intervention for a child who is in need of care and protection. The Unit is responsible for the management of the Authority’s 24-hour Hotline. For Fiscal 2020, the Unit received 31,633 calls from which there were 4,914 reports of abuse.

The following graphical presentation represents the achievement of the Unit over the reporting period.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI) (1) ENTER REPORTS INTO CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

During the reporting period, the Unit was tasked with the KPI to enter all reports of abuse received via the Hotline within 24-hour. The Unit achieved a 99 percent target for the entry of reports received.

CALLS AND REPORTS RECEIVED FOR FISCAL 2020

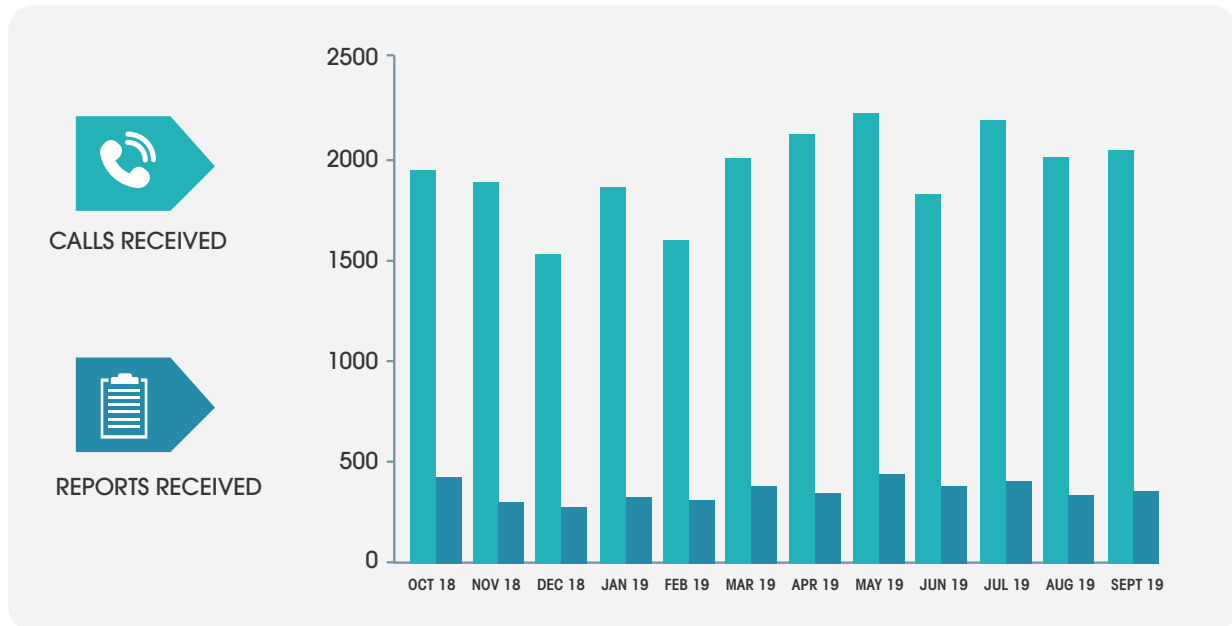


Figure 2: Calls and Reports Received for Fiscal 2020

KPI (2) ASSIGN 50 PERCENT OF REPORTS RECEIVED VIA HOTLINE MONTHLY

The following graph illustrates the number of reports of abuse received and the number of cases assigned for intervention during the reporting period. The Unit maintained an average of 60 percent for assigned cases during this Fiscal.

Cases Received vs Cases Assigned for Intervention Fiscal 2020

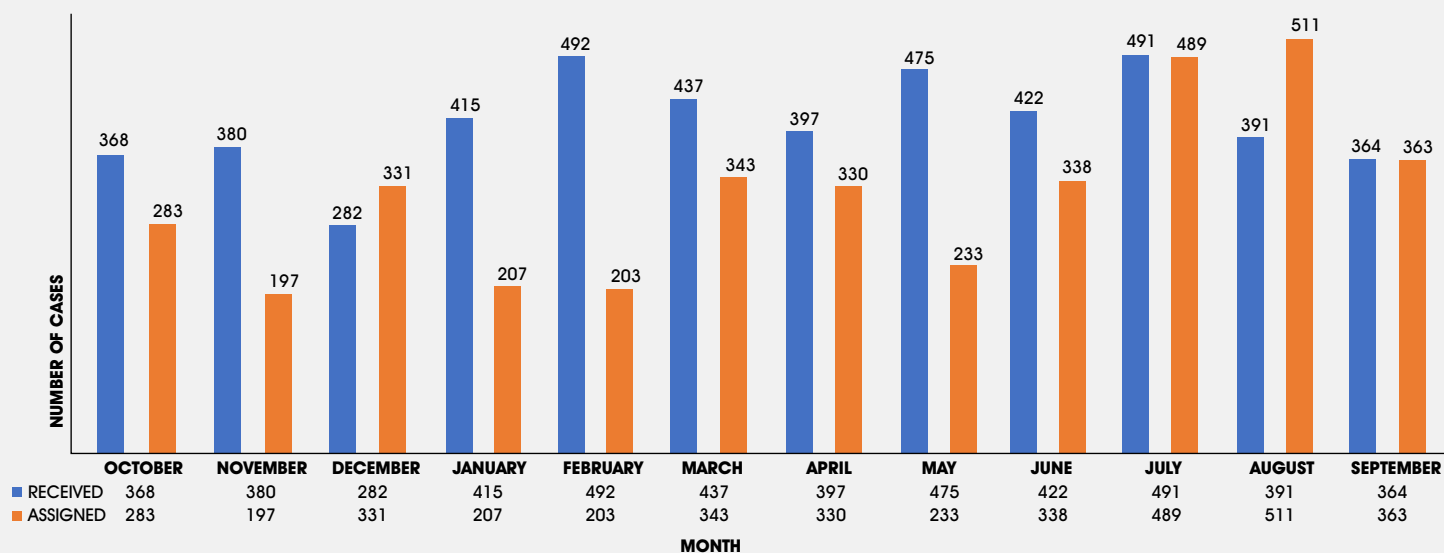


Figure 3: Cases Received vs Cases Assigned for Intervention

OTHER SUCCESSES

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions accounting for seven months of operations, the Registry Unit was able to maintain its 24-hour operations with no downtime. This was achieved through the successful decentralisation of the Call Centre operations, which ensured business continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Unit completed its Call Centre Project Plan, which was aimed at improving the efficiency of the Centre by identifying areas for improvement and modernisation.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

To ensure safety protocols such as social distancing, operations for the Call Centre were decentralised to three of the Authority's other locations. Further, business continuity became a priority and this period showed that the Call Centre operations can not only be decentralised, but be conducted remotely and effectively managed. As a result, staff of the Registry Unit were relocated to CA locations nearer to their homes, which led to a reduction in stress levels and an improvement in work-life balance.

THE WAY FORWARD

In the next Fiscal, the Unit will also experience an improvement in their overall level of service via the implementation of enhanced Call Centre technology, as well as improved efficiency through the upgrade of the database to the CPIMS+ PRIMERO Case Management Information System. The Registry team has embarked upon a review of the Risk Assessment Matrix with a view to configuration and integration of this tool into the new database.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUNCTION

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) operates on a 24-hour basis. The Team’s mandate is to receive a child into care once it has been proven that the child is in imminent danger, which could result in repeated abuse and/or serious injury and/or death. In accordance with Section 22 of the Children’s Authority Act, Chapter 46:10, if the Authority is of the view that a child is in need of care and protection and that its intervention is necessary in the best interest of the child, it shall investigate the matter and where appropriate, receive the child into care.

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) remains resolute in its role to achieve the Authority’s mandate by its execution of duties to children in imminent danger. During the Fiscal period, the ERT responded to 741 reports of children in imminent danger.

In alignment with the strategic goal of Intervention, the Unit was mandated with the following four Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- to respond within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving a call from the Registry Department,
- to submit reports within 24-hours for children removed from their home and received into care,
- to submit reports for all non-media and removal cases within 72-hours of initiating investigation, and
- To submit all Section 45 Suitability Assessments 96-hours after the initial report is received.

The following graphical presentation represents the achievement of the Unit over the reporting period.

KPI (1) TO RESPOND WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR (24) HOURS OF RECEIVING REPORT FROM REGISTRY

Of the seven hundred and forty-one (741) cases, the ERT had a 98% response rate or 726 cases.

Total Cases and Response Times

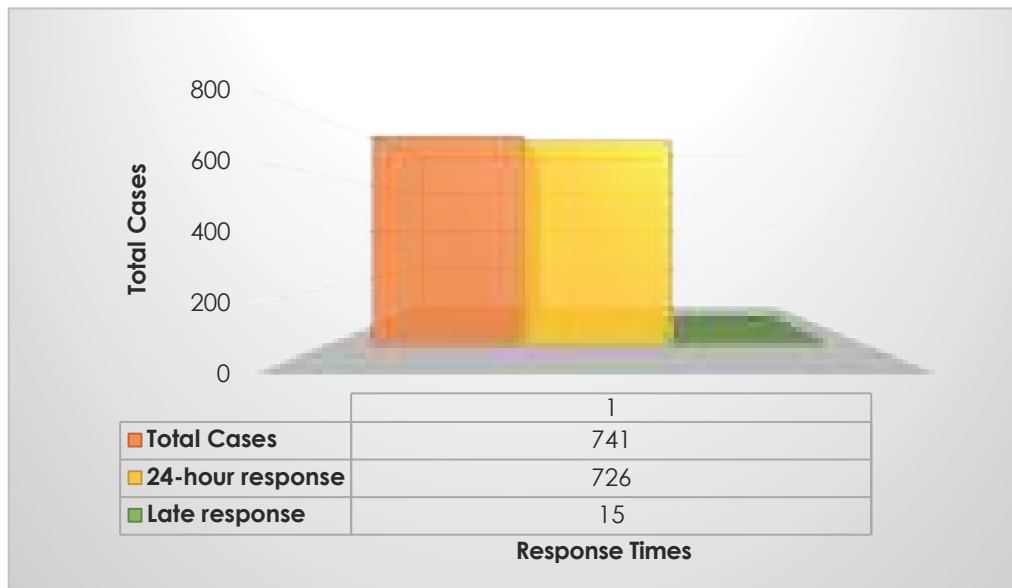


Figure 4: Total Cases and Response Times

KPI (2) TO SUBMIT WITHIN 24 HOURS, REPORTS ON CHILDREN RECEIVED INTO CARE

For the reporting period, the ERT was able to submit 90% or 103 reports for children received into care.

Removals and 24-Hour Reports

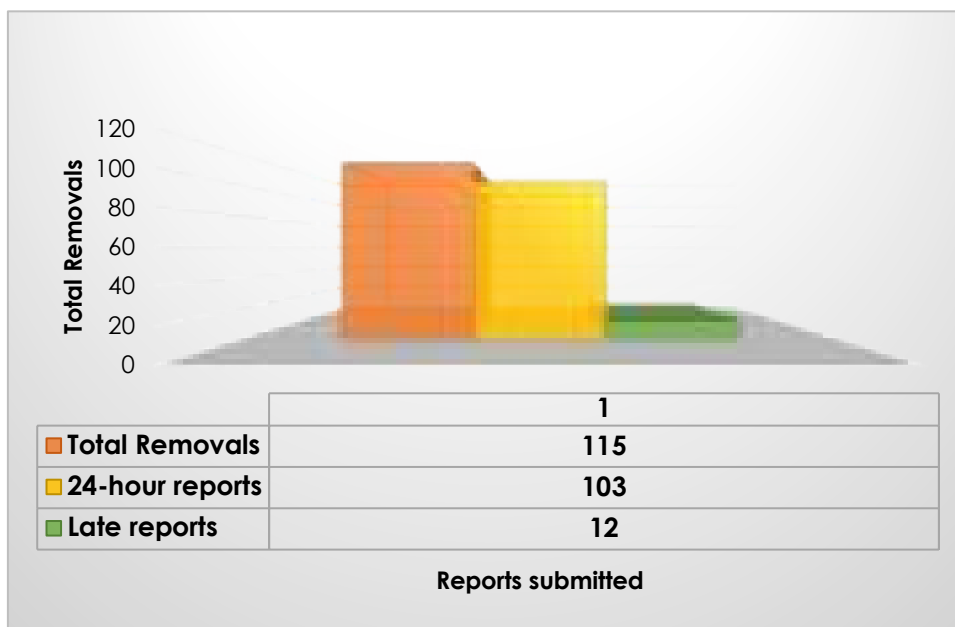


Figure 5: Removals and 24-Hour Reports

Additionally, the Unit was tasked with the responsibility to submit reports for all cases that were reported by the media.

Media Cases and 24-hour Reporting

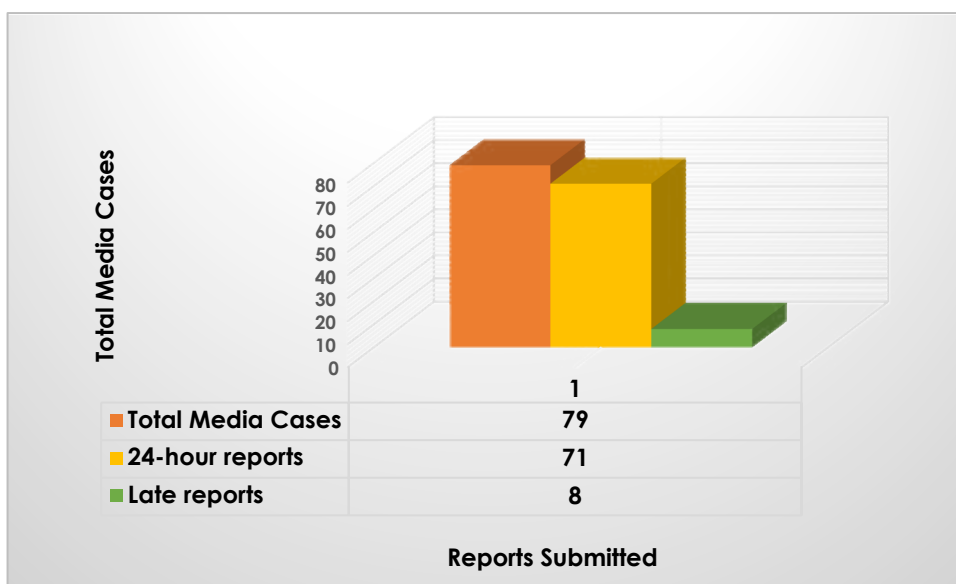


Figure 6: Media Cases and 24-Hour Reporting

KPI (3) TO SUBMIT REPORTS FOR ALL NON-MEDIA AND REMOVAL CASES WITHIN 72-HOURS OF INITIATING INVESTIGATION

Of the 547 non-media and removal cases, the ERT was able to submit 95% or 520 of these reports within 72-hours

Non-Media/Removal Reports

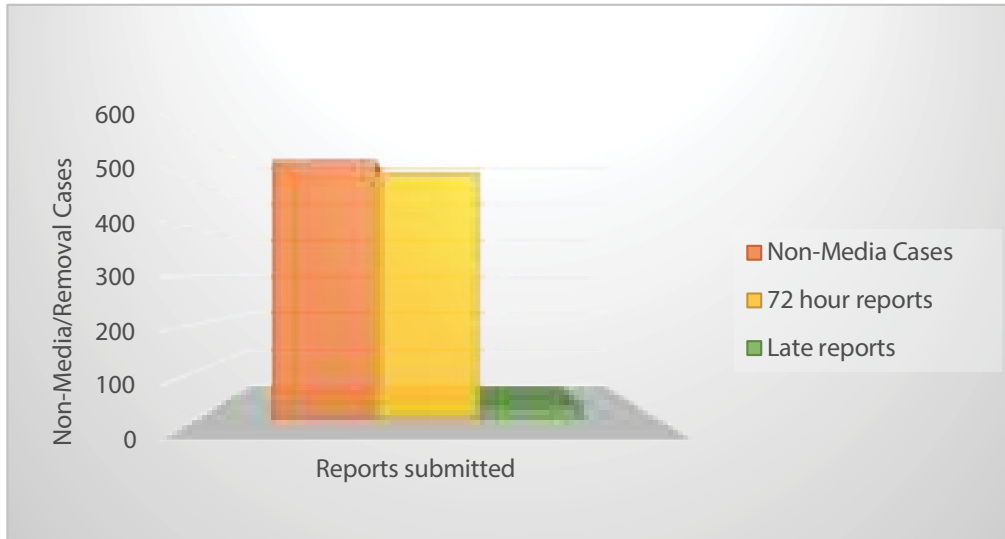


Figure 7: Non-Media Removal Reports

KPI (4) TO SUBMIT ALL SECTION 45 SUITABILITY ASSESSMENTS 96-HOURS AFTER THE INITIAL REPORT IS RECEIVED

Section 45 Suitability Assessments are done at the request of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) for any child who is removed to a safe place without ERT’s presence. Once the removal is done by the TTPS, a suitability assessment is done by the Unit to determine the safety of the environment for the child’s wellbeing.

Section 45 Reports Facilitated



Figure 8: Section 45 Reports Facilitated

IMPACT OF COVID-19

Despite the restrictions placed on the country, the ERT maintained three shifts on roster with a rotation every 48-hours. During the COVID-19 period, the Unit experienced an increase in children requiring removal from imminent danger. As a result, the team maintained its flow of operations by adhering to the necessary safety protocols including wearing gloves, masks and ensuring that children were not displaying flu-like symptoms prior to their removal. The increased reports of children to be received into care, coupled with the need to stay safe, led to some staff burn-out and staff shortages in the execution of the Unit's duties.

Staff also adopted initiatives that allowed them to maintain social distancing and provide support to colleagues with children. Further, in instances where the safety of staff was at risk, the Unit relied on virtual forms of communication to complete some tasks including, home visits and suitability assessments which increased from four to ten per month. In order to keep staff safe, Suitability Assessments were completed for emergency cases. This however, led to a backlog. Once the parameters of the COVID-19 restrictions are relaxed, the backlog can be completed as it would allow for more community visits.

THE WAY FORWARD

For Fiscal 2021, the Unit looks forward to the expansion and creation of South, Central and Tobago teams which will provide faster response times to reports of children in imminent danger, in those administration districts. Currently, the Unit is operating with one team that splits up to meet demands.

The Emergency Response Team also looks forward to the acquisition of an additional vehicle to facilitate greater effectiveness within a 24-hour timeframe.

There are also plans to conduct training for staff in the areas of De-escalation Tactics, Methods of Questioning and Report Writing. The Unit is also looking forward to the implementation of the new Case Management System and the new Child Protection Information Management System (PRIMERO) to facilitate efficient management of cases that come to its attention.

INVESTIGATIVE FUNCTION

The Children’s Authority Act Chapter 46:10 mandates that the Authority investigate complaints or reports of mistreatment of children.

The work of the Investigation Unit is activated by reports of abuse received, triaged and forwarded by the Registry Unit. Once the Investigation Unit has received the report, the team employs various techniques and conducts different types of enquiries to determine whether the report can be substantiated or not. This involves conducting field visits in order to meet with all persons associated with a case including parents, family members, members of the community, as well as other child protection practitioners. The team provides the assessment of familial placement options for the child, if removal is required. The Unit also conducts investigations at the request of the Court into any matter involving a child.

The following graphical presentation represents the achievement of the Unit over the reporting period.

KPI (1) CSA’S TO INVESTIGATE NINE REPORTS OF ABUSE AND CLOSE THREE CASES WEEKLY

During the Fiscal Year, a total of 3,222 cases were assigned to Children’s Services Associates (CSAs) and Independent Service Providers (ISPs) within the Unit. Of the assigned cases, the Unit completed investigations and closed 1,589.

Cases Closed

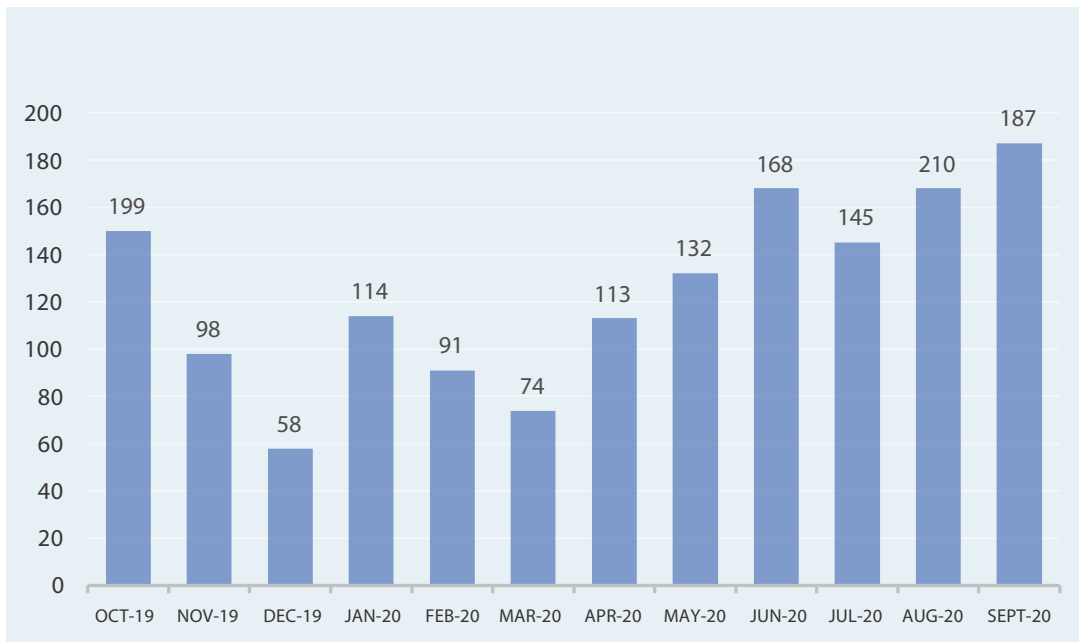


Figure 9: Cases Closed

KPI (2) TO REFER CASES INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY FOR INTERVENTION AND SUBMIT REPORT TO THE COURT BASED ON REFERRALS MADE

Referrals and Court Requested Reports

DESCRIPTION	TOTAL NUMBER
Internal and External Referrals Completed	601
Court-Requested Reports	179

Table 1: Referrals and Court Requested Reports

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The Investigation Unit made some adjustments to its operations to ensure continuity of services to children in need of care and protection, as well as ensure the safety of staff. These adjustments included virtual interviews to facilitate investigation of cases, Court hearings and field assessments. While these modifications proved to be successful, the team was faced with challenges in finding placement for children who were removed from their primary home, as Children's Homes refused requests for placement due to the risk of residents and staff contracting the virus. However, protocols were implemented which included testing of the child to be placed, to reduce risk and allow for ease of access into Homes.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Investigation Unit is committed to its task of investigating the reports of abuse that come to its attention. The Unit looks forward to the new Case Management System and the new Child Protection Information Management System (PRIMERO). These new Systems would enable the Unit to be efficient and meet the global Case Management Standard Operating Procedures for social workers in handling cases of children in need of care and protection.

ASSESSMENT FUNCTION

The Assessment Unit is guided by the Children’s Authority Act, Chapter 46:10, Section 14, which mandates the establishment of Assessment and Support Centres and Reception Centres. The Unit conducts comprehensive assessments of children in need of care and protection brought to the attention of the Authority. The work of the various teams at the Authority’s Assessment Centres is activated once a child has been referred by the Investigation or Emergency Response Units as a result of abuse experienced by the child. Assessments of children are carried out by a multidisciplinary team, which includes a medical doctor, a psychologist and a social worker. Children are sometimes referred for psychiatric assessment, depending on the details of the case.

The following graph illustrates the main interventions conducted by the Assessment Unit for the period October 2019 to September 2020.

Assessment Unit Output October 2019 - September 2020

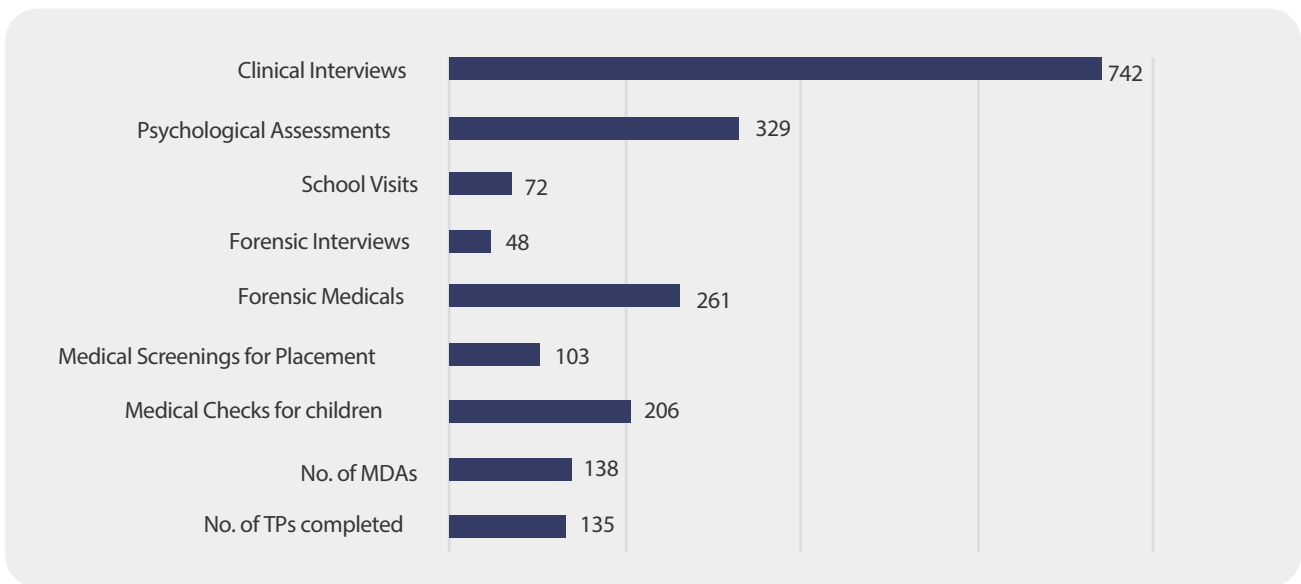


Figure 10: Assessment Unit Output

KPI (1): ASSESSMENTS SHOULD BE INITIATED WITHIN THREE (3) MONTHS OF THE CASE BEING REFERRED TO THE ASSESSMENT UNIT

During the Fiscal period, the Tobago Regional Assessment Centre (TRAC) was consistent in exceeding this target by initiating cases in less time due to a lower caseload. Other Assessment Centres (AC) fell below with longer wait times, as a result of high caseloads and under-staffing at the Centres.

Assessment

Average Timeframe for Initiating Assessments

KPI: 3 Months

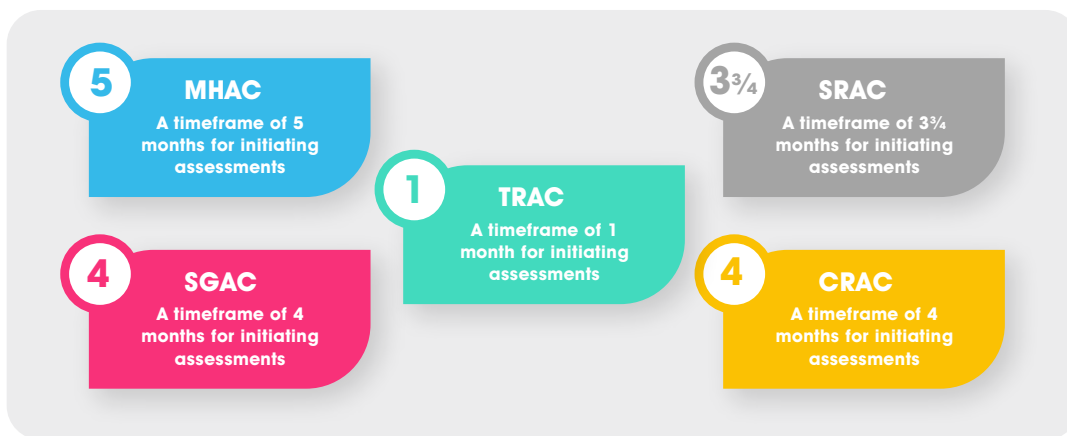


Figure 11: Timeframe for Initiating Assessments

KPI-2: ASSESSMENTS SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND FINAL REPORTS PREPARED WITHIN TWO (2) MONTHS OF INITIATION.

This KPI was achieved by both the Tobago Regional Assessment Centre and the Chaguanas Assessment Centre. This was due to lower caseloads at these Centres. However, the other ACs did not meet their set timeframes due to high caseloads, and in the case of Sangre Grande AC, under-staffing was a major factor that impeded their ability to meet the targeted KPIs.

Assessment

Average Timeframe for Completion Assessments

KPI: 2 Months

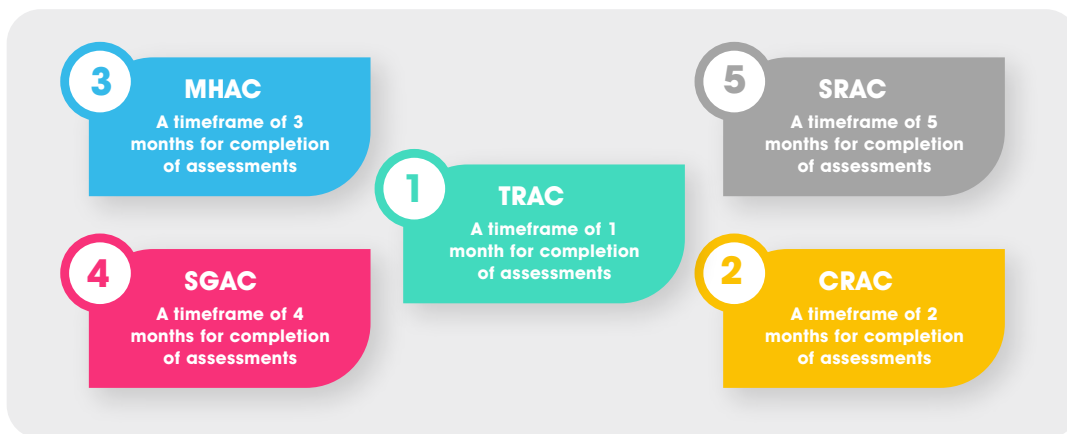


Figure 12: Timeframe for Completing Assessments

KPI-3: AT LEAST FOUR (4) FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORTS (I.E. TREATMENT PLANS AND ADDENDUM REPORTS) SHOULD BE PRODUCED EACH MONTH PER ASSESSMENT CENTRE.

