

POLICY CONTEXT - PARTNER MINISTRIES

*Human and Social Development***Ministry of National Security (MNS)**

The mission of the MNS as outlined in its Strategic Plan 2017-2019 is to create safer and more secure communities through teamwork, intelligence-based decision making, and strengthened inter-agency structures, systems and collaboration. A major initiative in pursuit of this end is the Ministry's National Crime Prevention Programme (NCP) aimed at using a collaborative, whole of government and whole of society approach to crime prevention, with a strong focus at the community level. The NCP through its bottom-up, multi-sectoral approach and institutional strategy, is perfectly aligned with the intent and design of the NPSCD. In addition, crime prevention through social development and environmental design approaches utilise strategies consistent with community building. The NPSCD will therefore collaborate closely with the NCP and other violence reduction strategies of the MNS.

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services (MSDFS)

MSDFS has adopted as its mission, to lead in the enhancement of lives, with emphasis on the vulnerable, through a network of integrated, effective and accessible social services. It therefore has the responsibility for addressing the social challenges of poverty, social inequality and social exclusion, and places particular emphasis on developing and executing programmes and services that protect and assist vulnerable and marginalized groups in society such as women, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly, the poor/indigent, the socially displaced, ex-prisoners, deportees and persons living with HIV/AIDS. The MSDFS has intensified action in light of the current economic downturn in the Trinidad and Tobago economy and has scaled up efforts to mitigate the negative social impacts. Accordingly, it has developed the Social Mitigation Plan (SMP) 2017-2022, focused on achieving three main objectives, namely:

- Strengthening the Social Protection System
- Promoting Community and Civil Society Action; and
- Enhancing Productivity and Innovation

The NPSCD is a key companion of the SMP, with the former focused on quality of life, growth and development within vulnerable spatial communities and by extension the sustainable livelihoods of all

marginalised groups therein. The NPSCD will with the MSDFS, facilitate the capacity building and involvement of community organisations and stakeholders to be 'first responders' in understanding, identifying and intervening in the challenges, strengths and solutions in the community, and to be competent in interfacing with the MSDSF and other government programmes and services on behalf of the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

The MSDFS has also been foremost in the conduct and dissemination of poverty research, which would be critical in helping communities derive data driven decisions and strategies towards community sustainability. This type of data will be invaluable to the roll out of the NPSCD.

Ministry of Education

The MOE is mandated with management of the education system in Trinidad and Tobago from early childhood to tertiary education. To this end it exercises oversight over all school buildings; the recruitment of teachers; the school nutrition programme; student support services; facilitating the establishment of the Parent Teacher Association; and local school boards in primary and secondary¹. Its vision, as outlined in the education policy paper (1993-2003) is concerned with quality education for all and improving the education attainment of students. A number of strategies are critical to these objectives. In addition to the provision of a well-educated work force; of relevance to the sustainable community development is the importance of forging strategic linkages with the communities in which schools are located, parenting education and parents' value of education (Ibid) and providing environments, which support their healthy development, enabling them to become responsible, productive citizens.²

The NPSCD focuses on education as a key tool of social mobility especially for vulnerable populations with limited opportunities. In implementation of the NPSCD, the MCDCA will work with schools, school boards, school social workers, parents, and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) to ensure the holistic development of the child.

Office of the Prime Minister - Gender and Child Affairs (OPM-GCA)

The OPM is charged with the added responsibility for Gender and Child Affairs. The Gender Affairs Division has responsibility for improving the quality of life of men and women and boys and girls, at all levels of society through the promotion of gender equity and equality. The Child Affairs Division is responsible for

¹ education policy paper (1993-2003)

² Website of Student Support Services Division <http://moe.gov.tt/Services/Office-of-the-CEO/Student-Support-Services>

providing a secure and nurturing environment for all children and breaking the silence on Child Sexual Abuse.

The NPSCD's concern for human and social development in communities is focused on creating an enabling environment for the growth and development of all persons with special emphasis on vulnerable persons such as youths, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. The GCA will therefore be a critical partner in the implementation of the NPSCD, to assist communities in the promotion of gender equity, in addressing issues of domestic violence, sexual offences including child sexual abuse and in promoting healthy family relationships and functioning.

Ministry of Health (MOH)

The MOH is the national authority charged with oversight of the health system in Trinidad and Tobago. It is therefore responsible for ensuring the right of citizens, communities, residents and visitors to appropriate, quality health services. In the Ministry's National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non Communicable Diseases 2017-2021, the MOH provided the strategic outline for the control of non-communicable diseases, based on a vision for 'happier, healthier, fitter people...living longer and more productive lives.' The Plan (i) outlines a strategy for multi-sectoral, whole of government and whole of society action; (ii) includes a call for clear strategies for health related outcomes in all national policies; and (iii) emphasises improving social and economic conditions impacting well-being, focused on vulnerable and underserved populations.

