

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

**ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
FOR THE CARIBBEAN**



**Report on the national consultation  
on sustainable recovery and  
resilience towards achieving the  
Sustainable Development Goals  
in Trinidad and Tobago**



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UNITED NATIONS



Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean  
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

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National consultation on sustainable recovery and resilience  
towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals  
in Trinidad and Tobago

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LC/CAR/2023/8  
25 January 2023  
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Virtual meeting, 22 March 2022

**REPORT ON THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION  
ON SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE  
TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS  
IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

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## **A. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The debt for climate adaptation swap and financing the impact of climate change and disasters are innovative forms of financing for development. ECLAC along with regional partners is working on the establishment of a Caribbean Resilience Fund (CRF) which will provide an innovative way of addressing some of the fiscal challenges of the Caribbean, such as unsustainable debt levels (debt-to-gross domestic product) which often deteriorates when exogenous climatic events occur. Other funding mechanisms exist such as the gender responsive climate adaptation tools, including gender bonds. In the specific area of financing disaster preparedness or recovery, mention was made of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company (CCRIF SPC) where there is a need to finance disasters before they happen, which is a part of resilience building.
2. Data for assessing the impact of COVID-19 should be from reputable sources. The multiplicity of data sources on COVID-19 has the potential of casting doubts on the reliability of studies done on the impact of COVID-19.
3. It is essential to identify vulnerable groups and communities that should be prioritized for recovery and resilience building. As regards the impact of COVID-19 on women, attention will need to be paid to the issue of gender-based violence and the role that restrictions during COVID-19 and lockdowns may have played in perpetuating this vice. Focus on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 can be used as a main driver for poverty reduction, economic development and women's economic empowerment.
4. Participants were informed by ECLAC that a study on the impact of COVID-19 on citizens was undertaken by the United Nations Country Team and the Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago, focusing on the perception by citizens of the impact of COVID-19 on them. ECLAC indicated that when the study is complete, it would be a good source of primary data.
5. Recovery should be done in an integrated manner and look beyond COVID-19. In Trinidad and Tobago, the issue of timely implementation is key to any successful recovery. There is a need to strengthen focus on implementation of activities in a timely manner.
6. Greater partnerships between the public sector and the universities should be fostered, whereby universities can help support research and data collection by integrating these activities in student projects.

## **B. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK**

### **1. Place and date of the meeting**

7. The national consultation on sustainable recovery and resilience towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Trinidad and Tobago was held virtually on Tuesday 22 March 2022.
8. The virtual consultation targeted stakeholders from the public and private sectors, civil society organizations, academia, youth and development partners.

### **2. Attendance<sup>1</sup>**

9. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management of Belize, and by several officials of the Government of

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<sup>1</sup> See annex I for a full list of participants.

Trinidad and Tobago. Officials from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), a representative from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), as well as members of civil society organizations, academia, and public and private sectors participated.

### **3. Agenda**

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Assessment of the social and economic impact of COVID-19 in Trinidad and Tobago
3. Stakeholders' engagement and capacities to implement recovery plans post COVID-19
4. Building forward stronger post COVID-19: the road to a resilient recovery, selected options for consideration in Trinidad and Tobago
5. Financing for sustainable recovery and development in the era of COVID-19 and beyond
6. Conclusion

### **4. Background**

10. The national consultation in Trinidad and Tobago represented phase II of DESA and ECLAC cooperation with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago under the project "Integrated recovery planning and policy coherence towards the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals in selected Caribbean countries". The project aims to strengthen the integrated recovery planning and decision-making capacity of national stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago and other participating member States involved in mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and building back better towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

11. The national consultation focused on discussing with stakeholders the progress in formulating and implementing sustainable recovery plans in Trinidad and Tobago and receiving input and concrete recommendations on building back better to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs. To build back better post COVID-19, the country's long term national strategy, Vision 2030, offers good entry point for enabling integrated planning to support sustained recovery. Trinidad and Tobago produced three reports starting with the Roadmap to Recovery Report which provides comprehensive strategies focused on socioeconomic and environmental recovery, transformation and resilience. Phase I and II of the report contain recommendations intended to guide Government's actions in the immediate short term and set a solid foundation for the transformation of the economy and the society over the medium to long term. The Community Recovery Report made recommendations to support communities with at risk youths and vulnerable groups in some communities throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

12. The consultation, all papers and outputs related to Trinidad and Tobago can be found at: <https://cepal.org/en/events/national-consultation-sustainable-recovery-and-resilience-towards-achieving-sustainable-0>.