Assessment

Average Number of Final Reports Completed

KPI: 4 Assessments per Month



Figure 13: Final Assessment Reports Completed

The South Assessment Centre exceeded the target, while the other Centres did not meet the target. At the Mt. Hope Assessment Centre and Sangre Grande Assessment Centre, there were high caseloads and extended periods of mandatory leave of staff, due to end-of-contract or quarantine orders. The Sangre Grande Assessment Centre and Chaguanas Assessment Centre were also under-staffed from January 2020 onwards. It must be noted that the Chaguanas Assessment Centre only became operational in January 2020.

KPI-4: FOUR TO SIX (4-6) NEW MULTIDISCIPLINARY ASSESSMENTS (MDAs) SHOULD BE INITIATED BY EACH ASSESSMENT CENTRE EACH MONTH.

The Mt. Hope Assessment Centre and South Assessment Centre met this target. The other Assessment Centres fell below this target due to a high caseload while being under-staffed for most of the year. Specifically, The Tobago Regional Assessment Centre did not meet the target to complete four reports per month, since they did not have a high caseload or outstanding reports awaiting completion. Despite these factors, 138 MDAs were initiated in total, across the Unit.

Assessment

Average Number of MDAs Initiated

KPI: 4-6 MDAs per Month



Figure 14: Number of MDAs Initiated

OTHER SUCCESSES

- The Assessment Unit played a key role in advancing the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the North Central Regional Health Authority, the South West Regional Health Authority, as well as collaborative agreements with the Tobago House of Assembly and the Eastern Regional Health Authority.
- All of the Unit's operational manuals were approved by the Board of Management and formally implemented.
- The Unit's staff facilitated a study tour of the Mt. Hope Assessment Centre for the UNDP Panama Hub in November 2019, thus enabling a showcase of the operational and infrastructural model to facilitate learning and possible application in other agencies and jurisdictions.
- Assessment staff performed sensitisation sessions for multiple stakeholders, particularly on forensic medical and forensic interview processes (e.g. Child Protection Unit, Nurses, District Medical Officers (DMOs), Doctors and internal staff, to name a few).
- Recruitment of Clinical Consultants (Child Abuse Pediatrician and two Clinical Psychologists) to offer clinical supervision to the Unit's doctors and psychologists, which enhanced the quality of the clinical work.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

New assessments were temporarily paused during the months of April and May 2020. This resulted in a backlog of new cases to be initiated at the respective Assessment Centres. However, this period allowed for intensive report-writing and provided the opportunity for staff to work on completing outstanding reports.

To ensure adherence to social distancing requirements, assessments were not conducted at the Sangre Grande Assessment Centre, as the rooms could not accommodate both clinicians and clients. Consequently, alternative external locations were sought for appointments. The upsurge in new COVID-19 cases posed a further challenge, as there were concerns about the exposure and sanitation of these external spaces.

In September 2020, emphasis was placed on initiating assessments for new residents admitted to the Authority's Child Support Centres. However, this could not be done for two new admissions at the Centres due to the presentation of COVID-19 symptoms in the children, and restrictions in access to the Centres due to COVID-19 concerns. Several assessment staff were placed on quarantine since they were primary COVID-19 contacts, which also impacted their capacity to meet targets. As a result, a roster system comprising a combination of work from home and office days was instituted, with monitoring by Team Leads and the Manager. This system proved highly effective with persons reporting greater work-life balance, while meeting deliverables and timelines. Greater flexibility was achieved in hosting meetings, team-building sessions and online training, as staff were able to connect virtually without the challenges of commuting and space constraints for large gatherings.

THE WAY FORWARD

In order to maintain and improve efficiency in meeting targets, while also ensuring proficiency in operations and a healthy work environment for staff, the following is proposed for continuation or implementation within the Assessment Unit:

- Continued implementation of operations in accordance with strategic values, goals, KPIs and caseload management efficiency strategies as outlined in the operational manuals.
- Pursue MOUs with RHAs to expand forensic medical services in other ACs.
- Stakeholder collaboration and training of stakeholders that impact assessment (e.g. DMOs, CPU, National Forensic Sciences Centre).
- Staff training in forensic interviewing and trauma related areas.
- Continued participation in professional development initiatives programmes on topics related to medical and psychosocial clinical practice, to enhance professional development and performance efficacy.
- Implementation of revised filing systems to improve efficiency and streamlining, across the Centres.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES FUNCTION

The philosophy of the Authority is that children thrive best in a family environment and the Child and Family Services Unit (CFSU) seeks to make this a reality. The Unit provides a range of services to children and their families, which aid in their rehabilitation and reunification. These services include support with family reintegration, transitional living, services for children who exhibit challenging behaviours, crisis intervention, referrals to external service providers, support of children in group care, monitoring of children who have been placed under a Supervision Order by the Court and monitoring of children placed in families requiring intensive support. The Unit also provides a variety of psychosocial interventions for children in need of care and protection and their families. During the Fiscal, a total of 5,384 cases were referred to the Unit for intervention.

During the period 2015 to September 2020, the Unit accrued a backlog of 3023 cases. The number of cases referred for case management since 2015 significantly exceeded the unit's capacity. Currently caseworkers have over 100 cases which are difficult to close due to a lack of timely intervention and services within the public sector. This resulted in the cases remaining open and directly impacted the unit's ability to assign new cases to caseworkers. As a result, high risk cases received priority for assignment to caseworkers whilst low and medium risk cases remain unassigned. In August 2020, the Authority initiated a multi-unit exercise to address these unassigned cases. It is anticipated that this exercise will continue into 2020/2021.

KPI (1) 25% INCREASE IN SUCCESSFUL REINTEGRATION OF CHILDREN INTO FAMILY-BASED ENVIRONMENTS

During the reporting period, the Unit was tasked with the KPI to enter all reports of abuse received via the Hotline within 24-hour. The Unit achieved a 99 percent target for the entry of reports received.

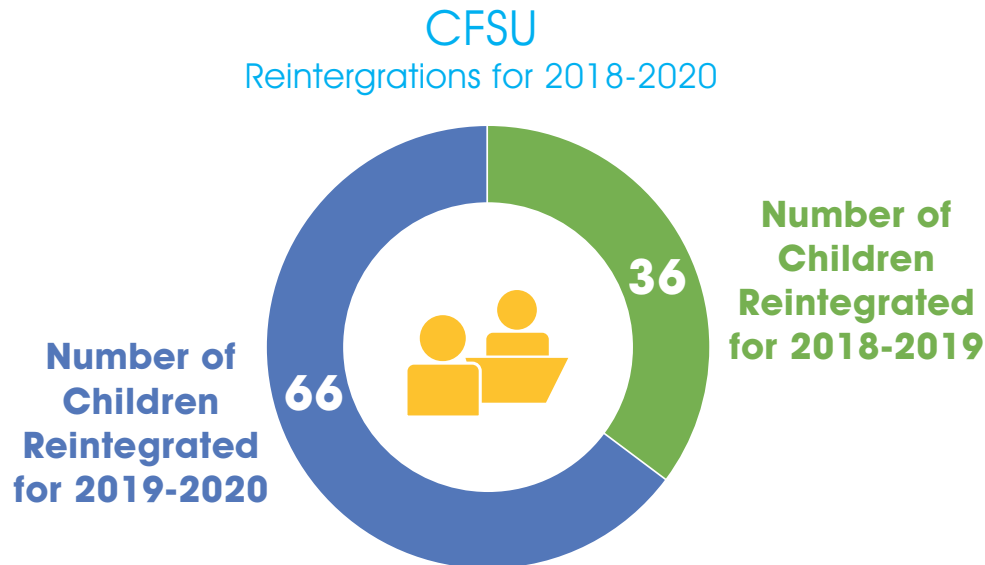


Figure 15: Reintegrations Completed

In cases where reintegration is in the best interest of the child, the Unit works with the child and the family to receive interventions such as parenting training sessions, individual therapy, family therapy, supervised access visits and sibling visits. The goal is to help the family strengthen their internal and external resources and support, help parents to improve their parenting skills, help the child and family to process past trauma and resolve family conflict, and to promote the building and reinforcement of positive relationships and bonds amongst family members.

For Fiscal 2020, the KPI of 45 reintegration was assigned to reflect a 25 percent increase from the last Fiscal's target. The Unit completed 66 reintegration for Fiscal 2020.

OTHER SUCCESSES

The following graphs depict the total number of direct interventions, which include counselling sessions, visits to community residences, school visits, home visits, hospital visits, supervised access visits, sibling visits, meetings with stakeholders, interviews with clients, clinic appointments, paid counselling and specialised therapy, paid assessment and psychiatric evaluations and forensic interviews, conducted by the Unit.

Indirect interventions refer to referral letters and phone calls to clients and stakeholders made by the Unit.

For Fiscal 2020, the Unit conducted 181 private counselling sessions, 110 private assessments and 804 internal counselling sessions for children brought to its attention.

CFSU Monitoring Interventions



Figure 16: Monitoring Interventions

Therapeutic Interventions for 2019-2020

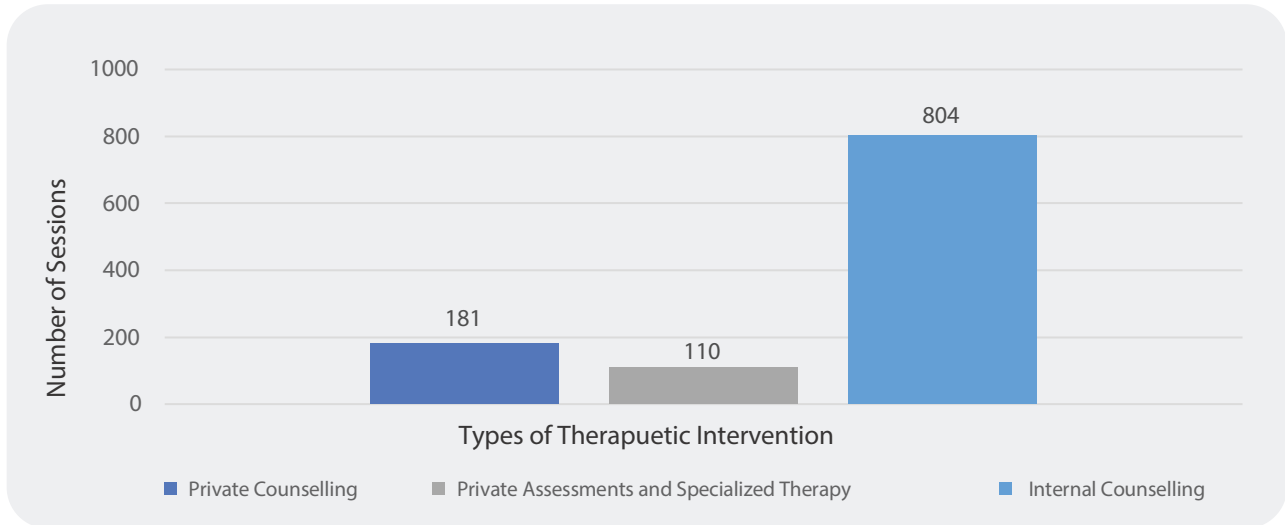


Figure 17: Therapeutic Interventions

Further, the Unit is also tasked with ensuring reports are submitted to the Courts to provide updates on ongoing interventions for children. In addition, for services that are outside of the Authority’s capacity, referrals are made to external service providers for children who require intervention and support for their rehabilitation.

CFSU Reports and Referrals for 2019/2020

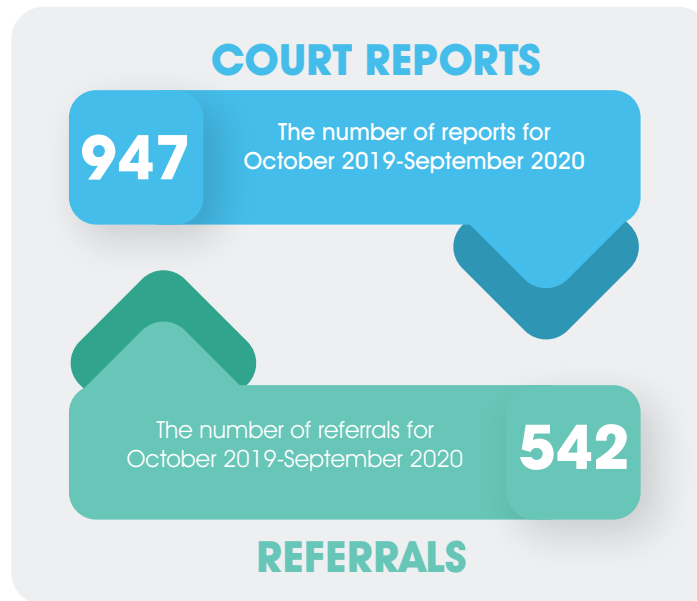


Figure 18: CFSU Reports and Referrals

OTHER SUCCESSES

- **Parenting skills group at Mary Care:** The South CFSU Team conducted a parenting skill training group for residents at the Mary Care Home for Pregnant Teens. The training was conducted over the period January to March 2020.
- **PEDIC Partnership:** The University of the West Indies Psychoeducational, Diagnostic and Intervention Clinic (PEDIC) agreed to provide intervention to the Authority's clients at a subsidised cost. To date, 12 children have received intervention which includes psychoeducational assessments and/or reading assessments.
- **Transition to Tele-Health Services:** In an attempt to maintain the required COVID-19 protocols, some of the Unit's services were adjusted to facilitate virtual assistance. This included tele-health services which comprised therapy utilising online software
- **Stakeholder engagement:** During this period, the Unit also assisted with the strengthening of stakeholder relationships by hosting and participating in ongoing meetings and case conferences with a number of organisations. These included the Counter Trafficking Unit, the Student Support Services Division (SSSD) of the Ministry of Education, the Immigration Division and Medical Social Workers.
- **Representation on Committees.** The Unit also participated in the following external committees:
 1. The Community Resilience Initiative Multi-Stakeholder Coordination Committee
 2. The Inter-Ministerial Committee to Coordinate Strategies to Reduce Domestic Violence
 3. The Working Committee for the Delivery of Care to Victims of Trafficking
 4. The UNICEF Children on the Move Protection Working Group
 5. Drug Treatment Court (represented by a CFSU Team Lead and Psychologist)

IMPACT OF COVID-19

- During the Fiscal period, there were multiple instances where CFSU staff were required to self-quarantine due to possible exposure to the virus. There was one confirmed COVID-19 positive case within the Unit. While staff managed to remain productive during period of self-quarantine, outputs associated with field visits and office related administrative tasks were impacted.
- There was reduced availability of external service providers who are the usual source of direct intervention for children requiring engagement. This resulted in extended wait times for appointments or the inability to obtain services where operations of providers were suspended.
- The client's access to schooling was also an area of focus during this period. Efforts were made by the Unit to connect clients with NGOs, school social workers and other support systems to assist those who did not have access to the internet or electronic devices. Creative measures were explored in many instances to assist with the collection and delivery of academic packages for clients.
- Due to the social distancing protocols associated with COVID-19, intervention such as sibling visits and supervised access visits were greatly reduced. In many instances, these visits were replaced by virtual communication.
- The team has also become creative and resourceful in their monitoring during the COVID-19 period. In fact, where appropriate, monitoring is conducted via phone calls or video calls. Where not appropriate, in-person visits were conducted utilising relevant safety protocols.

THE WAY FORWARD

In the next Fiscal, it is hoped that tele-modalities can continue to be utilised in the provision of intervention and monitoring of children and their families. The Unit looks forward to the implementation of the Authority's new Case Management Model, as it is expected to address many of the gaps of the current system and maximise the use of limited resources within the organisation.

LEGAL FUNCTION

The Legal Services Unit provides in-house legal support to the Authority in the general execution of its statutory mandate. It represents the Authority in all litigations, whether initiated by the Authority or to which the Authority has been joined as an Interested Party. There are six litigation matters pending against the Authority and one matter in which the Authority is named as an interested party. In one matter the Authority has already been successful and costs are to be settled. In addition, there are three matters before the Court of Appeal. For Fiscal 2020, the Authority was served with two Pre-Action Protocol Letters.

The Unit has also contributed extensively to proposals made to the Office of the Attorney General for legislative reform. This legislative support, particularly at Court proceedings, is key, in order for the Authority to achieve its mandate of providing care and protection to children.

As such, during Fiscal 2020, the Legal Services Unit made appearances in Court on behalf of minors in over 1,140 hearings (over 480 in respect of Care matters and over 600 in respect of CHINS matters), at various Courts across the island.

In instances where a child was received into care, the Legal Unit made applications before the Court and successfully obtained 295 Court Orders. The Orders were as follows:

- Wardship Order: 61
- Foster Care Order: 5
- Supervision Order: 5
- Orders for Substituted Service: 10
- Care Order: 56
- Fit Person Order: 37
- Adoption Order: 8
- Maintenance Order: 7
- Final Order: 106

Legal Orders during Fiscal 2020

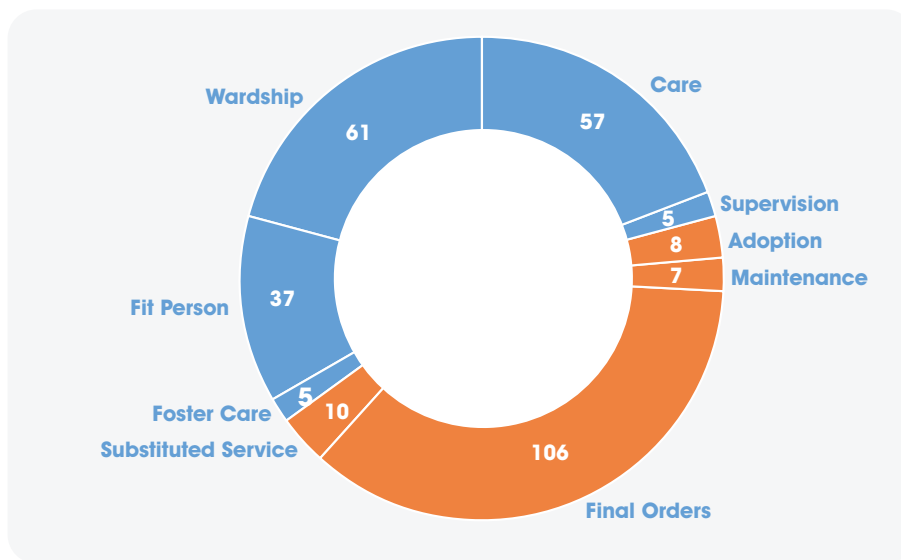


Figure 19: Legal Orders for Fiscal 2020

IMPACT OF COVID-19

For the Legal Services Unit, COVID-19 brought about innovative changes to the Judicial system as Court hearings are now being conducted virtually and filings are done electronically. Apart from some technological setbacks, this change has made the Unit more effective in its duties.

SUCCESSSES

A major achievement for the judicial system has been the introduction of a virtual court whereby all matters and Orders are heard and filed through electronic means. While the change impacted the Legal Unit, the team was able to quickly adapt and all electronic hearings were conducted successfully and without incident.

Another huge success for the Unit was the adoption of a child by a foster parent and the adoption of three children by one family. This was a first and brought great joy to the Unit and the organisation, given that the three children are siblings and could therefore live together.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Legal Unit proposes to continue to defend child rights to the best of its ability and to participate in sensitisations with the Authority's internal teams, as well as external stakeholders, to build a strong child protection framework both locally and regionally.

Through the Courts, law is sometimes made and following on from those decisions, in the best interests of the child, recommendations will be made for legislation to be amended and adjusted, to reflect these changes.

CHILD SUPPORT CENTRE FUNCTION

The Children’s Authority Act, Section 14 stipulates that “the Authority shall maintain Assessment, Support Centres, and Reception Centres,” and that “a Reception Centre shall be responsible for the temporary care of children received by the Authority.” The Children Act No.12 of 2012 also makes reference to “Places of Safety” and redefines these as being places that adequately provide and care for children requiring emergency accommodation for a period not exceeding 12 weeks.

The Authority established the Child Support Centre as an emergency and short-term placement facility to accommodate children who were immediately removed. It is a location that is secure, child-friendly and professionally staffed.

The following graphical presentation represents the achievement of the Unit over the reporting period.

KPI (1) NUMBER OF CHILDREN DISCHARGED

Discharges at Child Support Centres

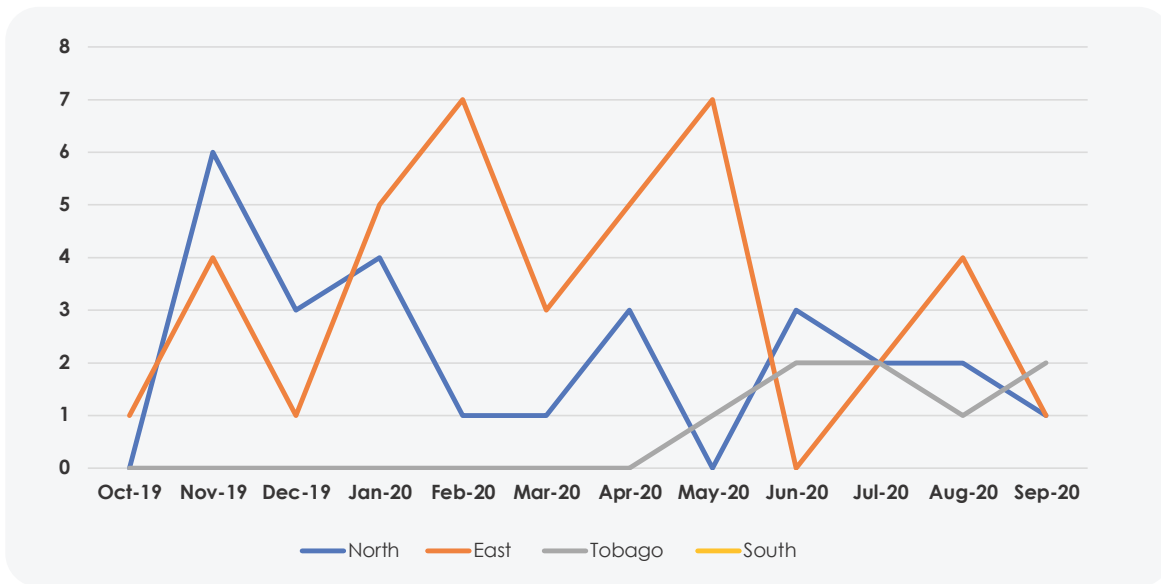


Figure 20: Discharges at Child Support Centres

KPI (2) NUMBER OF CARE PLANS PREPARED FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

No. of Care Plans from Oct. 2019 to Sept. 2020

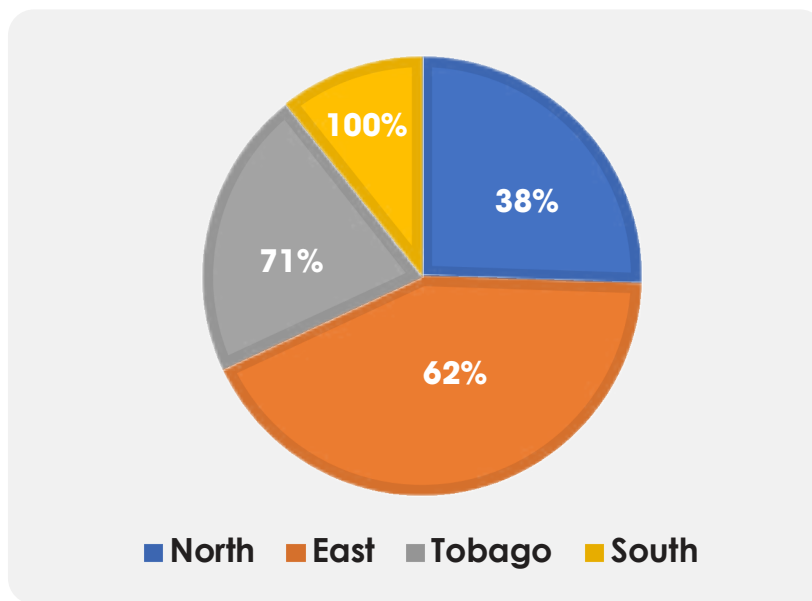


Figure 21: Care Plans for Fiscal 2020

KPI (2) NUMBER OF CARE PLANS PREPARED FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

Critical Incidents Reported for the Period 2019

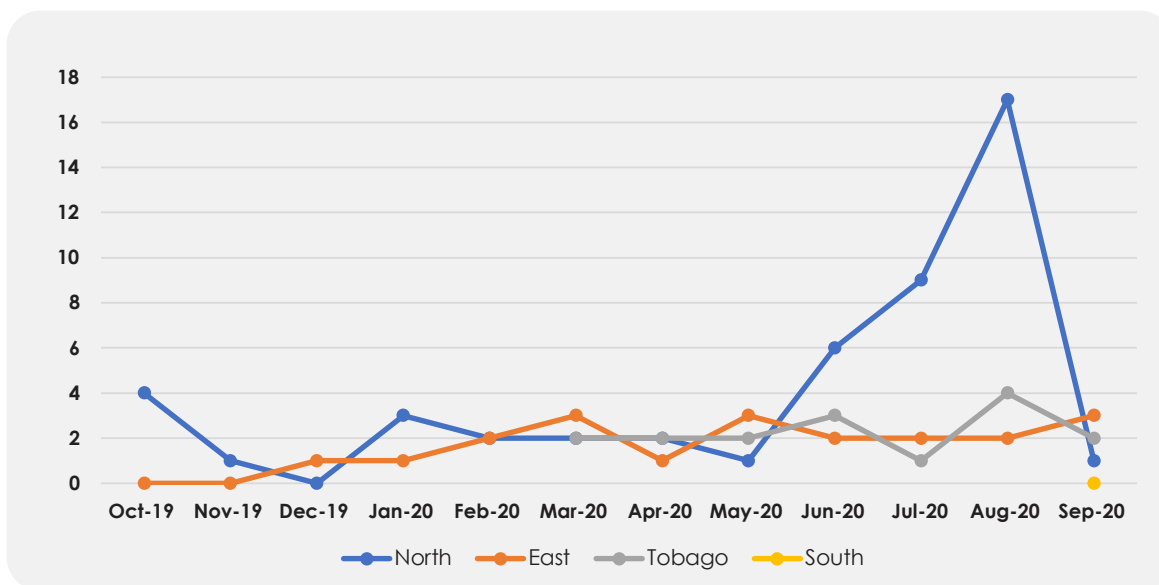


Figure 22: Critical Incidents Reported

OTHER SUCCESSES

There were 79 children admitted to the Child Support Centres during the Fiscal period under review. However, by the end of the Fiscal, the Centres had a total of 45 children in care, as children would have been discharged for varying reasons. The graph below identifies the number of children at each Child Support Centre by September 30, 2020. The South Centre was the only one without a child in residence.

Number of Children Residing at CSCs by September 30, 2020

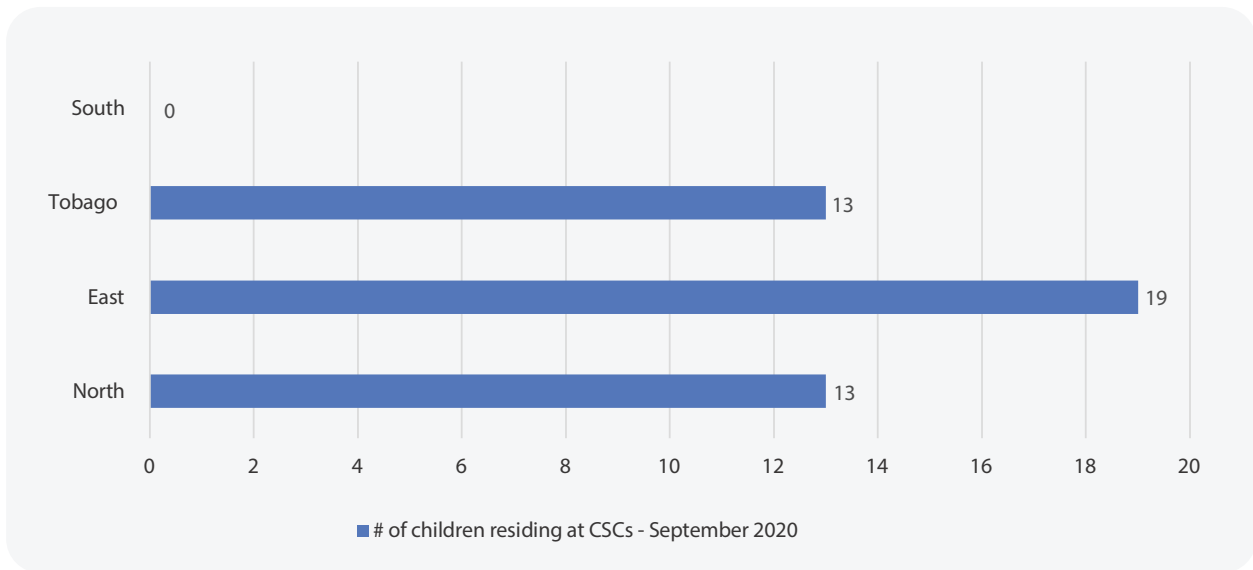


Figure 23: Number of Children Residing at Child Support Centres

In keeping with the Authority’s mandate to rehabilitate children received into care, 963 psychosocial sessions were completed with clients at the four CSCs during the period. These sessions followed psychosocial interviews and were held with the aim of helping children cope with placement, develop socio-emotional skills and problem-solve internal or external concerns and challenges.

Clients in need of counselling or psychotherapy were also supported with psychological treatment as evidenced by the 376 sessions that were held. Additionally, 440 educational sessions were organised by a tutor in the North and a Children’s Services Associate facilitated at the three other locations, in the absence of a tutor. As it relates to family contact, 115 visits were held between children and their families and 270 calls were completed to respective parents, guardians or potential fit persons to allow for communication and maintain bonds between children and their families.