The MCDCA has a solid history of partnership with the MOH in the delivery of health promotion activities. The NPSCD through its deliberate focus on the four pillars of sustainable development will continue to promote the priority of healthy living as a critical development strategy in communities. It will however rely on the MOH to ensure that all communities have equitable access to quality state-supplied health services.

Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs (MSYA)

The MSYA is a primary partner with the NPSCD in terms of the development and execution of initiatives for children and youth in communities. The MSYA's mission is to coordinate and facilitate the delivery of quality development services with special emphasis on the enhancement of youth, and sport for recreation and industry. It however has outlined for itself a key role in engaging sport as a tool of development, recognising the wide varied of uses and benefits associated with sport, including:

- i. reinforcing values and strengthening youth development
- ii. crime fighting initiatives and as a component of community development

- iii. conflict aversion, resolution and peace building
- iv. promotion of gender equity and equality, empowerment of girls and women
- v. enhancing societal inclusion and health of persons living with disabilities (PWDs) and elders
- vi. the promotion of health and disease prevention
- vii. enforcement of human rights

In the context of youth development the 2012-2017 National Youth Policy (now under review) focused on the goals of youth leadership and participation in their development and their access to appropriate and varied and synchronized programming all with a view to creating an enabling environment for their self-development. The issues of children and youth and by extension their families, are central to community development and crime prevention. The emergence of youth with their energy and innovation as leaders in community development, and the versatility of sport and its relevance to developmental strategies with variety of groups (elderly, PWDs) and circumstances, make collaboration with the MSYA critical to the NPSCD.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD)

MHUD is responsible for the formulation and execution of Government's policy in the Housing and Urban Development sector. Its mandate is in concert with two pillars of the NPSCD, namely, human and social development and economic development. Government's housing policy is based on the principles of 'affordability', 'accessibility', and 'improving the living conditions of our citizens'.³ MHUD is committed to providing well-designed, affordable housing solutions on serviceable, tenured lots in widely dispersed (suburban and rural) areas for qualifying persons from the low and lower-middle income groups. MHUD also provides grants to assist lower income home owners to effect critical repairs/upgrades to existing homes; and is engaged in regularising land tenures for qualifying families residing in squatter communities by providing infrastructural and basic amenities' upgrades.

Accordingly, MHUD is important to the NPSCD for its impact on the socio-economic development of communities through quality housing, and employment generation in the construction sector. MHUD is in the business of creating communities through its housing schemes and must ensure that in the design of new communities, they conform to standards that are critical for sustainability.

Ministry of Planning and Development

The MPD is aligned to national development through its four (4) main pillars; economic, social, spatial and environmental development. This governmental agency provides policy guidance and development,

³MHUD Website

technical support, advice and feasibility assessment for national development. MPD is committed to the development of Trinidad and Tobago's National Development Strategy, Vision 2030, to which all governmental organisations adhere. MPD facilitates national development through the following⁴:

- Coordination of national statistics
- Environmental policy, planning and management
- National monitoring and evaluation
- Socio-economic planning, coordinating and monitoring
- Spatial development, and
- Technical cooperation on special projects and programmes inter alia.

MPD is a critical partner to the NPSCD to provide technical assistance through the Monitoring and Evaluation as well as, other divisions to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes implemented.

Economic Development

Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development

The MOLSED focuses on the provision of decent work, the facilitation of industrial peace, the development of small enterprises and co-operatives, and the provision of employment opportunities through on-the-job training and job placements⁵. Its mission is to facilitate an enabling environment that supports employment creation, sustainable enterprise development and employee well-being in a safe, peaceful and productive work environment.⁶

The MOLSED will be an important partner of the NPSCD, particularly as it pursues the goal of sustainable development of community economies through a myriad of strategies depending on the unique assets and opportunities of each community. Additionally, community enterprises and small and micro enterprise development have been long standing features of the community development programming of the MCDCA especially through skills development. Building community economies, providing sustainable options to make work programmes are important to national development. As such, the scaling up of individual entrepreneurial capacity, access to capital and stronger focus on community

⁴ Ministry of Planning and Development. About Ministry of Planning and Development. (2015) [https://www.planning.gov.tt/content/about]

⁵ Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development. Our Mandate. (2015). [http://www.molsed.gov.tt/index.php/about-us/our-mandate]

⁶ Ibid.

enterprises, cooperatives and community business clusters are among the strategies for partnership with MOLSED and other partners as identified in the NPSCD.

Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries (MALF)

The MALF's mission is to work as an innovative team, championing the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development of food and non-food systems, supported by sound public policy.⁷ In the context of the NPSCD, communities will be empowered to explore and productively exploit their asset base, including opportunities and innovative mechanisms for home gardens, food and horticultural production. Accordingly residents in both urban and rural communities will be encouraged to become aware of and access all opportunities available at the MALF to improve capacity and innovation in the context of sustainable livelihoods.