## **C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS**

### **1. Opening of the meeting**

13. In his opening remarks, the Deputy Permanent Secretary a.i. of the Ministry of Planning and Development, Trinidad and Tobago, indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic has irreversibly reshaped our

world from how we interact to how nations trade with each other. The definition of recovery is not static, it is multidimensional and somewhat fluid. The very core of recovery will be on people's lives, towards allowing them to grow and thrive. He advised that Trinidad and Tobago developed a Roadmap to Recovery and Community Recovery Reports. Recommendations from these reports are aligned with the country's national development plan, Vision 2030, and will guide Government's actions in the immediate and short terms and will lay a solid foundation for economic and social transformation in the future. Transformation, however, will not be achieved at the expense of at-risk communities. Among the lessons learned from the pandemic, one of particular importance is that development gains achieved over decades can be wiped out in a matter of weeks. In the case of COVID-19, no country or sector has been spared from its disruptive effect. The experience of the pandemic has served to reinforce the mantra to build resilience in everything we do going forward. Recovery and resilience have been placed front and centre in Trinidad and Tobago development pathway. The current national consultation is timely, as Trinidad and Tobago is transitioning to how best we live with COVID-19. The Deputy Permanent Secretary a.i. expressed gratitude that the private sector, civil society organizations and academia are partnering with the Government in this exercise.

14. The Coordinator of the Statistics and Social Development Unit of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean noted that the challenges the world faces today could not have been anticipated. However, the Caribbean has been preparing and ECLAC has been involved in supporting countries over the years with integrated planning. ECLAC has had one or more sessions similar to this consultation. In May 2019, in collaboration with DESA and the Ministry of Planning and Development, a regional learning conference was convened in Trinidad and Tobago to look at the ways in which the implementation of the 2030 Agenda could be mainstreamed. Due to the success of that conference, in November 2019 another one on integrated planning and policy coherence was held again in partnership with DESA and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Also, in December 2020 a workshop on evidence-based planning was held for regional stakeholders. With COVID-19, there is recognition that focus cannot only be on planning but on recovery and resilience and in partnership with DESA, ECLAC has looked at what has been done in other regions and how that can be applied to the Caribbean. The four pilot countries on board under this initiative are Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica and Trinidad and Tobago, and support will be provided with respect to resilience building and recovery planning across all spheres of development. He noted that this workshop is expected to be interactive to allow for exchange of ideas.

15. The Sustainable Development Officer, DESA, noted that the consultation resulted from the joint efforts of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and colleagues of ECLAC and DESA as well as the United Nations Country Team in Trinidad and Tobago. Focus has to be on support with respect to strengthening green recovery planning towards mitigating the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and to build back better post COVID-19. Building the capacity of stakeholders to build back better and to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs will be key. The COVID-19 pandemic which started out as a severe public health emergency/crisis has since become a significant socioeconomic crisis of immense proportion and has eroded several development gains. The cost of the pandemic has been the loss of many lives, but the secondary effects has been several socioeconomic impacts. Latin America and the Caribbean has been the hardest hit region in the world. The multi-hazard environment of the region requires green economy and integrated planning, and it is therefore critical for countries to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The capacity of stakeholders needs to be strengthened as part of the recovery process. DESA also wants to promote the localization of the SDGs. Local actions are critical to ensuring that the SDGs are delivered and achieved. This consultation will provide concrete inputs on recommendations for building back better. DESA, ECLAC and the United Nations Country Team stand ready to support Trinidad and Tobago with the localization of the SDGs. He expressed that this consultation is only the beginning, the team intends to journey with the country on the path to ensuring it achieves sustainable development.