All four CSCs benefited from increased staff which included Psychiatric Nurses who provided support that led to the reduction in hours worked by staff on roster. The CSCs also revised several policies for review and approval by the Board of Management as well as developed guidelines to reduce critical incidents in the operations at all locations.

These policies or guidelines included the following: Critical Incident Policy, Electronic Devices Policy; Abscond Watch Guidelines, Caregiver's Code of Conduct, Child Support Centre - Security, Admission, Orientation, Discharge Processes, CSC Education Programme Proposal, and Suicide Watch and Self-Harm Guidelines. Staff also participated in the following training sessions:

- September 2019 - IT Training
- September 2019 - Staff in Tobago benefitted from Training with the Communications Unit on Conducting Sensitisation Sessions.
- September 2019 - Child Returnees from Conflict Zones Training
- October 2019 - Adoption Unit Sensitisation
- November 2019 - COPE Training for Carers of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- February 2020 - Behaviour Management Training which is done every quarter
- July 2020 - De-escalation Training for CSAs and Caregivers which is done every quarter
- September 2020 - Psychological First Aid
- Self Defense Training

IMPACT OF COVID-19

During the height of the pandemic, the Authority continued to receive children who needed urgent placement, as ordered by the Court. To protect other residents and staff, several safety protocols were implemented including temperature checks upon entry to a CSC, screening and continuous monitoring of residents and staff for symptoms. Team members were asked to stay at home if they were ill as well as update Team Leads if they may have been exposed to a suspected or positive COVID-19 patient.

While the relevant health protocols were implemented throughout the organisation and at the Centres, the Authority had to place several children and staff in quarantine. Given the risk of having children placed by the Court into the Authority's care, new admissions were placed in quarantine between 14 to 20 days while sick children were placed in isolation rooms between 14 to 20 days.

In particular, at the North and East Centres approximately 33 children and 37 adults had to be placed in quarantine at the facilities. The Authority's Executive Team, led by the Director, worked closely with the County Medical Officer of Health of the Ministry of Health to develop quarantine guidelines. These included identifying Hot and Cold Zones at the various locations. Hot Zones were areas designated for persons who were required to be placed in quarantine between 14 to 20 days, while Cold Zones were areas designated for persons without influenza symptoms.

The manpower of the Centres was affected significantly as there were several exposure scares which required some staff to quarantine at home. The pandemic and the necessary protocols did cause some level of frustration and stress for residents, as children placed in care already live with the reality of separation from adults they love as well as their family. The staff at the Centres, therefore were key caregivers and had to ensure the children adhered to protocols like social distancing, wearing masks during daylight hours, and adopting a new cleaning routine. This became a source of tension and frustration for some residents, who required additional support to address their concerns. Moreover, because of the nature of the services provided at the Centres, staff are constantly exposed to the virus.

THE WAY FORWARD

As the Unit looks ahead, the intent is to ensure adherence to a 12-week stay for all children received into care. This is in keeping with the Authority's legislative mandate and an attempt to improve efficiency of the operations of the Child Support Centres.

The Unit hopes to establish specialised Reception Centres which will be staffed and resourced to treat with the following populations:

- Girls 0-12 years (Imminent Danger - lower level security)
- Girls 13-17 years (Secure accommodation facility/Vocational programmes. Age appropriate therapeutic programmes/Mentorship programmes)
- Boys 0-12 years (Imminent Danger - lower level security)
- Boys 13-17 years (Secure accommodation facility/Vocational programmes. Age appropriate therapeutic programmes/Mentorship programmes)

Given the limited resources available, it is hoped that alternative spaces can be obtained for children with severe physical disabilities, mental disabilities, unaccompanied migrants (male and female), pregnant/teenage mothers and Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS).

CHILD JUSTICE

The Authority’s legislative mandate towards Children in Conflict with the Law involves supporting the nation’s child justice framework by adopting a rehabilitative, restorative, and less retributive approach to child offenders. The Child Justice Unit (CJU) is tasked with this mandate and executes it by providing support to minors who are engaged by the judicial system. Staffed with professionals with an intricate understanding of child protection concerns and juvenile justice procedures, the Unit supports Children in Conflict with the Law and Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS). Children in Conflict with the Law are those who have been arrested for a criminal offence, while Children in Need of Supervision are brought to the attention of the Court through an application made by the child’s adult caregiver, that the child has been displaying challenging behaviours.

The following graphical presentation represents the achievement of the Unit over the reporting period.

KPI (1) PROCESS 60 PERCENT OF COURT ORDERS RECEIVED PER MONTH

The Unit maintained an average of 85 percent for its KPI to process 60% of Court Orders received for any given month. The Unit processed 2,956 Court Orders for the period under review.

Orders Processed for Fiscal 2020

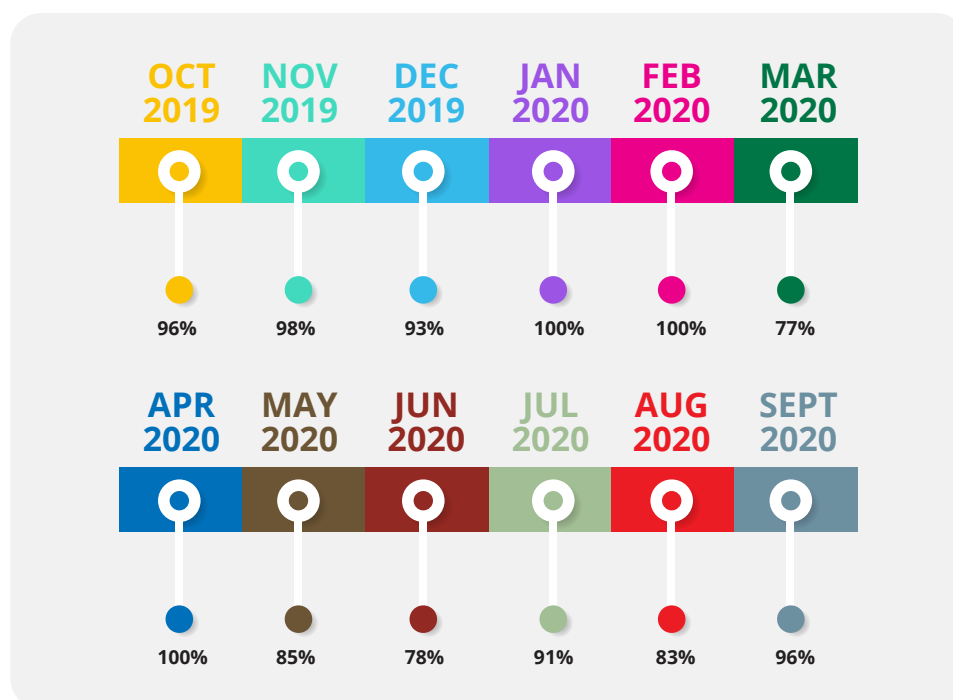


Figure 24: Court Orders Processed by the Child Justice Unit

KPI (2) PROCESS 40 PERCENT OF COURT INSTRUCTED EMERGENCY REQUESTS PER MONTH

The Child Justice Unit surpassed its KPI to achieve a 40 percent processing rate for the completion of Court Orders for Fiscal 2020. The Unit responded to 194 emergency requests

Emergency Request Compliance

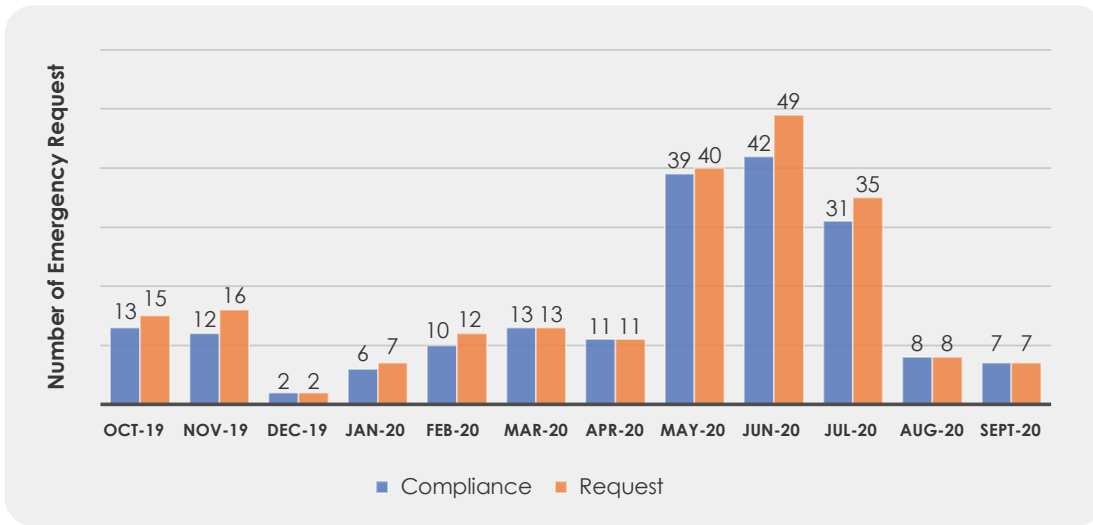


Figure 25: Emergency Request Compliance by the Child Justice Unit

KPI (3) COMPLETE 10 PERCENT OF OUTSTANDING ASSESSMENT FOR FISCAL 2020

CJU surpassed its KPI to complete 10 percent of all outstanding assessments. These assessments include Juvenile Inventory for Functioning, Youth Level Service Case Management Inventory (Screener Research Version) & Youth Level Service Case Management Inventory YLSCMI 2.0). A total of 187 assessments were completed for the Fiscal.

Assessments Completed

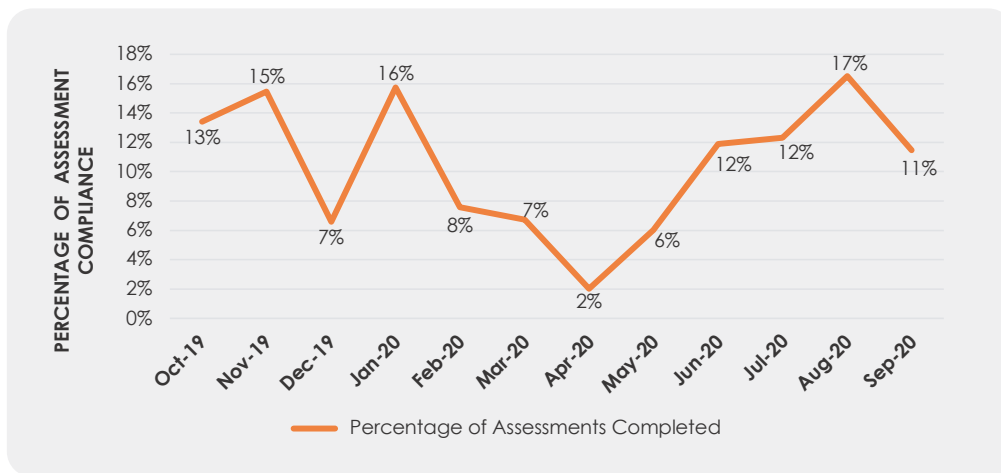


Figure 26: Assessments Completed by the Child Justice Unit

KPI (4) MAINTAIN AN 80 PERCENT ATTENDANCE TO COURT MATTERS FOR FISCAL 2020

The Unit surpassed its KPI of 80% attendance to Court instructed appearances for 11 months in the Fiscal Year. CJU appeared in 667 matters for the Fiscal Year. It must be noted that there was a major reduction in Court appearances in September 2020 due to clashes in Court matters, competing deliverables and staff absences as a result of required leave and the need to quarantine.

Court Instructed Appearances

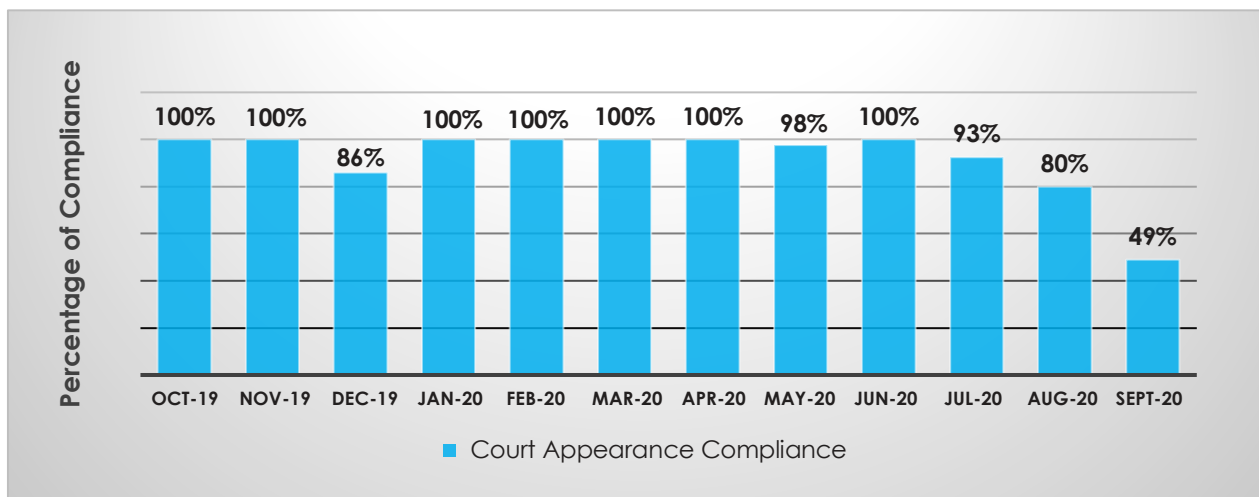


Figure 27: Court Instructed Appearances by the Child Justice Unit

KPI (5) COMPLETE 80 PERCENT OF TRANSPORTATION REQUEST FOR CHILDREN PER MONTH

CJU surpassed its KPI of completing 80% of transportation requests received each month and facilitated 250 transport requests for the period under review.

Transport Request VS Transport Request Facilitated



Figure 28: Transport Request vs Transport Request Facilitated

OTHER SUCCESSES

In order to effectively serve the children who came to its attention, the Child Justice Unit managed the development of a Virtual Assessment Guideline, which is aimed at maintaining the integrity of the team's international Assessment tools (Juvenile Inventory for Functioning, Youth Level Service Case Management Inventory (Screener Research Version) & Youth Level Service Case Management Inventory YLSCMI 2.0).

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The Child Justice Unit's operation was significantly impacted by the onset of the pandemic. While there are already limited intervention service providers, Children in Need of Supervision and those in Conflict with the Law faced additional challenges when the Court closed its physical doors and intervention programmes. Although the Court quickly resumed in the virtual world, the further reduction in support services significantly affected the at-risk population. The closure of additional support services including school (both traditional and vocational), COVID-19 protocols at health facilities and police stations, and the closure of other intervention service providers impacted the team's ability to provide much needed service to the required population.

The stay at home measures, though designed to keep the nation safe, proved particularly challenging when treating with the at-risk population as the limited support services available, stymied the progress that some families made with children with challenging behaviours prior to the pandemic and contributed to increased placement breakdown in others. Additionally, technological requirements to conduct assessment virtually proved challenging for some clients.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Unit will continue to support Children in Conflict with the Law and Children in Need of Supervision. The team hopes to implement a Case Management approach to treating with Children in Conflict with the Law so that proactive steps can be taken to reduce the risk of recidivism and provide the necessary support this population needs. The Child Justice Unit will continue to build capacity within the families of children brought to the attention of the Authority, so they can effectively treat with challenges, as they arise.



CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO



FOSTER CARE, ADOPTION AND COMMUNITY RESIDENCES

Additional core functions of the Authority include the placement of children, utilising the following pathways:

- Foster Care, which is an alternative care option that provides a temporary living arrangement for children who are not able to live with their birth families due to various circumstances.
- Adoption, which is the legal transfer of all parental rights and responsibilities for a child from that child’s legal parents (birth parents or adoptive parents) to another person or persons, referred to as the adopter.
- Community Residences, which can be designated as either a Children’s Home or Rehabilitation Centre. A Rehabilitation Centre will be used to house children in conflict with the law.

The following highlights the key achievements of the Authority during Fiscal 2020 in meeting its legislative functions in relation to these areas:

FOSTER CARE FUNCTION

The Foster Care system which is managed by the Authority, seeks to promote the wellbeing of the child by taking reasonable steps to prevent abuse and promote contact between the child and his or her biological parents or any persons with parental responsibility.

The following graphical presentation represents the achievement of the Unit over the reporting period.

KPI (1) MONITOR FOSTER PROVIDERS AND CHILDREN IN THEIR CARE TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH ESTABLISHED REGULATIONS

Foster Care

Monitoring of Foster Care Providers and Children in their Care

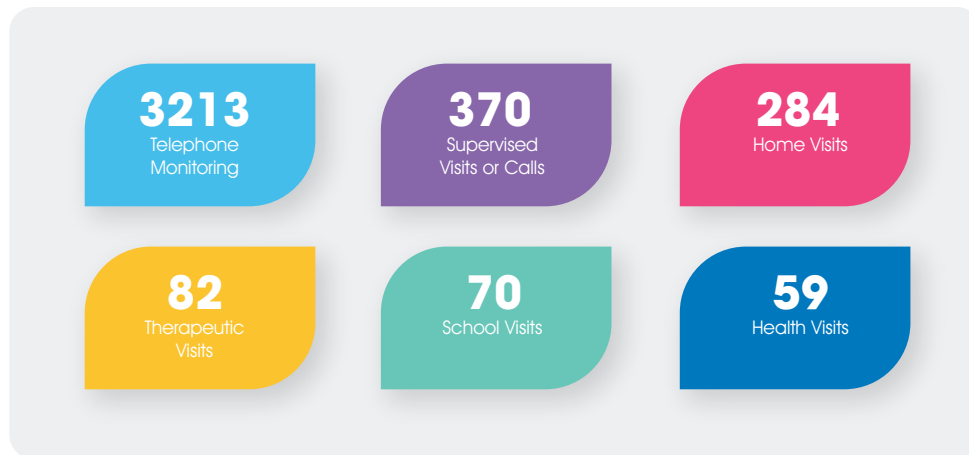


Figure 29: Monitoring of Foster Care Providers and Children

With best interest considerations as the foundation of all decisions, the Foster Care Unit conducted monitoring visits of the children in the system to ensure that placements promoted their wellbeing. The Unit conducted 284 home/virtual monitoring visits and 70 school visits, in addition to the 370 supervised access visits that allow children in care to maintain contact with their siblings, birth families and other persons connected to them. The Unit also facilitated 3,213 telephone calls to foster care providers, which increased significantly during the initial COVID-19 lockdown.

KPI (2) FACILITATE AT LEAST ONE (1) SENSITISATION PER MONTH

Foster Care Sensitisation/Outreach

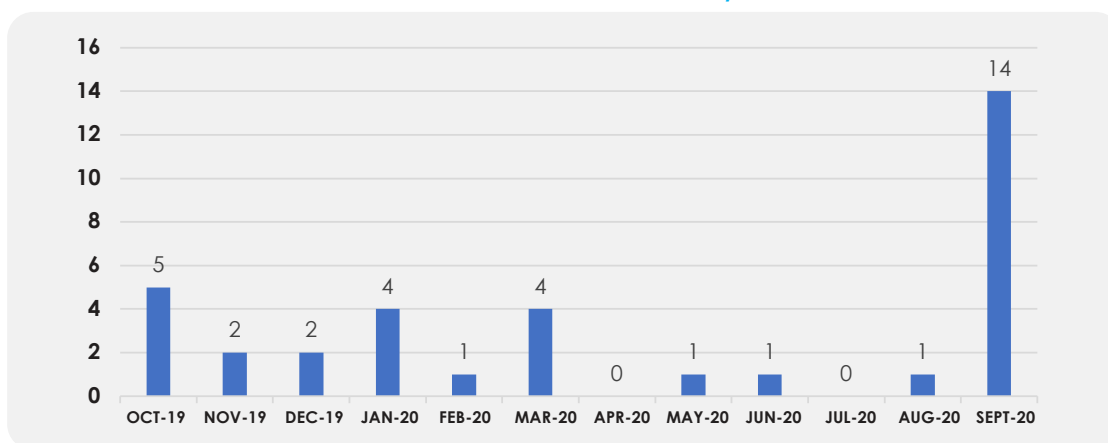


Figure 30: Foster Care Sensitisations

In an effort to increase the pool of Foster Care providers, as mandated in Section 30 of the Children’s Community Residence, Foster Care and Nurseries Act Chapter 46:04, the Unit facilitated 36 sensitisation sessions to various stakeholders, including the general public. This thrust resulted in 11 new approved Foster Care providers for the reporting period.

KPI (3) APPROVE 1 – 2 NEW FOSTER CARERS PER MONTH

Assessments and Approvals

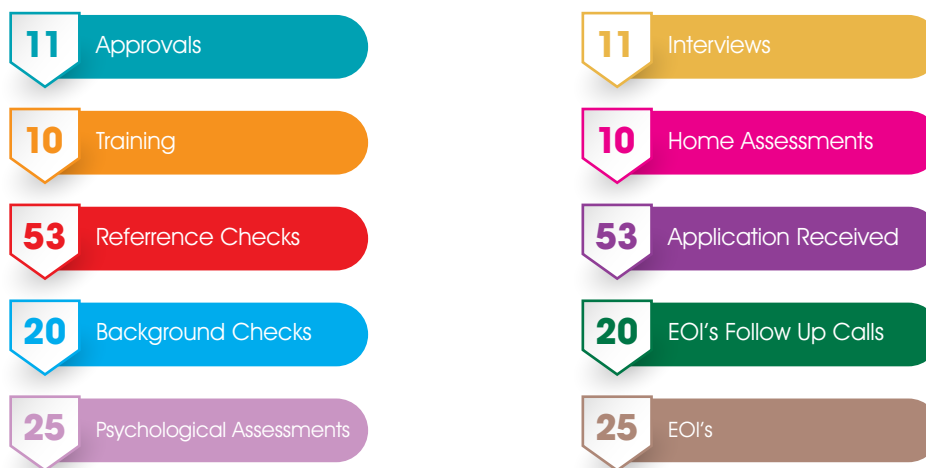


Figure 31: Assessments and Approvals of Foster Care Providers

While attempts are being made to increase the pool of foster carers, the Unit facilitates new applications through rigorous assessments, interviews, background checks and training. While the Unit was not able to meet the KPI of 1 or 2 new foster carers per month, the data highlights the work that went into meeting the target KPI, which resulted in 11 new foster carers.

KPI (4) 15 PERCENT REINTEGRATION ON CHILDREN WITH BIRTH FAMILIES OR LONG-TERM PLACEMENT OPTION.

One of the guiding principles of the Authority is that children thrive best in family environments. With this in mind, the Unit facilitated the placement of 42 children with foster carers and reintegrated 7 children with either their birth families or Fit Persons.

SUCCESES

The Unit partnered with the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force to conduct targeted sensitisations throughout its divisions across Trinidad and Tobago. This was done to attract a population who may be willing to provide care for children with behavioural issues.

The Unit also successfully approved three foster parents in Tobago and facilitated the placement of three children in their care. This was a major accomplishment for the Unit given that these three parents are the first approved foster carers in Tobago since the Authority became operational in 2015. Another success was the adoption of two foster children by their foster parents.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The approval of new foster carers was impacted given the restrictions and safety protocols implemented to slow the spread of the virus. Further, the monitoring of children in the care of foster providers was reduced and limited to telephone or video monitoring. Many foster parents were impacted financially by COVID-19 lockdown measures, as such the Unit was able to arrange the donation of items such as grocery hampers, toys, books, clothing, furniture and appliances to those most in need. With regard to outreach activities, while the Foster Care Unit was not able to physically conduct in-person sensitisation sessions, efforts were made to conduct these virtually. Of the 20 sessions facilitated, 7 were conducted virtually. This allowed a wider audience to participate in the sessions.

THE WAY FORWARD

For the next Fiscal, the Foster Care Unit intends to explore more targeted ways of recruitment to attract specialist Foster Care providers. The Unit will also explore avenues through the social sector to access appropriate and possibly free therapeutic intervention and specialist services for both foster children and foster parents.

The Unit will also be exploring the possibility of facilitating requests from Foster Care providers who wish to consider Adoption, particularly of the children who have been in the system for a prolonged period. While there have been several discussions, the Unit will pursue the idea of staff of the Authority providing Foster Carer services, and the regularisation of kinship foster carers.

ADOPTION

Adoption refers to the act by which an adult formally becomes the guardian of a child and incurs the rights and responsibilities of a parent. At the conclusion of the formal process, a legal relationship between child and guardian will have formed. Therefore, it can be considered a socio-legal process of giving a permanent family to a child whose parents have voluntarily or involuntarily given up their parental rights.

The Adoption Unit receives applications from prospective adopters, conducts investigations on prospective adopters for consideration by the Court and makes recommendations to the Court as to whether the adoption is in the best interest of the child.

KPI (1) AN AVERAGE OF 2 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE UNIT TO THE ADOPTION COMMITTEE PER MONTH.

The Unit was able to achieve and surpass this.

KPI (2) 75% HOME STUDY REPORTS COMPLETED WITHIN 3 MONTHS OF INITIATION. THE UNIT HAS NOT MET THIS KPI

The Unit has not met the completion of 75% of Home Study reports. The factors which impacted KPI (2) achievements were the backlog of persons to be referred for psychological assessments, the delay in submission of supporting documents by Applicants, inadequate human resources in the Unit, the delay in resumption of referrals for background checks, with the new service provider.

Home Study Reports Completed for the period Oct. 2019 - Sept. 2020

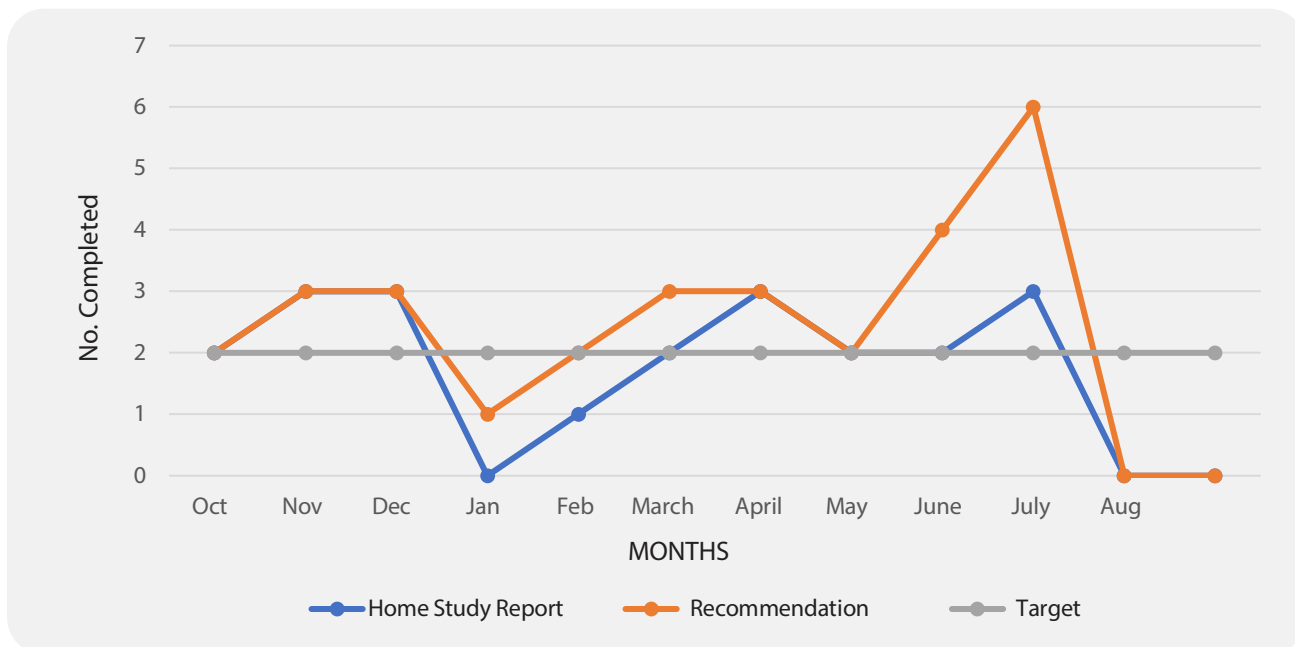


Figure 32: Home Study Reports Completed

OTHER SUCCESSES

During the period under review, 13 Adoption Orders were granted. Four (4) Orders were granted for closed adoptions; where there is no relationship between the biological parents and the prospective adoptive parents. During this type of adoption, the child is matched with the prospective adoptive parent by the Authority according to their child profile. Nine Orders were granted for open adoptions; where there is a relationship between the biological parents and the prospective adoptive parent.

The Unit was able to utilise technology to facilitate its first virtual interaction session during the COVID-19 pandemic, in collaboration with the Management of Couva Children's Home for a possible adoption. The Community Residence provided a private space, use of internet access, as well as a large screen television. The sessions progressed well as the (prospective adoptive parents) PAPs and the children engaged naturally, despite the mode of the session.

In October 2018, the Adoption Unit embarked on a project to gather demographic data and social history on children in nine Community Residences (CR) in Trinidad to determine their suitability as candidates for adoption. Given the colossal undertaking of a project of this nature, the assistance of Social Work students on practicum placement from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine was utilised for the duration of the project.

The second phase of the project commenced in October 2019, where social enquires were conducted to locate parents/guardians to obtain consent which would facilitate an application to the Court for a freeing order to declare the child available for adoption.

In December 2019, social enquiries were completed for Couva Children's Home and of the eight children identified by the CR, seven were potential candidates for adoption. Out of this seven, a sibling group of two was matched with a PAP and one child was recommended for the filing of an application to free him for adoption. Regarding the four other children, further enquiries are required. One (1) child was referred to Child and Family Services Unit for possible reintegration.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The onset of the global pandemic of COVID-19 in March 2020 resulted in the development of a remote arrangement roster for the Unit where the team worked two days in office and three days from home. The pandemic caused the suspension of psychological assessments by psychological service providers and adoption processes which required face-to-face contact such as interaction sessions and physical assessments of the applicant's home. The use of technology such as Zoom and WhatsApp were adopted to conduct clinical interviews, interaction sessions, home assessments and eventually psychological assessments. Despite the pandemic, the Unit continued to process applications utilising strict safety protocols of wearing masks, sanitising and physical distancing of six feet apart.