Ministry of Tourism

Under the National Tourism Policy, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago shall create an environment that facilitates the country's tourism growth by addressing human resource development, community development, infrastructure and transportation development, investment promotion, accommodation issues, product development, and marketing. A major objective of this policy is to involve the local communities in the growth of the tourism sector by engaging and empowering the local communities in the planning and decision making process for the development, management and ownership of tourism products and services.⁸ This policy goal is further elaborated in the country's draft Community-Based Tourism Policy, which seeks to:

- i. encourage local community involvement in developing, producing and promoting authentic and indigenous products and services;
- ii. support the preservation, protection and restoration of the natural assets and resources within the community;
- iii. support and facilitate an enabling environment that encourages and nurtures local investment and sectorial linkages in tourism in the community;
- iv. promote an environment for the health, safety and security of residents and visitors; and;
- v. encourage the development of strategic partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, CBOs and funding agencies that support CBT.⁹

⁷Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries. About Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries. (2015). [<http://www.agriculture.gov.tt/112-about-us.html>]

⁸National Tourism Policy of Trinidad and Tobago. Ministry of Tourism, Trinidad and Tobago. (2010).

⁹Draft Community-Based Tourism Policy of Trinidad and Tobago. Ministry of Tourism, Trinidad and Tobago. (2017).

Sustainable community tourism was a focal point of discussion at the Community Development Partnership Forum-II in 2015 and is considered a very strong potential area for building thriving community economies. MCDCA will therefore work closely with the MoT to ensure that this area of development is pursued in a sustainable and responsible manner, so that the sector realizes its full potential to engage local communities, create economic opportunities and alleviate poverty.

Infrastructural Development

Ministry of Public Utilities

The MPU seeks to improve the quality of life of nationals through the delivery of public utilities for the sustainability of the country. Its mission is to facilitate the effective delivery of efficient, affordable and quality public utilities services through a committed, resourceful team of professionals and in close collaboration with all stakeholders. In addition to its oversight of the nation's utilities, the Ministry provides a range of social service programmes geared to improving the quality of life families (especially the less fortunate) and communities, ensuring that their homes, streets and recreational areas are safely electrified. Issues surrounding private electrification and public lit areas affect all homes and communities be they urban or rural, and are essential for meaningful development.

Access to utilities is highly associated with ending poverty and ensuring prosperity for all, as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals 2015. Additionally, appropriate lighting for communities is also associated with a reduction in theft and robberies. The MCDCA will therefore be desirous of ensuring that in the context of sustainable communities, appropriate street lighting, potable water and affordable electrification are supplied to localities and households, to improve liveability and quality of life.

Ministry of Works and Transport

The principal mandate of the Ministry of Works and Transport is to develop quality infrastructure and transportation that will enhance the lives of all citizens. Crucial to the development of quality infrastructure and transportation, the Ministry is mandated to constructing a first class air, sea and land transport system that has the potential to increase efficiency and improve the lives of all its people in the community.¹⁰ The quality of transport systems is an important element of our communities and economic efficiency. Well maintained road networks, access to efficient and reliable public and private

¹⁰National Development Strategy 2016-2030

transportation systems are among the kinds of linkages to markets, public services, health, schools, religious institutions and malls which contribute to quality of life and sustainable livelihoods for residents.

Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government (MRDLG)

The MRDLG is at the forefront of Government's Local Government Reform, which aims at facilitating more effective quality service delivery, viable sustainable communities and balanced regional development.¹¹ The Local Government Reform initiatives intends to create a modern, efficient and properly resourced Local Government system, provide Local Government Bodies with greater authority and expanded responsibility in the areas including social, community and economic development, health and the environment and land use among others. The new responsibilities and mandate will require Ministries to work even closer with the Local Government Authorities.

The MCDCA has collaborated with the MRDLG as one of its key partners in the design and proposed implementation of the NPSCD. The Municipal Governments bring needed resources to the SCD process. In addition to expanded functions under public health, municipal policies, spatial planning and building inspectorate, school repairs, cemeteries, and crematoria. They will take on new responsibilities in the areas of welfare and social services, community centre repair, civil society participation, economic research and planning, local economic development (LED) among others. Their Municipal Development Plans (MDPs) and LED Plans and the work of the various Municipal sub-committees on health, social services, culture, economic development and the like, would be important resources for the development of community strategic plans and on-going support in building local communities. In addition, the MCDCA resources, intimacy and structures at the community level will be critical resources to the LGF process.

¹¹Transitioning of Local Government: Draft Policy. Government of Trinidad and Tobago, Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, October 2016.