## **2. Assessment of the social and economic impact of COVID-19 in Trinidad and Tobago**

16. The lead consultant provided a synopsis of the main findings of the research paper entitled: “Impact of COVID-19 on five Caribbean SIDS – Evaluating Progress in Recovery Planning, Emerging Policy Options, Best Practices and Lessons Learned”, with specific reference to Trinidad and Tobago. The report, which was shared with stakeholders prior to the consultation, highlights the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Trinidad and Tobago and focused on the response to the pandemic including recovery plans and related opportunities for the country post COVID-19.

17. Following the presentation, stakeholders provided additional information not captured in the presentation with respect to the impacts of COVID-19. This covered the economy, the labour market, education, employment, population health (outside of COVID-19 but with focus on non-communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS and other diseases), tourism and micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), livelihoods, food security and access to markets, women and girls, and other socioeconomic impacts.

## **3. Stakeholders’ engagement and capacities to implement recovery plans post COVID-19**

18. The Senior Planning Officer and the Monitoring and Reporting Officer for Sustainable Development Goals of the Ministry of Planning and Development led the session on how Trinidad and Tobago has been engaging stakeholders in recovery planning and resilience building. They delivered a presentation titled “Stakeholder engagement and capacities to implement recovery plans post COVID-19” which addressed the following questions.

19. The first question sought information on the impact of COVID-19 on the implementation of Vision 2030. Government responses were categorized below:

- Social sector – increased social sector protection programmes to ensure no-one was left behind.
- Construction sector – delayed implementation of projects due to movement restrictions.
- Manufacturing sector – the crisis created an economic, labour market and export earnings shock, impacting the production of goods, consumption and investment.
- Service sector – termination, reduction and furloughing of employees in the entertainment, tourism and aviation sectors severely affected. Tourism sector used the closure of borders to allocate funds for the upgrading of hotel rooms in Trinidad and Tobago under the Hotel and Guesthouse Room Stock Upgrade Project.
- Energy sector – low downstream commodity prices resulted in closure of four plants.

20. The second question focused on the impact of COVID-19 on the progress towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Trinidad and Tobago. The following responses were given:

- People – early childhood care education and pre-primary education was negatively impacted due to restrictions.
- Prosperity – decline in GDP growth rate coupled with a significant increase in public sector debt.
- Peace – increased reports of intimate partner and domestic violence resulting from lockdowns and restrictions.
- Partnerships – increased resource mobilization from development partners to support shortfalls in budgetary allocation used for recovery efforts.

21. The third question sought to explore the actions taken to reduce the overall socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 on the population and the economy.

22. The Government appointed two committees, the Roadmap to Recovery and Community Recovery, to examine and propose strategic priorities that would stabilize the economy and communities and increase economic growth to minimize the long-term adverse effects of the pandemic and consequential impacts on economic and social structures. The committees were guided by Vision 2030 which provided the broad framework and vision for transforming Trinidad and Tobago into a developed country.

23. Three reports were produced, and these provide comprehensive strategies focused on socioeconomic and environmental recovery, transformation and resilience, known as the Roadmap to Recovery Report. Phase I and II of the Roadmap to Recovery Report contain recommendations intended to guide Government's actions in the immediate short term and set a solid foundation for the transformation of the economy and the society, over the medium to long term. The Community Recovery Report made recommendations to support communities with at risk youth and vulnerable groups in some communities throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Some of the Road to Recovery and Community Recovery interventions were included into the 2022 fiscal budget and will form a part of the three-year Public-Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) cycle which aims to propel Trinidad and Tobago to cope and recover from the unprecedented challenges, new and emerging, brought about by the pandemic.

24. Question four explored the steps taken and techniques applied at the country level in stakeholder selection, mapping and analysis (reference was made to the stakeholder consultation process in the preparation of Trinidad and Tobago's voluntary nation review (VNR) 2020. The following initiatives were reported:

- Grants – food support assistance, public assistance and disability, salary relief, rental assistance, fuel relief, emergency relief and humanitarian assistance to stranded nationals abroad.
- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) – SME loans, small business liquidity support facility and Government guaranteed SME loan facility.
- Value added tax and income tax refunds – VAT refunds to SMEs, VAT bonds and accelerated income tax refunds.
- Liquidity support – moratorium on mortgages and loan instalment payments, penalties are being waived on overdraft facilities and reduction of prime lending rates.