Subsequent to the aforementioned success on the CR project, the conduct of further social enquiries resumed in February 2020 when the practicum students returned in their second semester. At that time, eight relatives were located and interviews were scheduled with them, however they did not attend. The COVID-19 pandemic also affected the continuation of the project due to the closure of schools/universities by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago on March 16, 2020 which remained closed as of September 30, 2020, so the practicum students were not able to facilitate the social enquiries.

THE WAY FORWARD

It is envisioned that in the next Fiscal, the Unit will be effectively staffed to process applications and make way for the achievement of KPI (2) - 75% of home study reports within three months of initiation. The conduct of psychological assessments for all applicants has proven to be quite costly and time consuming. It is projected that the Authority can cut this expenditure through the completion of the assessments for closed applications and in the open application on a case by case basis if a concern/risk is flagged by the CSA. These applicants will be obligated to bear the cost for the psychological assessment. It would require the Authority to develop and utilise a referral listing of psychological service providers.

Adopting a child can be a life changing event and as such the establishment of a support group for adoptive parents where PAPs can come together to share experiences and advice would indeed be beneficial to the adopter and the adoptees. The completion of the second phase of the CR project is critical to the development of a pool of children who would be available for adoption, thus minimising the wait time for approved Prospective Adoptive Parents on the list of Suitable persons. Finally, the structured roster system of one office day, one field day, two interview days and one report writing day, in addition to the use of technology in the processing of adoption applications will be continued.

LICENSING AND MONITORING FUNCTION (COMMUNITY RESIDENCES)

The Licensing and Monitoring Unit is the regulatory arm within the Authority whose function is to license and monitor Community Residences throughout Trinidad and Tobago. The Unit's licensing and monitoring process is guided by the Children's Community Residences, Foster Care and Nurseries Act, No. 65 of 2000 and the Community Residence Regulations Chap 46:04. The Unit also has been assigned the responsibility of identifying placement options at Children's Homes for children who need to be received into care by the Authority.

The following represents the achievement of the Unit over the reporting period.

KPI (1) TO ISSUE A LICENCE TO COMMUNITY RESIDENCES TO OPERATE

The Licensing and Monitoring Unit conducted seven (7) formal inspections. From this, three (3) residences were issued a license for a period of two years and one was provided with a conditional Residence Licence.

The graph below identifies the Status of Licensing of the Homes.

Status of Licensing

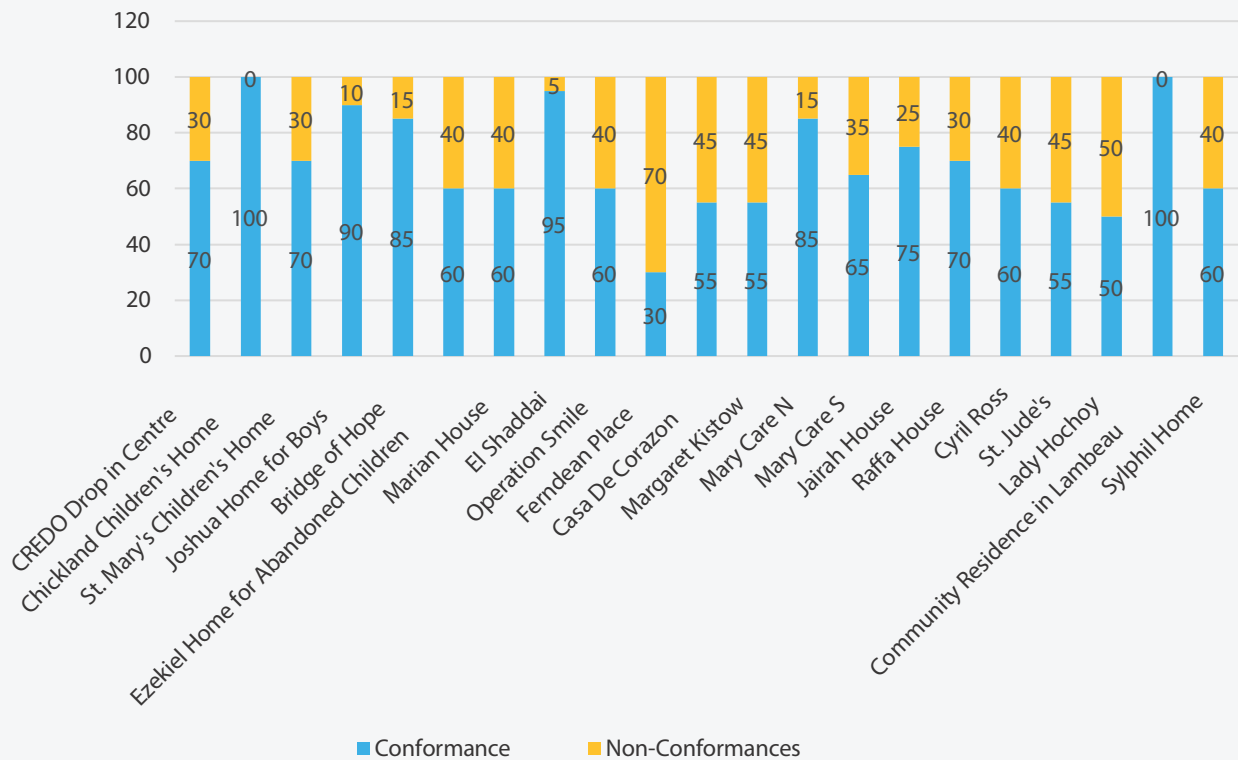


Figure 33: Status of Licensing

KPI (2) TO CONDUCT MONITORING VISITS OF COMMUNITY RESIDENCES

Monitoring Visits

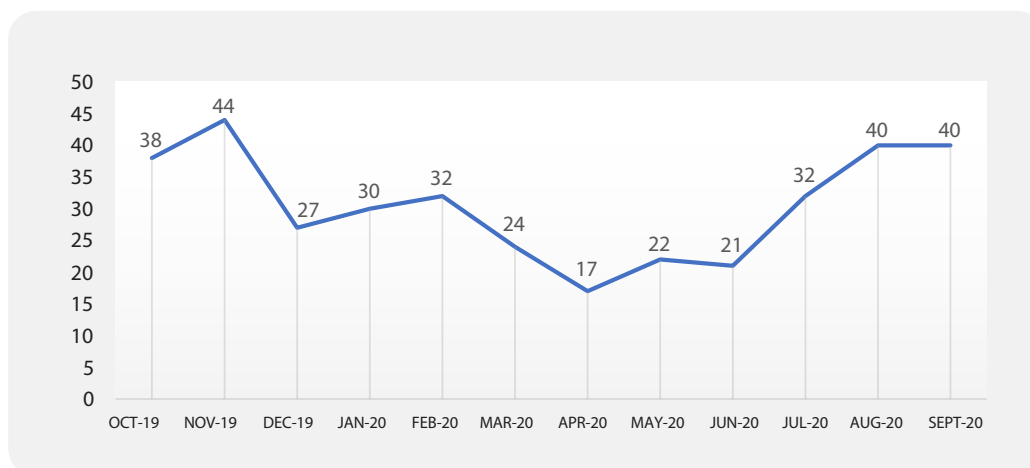


Figure 34: Monitoring Visits Completed at Children's Homes

During the reporting period, the main focus of the Unit continued to conduct monitoring visits of the 39 existing Children's Homes and 2 Rehabilitation Centres throughout the country. Within the reporting period, the Unit conducted 367 routine monitoring visits to ensure that facilities met standards of care, as set out in the Regulations.

The Licensing and Monitoring Unit also conducted 37 additional visits to Children's Homes and Community Residences based on complaints received. Further, the Unit facilitated the placement of 175 children in Community Residences and Children Homes throughout the country.

SUCCESES

Prior to the pandemic, the Unit conducted bi-annual meetings with Managers of Children's Homes and the Children's Home Association of Trinidad and Tobago to discuss updates in regulations and safety guidelines for the wellbeing of the children in their care. The Unit facilitated the formation of a Multi-Ministerial Committee for the remodeling and licensure of the Cyril Ross Nursery. Additionally, the Unit collaborated with the United Way organisation to seek financial assistance for Community Residences that could not be licensed due to a lack of funding.

The L&M Unit also collaborated with the Health Education Division of the Ministry of Health to develop COVID-19 Infection, Prevention and Control Guidelines for Children's Homes and Residential Care Facilities. Sensitisations were also facilitated virtually with Children's Homes on the COVID-19 guidelines to identify challenges experienced and to provide solutions. This was necessary given the risk posed to children as well as staff of the Homes.

The team also commenced the Nursery Gap Analysis Project with the aim of registering and licensing nurseries. A review of all nurseries began and field research commenced on February 10th, 2020. During this Fiscal, Field Researchers completed a total of 141 research questionnaires in Trinidad and 25 in Tobago.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic caused reduced services and negatively impacted the licensing process for many of the Homes, as there were delays in public health and fire inspections. The restructured operations by the Public Health Department in light of COVID-19, postponed the expected licensing dates of many Homes.

One of the responsibilities of the Licensing and Monitoring Unit is to identify spaces within Children Homes where children can be placed. However, the demand for placement was far greater than the availability of space. This was more pronounced with specific groups of children such as Children in Need of Supervision (CHINS), children with disabilities, victims of trafficking and children with poor mental health.

The COVID-19 pandemic also caused changes in the intake policies at Children’s Homes which made placement more challenging, as children were now required to be quarantined for 7-14 days prior to placement. Further, in-person monitoring of Homes was a major challenge as the Homes stopped visits as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Nurseries project, which was scheduled to come on stream in Fiscal 2021 was also halted, as a result of the pandemic. The physical capacity of Children’s Homes was maximised at 740 beds in this reporting period. In mid-2020, two homes temporarily closed for a few weeks to conduct renovations to meet Public Health certification for Licensing.

During the period under review number of children at the Homes continued to fluctuate with the maximum being 674 in October 2019 and the minimum being 635 children in September 2020. There were also fluctuations in the physical capacity of the Children’s Homes which ranged from 748 to 727 beds. Percentage occupancy reached 90% for five of the months with the lowest at 83%. Both Occupancy and Capacity were impacted by the temporary closure of Homes for the purpose of renovations to meet Public Health certification for Licensing. However, the impact on occupancy was as a result of a number of other issues. Most significant was the staffing constraints as the Homes continue to experience challenges in their operations with limited staff. This was compounded by the restructuring which they were required to engage in, as part of their COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines.

There also continues to be a dearth of available spaces and Homes for special populations such as children with disabilities, poor mental health and adolescent males in Need of Supervision. The Authority continues to advocate on their behalf.

Occupancy and Capacity of Children’s Home in Trinidad and Tobago for the period Oct. 2019 – Sept. 2020

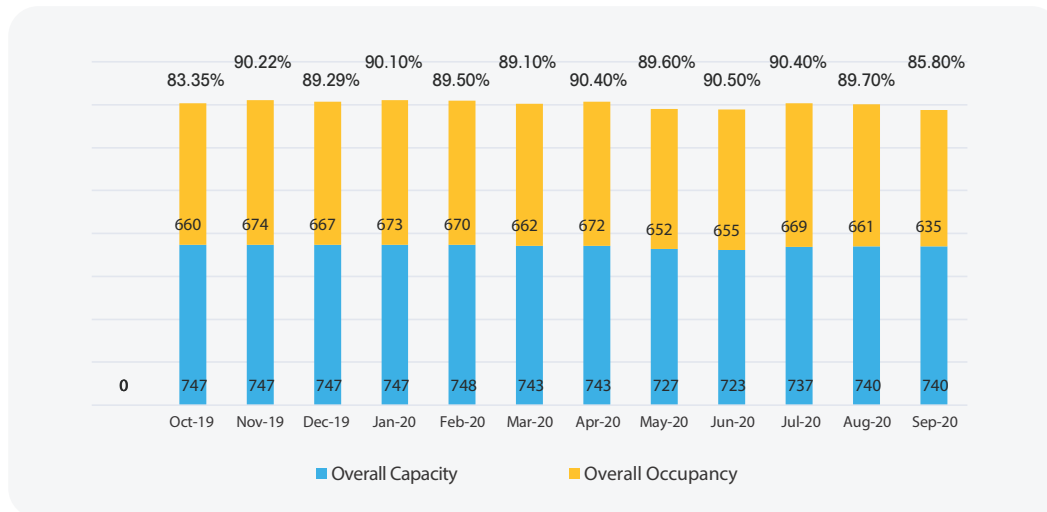


Figure 35: Occupancy and Capacity of Children's Homes

THE WAY FORWARD

The Licensing and Monitoring Unit is committed to its mandate to license and monitor Homes in Fiscal 2021. The Unit intends to increase its advocacy efforts for the establishment of a facility for CHINS. Since the closure of the St. Michael's School for Boys and the establishment of the Children Court, an increased number of children are being received into residential care, whose behaviour require a specialised facility that will not only house the residents but engage them in rehabilitative work. This is necessary so that children can be reintegrated with their families and become contributing members of society.

The Unit also intends to advocate for the establishment of a facility that treats with children who have special needs. Currently there are no facilities for children with mental health disabilities, as such, children under this category are being cared for in facilities not designed for their specific needs. Further, it is hoped that consultation would be actioned between partnering Ministries to coordinate the continuation of the Nurseries Gap Analysis for the Licensing of Nurseries.

TOBAGO OPERATIONS



TOBAGO OPERATIONS

During the period, Tobago's first three foster carers were approved and one Adoption application was processed from persons living on the island. Further strategies are being pursued to increase placement opportunities. Online public education sessions on Foster Care and Adoption attracted significant participation by Faith-Based Organisations in Tobago.

The Tobago Child Support Centre operated at over-capacity, as a steady increase in the number of CHINS applications continued and placement challenges were experienced. The demand for placement in Tobago is diverse and includes, children with disabilities, Children In Need of Supervision (CHINS), children in conflict with the law, children with behavioural challenges, children with poor mental health, care and protection.

Existing Community Residences cater mainly to care and protection needs, therefore, the Tobago Child Support Centre took up the burden of caring for children with special needs and CHINS. Of the three Community Residences in Tobago, one – Probation Hostel - was licensed, while the remaining two were at 85% and 75% completion, respectively, toward licensure. In addition, inadequate resources for interventions for children in care, negatively impacted the ability to reintegrate them successfully.

While meetings were held with stakeholders regarding outstanding jurisdictional issues and the delegation of forensic medicals, as outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Authority and the Tobago House of Assembly, these issues remain to be determined. As a result, forensic medicals were performed at the Tobago Regional Assessment Centre. Forensic interviewers from Trinidad conducted the interviews in Tobago as there are no trained forensic interviewers in Tobago. This created the additional costs of airfare, pending arrangements to secure forensic training.

In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, service to clients across various Units – Investigation, Assessment and CFSU, slowed down as the majority of people were not willing to be interviewed in-person. For the Investigation Unit, Child Justice Unit and the Child and Family Services Unit, field work continued, however, school visits were not possible, whereas the Assessment Centre's operations transitioned to mostly online. The impact of increased online service delivery was mixed as the Court moved to accepting electronic filing and electronic signatures for Tobago matters which made for more efficient and timely transmission of affidavits. However, servicing clients presented challenges, as clients did not have access to internet and/or devices on which to facilitate the online interventions.

While client attendance increased when lockdown restrictions were lifted, client attendance at appointments remained low, in some instances. With increased reliance on online delivery, staff accessed training and team building. In a few instances, Assessment staff were available to lend support online to de-escalate situations at the CSC, which is potentially an area for development to increase the efficiency of services.

Residents at the CSC were able to transition fairly smoothly to the new normal of accessing education online, as more than 80% of them were already attending school. Children who were not registered at school were able to piggyback off of the resources from children who were attending school.



CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

SUPPORT SERVICES

SUPPORT SERVICES

The Corporate Services Units of the Authority are critical in providing the requisite support needed to facilitate the work of the agency in the provision of services and interventions to children in need of care and protection.

The following are key achievements of the Corporate Services Units during Fiscal 2020:

FACILITIES, ADMINISTRATION AND HSSE FUNCTION

The Facilities, Administration and HSSE (FAHSSE) Department is the driving force behind the Authority's commitment to develop a culture embraced by all employees that mitigates risks to people, community and the environment. A key facet of this risk mitigation is an emphasis that goes beyond protecting human health, avoiding and preventing accidents and injuries, and minimising environmental impacts, but focuses on quality assurance and integrity. Given that HSSE is viewed as an integral component of the organisation's service, the Authority advocates the adoption of HSSE best practices through policies that are aligned with global industry standards and statutory obligations, which are then strictly and fairly enforced. In the pursuit of excellence in both HSSE and Facilities Management, the Unit ensures that the safety, security and wellbeing of all personnel and the conservation of resources are adhered to, at each facility,

KPI (1) 90 % EMERGENCY REQUESTS COMPLETED/RESPONDED TO WITHIN 24 HOURS

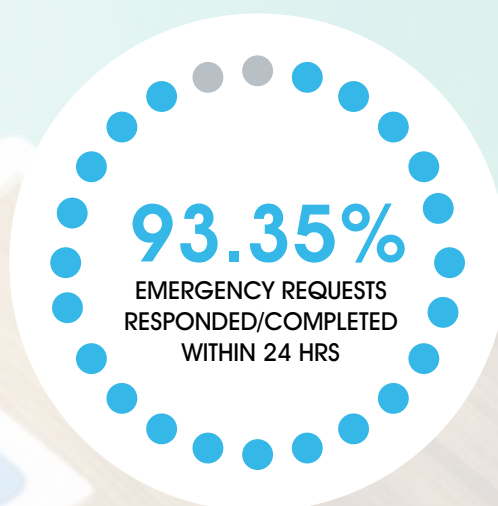


Figure 36: Emergency Requests Completed/ Responded in 24-Hours

The FAHSSE Department continued to surpass this stated KPI, averaging 93.35% within Fiscal 2019-2020.

KPI (2) 95% OF HSSE ISSUES RESOLVED/RESPONDED TO WITHIN 48 HOURS



Figure 37: Issues Resolved/ Responded to within 48-Hours

The FAHSSE Department continued to surpass this stated KPI over the reported period. With the increased sensitisation of staff and the no-tolerance approach to HSSE issues within the organisation, the Unit recorded an overall decrease of 58 percent in the quantum of emergency requests during Fiscal 2019-2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic, staff roster and FAHSSE preventative maintenance systems were factors that attributed to the decrease. This KPI of Total Number of Emergency Requests was introduced for the Unit in March 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Total Number of Emergency Requests (Mar. - Sept. 2020)

FAHSSE realised an overall 50% decrease in the quantum of emergency requests over the Fiscal 2019-2020. The current COVID-19 pandemic, staff roster and FAHSSE preventative maintenance systems are factors attributable to the decrease.

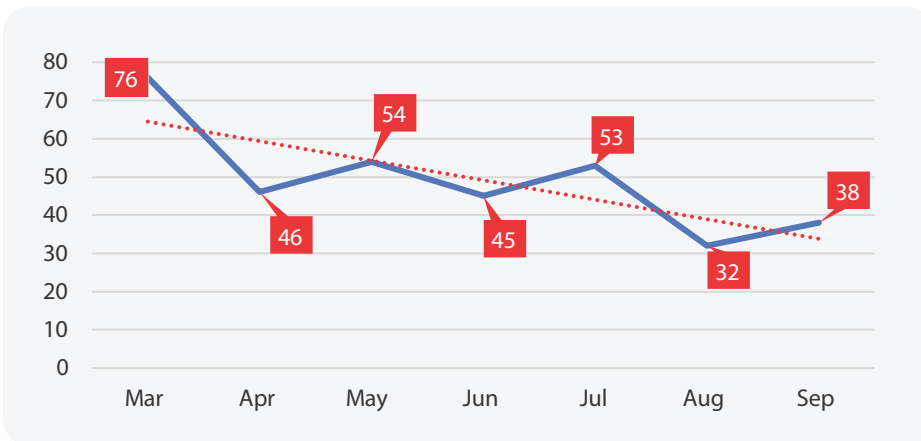


Figure 38: Number of Emergency Requests Received by FAHSSE

Additionally, FAHSSE recorded a 100 percent decrease in the quantum of critical incidents over the reporting period. The categorisation of critical incidents by HSSE is defined by OSHA.

Total Number of Critical Incidents (Mar. - Sept. 2020)

FAHSSE realised a 100% decrease in the quantum of Critical Incidents over the reporting period.

The categorisation of critical Incidents by HSSE are defined by OSHA.

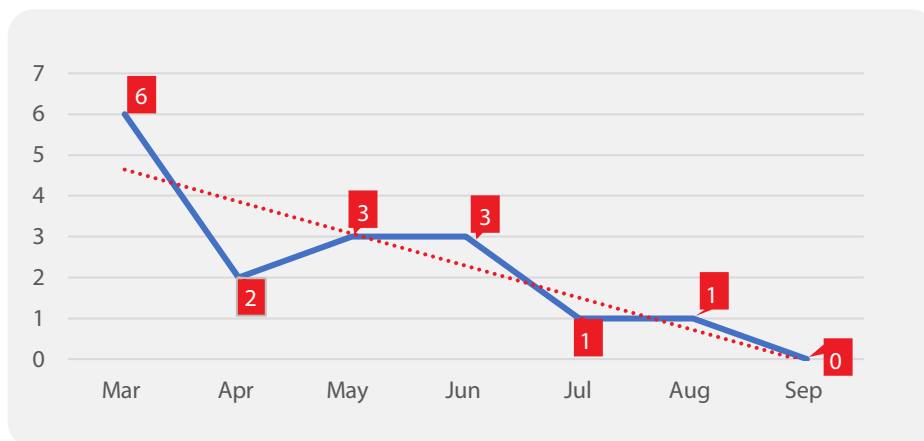


Figure 39: Number of Critical Incidents Recorded by FAHSSE

OTHER SUCCESSES

The Unit implemented an internal Security Force for the Authority's North Child Support Structure, which would provide increased service delivery, realise monthly cost savings, and reduce the occurrence of significant security breaches.

The Unit also managed the following:

- Development and execution of Risk Assessment and Response Plan for the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Development of an updated HSSE policy;
- Implementation of sustainability, recycling and environmental conservation measures throughout all facilities; and
- Establishment of a robust online Repair and Maintenance System for all facilities.

During the Fiscal, the Unit also developed Emergency Response Plans and Evacuation Maps for new facilities:

- Operationalisation of the South Child Support Centre
- Refurbishment of the North Child Support Centre
- Operationalisation of the Tobago Regional Office
- Operationalisation of the Chaguanas Assessment Centre

IMPACT OF COVID-19

COVID-19 changed the operating landscape of the FAHSSE Department in ways that could not have been predicted. FAHSSE still does the same work, albeit in a different environment and under different circumstances. One change was the redesign of the workplace to favour staff divergence and team decentralisation. FAHSSE shifted in a direction that's less focused on - maximising worker numbers – towards embracing reduced demand for physical office spaces, rethinking the layout of offices and contact with suppliers/contractors/clients/public, to create a safe, productive, and enjoyable environment for staff.

THE WAY FORWARD

For Fiscal 2020-2021 FAHSSE will focus on increasing the efficiency of its service delivery to staff, clients and facilities, reducing operating expenditure and bolstering performance by:

- Consolidating the Authority's Head Office location, to decrease monthly operating expenditure and mitigate security risks;
- Utilising cloud-based procurement management software to streamline purchase requests, maximise savings and control costs;
- Increasing fuel economy of fleet vehicles through utilisation of compressed natural gas systems;
- Automating current processes and consolidating documentation to online platforms;
- Optimising the value of the Department's human resources through targeted training;
- Improving communication across Units, Departments and end users, allowing for higher transparency;
- Increasing the use of data and analytics for predictive maintenance programmes and KPI achievement;
- Encouraging greater use of work-from-home and a mobile workforce to reduce workload stress and increase response time to emergencies.

FINANCE FUNCTION

Recurrent Income and Expenditure – Fiscal 2020

For Fiscal 2020, the Authority made a budget request for \$125.4Mn, however was allocated Recurrent funding of \$66.3Mn to cover its core expenses, as well as Foster Care and Adoption expenses. Based on its current staffing and other operating commitments, the Authority projected a significant Recurrent funding shortfall in Fiscal 2020 and consequently petitioned the Ministry of Finance to transfer its unutilised Development Programme Budget of \$4.6Mn to cover Recurrent expenses. The request was approved by the Ministry of Finance which resulted in revised Recurrent Estimates for 2020 of \$70.9Mn. Recurrent expenditure and commitments as at 30th September, 2020 amounted to \$81.7Mn, exceeding the budget by 15%.

The Authority received an approved budget allocation of \$0.257Mn in Fiscal Year 2020 to cover Adoption Board Expenses. Although the original budget request was made for 0.61Mn, no additional funding was approved in the 2020 Mid-Term Review. The full amount was received by September 30th 2020. Expenditure for the year ended September 30th, 2020 amounted to \$0.369Mn, which exceeded the allocated budget for the year by 43%.

With respect to Foster Care expenses, the Authority received an approved budget allocation of \$1.703Mn in Fiscal Year 2020. No additional funding was approved at the 2020 Mid-Term Review. Of this, 1.701Mn was received as at September 30th 2020, falling just short of the approved budget allocation. Expenditure and commitments for the year ended September 30th, 2020 amounted to \$1.861Mn, which exceeded the allocated budget for the year by 9%.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT at 30 September, 2020

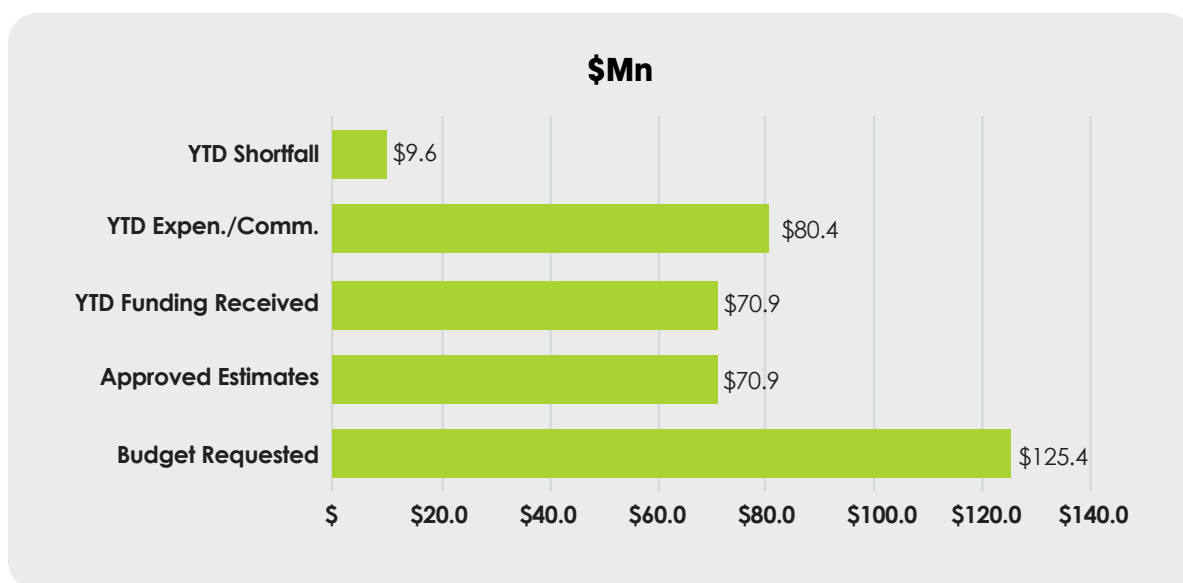


Figure 40: Financial Snapshot as of September 30, 2020

Development Programme (DP) Income and Expenditure - Fiscal 2020

DP funding of \$4.6Mn was allocated to the Authority in Fiscal 2020 - an increase of \$0.1Mn compared to Fiscal 2019. Due to the recurrent funding shortfall for Fiscal 2020, the Authority sought and received the approval of the Ministry of Finance to transfer the full DP budget of \$4.6Mn to Recurrent. As a result of this transfer, the planned DP project activity for Fiscal 2020 was put on hold.

- **Children's Authority Act Chapter 46:10, Section 48: Financial Control and Auditing**

With respect to the Financial Year ended September 30th, 2019, the Auditor General did not appoint an auditor to conduct the Authority's audit. However, the Authority was advised by the Auditor General's Office that consecutive audits for the 2019 and 2020 Fiscal Years will be conducted by Quarter 2 of the 2021 Fiscal Year.

- **Children's Authority Act Chapter 46:10, Section 49(1): Preparation of Financial Statements for Annual Report**

The Authority's unaudited financial statements for the Financial Year ended 30th September, 2020 were completed and are appended to this report.

Budget Estimates – Fiscal 2021

For Fiscal Year 2021, the Authority made a budget request of \$127.4Mn, however the approved estimate is for a total of \$69.8Mn. The projected expenditure amounts to \$ 82.8Mn. which is a shortfall of \$13Mn. The approved budget allocation will be divided as follows: Foster Care \$1.7Mn, Adoption \$0.258Mn and recurrent funding of \$ 67.8Mn. Note that the Adoption allocation of \$.258Mn was incorrectly allocated to the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services. Efforts are currently ongoing to retrieve these funds.

External Funding

The External Grants Fund was established in February 2020 under the Children's Authority Act, Chapter 46:10 for the purpose of receiving grants, donations and financial assistance from national and international organisations. For this Fiscal, funding was sourced to meet operational needs, which were heightened during the pandemic. Funding of \$.301Mn and \$.015Mn were received from Republic Bank Limited and the Massy Foundation respectively. The funds were used to purchase laptops computers, protective wear, sanitisation supplies and sanitisation of facilities to protect staff and children in care.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

CHALLENGES FACED AND SUCCESSES

In March 2020 the Authority was faced with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to ensure the organisation had the support that was required, staff rose to the challenge by ensuring that the organisation continued to operate efficiently. They operated remotely as well as visited the office, as required. The Authority ended Fiscal 2020 with an estimated funding shortfall of \$9.6Mn despite the transfer in July 2020 of the DP budget of \$4.6Mn to the recurrent line. The shortfall resulted in very little cash being available to make supplier payments after staff salaries, ISP payments and statutory obligations were met. As at 30th September, 2020, there is a significant Accounts Payable figure and outstanding payments of staff gratuity.