25. The Roadmap to Recovery and the Community Recovery Reports, including the medium to long-term objectives contained therein. Interventions over the medium term 2022–2024 include:

- Retraining of women in small and micro enterprise development
- Digital government programme
- Development of smart city infrastructure
- Youth business park
- Development of the eco-friendly business sector

26. The Government has placed emphasis on the importance of stakeholder consultations including:

Sustainable recovery of Trinidad and Tobago:

- Private sector
- Public sector
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society
- Academia
- Trade unions
- General public

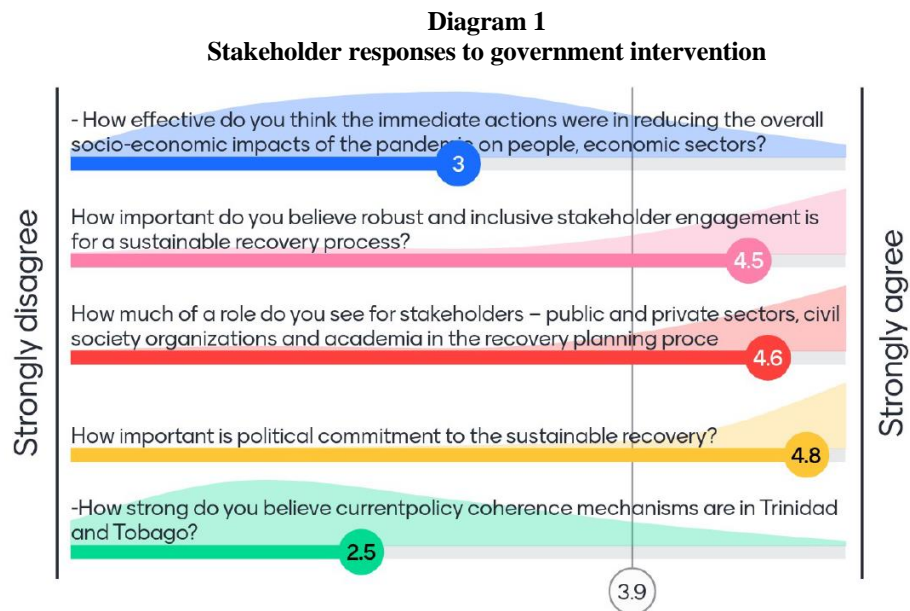
Voluntary national reviews:

- Private Sector
- Public sector
- NGOs and civil society
- Academia
- General public

27. Following the session, stakeholders were invited to use the Mentimetre platform to respond to the following guiding questions (using a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the best possible outcome and 1 being the least favourable outcome), to share their views on the following:

- How effective do you think the Government’s immediate actions were in reducing the overall socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic on people, vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples and economic sectors?
- How important do you believe robust and inclusive stakeholder engagement is for a sustainable recovery process?
- How much of a role do you see for stakeholders – public and private sectors, civil society organizations and academia in the recovery planning process and implementation efforts?
- How important is political commitment to the sustainable recovery?
- How strong do you believe current policy coherence and policy coherence mechanisms are in place in Trinidad and Tobago?

28. The group consensus and the collective responses to the questions above are presented in diagram 1. The results of this exercise can provide the Government with key information on the importance stakeholders place on consultation and engagement and their collective interests to support national development efforts. It can inform in some cases how the Government communicates with the wider population in areas such as policy development and implementation and other initiatives, providing the Government with key insights into areas that they may need to step-up engagement with stakeholders. Based on this exercise, one area for recommended action is for the Government to give more attention to policy coherence as stakeholders noted that policy coherence mechanisms were not strong.



Source: ECLAC and DESA.

#### **4. Building forward stronger post COVID-19: the road to a resilient recovery, selected options for consideration in Trinidad and Tobago**

29. The Sustainable Development Officer made a presentation on proposed strategies and transformative initiatives for consideration in building back better, building forward stronger and equal post COVID-19. The initiatives presented are aligned to the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (MSDCF) for the Caribbean and the SDGs which emerged from the research paper “Impact of COVID-19 on five Caribbean SIDS – Evaluating Progress in Recovery Planning, Emerging Policy Options, Best Practices and Lessons Learned”. The twelve strategies for consideration are:

- (i) New approaches for increasing concessionary financing
- (ii) Budgetary support and debt relief
- (iii) Use of new and innovative financing instruments and new financing modalities
- (iv) Fiscal reprogramming
- (v) Creating shock responsive social protection systems
- (vi) Transforming education models and the education sector
- (vii) Enhancing digital preparedness
- (viii) Transforming current economic models
- (ix) Rethinking agriculture and food security
- (x) Focusing on sustainable agriculture
- (xi) Rethinking the role of women and women’s economic empowerment in sustainable development – building back fairer and equal
- (xii) Investing in comprehensive disaster risk management, disaster risk financing and financial protection

30. The strategies draw from the Caribbean Common Multi-Country Analysis 2021 and are aligned to the MSDCF. They are based on the issues and challenges faced by countries due to COVID-19. They are drawn from several studies and policy prescriptions regionally and internationally that are geared to supporting countries in their efforts to advance their development prospects in line with the 2030 Agenda, the Samoa Pathway and within the context of leaving no one behind.

31. Following this presentation, participants engaged in a brainstorming exercise that focused on assessing how participants viewed each of the twelve proposed initiatives presented. Using polling, each participant reviewed the proposed initiatives and voted individually for the top three they believed are most critical for building back better in Trinidad and Tobago to achieve a more resilient and sustainable recovery within the context of Vision 2030.

32. The responses were then collated across all participant responses and the top five priority areas for consideration by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, based on the consensus of the group, are:

- (i) Enhancing digital preparedness
- (ii) Focusing on sustainable agriculture
- (iii) Transforming education models and the education sector
- (iv) Transforming current economic models
- (v) Rethinking agriculture and food security

#### **5. Financing for sustainable recovery and development in the era of COVID-19 and beyond**

33. The Statistician at the CDB presented on sustainable recovery and development post COVID-19.

His presentation focused on:

- 2021 GDP growth estimates for the Caribbean and the long-term economic effects of COVID-19 including debt levels.
- How to reposition Caribbean economies and built resilience.
- Some policy imperatives for consideration by governments such as improved logistics infrastructure, regional cooperation and integration.
- The need to recognize that sustainable, inclusive recovery must be tied to the achievement of the SDGs.
- The need for Trinidad and Tobago to focus on planning beyond oil and gas, for example by considering exploiting in a sustainable manner the marine environment and renewable energy.

34. The Statistician recommended the following areas of policy imperatives for consideration by the Government:

- Greater efficiency of regulatory frameworks
- Improved logistics infrastructure
- Regional cooperation and integration
- Modernizing education
- Facilitating exploitation of renewable energy

## **6. Conclusion**

35. In his closing remarks, the Coordinator of the Statistics and Social Development Unit highlighted a financing initiative led by ECLAC called the Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap, intended to be an innovative idea for financing for green recovery, to address the impact of climate change and disasters. This includes the establishment of the Caribbean Resilience Fund which COVID-19 has further made more imperative. It is designed to address the Caribbean's unsustainable debt level which is aggravated by disasters and how we could recover in a resilient way. There are other funds such as the Caribbean Climate Resilience Fund and gender responsive climate adaptation. These funds provide a means of financing recovery and resilience in the Caribbean.

36. For the next steps of the project, the team will engage Trinidad and Tobago in phase III and IV. Phase III will focus on adapting the DESA – UNITAR e-learning course, "Integrated Recovery Planning and Policy Coherence Towards the SDGs", with specific emphasis to the national context of Trinidad and Tobago. Phase IV will be the delivery of the e-learning course, "Integrated Recovery Planning and Policy Coherence towards the SDGs: the Trinidad and Tobago Context", using a train-the-trainer format targeting governments, civil society organizations, academia, youth and the private sector.