Solutions

The Authority continues to seek additional funding from the Government and external donors to support its COVID-19 efforts and specific project activities. Correspondence will also be dispatched to the Line-Ministry in October 2020 to advise of the Fiscal 2020 funding shortfall and to request that additional funding be made available to the Authority to meet the 2020 outstanding commitments.

During the pandemic, the Authority was able to secure donations from both Republic Bank Limited and Massy Foundation. The amounts received were \$0.301Mn from Republic Bank Limited and \$0.015Mn from Massy Foundation. These funds were used for the purchase of Laptop Computers, protective wear, sanitisation supplies, and sanitisation of facilities to protect both staff and the children in the care of the Authority.

SUCCESSSES

The Procurement and Finance Units supported the FAHSSE team in outfitting the new South Child Support Centre during the month of September. All arrangements were made and the facility was in operation within the timeline specified.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

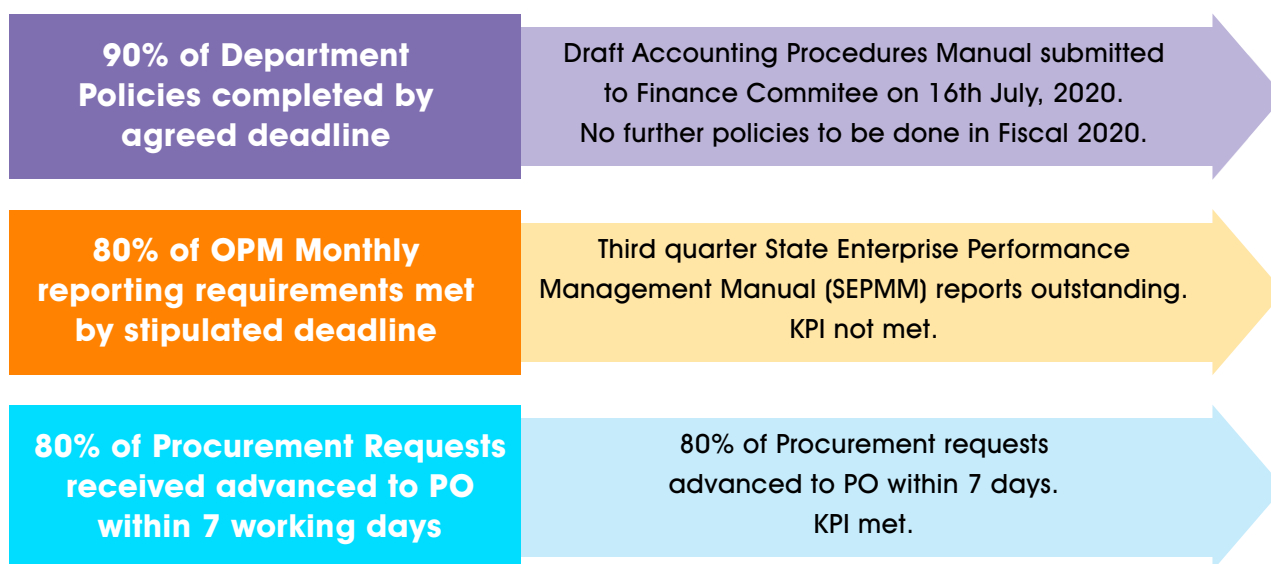


Figure 41: The Finance Unit's Key Performing Indicators

Special Projects/Policies

Prior to the onset of COVID-19, the Procurement Unit was engaged in acquiring an electronic requisition system which would allow for the electronic submission and approval of purchase requisitions by user departments and better monitoring of proposed spend against budget. The system will also facilitate more efficient tracking of purchase requests received. The proposals were received and evaluated prior to COVID-19 but the pilot testing has been delayed. That process has recommenced with a view to full implementation by the end of November 2020.

THE WAY FORWARD

For Fiscal 2021, the Authority has proposed eight Development Programme projects for funding at a total cost of \$8.2Mn to address deficiencies and increase efficiency.

The rapid growth of the Authority over the past five years has revealed the need to expand the IT Infrastructure including its network, telecommunications, records management and performance management systems. This Fiscal 2021 DP submission proposes four Information Technology projects intended to address these deficiencies and put the Authority on a stronger footing with respect to these systems, including to upgrade the Call Centre Case Management Information Systems – partially funded by UNICEF.

HUMAN RESOURCES FUNCTION

The Human Resources Unit is responsible for implementing HR best practices and procedures to facilitate the Authority's goals and objectives as outlined in the Authority's Strategic Plan. The key functions of the Unit are policy development, recruitment and selection, performance management, training and development, compensation and benefits administration and promoting employee work life balance, health and wellness.

Manpower Statistics

During the period under review, 52 employees were hired on contract with 29 employees exiting the Authority. The breakdown of staff hired for the reporting period is as follows:

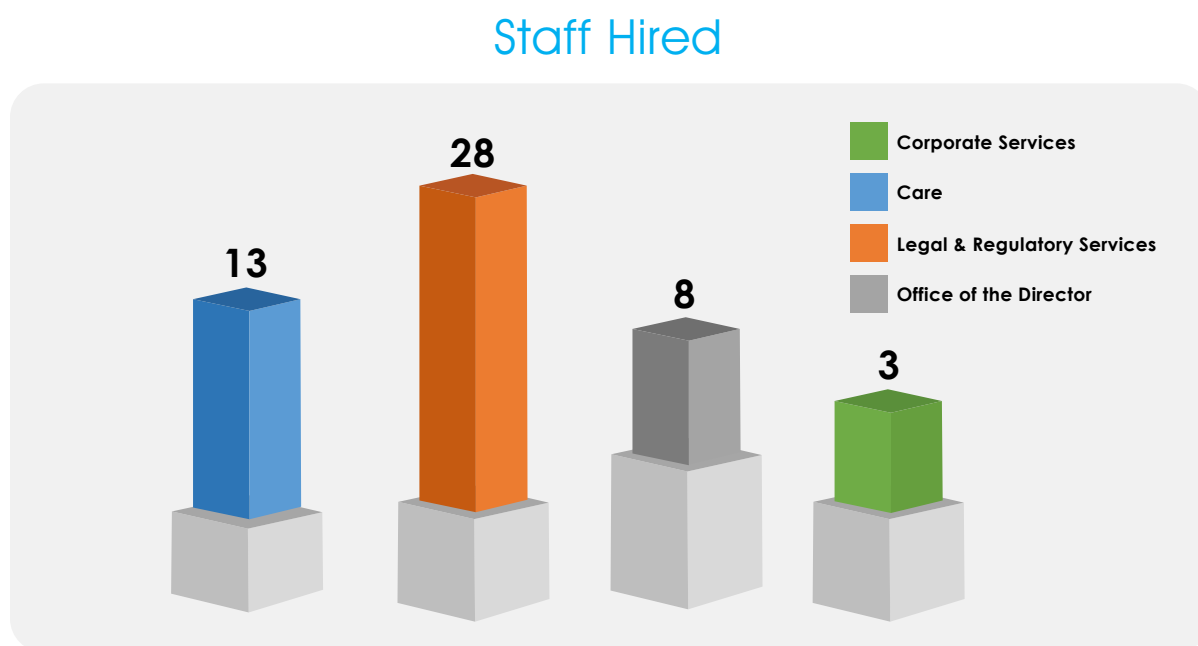


Figure 42: Staff Hired for Fiscal 2020

While there were 278 Fixed-Term employees at the end of Fiscal Year 2020, the Authority also had other classification of employees on staff, which included 51 On-The-Job Trainees, Associate Professionals, Interns and Practicum Students; and 42 Independent Service Providers. Therefore, the Authority's staff complement at the end of Fiscal Year 2020 totaled 371. The breakdown by staff type is represented in the illustrations below:

MANPOWER FY 2020

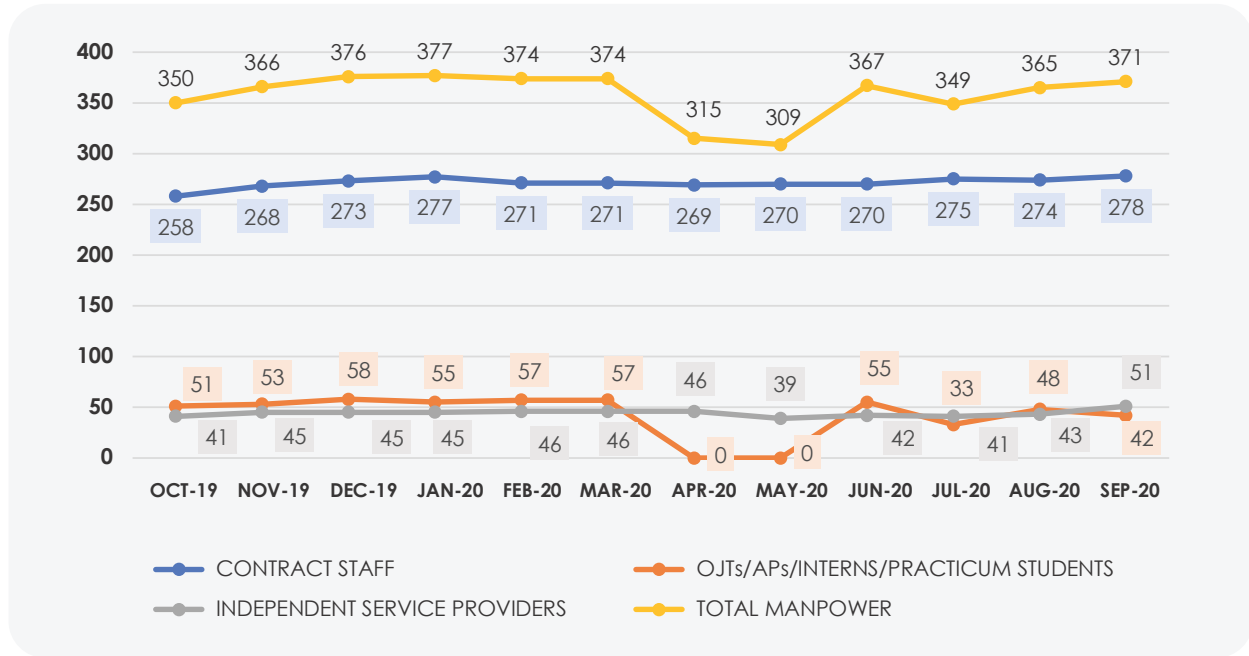


Figure 43: Manpower Resources for Fiscal 2020

MANPOWER HIRED

	OCT-19	NOV-19	DEC-19	JAN-20	FEB-20	MAR-20	APR-20	MAY-20	JUN-20	JUL-20	AUG-20	SEP-20
Contract Staff	258	268	273	277	271	271	269	270	270	275	274	278
OJTs/APs/Interns/Practicum Students	51	53	58	55	57	57	0***	0***	55	33	48	42
Independent Service Providers	41	45	45	45	46	46	46	29	42	41	43	51
Total Manpower	350	366	376	377	374	374	315	309	367	349	365	371

Table 2: Manpower Hired in Fiscal 2020

It must be noted that a new organisation structure was approved by the former Board of Management to support the Strategic Plan 2020-2023. This proposed structure is currently being reviewed by the Line-Ministry, Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs) and the Public Management Consulting Division (PMCD) of the Ministry of Public Administration.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A total of 362 staff were trained during Fiscal 2020. Training was conducted both internally and externally on the Legislation, Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Counter Terrorism Conference, HRPLUS/HRIS Training on Implementation of HRIS, Helping the Helper, Behaviour Management and De-escalation Training, Self Defense, The Role of the Company Secretary, In-house Performance Management and Industrial Relations Training, ILO Violence and Harassment in the Workplace and Improving HR's Strategic Value (Webinar). However, training slowed down drastically due to COVID-19. Despite the challenges, HR maintained its KPI by training 5% of the Authority's staff on a monthly basis.

Training Completed

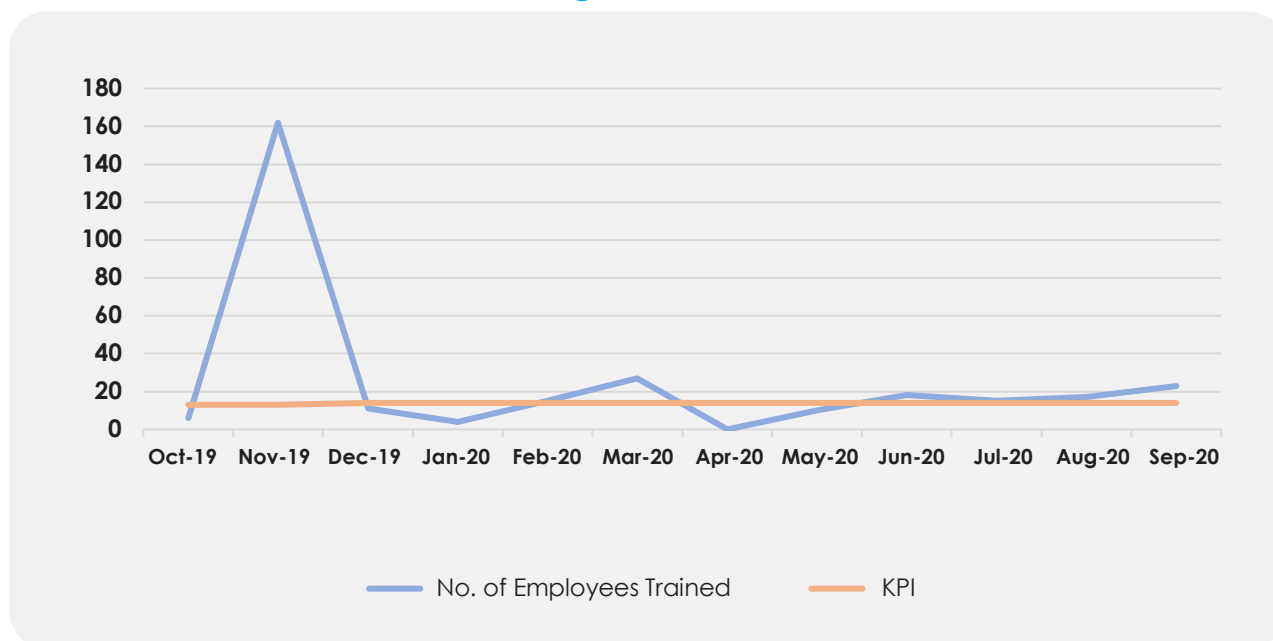


Figure 44: Training Completed by HR

SUCCESES

The HR Unit successfully completed its Vacation Leave Matrix and notified all employees with vacation leave balances in excess of 25 days to proceed on leave. Also, all employees who had acquired vacation leave from their previous Contract of Employment, were sent on vacation in keeping with the Authority's revised Leave Policy.

The HR Unit also successfully conducted a Qualification Exercise for staff, as well as completed 85% of the HRIS Modules which is due to be completed early in Fiscal 2021. With the implementation of the HRIS Programme, staff will benefit tremendously since they will be able to access all information pertaining to their leave and make request for job letters, among other things. The Unit's productivity is expected to increase from the implementation of the HRIS Programme since it will reduce the time it takes to recruit new staff, access leave balances and most importantly align the HR services with the organisation's 2021 Strategic Plan. Further, the Unit completed the revision of the Authority's Organisational Chart to reflect the Authority's operational Strategic Plan for the period 2021 to 2023.

THE WAY FORWARD

The HR Unit will continue to seek avenues to deliver cost effective training to staff by utilising internal expertise and leveraging on professional associations and networks to deliver training at discounted rates. The Unit will partner with the Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation to access training for staff with the aim of improving workforce performance. The Unit intends to align its services strategically to meet the needs of both internal and external stakeholders. This will be done by implementing a Manpower Plan for the Authority which will see a reduction in the time it takes for employees to be paid their Acting and Extra Duty Allowances as well as replacement of staff for various departments. Further, HR is at present revising its policies with a focus on a Reward and Recognition Plan for employees, Work-Life Balance initiatives and a flexible workforce. Finally, the Unit intends to embark on an employee retention strategy as 10.25% of the staff exited in Fiscal 2020.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

During Fiscal 2020, the Information Technology Unit was able to work with the functional Departments to complete the following projects:

- Digitisation of the old Adoption records on OnBase.
- Implementation of a Board Portal to facilitate board and committee meetings which has reduced the use of paper and improved security by centralising Board papers.
- A software solution (Sohema) for the management of Adoption applications.
- Improved backup solution which allows the backup of the Authority's virtual environment.

Meetings and collaboration between the Authority's remote locations have improved with the installation of video conferencing equipment at 3 locations and the implementation of Microsoft Teams in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic to facilitate additional virtual meetings.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

In direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic, IT was able to increase remote functionality with the deployment of additional laptops and increased VPN licenses. The Internet bandwidth at Head Office was upgraded and Microsoft Teams was implemented to allow all members to participate in online meetings and collaboration. The Child Support Centres were provided with devices to allow the children to participate in online learning. To assist the Registry team with social distancing, the Call Centre was decentralised to other locations to allow for remote working.

THE WAY FORWARD

Management of case records and keeping data secure continue to be the major objective of the Unit and a new case management software solution has been identified. In the next Fiscal key projects will include:

- Replacement of the Case Management software
- Selection and Implementation of Upgrade Call Centre solution for the Registry Unit
- Completion of the Disaster Recovery system
- Replacement of the Firewall

RESEARCH, PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION UNIT

The Research, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit is a core support function that furthers the legislative mandate and responsibilities of the Authority. It is responsible for implementing the research, planning, monitoring and evaluation agendas of the Authority and to review the effectiveness of the programmes and interventions administered by the Authority.

The work undertaken by the Unit supports the functions of the Authority through strategic planning, the development of key performance indicators that are in alignment with organisational goals and objectives; the monitoring and evaluation of the achievement of key performance indicators, strategic goals and objectives; policy development; data analysis; and research to assist in evidence-based decision making.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Unit's key performance indicators (KPIs) for Fiscal were:

1. 60% projects completed within agreed upon project schedules
2. 90% requests for immediate support and from Executive completed within timeframes
3. 90% request for support from internal teams completed within two weeks
4. 90% external requests completed within agreed timeframes
5. 90% departmental policies completed within agreed timeframes
6. Track and monitor the completion of departmental policies and develop the Authority's policy development work plan

Achievement of Q3 & Q4 KPIs

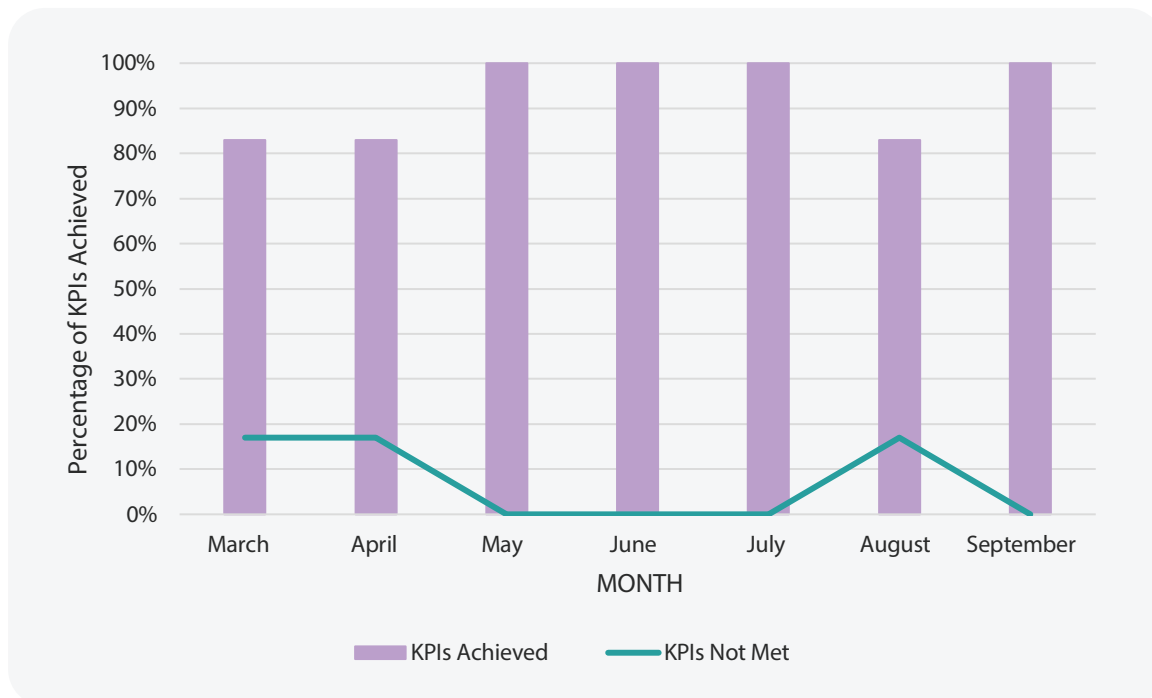


Figure 45: Achievement of Q3 & Q4 KPIs

OTHER SUCCESSES

The Unit successfully completed the comprehensive document outlining the Authority's Strategic Plan 2020-2023. The Strategic Plan 2020-2023, outlines the Authority's evolution, starting with its current state, examines its operating environment, and deliberately chooses the best strategy and priorities in developing the roadmap over the next three years and beyond. It proposes key transformative strategies the organisation will adopt to more efficiently and effectively deliver on its mandate to serve children in need of care and protection.

During Fiscal 2019-2020 the Department also continued to champion and develop the organisation's internal policy infrastructure, with the aim of streamlining and standardising internal processes and operations. This period also witnessed the completion of phase two of the Authority's National Baseline Study on Public Perceptions on Child Protection Issues in Trinidad and Tobago. The study aims at establishing baseline indicators for attitudes towards and perceptions of children, children's rights, children's values, child abuse and child protection as a platform for impact evaluation in future policy development. The final report of the study will be completed and ready for public publication in Fiscal 2020/2021 and will identify evidence highlighted in the study to support national planning and developmental processes including recommending policies, strategies, budgets and national legislative amendments to contribute to an enabling environment which prevents and mitigates against all forms of child abuse and maltreatment.

NATIONAL & EXTERNAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

In addition to supporting the legislative mandate and core services of the Authority, the Research, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit also supports the national child protection system by representing the interests and work of the Authority on the following external Committees:

- Inter-Ministerial Research Council
- Standing Review Committee for the T&T Equivalency Table for the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes
- National Child Policy Steering Committee
- National Children's Registry Steering Committee
- Committee to Establish Gender Focal Points within the Organisation

The regular meetings and work of these Committees, with the exception of the Inter-Ministerial Research Council, were postponed due to the impact and resulting restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

THE WAY FORWARD

Special Projects

The Research, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, during Fiscal 2019-2020, has also been engaging with United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) on areas of collaboration aimed at strengthening the national child protection system. During this Fiscal Year, the Unit was able to secure an agreement to partner with UNICEF on the PRIMERO Child Protection Case Management Software and the National Inter-Agency Child Abuse Protocol. UNICEF has agreed to fund both initiatives under the EU Spotlight Initiative in Trinidad and Tobago and will be supported by the UNICEF Technical Team. The approved funding allocation for both initiatives is Sixty-Thousand US Dollars (\$60,000).

National Inter-Agency Child Abuse Protocol and Child Protection Case Management Software

The National Inter-Agency Child Abuse Protocol as well as the Child Protection Information Management System Project were both initiated during Fiscal 2019-2020. The Research, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Department, as the key liaison between the Authority and UNICEF, is executing the project management roles for these projects. Project schedules plan that both projects will be completed and implemented during Fiscal 2020-2021.



CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Public Education and Communications Unit is responsible for making the public aware about the rights of the child, the role and mandate of the Authority and the child protection legislation. The Unit also focuses on informing children about how they can protect themselves from abuse, as well as inform families about their role in keeping children safe.

The following graphical presentation represents the achievement of the Unit over the reporting period.

KPI (1) CONDUCT THREE (3) SENSITISATIONS OR PUBLIC OUTREACHES PER MONTH

The Unit maintained a 96 percent performance average over the period under review.

COVID-19 certainly did affect the number of sensitisations the Authority would usually have per year, due to national health protocols implemented to prevent the spread of the virus. The Communications Unit sought to engage its various publics through the use of online platforms. However, it was noted that many organisations faced challenges related to connectivity, limited knowledge of the use of the various online platforms, security and access to a device. Nevertheless, the Authority was able to maintain, and in some instances, surpass its target for ten months of the year.

Sensitisations

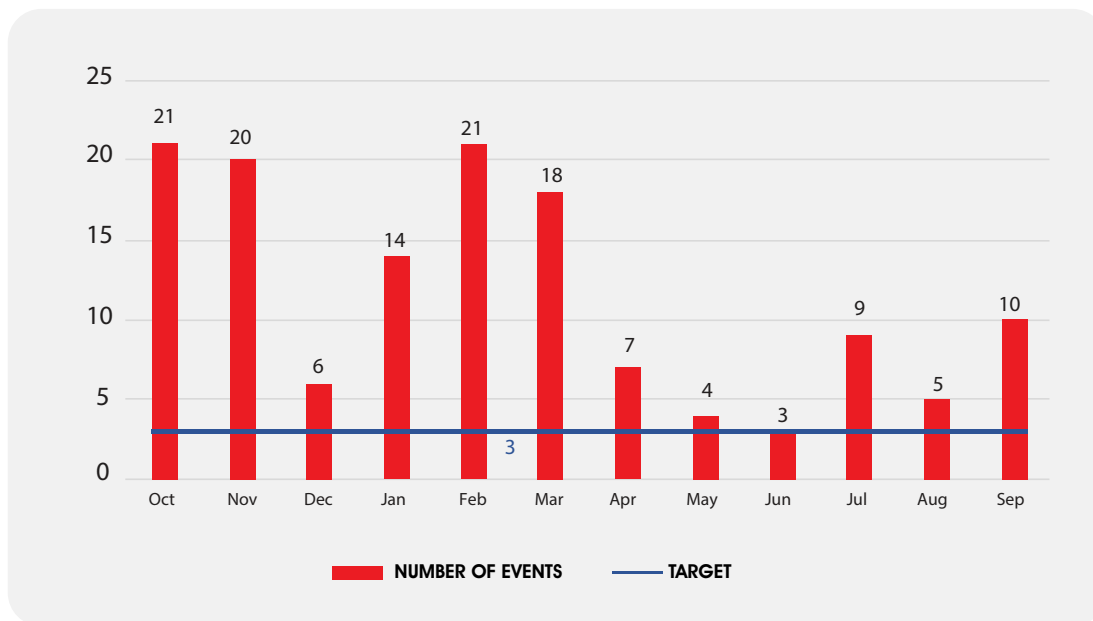


Figure 46: Sensitisations Completed by the Public Education and Communications Unit

KPI (2) MAINTAIN A FOLLOWER INCREASE OF 500 PER MONTH FOR FACEBOOK

The Unit’s ability to maintain this KPI fluctuated throughout the Fiscal. As a result, the KPI was met for four months during the period under review. Attempts to maintain an active social media presence was even more important during the COVID-19 period, since the Authority was unable to conduct face-to-face sensitisations with children, their teachers, parents and the wider community. With the social media audience requiring more engaging material to keep them tuned in, the Communications Unit sought to conduct Facebook Live sessions on exciting topics and used the Vyond animation software to develop videos.

FACEBOOK

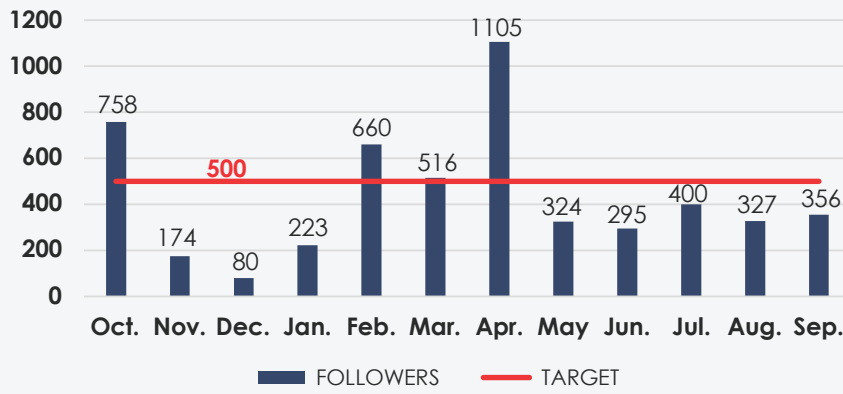


Figure 47: Growth of Facebook Following for Fiscal 2020

KPI (3) MAINTAIN A FOLLOWER INCREASE OF 58 PER MONTH FOR INSTAGRAM

The Unit maintained a 98 percent performance average for this KPI. This target was achieved through the use of more engaging posts, animations and videos.

INSTAGRAM

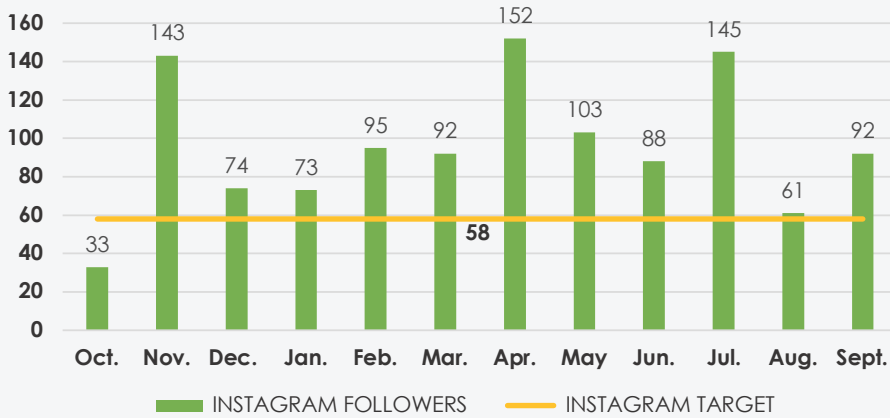


Figure 48: Growth of Instagram Following for Fiscal 2020

KPI (4) MAINTAIN A FOLLOWER INCREASE OF SIX PER MONTH FOR TWITTER

The Unit maintained a 95 percent performance average for this KPI. For seven months of the Fiscal Year, the Communications Unit had to regularly review its approach to social media. While more persons were online, due to stay-at-home measures implemented as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was also more social media activity available to captivate audiences. Therefore, posting material that was relevant and appealing was critical in order for the Authority to maintain and grow its audience share.

TWITTER

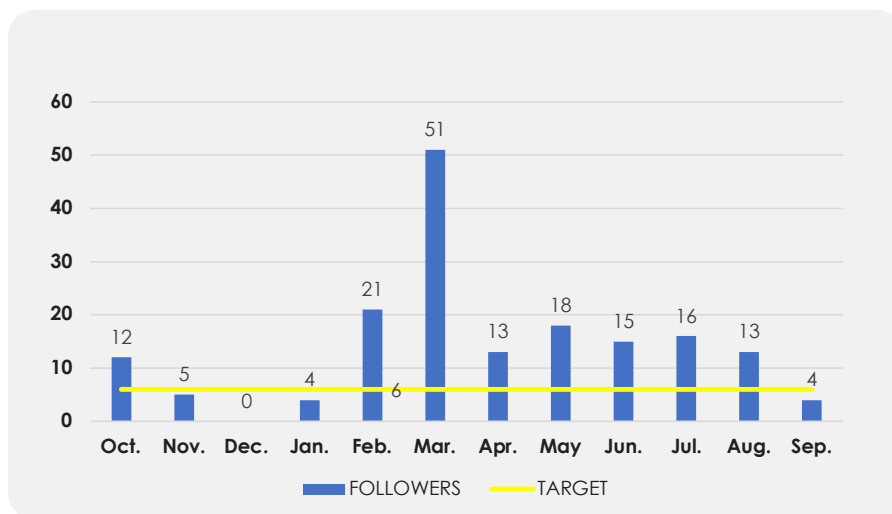


Figure 49: Growth of Twitter Following for Fiscal 2020

In addition to using social media and online sensitisations, the Unit sought to provide continued public awareness through Media Releases and Media Interviews. The following graph highlights the number of interviews conducted and the number of Media Releases issued during Fiscal 2020.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

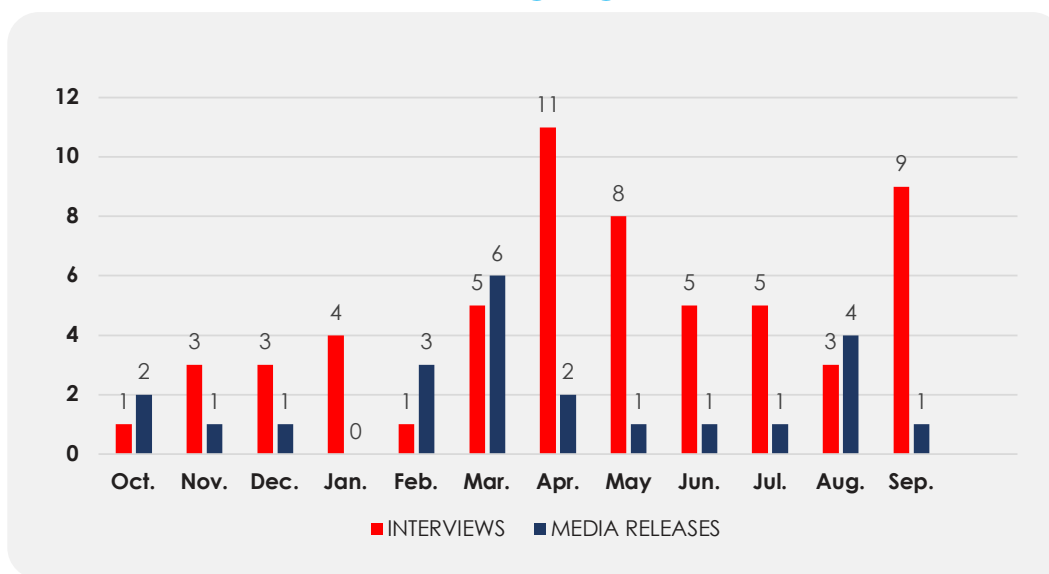


Figure 50: Media Engagement for Fiscal 2020

OTHER SUCCESSES

Despite the challenges of a limited budget and the effects of COVID-19, the Communications Unit was able to deliver on its mandate to advocate and seek to change public attitude towards the protection of children and their rights. These took place through key collaboration with the European Union, Embassies and High Commissions, Republic Bank Limited, First Citizens Bank, the Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs), UNICEF and Create Future Good. The Unit’s partnerships also included the media, which led to the development of three television advertisements, which were produced entirely by CCN TV6 at no cost to the Authority and aired as part of the station’s daily programming. The video was also aired on heavy rotation, which ensured further dissemination of the Authority’s key message that “Child Protection Is Everybody’s Business”. The Unit also managed the official opening of the Chaguanas Assessment Centre and Regional Office in October 2019, which provides greater access of the Authority’s services to the public. During the period, there was also a significant thrust to utilise social media, in particular Facebook Live sessions to engage and reach a wider cross section of the society. The intent was to aid the public in understanding the vast work of the Authority, its role and the role of society in the protection of children. The Facebook Live sessions began in July and were held twice per month, thereafter. Below is a list of the sessions and the theme of each discussion.

FACEBOOK LIVE	
DATE	DISCUSSION
July 27, 2020	Support Networks and Child Protection
August 13, 2020	How to respond if your child discloses abuse
August 26, 2020	Domestic Violence and its impact on families
September 9, 2020	Foster Care and Adoption Awareness Month
September 23, 2020	The experience of a foster carer

Table 3: Facebook Lives Completed for Fiscal 2020

This graph identifies the number of People Reached and Engagements for each Facebook Live session.

FACEBOOK LIVE (JULY 2020- SEPTEMBER 2020)

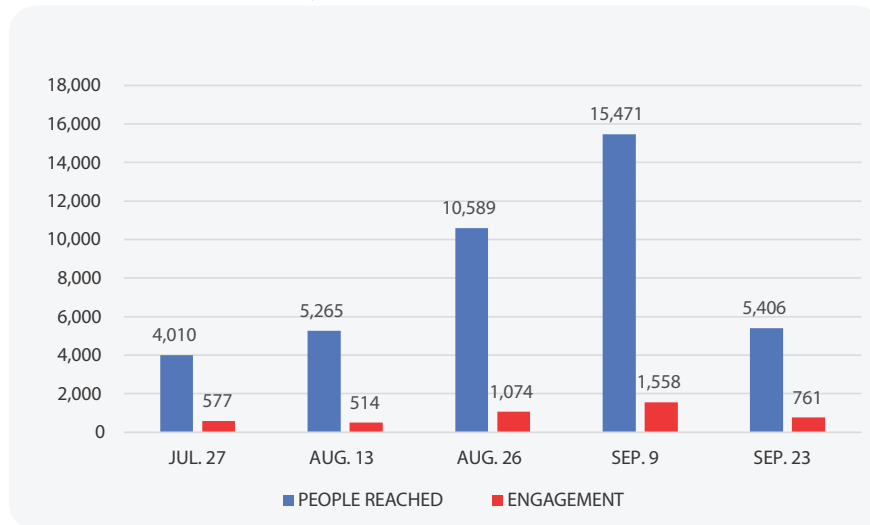


Figure 51: Reach and Engagement for Facebook Lives Completed

IMPACT OF COVID-19

The pandemic, undoubtedly, affected the number of scheduled public outreaches and sensitisations to various stakeholders. However, despite a notable reduction, sessions were facilitated through virtual platforms. In fact, one-third of all sensitisations were conducted virtually with stakeholders, including Faith-Based Organisations, Vacation Camps and caregivers of children. As a result of the heavy reliance and consumption of digital media during the pandemic, the Unit placed greater emphasis on sensitising the public via digital platforms inclusive of social media. While efforts were made to continue sensitisations with teachers and children, these sessions have been deferred to next Fiscal, to allow the teachers and students to develop a smooth transition to online school.

THE WAY FORWARD

With the development of the new Strategic Plan, 2020-2023, the work of the Communications Unit will centre mainly around the first Strategic Priority – Increased Prevention of Child Abuse, which has as its goal, “to reduce the incidence of child abuse in Trinidad and Tobago”.

In order to maintain the relevant health and safety protocols for COVID-19, the Unit will focus its energies on increasing social media engagements. It will also seek to increase the number of public sensitisations conducted with various audiences, in an effort to bring about behaviour change, regarding the way children are treated. Given that the Authority’s data continues to show sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect as the highest types of abuse recorded over the past five years, a range of stakeholders will be identified, with whom the Authority can partner to engage children throughout the country.

In Fiscal 2021, the Unit intends to further engage key stakeholders via webinars. It will conduct two Facebook Live sessions per month on topical issues and develop a Pledge Campaign to make homes and communities safer spaces for the nation’s children.

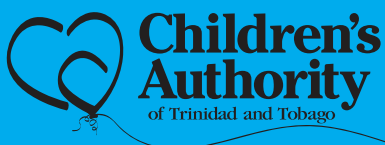


CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

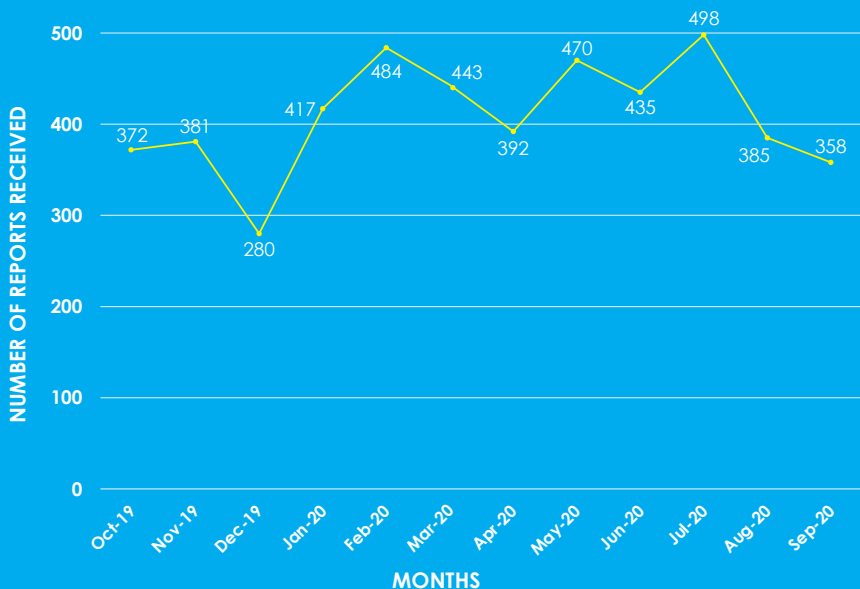
CATT'S DATA FOR THE PERIOD 2019-2020

The data presented in this section provides a snapshot of the cases of children in need of care and protection reported to the Authority for the period October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020 (Fiscal 2019-2020).

This statistical analysis highlights reports received by the public and stakeholders and not reports that have already been substantiated by the Authority's Investigations Unit and Emergency Response Team.



CASE LOAD FOR FISCAL 2019/2020



CASE LOAD: TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

- Highest number of cases were reported during the months of July 2020 (498 reports) and February 2020 (484 reports)
- Lowest number of cases were reported during the months of December 2019 (280 reports) and September 2020 (358 reports)
- An average of 410 reports were recorded per month

CASE LOAD: TRINIDAD

- Highest number of cases reported in Trinidad were during the month of July 2020 (466 reports)
- Lowest number of cases reported in Trinidad was during the month of December 2019 (242 reports)
- An average of 370 reports were recorded per month



CASE LOAD: TOBAGO

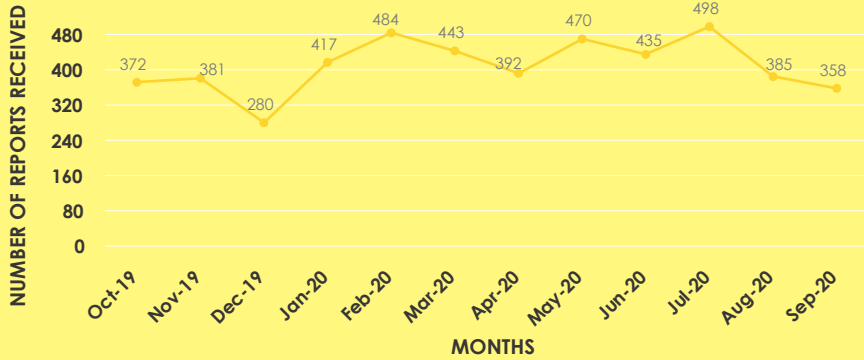
- Highest number of cases reported in Tobago were during the month of May 2020 (40 reports)
- Lowest number of cases reported in Tobago was during the month of December 2018 (13 reports)
- An average of 24 reports were recorded per month



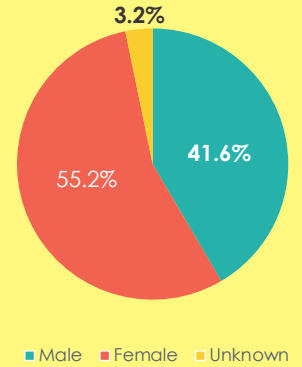
Figure 52: Case Load for Fiscal 2020

SNAPSHOT: CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION

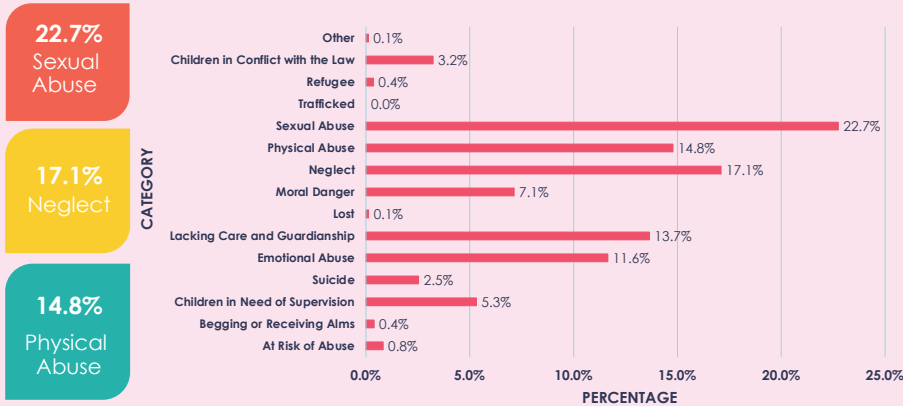
CASE LOAD



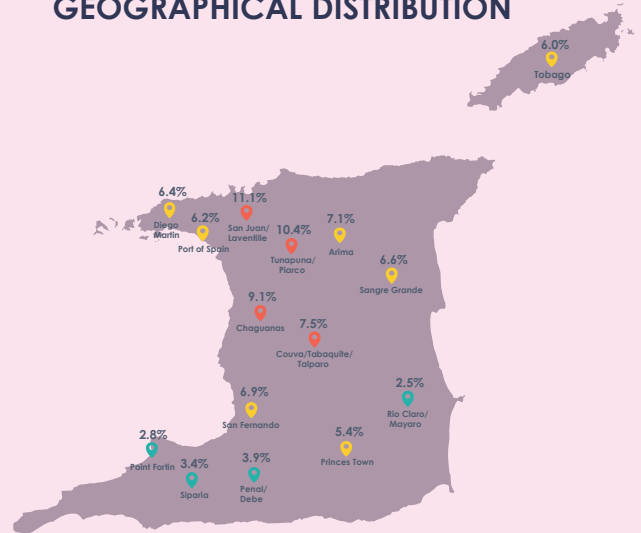
SEX OF CLIENTS



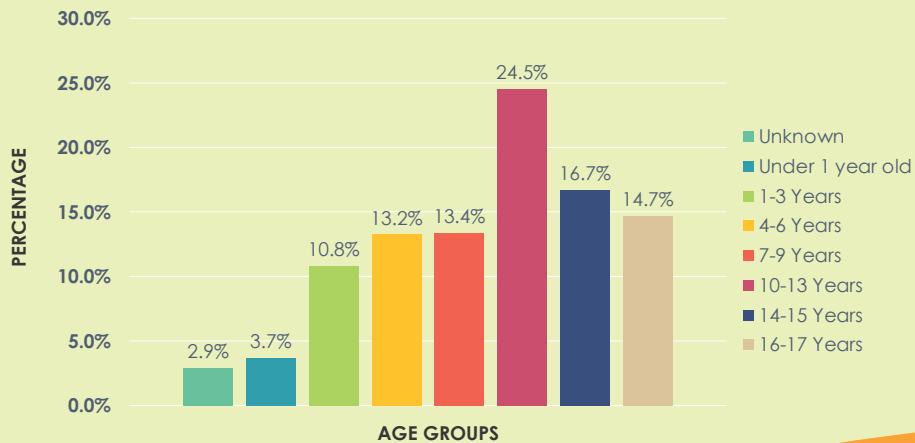
CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT



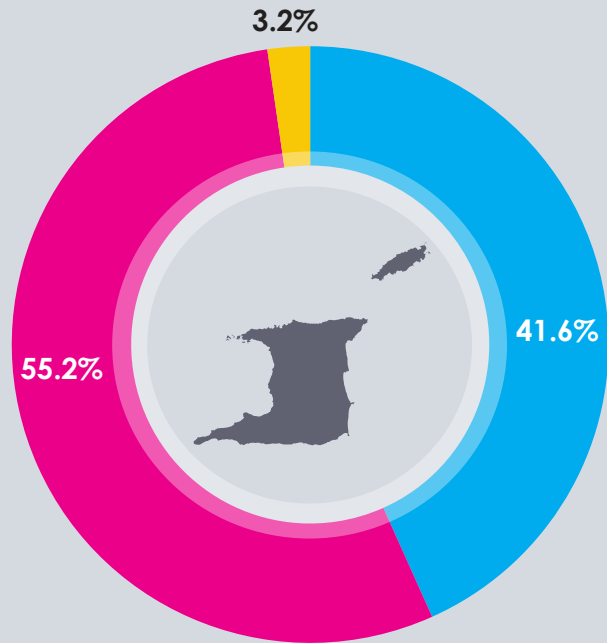
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION



AGE OF CLIENTS



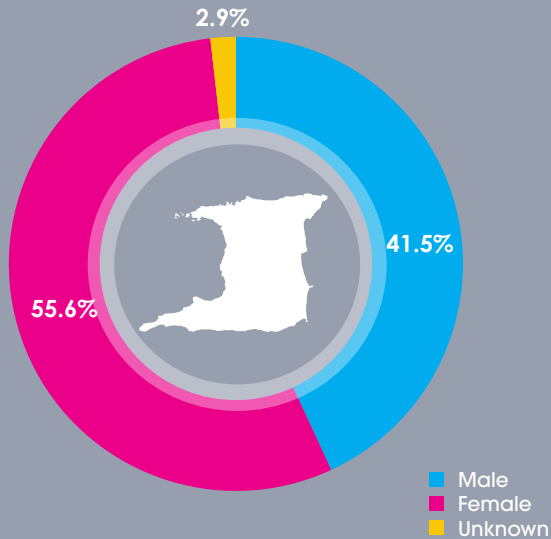
SEX OF CLIENTS



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

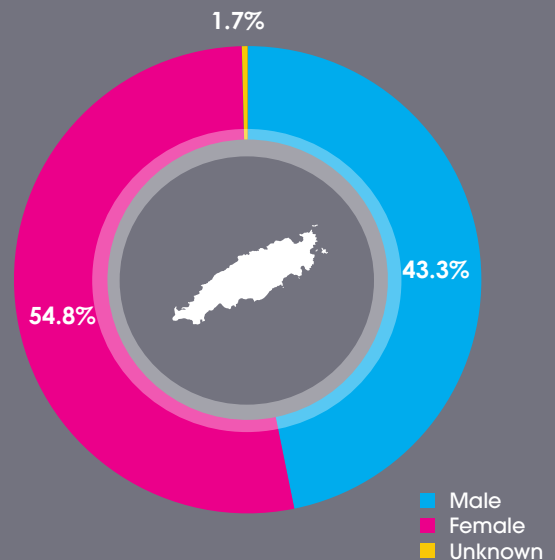
- Female clients accounted for the majority of reports received amounting to 55.2 percent while male clients accounted for 41.6 percent
- In 3.2 percent of reports received, no sex was provided

■ Male
■ Female
■ Unknown



TRINIDAD

- In Trinidad, female clients accounted for the 55.6 percent of reports received as compared to 41.5 percent for male clients
- In 2.9 percent of reports received, no sex was provided



TOBAGO

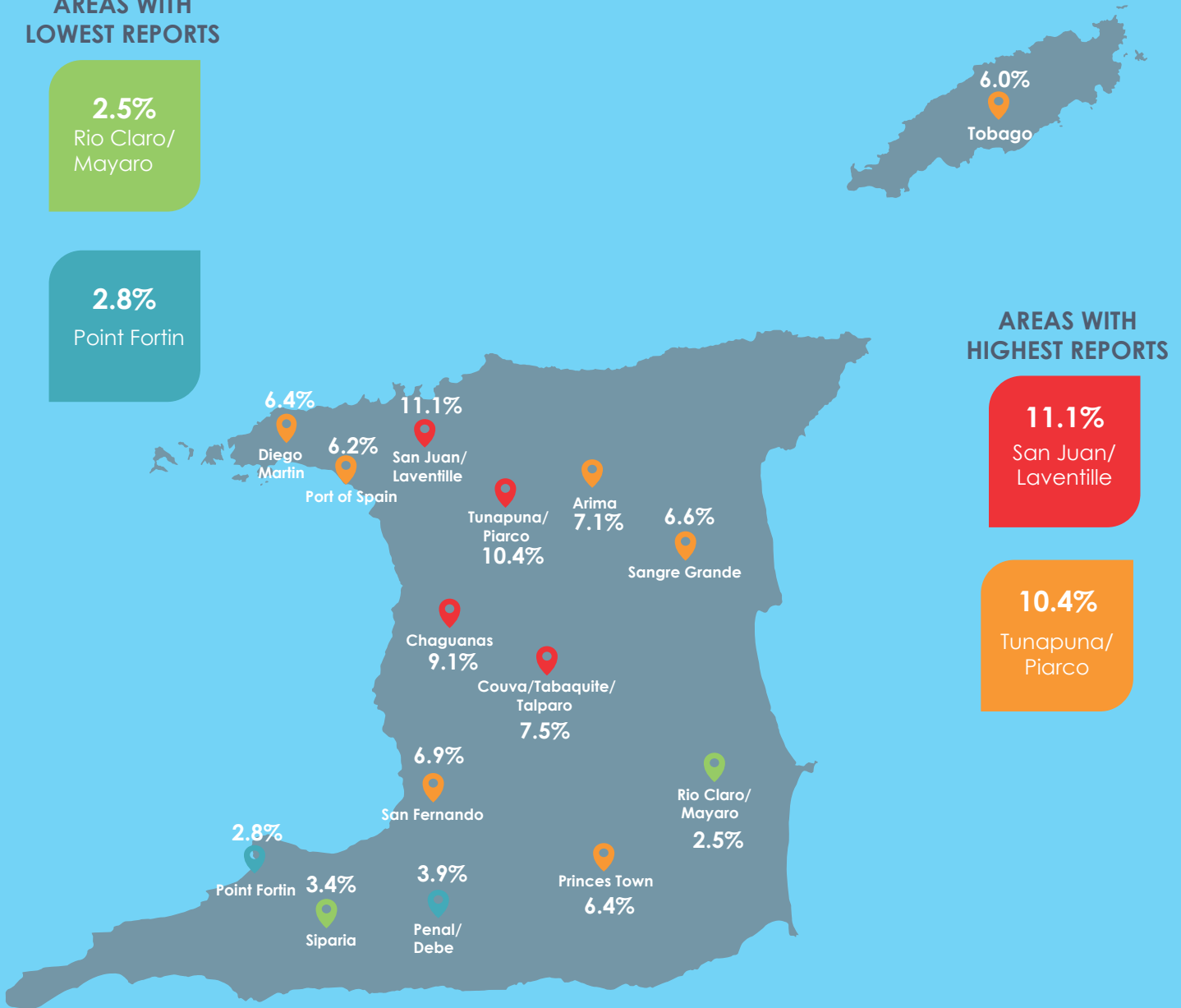
- In Tobago, female clients accounted for the 54.8 percent of reports received as compared to 43.3 percent for male clients
- In 1.7 percent of reports received, no sex was provided

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTS

AREAS WITH LOWEST REPORTS

2.5%
Rio Claro/
Mayaro

2.8%
Point Fortin



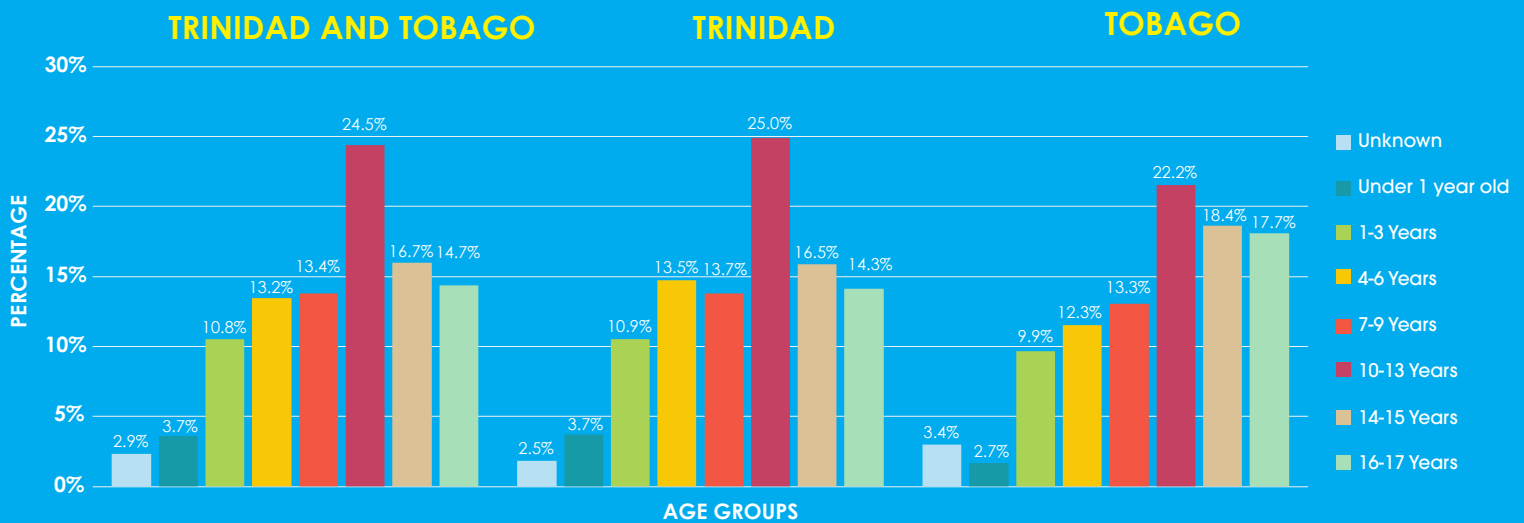
AREAS WITH HIGHEST REPORTS

11.1%
San Juan/
Laventille

10.4%
Tunapuna/
Piarco

Figure 55: Geographical Distribution of Reports

AGE GROUPS OF CLIENTS



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

- The majority of clients belonged to the 10-13 year age group (24.5 percent) while children under the age of 1 year old accounted for the least number of reports (3.7 percent)

TRINIDAD

- In Trinidad, the majority of clients belonged to the 10-13 year age group (25.0 percent) followed by the 14-15 year age group (16.5 percent)
- Clients under the age of 1 year old reported the least number of reports (3.7 percent)

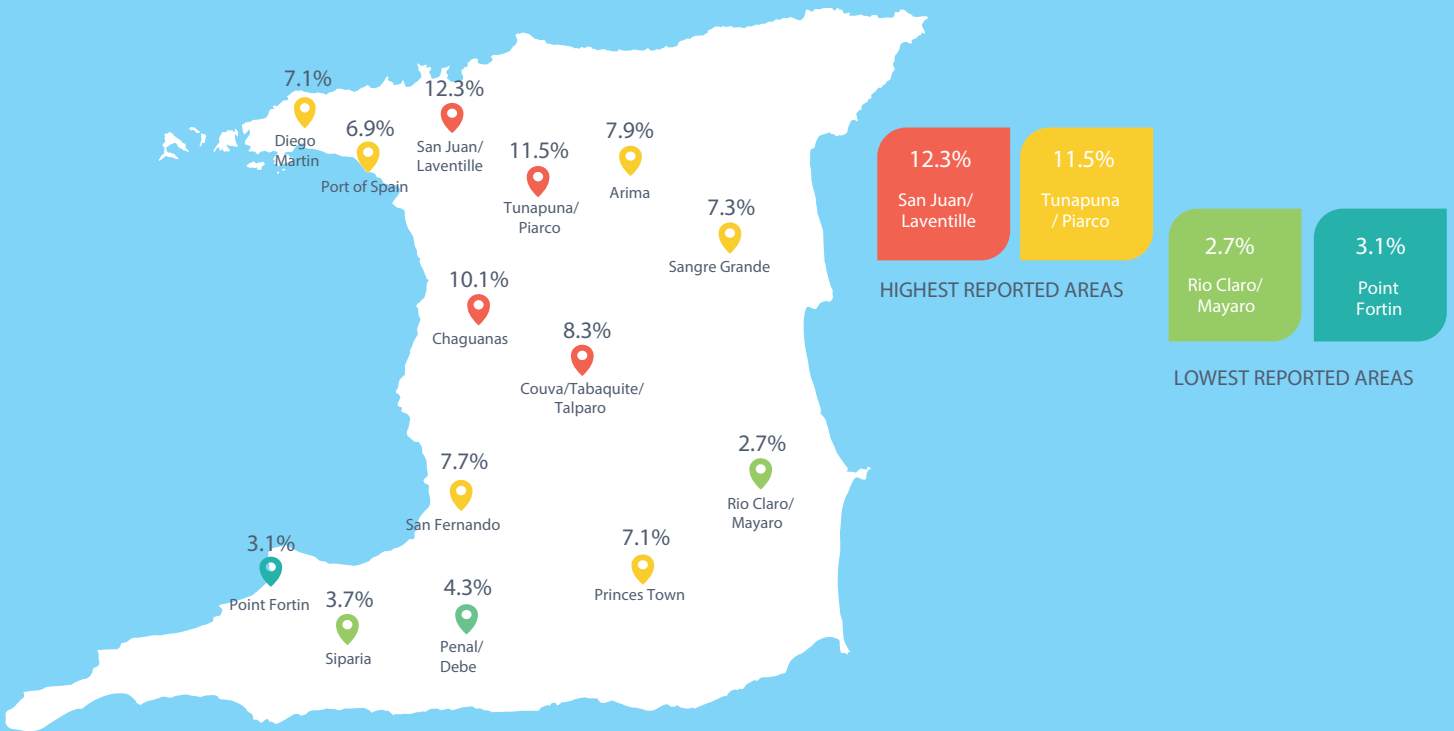
TOBAGO

- In Tobago, the majority of clients belonged to the 10-13 year age group (22.2 percent) followed by the 14-15 year age group (18.4 percent)
- Clients under the age of 1 year old reported the least number of reports (2.7 percent)

Figure 56: Age Groups of Clients

DISAGGREGATED GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTS

TRINIDAD



TOBAGO

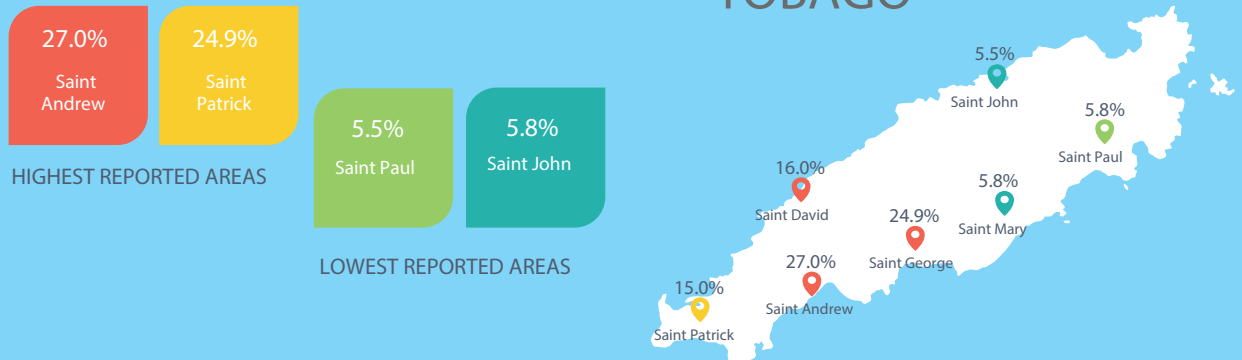
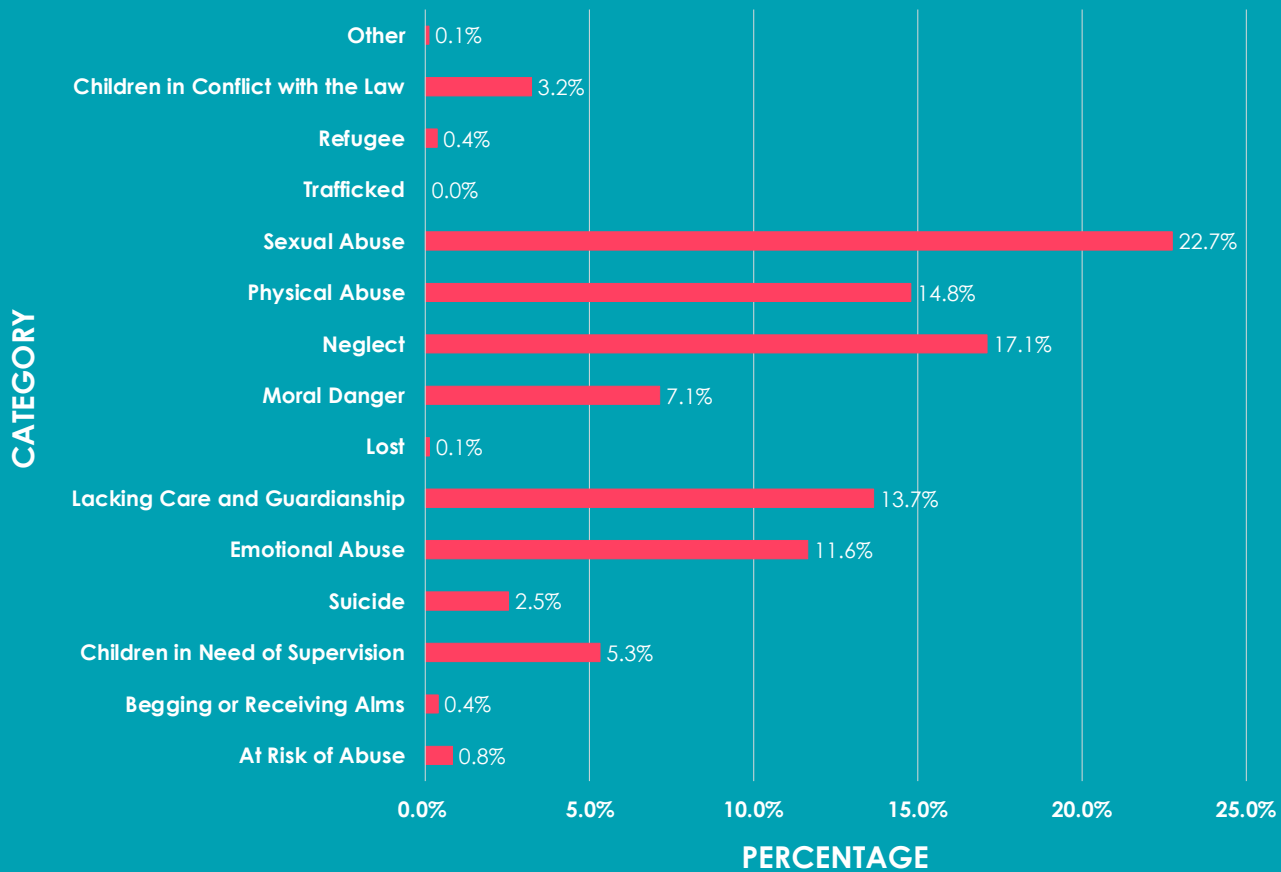


Figure 57: Disaggregated Geographical Distribution

CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

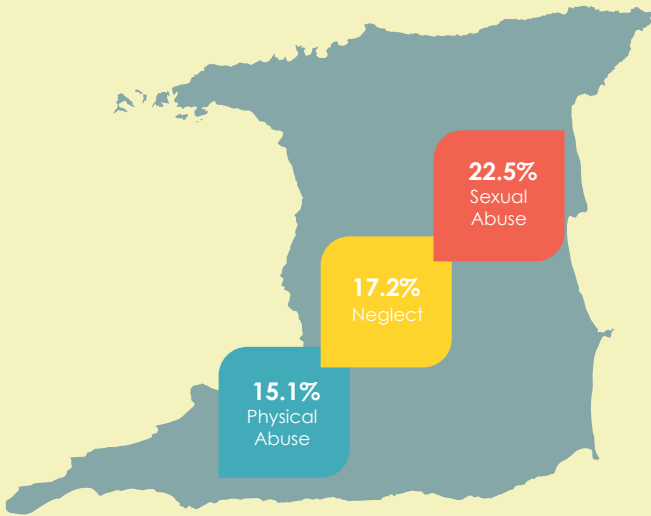


HIGHEST REPORTED CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT

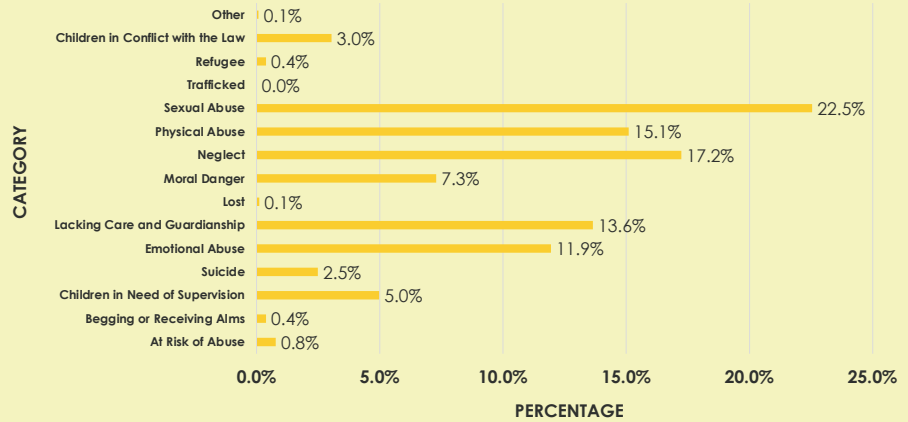
- Reports of sexual abuse (22.7 percent), neglect (17.1 percent) and physical abuse (14.8 percent) collectively amounted to 54.6 percent of reports received in Trinidad and Tobago during Fiscal 2019/2020.
- Reports of sexual abuse, neglect and physical abuse have consistently been the highest reported types of abuse and maltreatment received by the Authority over the past Fiscal Years.

Figure 58: Children in Need of Care and Protection in Trinidad and Tobago

CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION - TRINIDAD



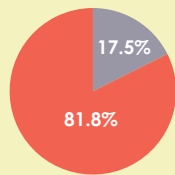
NUMBER OF REPORTS RECEIVED IN TRINIDAD DURING FISCAL 2019/2020



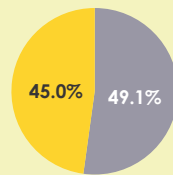
HIGHEST REPORTS RECEIVED DISAGGREGATED BY AGE

Category of Care and Protection	Under 1 Year Old	1-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-9 Years	10-13 Years	14-15 Years	16-17 Years
Children in Need of Supervision	0%	0%	0.3%	1.3%	7.6%	13.2%	14.6%
Lacking Care and Guardianship	46.6%	31.9%	22.7%	20.8%	14.6%	12.0%	9.1%
Neglect	39.9%	34.3%	23.7%	22.4%	15.4%	7.3%	5.0%
Physical Abuse	11.2%	21.5%	26.5%	28.0%	21.8%	18.0%	13.5%
Sexual Abuse	2.2%	12.2%	26.5%	25.9%	37.8%	41.1%	44.7%
Children In Conflict With The Law	0%	0%	0.3%	1.6%	2.7%	8.4%	13.0%

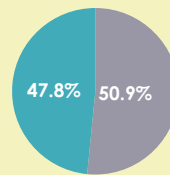
HIGHEST REPORTS DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER



Category of Sexual Abuse disaggregated by gender shows that the majority of clients were female.



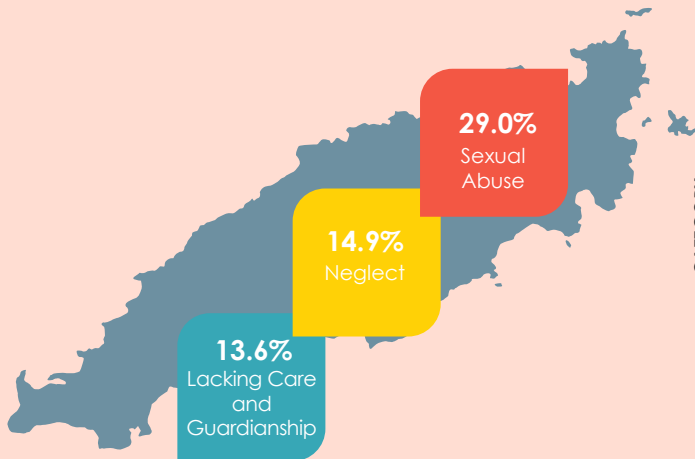
Category of Neglect disaggregated by gender shows that the majority of clients were male closely followed by female clients.



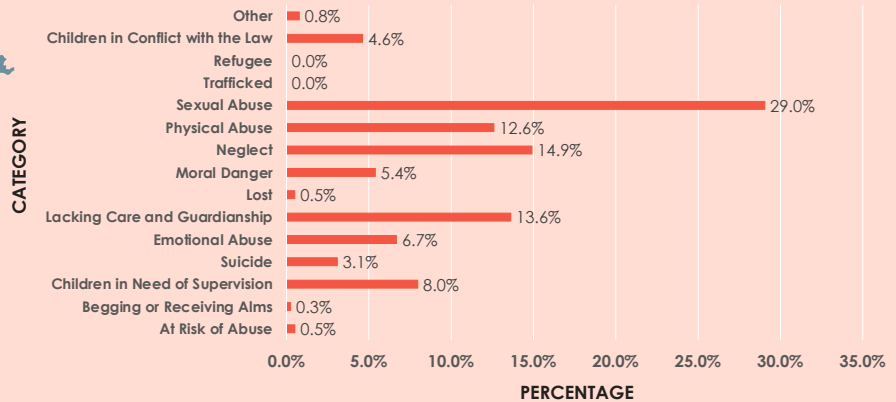
Category of Physical Abuse disaggregated by gender shows that the majority of clients were male closely followed by female clients.

Figure 59: Children in Need of Care and Protection - Trinidad

CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION - TOBAGO



NUMBER OF REPORTS RECEIVED IN TOBAGO DURING FISCAL 2019/2020



HIGHEST REPORTS RECEIVED DISAGGREGATED BY AGE

Category of Care and Protection	Under 1 Year Old	1-3 Years	4-6 Years	7-9 Years	10-13 Years	14-15 Years	16-17 Years
Children in Need of Supervision	0%	0%	0%	7.1%	4.5%	18.8%	16.79%
Lacking Care and Guardianship	66.7%	34.5%	23.4%	14.3%	13.4%	12.5%	6.3%
Neglect	11.1%	41.4%	23.4%	28.6%	13.4%	6.3%	0%
Physical Abuse	11.1%	6.9%	23.4%	16.7%	20.9%	10.9%	14.6%
Sexual Abuse	11.1%	17.2%	27.7%	23.8%	44.8%	39.1%	56.3%
Children In Conflict With The Law	0%	0%	2.1%	9.5%	3.0%	12.5%	6.3%

HIGHEST REPORTS DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER

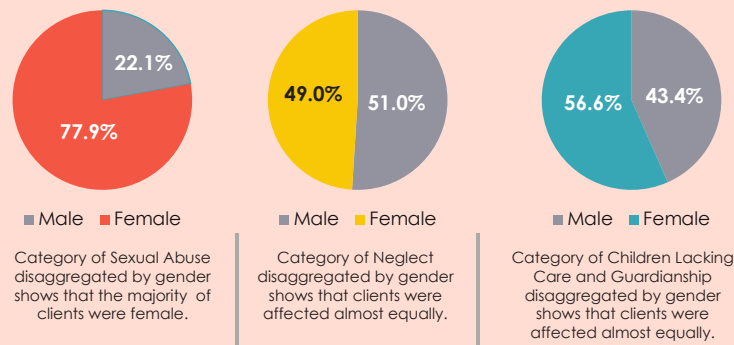
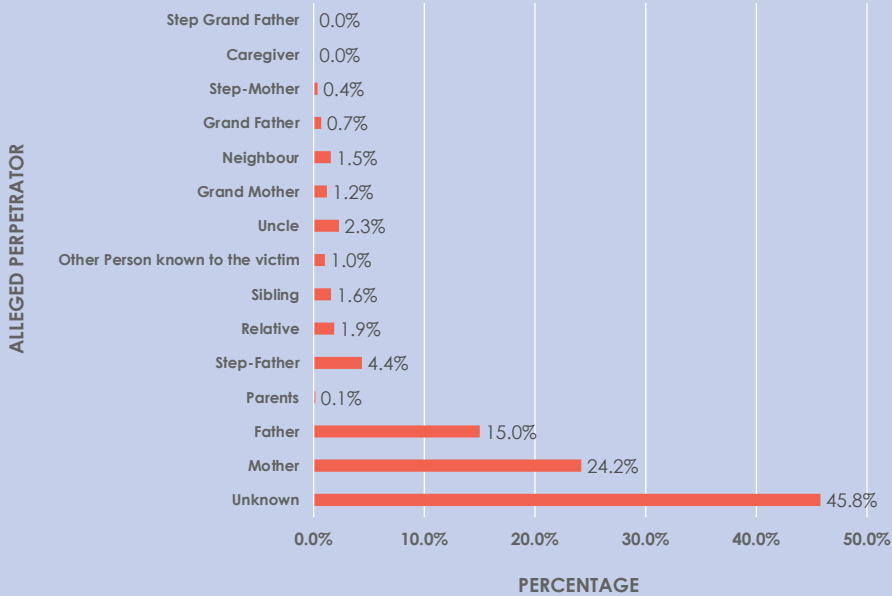


Figure 60: Children in Need of Care and Protection - Tobago

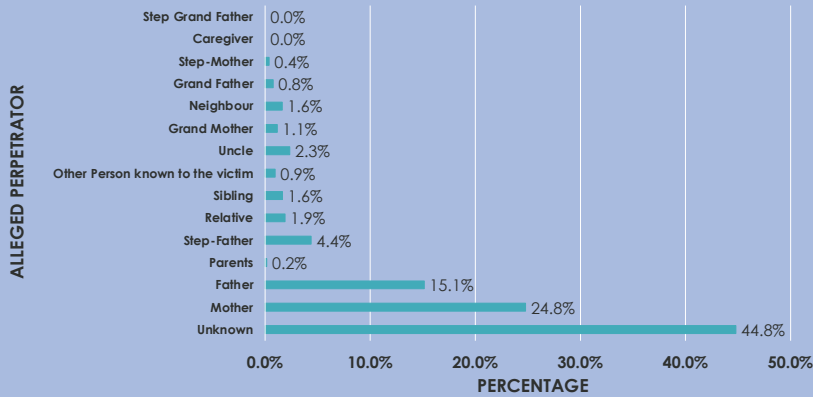
REPORTED ALLEGED PERPETRATORS OF ABUSE



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

It has been noted over the past five years of operations, that mothers have consistently been identified by persons reporting cases to the Authority as the alleged perpetrator of abuse and maltreatment of children across Trinidad and Tobago. During Fiscal 2019/2020, mothers accounted for 24.2 percent of reports of alleged perpetrators whereas 45.8 percent of alleged perpetrators could not be identified.

TRINIDAD



TOBAGO

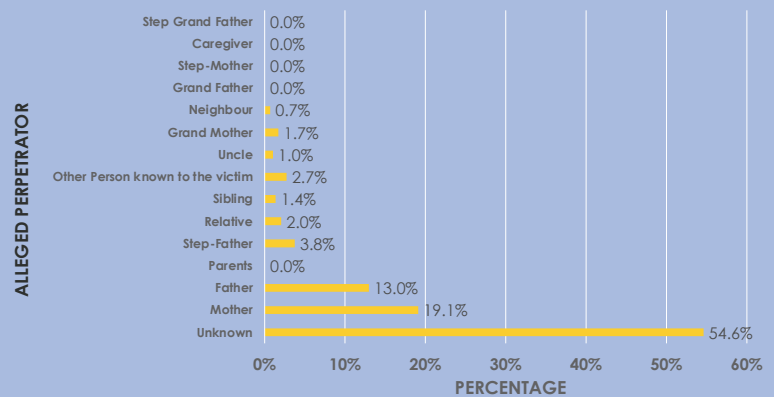


Figure 61: Reported Alleged Perpetrators of Abuse

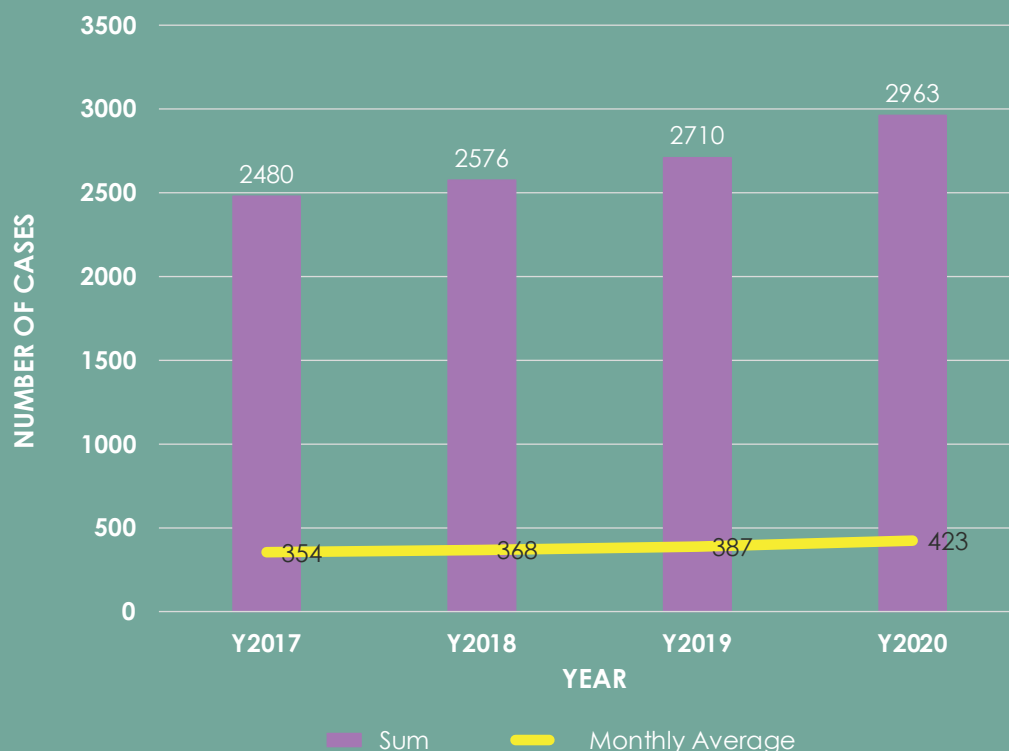


CASES REPORTED DURING THE 'LOCKDOWN' PERIOD (MARCH- SEPTEMBER) COMPARED TO CASES REPORTED DURING THE SAME PERIOD OVER THE YEARS 2017-2019

The data in this section provides a summary on reports of children in need of care and protection made to the Authority during the lockdown period - that is the months of March to September 2020. A comparative analysis of reports of sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect received by the Authority for these seven months is provided for the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

The summary also identifies the highest reported categories of child abuse and maltreatment received during the period, which were emotional abuse and children lacking care and guardianship.

TOTAL CASES REPORTED DURING THE MONTHS OF MARCH-SEPTEMBER OVER THE YEARS



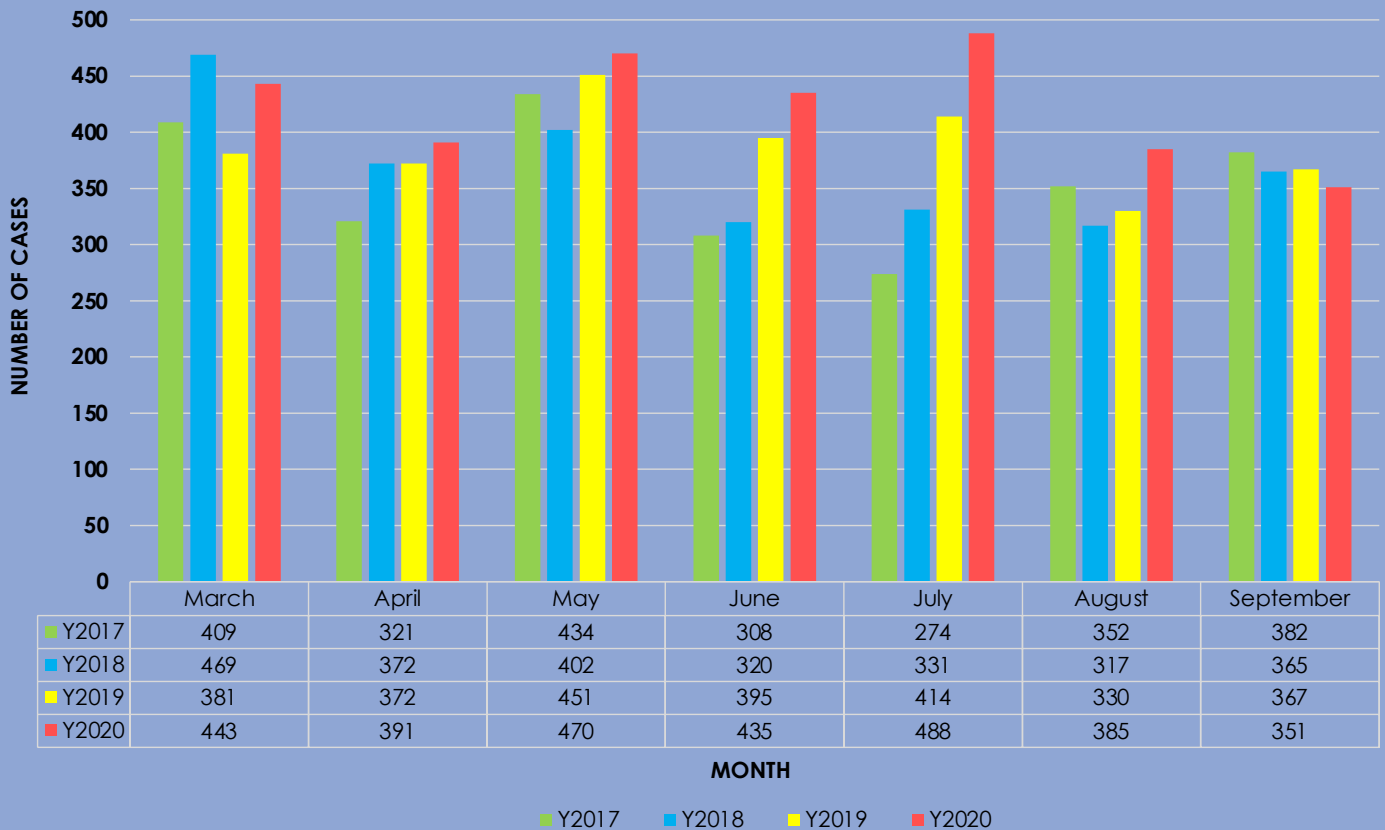
TOTAL CASES REPORTED DURING THE MONTHS MARCH-SEPTEMBER (Y2017-Y2020):

An overview of total cases received by the Authority during the months of March to September from Y2017 to Y2020, illustrates a gradual increase of reports received over the four-year period.

During the months of March-September (Y2017-Y2020), Y2020 presented with highest number of reports of children in need of care and protection totaling 2,963 reports. There was an increase of 253 reports in 2020, when compared to the previous year of 2019 and an increase of 387 when compared to Y2018.

Figure 62: Total Cases Reported during the Months of March-September over the Years

MONTHLY TOTALS OF CASES REPORTED DURING THE PERIOD MARCH-SEPTEMBER OVER THE YEARS



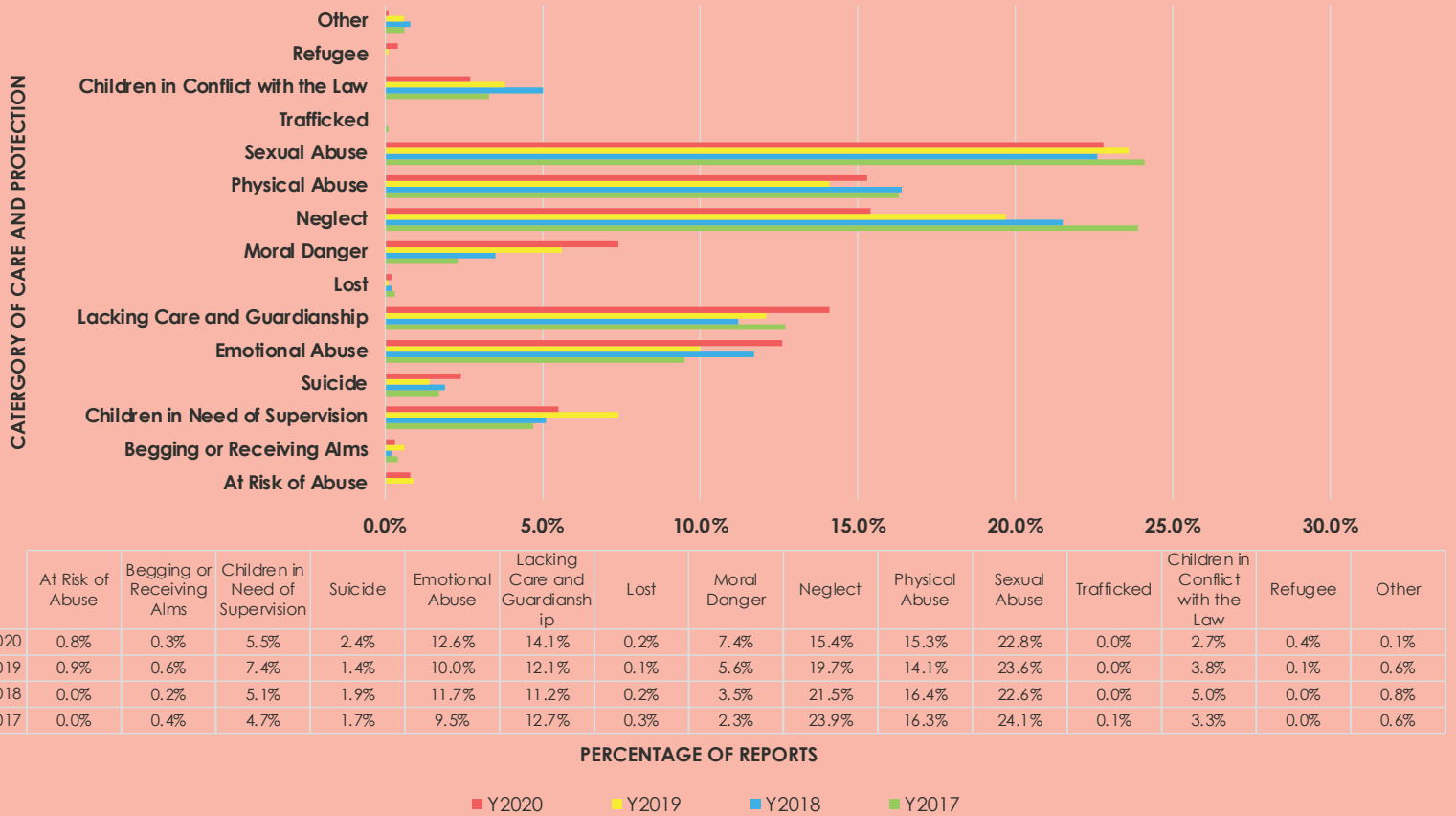
MONTHLY TOTALS:

During Y2020 the months of April, May, June, July and August recorded the most reports of children in need of care and protection when compared to previous months over the years.

Of all the years, July 2020 recorded the most reports of children in need of care and protection made to the Authority, amounting to 488 reports. This is an increase of 74 cases when compared to July, 2019.

Figure 63: Monthly Totals of Cases Reported during March-September over the Years

CHILDREN IN NEED OF CARE AND PROTECTION REPORTED DURING THE PERIOD OF MARCH-SEPTEMBER OVER THE YEARS



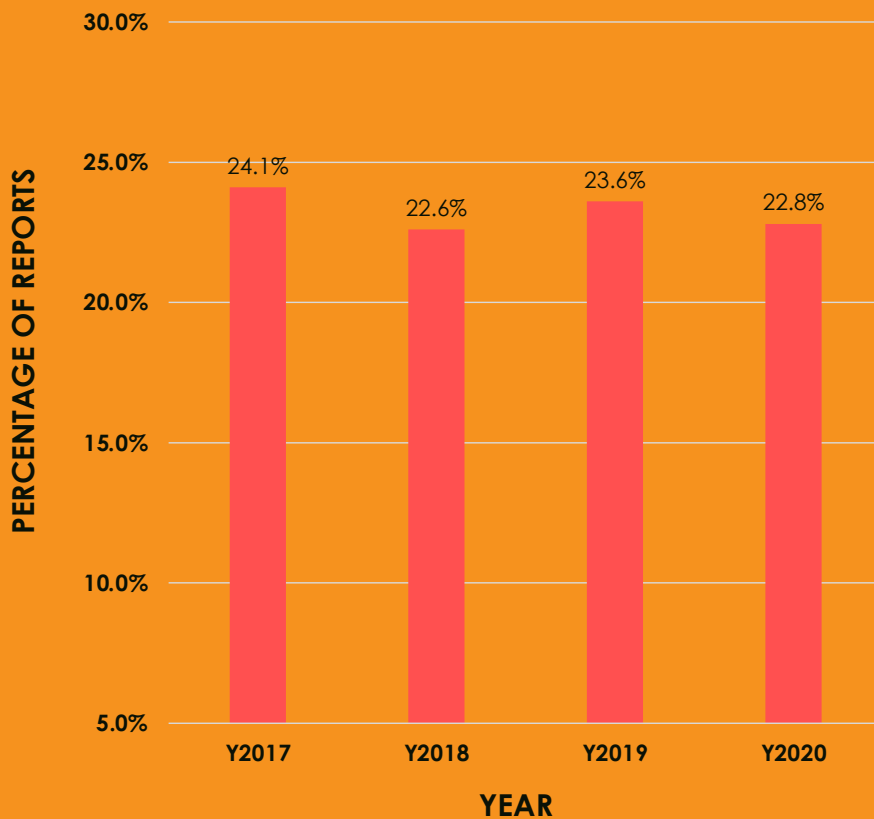
Highest Reported Categories of Child Abuse and Maltreatment:

During the period of March-September Y2017-Y2020, reports of child sexual abuse have consistently recorded as the most reported category of child abuse and maltreatment, accounting for 23.6 percent of cases during these few months in Y2019. During the same period in Y2020, there was a 0.8 percent decrease of child sexual abuse when compared to Y2019.

During this period however, reports of emotional abuse; and lacking care and guardianship made to the Authority, increased when compared to the same period in previous years.

Figure 64: Children in Need of Care and Protection during March-September over the Years

CASES OF SEXUAL ABUSE REPORTED DURING THE PERIOD OF MARCH-SEPTEMBER OVER THE YEARS



SEXUAL ABUSE:

- Highest percentage of cases were reported during Y2017 (24.1 percent) and Y2019 (23.6 percent).
- Lowest percentage of cases were reported during Y2018 (22.6 percent) and Y2020 (22.8 percent).
- Over the four year period, cases of child sexual abuse have consistently been the highest reported category of child abuse and maltreatment made to the Authority

Figure 65: Cases of Sexual Abuse Reported during March-September over the Years

CASES OF PHYSICAL ABUSE REPORTED DURING THE PERIOD OF MARCH-SEPTEMBER OVER THE YEARS

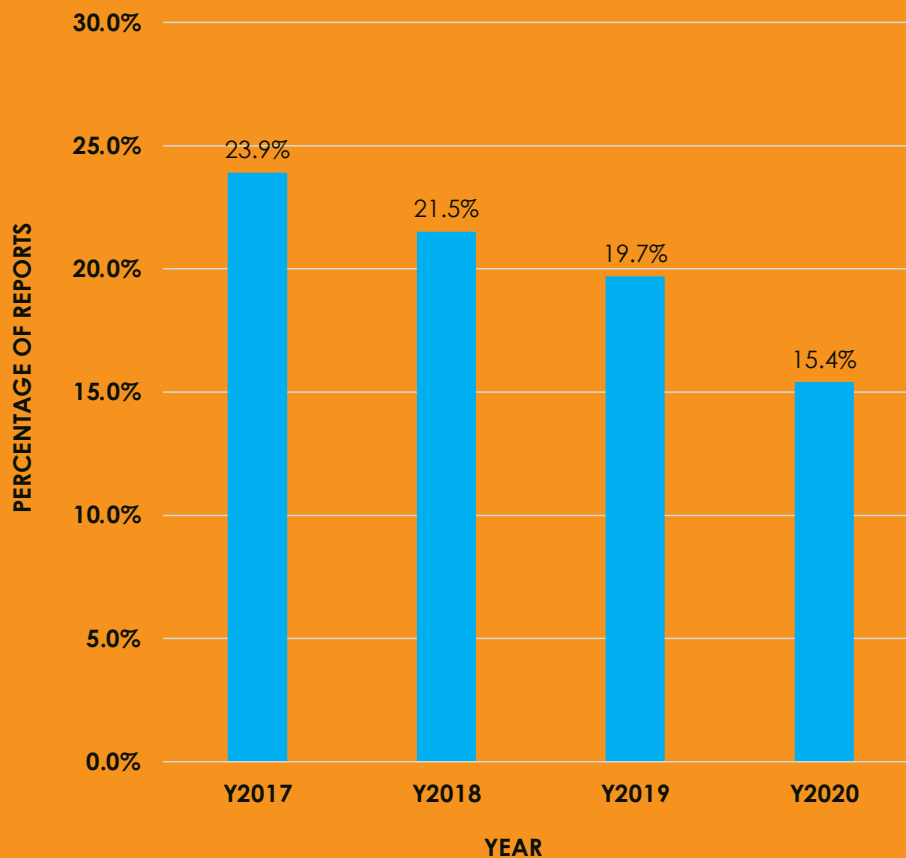


PHYSICAL ABUSE:

- Highest percentage of cases were reported during Y2018 (16.4 percent) and Y2017 (16.3 percent).
- Lowest percentage of cases were reported during Y2019 (14.1 percent) and Y2020 (15.3 percent).

Figure 66: Cases of Physical Abuse Reported during March-September over the Years

CASES OF NEGLECT REPORTED DURING THE PERIOD OF MARCH-SEPTEMBER OVER THE YEARS

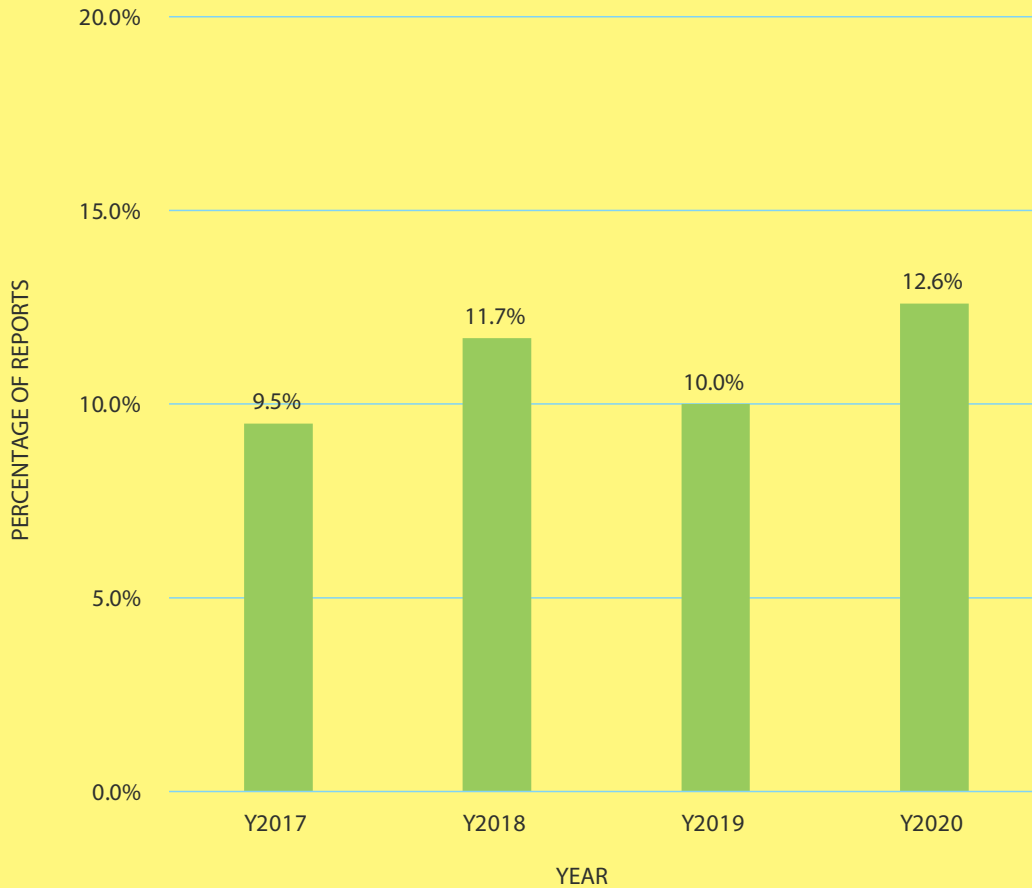


NEGLECT:

- Highest percentage of cases were reported during Y2017 (23.9 percent) and Y2018 (21.5 percent).
- Lowest percentage of cases were reported during Y2020 (15.4 percent) and Y2019 (19.7 percent).

Figure 67: Cases of Neglect Reported during March-September over the Years

CASES OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE REPORTED DURING THE PERIOD MARCH-SEPTEMBER OVER THE YEARS

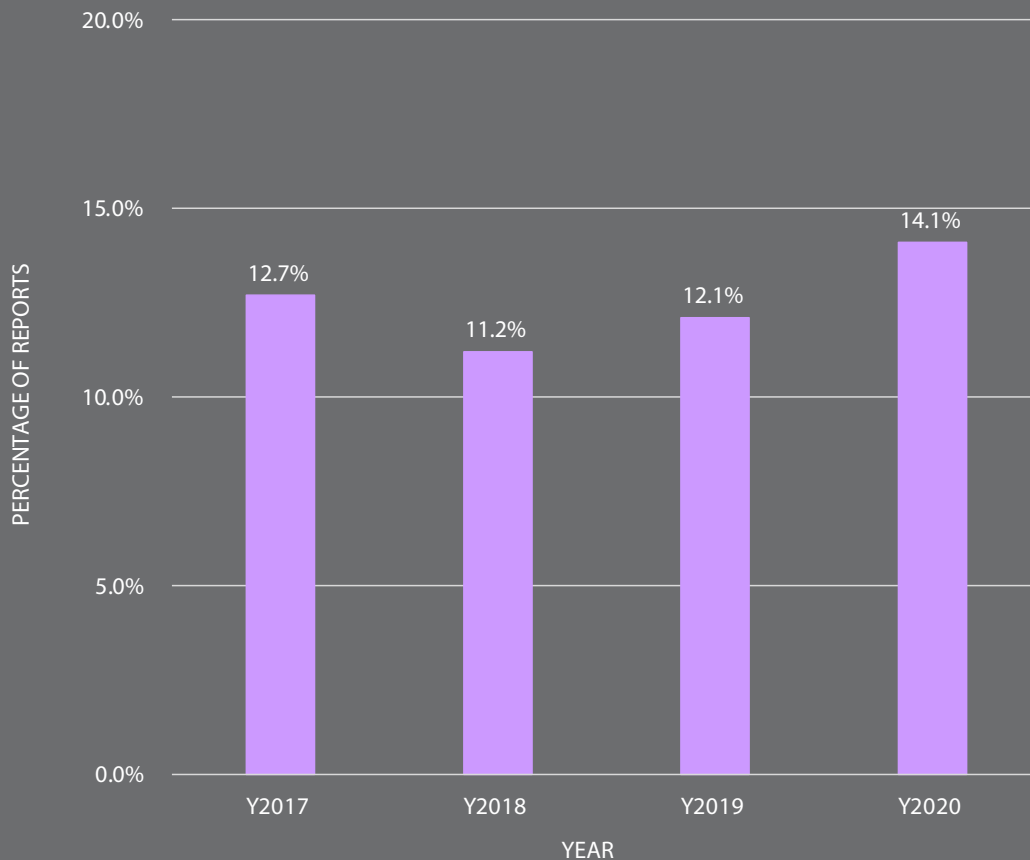


EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

- Highest percentage of cases were reported during Y2020 (12.6 percent) and Y2018 (11.7 percent).
- Lowest percentage of cases were reported during Y2017 (9.5 percent) and Y2019 (10.0 percent).

Figure 68: Cases of Emotional Abuse Reported during March-September over the Years

CASES OF LACKING CARE AND GUARDIANSHIP DURING THE PERIOD OF MARCH-SEPTEMBER OVER THE YEARS



LACKING CARE AND GUARDIANSHIP:

- Highest percentage of cases were reported during Y2020 (14.1 percent) and Y2017 (12.7 percent).
- Lowest percentage of cases were reported during Y2018 (11.2 percent) and Y2019 (12.1 percent).

Figure 69: Cases of Lacking Care and Guardianship during March-September over the Years



CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

LOOKING AHEAD



LOOKING AHEAD

In order to successfully prepare for the future, organisations require a clear strategy for growth. The Strategic Plan 2020-2023 is what provides the Authority with the tools to improve its efficiencies and respond to an ever-changing environment.

Therefore, as the Authority looks ahead, its roadmap is based on the six strategic priorities, which are guided by the organisation's vision, mandate, functions and legislative mandate:

1. Increased Prevention of Child Abuse
2. Responsive and Timely Child Protection
3. Effective Stakeholder Collaboration
4. Sustainable Institutional Strengthening
5. Robust Corporate Governance
6. Increased Financial Sustainability

Within the shortest possible timeframe, the Authority plans to upgrade the Call Centre Case Management Information Systems – partially funded by UNICEF, which would improve the response time to reports of child abuse. In order for the Authority to enhance its service delivery to children and their families, a “best interest” Case Management Model Plan will be implemented. This will seek to sustain the agency as a key stakeholder of a new and progressive child protection system, specifically designed at promoting the wellbeing of all children in Trinidad and Tobago, providing care and protection for vulnerable children, meeting the Authority's legislative mandate and complying with national obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

In order to support the new Case Management Model, the organisation's structure will be modified along geographical locations, which would allow each location to be self-sufficient and capable of providing the suite of services available from the Authority. The intention is for the organisation to get closer to its clients, and its resources; and deliver improved coordination and collaboration among all parties involved with a mandate to protect children.

While the Authority will continue to deliver on its philosophy to be child-focused and family-sensitive, the new approach is built on the fact that “Child Protection Is Everybody's Business”. Therefore, efforts will be ramped-up to engage stakeholders at all levels of the society, in the best interest of the nation's children.

To address the persistent funding shortfalls, the Authority will seek alternative funding options, both locally and internationally, as well as development partnerships. It is expected that through these measures the Authority will realise the goal of enhancing its financial viability and sustainability.

The Authority will also be working towards expanding placement options for children by making it easier for persons to move from a Foster Care arrangement to becoming an adoptive parent. This would be especially significant in instances where the child has spent a considerable timeframe in Foster Care. Since the Authority's philosophy is to have children grow with their parents and families, where appropriate, possible and in the best interest of the child, the Authority will work with partners to provide parents with the skills to care for their children.

A major concern as the Authority looks ahead is the growing number of children who are placed before the Courts by the parents for having behavioural challenges. This should not be the alternative used by families. Therefore, the Authority will advocate for family strengthening through parenting programmes. However, where reintegration is not a possibility, the organisation will seek in the shortest possible timeframe to have children adopted with loving families.

Often, it has been necessary to manage the public's expectations, as the Authority is seen as the panacea for the poor treatment of the nation's children. Therefore, the ultimate success of the proposed strategy requires active engagement and collaboration with stakeholders, at every level, to build a stronger national child protection framework in which "All children are happy, healthy and confident; and their rights are respected, protected and promoted to facilitate their holistic development towards achieving their fullest potential as constructive members of society now and in the future." As the Authority looks towards Fiscal 2021 and beyond, the organisation will be actively working towards reducing the incidence of child abuse. We therefore, invite the public to join us as we seek "to defend and support child rights and make child protection everybody's business".



CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

YEAR IN PHOTOS





OPENING OF THE CHAGUANAS ASSESSMENT CENTRE AND REGIONAL OFFICE





**WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY
CELEBRATION AND COLLABORATION WITH THE
EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION**





SENSITISATIONS AND OUTREACHES







STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS





MEDIA INTERVIEWS





STAFF EVENTS





CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO,
CHILDREN'S AUTHORITY FUND**
Unaudited Financial Statements
(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)
For the Financial Year Ended September 30, 2020

Unaudited Financial Statements	PG
Statement of Financial Position	1
Statement of Comprehensive Income and Accumulated Fund	2
Statement of Cash Flows	3
Notes to Financial Statements	4-12



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

		2020	2019
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Investments	Notes	\$ 445,778	\$ 280,245
Cash in hand and at bank		4,053,423	4,861,276
Receivables and prepayments	C	811,717	2,540,026
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>5,310,918</u>	<u>7,681,547</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, Plant and Equipment	D	14,296,974	13,718,097
Intangible Assets	E	261,726	180,662
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>19,869,617</u>	<u>21,580,306</u>
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables and accruals	F	16,697,997	7,795,726
Deferred government grants	G	2,997,353	2,424,564
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>19,695,350</u>	<u>10,220,290</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Deferred government grants	G	11,561,349	11,474,197
		<u>11,561,349</u>	<u>11,474,197</u>
RESERVES			
Accumulated fund		(11,387,082)	(114,181)
		<u>174,269</u>	<u>11,360,018</u>
TOTAL RESERVES AND LIABILITIES		<u>\$ 19,869,617</u>	<u>\$ 21,580,306</u>

Chairman: _____

Member: _____

The accompanying notes on pages 4 to 12 form an integral part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND ACCUMULATED FUND FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

	Notes	2020	2019
Government grants	G	\$ 70,228,233	\$ 66,883,419
Other income		342,131	27,399
Project expenses		(187,332)	(1,216,669)
Operating expenses	H	(78,648,455)	(68,620,408)
Depreciation & Amortization		(2,997,351)	(2,424,563)
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment		(2,510)	(31,569)
Finance cost		(7,617)	(9,785)
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		<u>(11,272,901)</u>	<u>(5,392,175)</u>
ACCUMULATED FUND			
Balance at beginning of year as previously stated		(114,181)	5,277,996
Prior Year Adjustment		-	-
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year		(11,272,901)	(5,392,175)
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR		<u>\$ (11,387,082)</u>	<u>\$ (114,181)</u>

The accompanying notes on pages 4 to 12 form an integral part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

	2020	2019
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
(Deficit)/Surplus for the year	\$ (11,272,901)	\$ (5,392,175)
Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash Provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation	2,930,635	2,364,342
Amortization	66,717	60,221
Write off of intangible asset	-	196,922
Disposal of property, plant and equipment	176,819	131,349
Prior year adjustment	-	-
Changes to operating assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/Decrease in receivables and prepayments	1,728,309	(1,970,483)
Increase/(Decrease) in accounts payable and accruals	8,902,266	2,648,362
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	<u>2,531,845</u>	<u>(1,961,462)</u>
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(3,834,111)	(5,655,723)
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES	<u>(3,834,111)</u>	<u>(5,655,723)</u>
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Movement in deferred government grants	659,940	2,902,889
NET CASH PROVIDED/(USED IN) BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES	<u>659,940</u>	<u>2,902,889</u>
(DECREASE)/INCREASE IN CASH	<u>(642,325)</u>	<u>(4,714,292)</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	5,141,521	9,855,817
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF YEAR	<u>4,499,201</u>	<u>5,141,521</u>
Represented by:		
Cash in hand and at bank	4,053,423	4,861,276
Investments	445,778	280,245
	<u>\$ 4,499,201</u>	<u>\$ 5,141,521</u>

The accompanying notes on pages 4 to 12 form an integral part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE A – ESTABLISHMENT AND OBJECTIVES

The Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (the Authority) was established in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago under the guidelines stated in the Children's Authority Act, No. 64 of 2000 and the amendments in the Children's Authority (Amendment) Act, No. 14 of 2008. The Authority has been set up to fulfil the objectives of the Act which are to promote the well-being of all children in Trinidad and Tobago; provide care and protection for vulnerable children; and comply with certain obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Authority is managed by a Board of Management, which is appointed by the President. The Board shall include Members who possess professional qualifications and skills in child psychology, child psychiatry, social work, paediatrics and education, accounting and family law.

NOTE B – SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- (i) The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Basis of Preparation – The financial statements of the Authority have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRS"). The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified by the revaluation of certain assets and liabilities.

The preparation of the financial statements in conformity with IFRSs requires management to make judgments, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognized in the period in which the estimates are revised and in any future periods affected.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE B – SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES – (Continued)

(ii) Functional and Presentation Currency

Items included in the financial statements are measured using the currency of the primary economic environment in which the Authority operates ('the functional currency'). The financial statements are presented in Trinidad and Tobago dollars which is the Authority's presentation currency.

(iii) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or are recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the Authority and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other costs for repairs and maintenance are charged to the statement of comprehensive income during the financial period in which they are incurred.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using either the reducing balance or straight-line method. The following annual rates are used for the depreciation of property, plant and equipment.

Reducing balance method:

Computer equipment	- 33.3%
Software	- 25%
Furniture and fixtures	- 10%
Office equipment	- 20%
Security equipment	- 20%
Medical equipment	- 20%
Motor vehicles	- 20%

Straight line method:

Leasehold improvements	- Over 12 years
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE B – SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES – (Continued)

(iii) Property, Plant and Equipment – (Continued)

The assets' residual value and useful lives are reviewed and adjusted, if appropriate, at each statement of financial position date.

Assets are reviewed for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than the estimated recoverable amount. The amount recoverable is the higher of the asset's fair value less cost to sell and value in use.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These are included in the statement of comprehensive income.

(iv) Financial Assets

The Authority classifies its financial assets into the following categories: loans and receivables and available-for-sale. The classification is determined by management at the initial recognition and depends on the purpose for which the assets were acquired.

Classification

(a) Loans and Receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market. These are included in current assets, except for maturities greater than 12 months after the statement of financial position date. These are classified as non-current assets and are carried at amortized cost using the effective interest method.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE B – SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES – (Continued)

(iv) Financial Assets – (Continued)

Recognition and Measurement – (Continued)

Regular-way purchases and sales of financial assets are recognised on trade date – the date on which the Authority commits to purchase or sell the asset.

Financial assets are initially recognised at fair value plus, in the case of all financial assets not carried at fair value through profit and loss, transaction costs that are directly attributable to their acquisition.

Financial assets are derecognised when the rights to receive cash flows from them have expired or where they have been transferred and the Authority has also transferred substantially all risks and rewards of ownership.

When securities are sold or impaired, the accumulated fair value adjustments recognised in equity are included in the income statement as net realised gains on financial assets. Interest on available-for-sale securities calculated using the effective interest method is recognised in the income statement. Dividends on available-for-sale equity instruments are recognised in the income statement when the Authority's right to receive payment is established.

Impairment

At the end of each reporting period the Authority assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial asset or group of financial assets is impaired. A financial asset or group of financial assets is impaired and impairment losses are incurred only if there is objective evidence of impairment as a result of one or more events that have occurred after the initial recognition of the asset (a 'loss event') and that loss event (or events) has an impact on the estimated future cash flows of the financial asset or group of financial assets that can be reliably estimated.

(v) Cash and Cash Equivalents

In the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents includes cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE B – SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES – (Continued)

(vi) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Authority has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events; it is more likely than not that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and the amount has been reliably estimated.

Where there are a number of similar obligations as a whole, a provision is recognised even if the likelihood of an outflow with respect to any one item included in the service class of obligations may be small.

(vii) Revenue Recognition

Interest income is measured using the effective interest method on the accruals basis.

(viii) Government Grants

Grants from the government are recognised at their fair value where there is a reasonable assurance that the grant will be received and the Authority will comply with all attached conditions.

Grants received where the Authority has yet to comply with all attached conditions are recognised as a liability in the statement of financial position and released to income when all attached conditions have been complied with.

Grants related to the acquisition of property, plant and equipment are treated as deferred grants and recognised in the statement of comprehensive income over the life of the assets.

Grants related to compensation for non-capital expenditure are recognised in the statement of comprehensive income in the period it is received or receivable.

NOTE C – RECEIVABLES AND PREPAYMENTS

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Receivables	\$ 289,468	\$ 2,055,294
Security deposits	318,896	204,527
Prepayments	<u>203,353</u>	<u>268,780</u>
	<u>\$ 811,717</u>	<u>\$ 2,528,601</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE D – PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	Computer Equipment	Furniture and Fixtures	Office Equipment	Medical Equipment	Security Equipment	Motor Vehicles	Leasehold Improvements	Total
<u>Cost</u>								
At beginning of year	5,636,153	3,226,955	671,602	1,699,176	900,973	2,520,096	11,675,349	26,330,304
Disposals	(59,444)	-	-	-	-	(459,968)	-	(519,412)
Additions	1,729,026	169,060	107,627	13,863	21,400	639,985	1,005,370	3,686,331
At end of year	7,305,735	3,396,015	779,229	1,713,039	922,373	2,700,113	12,680,719	29,497,223
<u>Accumulated Depreciation</u>								
At beginning of year	3,386,980	1,295,527	377,450	880,113	350,247	1,334,691	4,987,200	12,612,207
Disposals	(33,347)	-	-	-	-	(309,246)	-	(342,593)
Current year charge	1,037,170	200,965	64,490	133,048	111,068	333,079	1,050,815	2,930,635
At end of year	4,390,803	1,496,492	441,940	1,013,161	461,315	1,358,524	6,038,015	15,200,249
Net Book Value 2019	2,249,173	1,931,428	294,152	819,063	550,726	1,185,405	6,688,150	13,718,097
Net Book Value 2020	2,914,932	1,899,523	337,289	699,878	461,058	1,341,589	6,642,704	14,296,974

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE E – INTANGIBLE ASSETS

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
<u>Cost</u>		
At beginning of year	\$ 592,459	\$ 789,381
Disposals	-	(196,922)
Additions	<u>147,780</u>	<u>-</u>
At end of year	<u>740,239</u>	<u>592,459</u>
<u>Accumulated Amortization</u>		
At beginning of year	\$ 411,797	\$ 351,576
Disposals	-	-
Additions	<u>66,617</u>	<u>60,221</u>
At end of year	<u>478,514</u>	<u>411,797</u>
Opening Net Book Value	180,662	437,805
Closing Net Book Value	<u><u>261,726</u></u>	<u><u>180,662</u></u>

NOTE F – PAYABLES AND ACCRUALS

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Sundry payables	\$ 8,894,174	\$ 2,573,902
Other Liabilities	3,832,718	797,619
Accruals	<u>3,971,105</u>	<u>4,424,203</u>
	<u><u>\$ 16,697,997</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 7,795,724</u></u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE G – DEFERRED GOVERNMENT GRANTS

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Year Ended September 30, 2020		
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 13,898,758	\$ 10,995,870
Grants received for capital expenditure	3,834,111	5,655,723
Transfers to statement of comprehensive income	(2,997,351)	(2,424,563)
Disposals	(176,819)	(328,272)
	<u>659,940</u>	<u>2,902,888</u>
Net transfer to government grants		
Balance at end of year	\$ <u><u>14,558,698</u></u>	\$ <u><u>13,898,758</u></u>

NOTE G – GOVERNMENT GRANTS

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Recurrent expenditure grant	\$ 70,888,274	\$ 65,297,433
Development expenditure grant	-	4,488,874
Transfer from deferred government grants	<u>(659,940)</u>	<u>(2,902,888)</u>
	<u><u>\$ 70,228,334</u></u>	<u><u>\$66,883,419</u></u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Expressed in Trinidad and Tobago Dollars)

NOTE G – DEFERRED GOVERNMENT GRANTS

The government grants have been presented in the Statement of Financial Position under both Current and Non -Current Liabilities.

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Non -Current Liability	\$ 11,561,348	\$ 11,474,196
Current Liability	<u>2,997,351</u>	<u>2,424,563</u>
	<u>\$ 14,558,699</u>	<u>\$ 13,898,759</u>

The accounting approach for the recognition of grants is the income approach under which the grant is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income over one or more period.

NOTE H – OPERATING EXPENSES

Operating expenses include the following:

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Salaries	\$ 43,688,459	\$ 35,543,140
Directors' fees	713,540	779,592
Gratuity	4,281,206	3,330,079
Accommodation cost	5,859,035	5,957,436
Number of employees at year end	278	250

NOTE I – FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

(i)! Fair Values – The carrying amounts of short-term financial assets and liabilities comprising cash in hand and at bank, investments, receivables and prepayments and payables and accruals are a reasonable estimate of their fair values because of the short maturity of these instruments.

(ii)! Credit Risk – The Authority has no significant concentration of credit risk.





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