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### **InvesTT**

- Pramilla Ramdahani, Vice President, Investments, email: pramilla.ramdahani@investt.co.tt

### **Supermarket Association of Trinidad and Tobago (SATT)**

- Rajiv Diptee, President, email: Satt.president@gmail.com
- Shamshad Ali, Board Member, email: shamshadfyali@gmail.com

### **Tobago Tourism Agency Limited (TTAL)**

- Louis Lewis, Chief Executive Officer, email: llewis@tobagotourism.org
- Narendra Ramgulam, Director, Product Development and Destination Management, email: nramgulam@tobagotourism.org

### **Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce (T&T Chamber)**

- Rianna Paul, Manager - Trade and Business Development, email: rpaul@chamber.org.tt

### **Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA)**

- Brithney Wright, Head- Business Development, , email: bduofficer@tma.com

## **G. Secretariat**

### **ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean**

- Abdullahi Abdulkadri, Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit, email: abdullahi.abdulkadri@eclac.org
- Dale Alexander, Programme Management Officer, Caribbean Knowledge Management Centre, email: dale.alexander@eclac.org.
- Colleen Skeete, Programme Management Assistant, Statistics and Social Development Unit, email: colleen.skeete@eclac.org
- Elizabeth Emanuel, consultant, email: liz.emmanuel@gmail.com

Annex II**CONSULTATION AGENDA****Welcome and opening (30 Minutes)**

Remarks by (Government and UN Agencies)

**Session 1 (45 Minutes): Assessment of the Social and Economic Impact of COVID-19 in Trinidad and Tobago****Brief Description**

The session will include two brief presentations. One by UNDESA on the main findings of the research paper, “Impact of COVID-19 on 5 Caribbean SIDS... *Evaluating Progress in Recovery Planning, Emerging Policy Options, Best Practices and Lessons Learned*”, with specific reference to Trinidad and Tobago and focused on impacts of COVID-19. The other would include a joint presentation involving civil society organizations and ECLAC on the Digicel COVID-19 survey.

This will be followed by inputs from key stakeholders from the public sector, private sector, academia, youth and civil society organizations sharing in 90 seconds each, the main impacts, including data on a single sector based on the guiding questions below that they are most engaged in. *Participants could also include responses to the questions in the Zoom chat or in the Google Doc that will be made available throughout the consultation.*

**Guiding Questions for Stakeholders**

What has been the experience and impact of COVID 19 in Trinidad and Tobago:

- a. Impacts on the Economy
- b. Impacts on the Labour Market
- c. Impacts on Education
- d. Impacts on Population Health (outside of COVID-19 but with focus on NCDS, HIV/AIDS and other diseases)
- e. Impacts on Tourism and MSMEs – the Trinidad and Tobago Hotel and Restaurant Association will be invited to share their perspective on the real-time effects of the pandemic their businesses and what the strategies they are incorporating post-pandemic
- f. Impacts on Livelihoods, Food Security and Access to Markets – The Supermarkets Association will be invited to provide a perspective from the supply side related to food inflation and distribution
- g. Other Socio-Economic Impacts
- h. Impacts on vulnerable and migrant groups - IOM and UNHCR will share on the impacts of the pandemic on vulnerable groups and how the wider community levelled up to provide support

**Session 2 (45 Minutes): Stakeholders’ Engagement and Capacities to Implement Recovery Plans Post COVID-19:****Brief Description**

This session will explore the importance and role of stakeholder involvement and engagement, political commitment and building consensus and ownership for recovery planning post COVID-19. The session also will explore the importance of policy coherence and policy coordination mechanisms. The session will begin with a brief presentation from the Ministry of Planning and Development and address the following questions:

- How has the COVID-19 affected the implementation of Vision 2030?
- How has COVID-19 affected the progress towards implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Trinidad and Tobago?
- What have been some of the immediate actions to reduce the overall socio-economic impacts on the population and the economy?

- What steps have been taken, and techniques applied at the country level in stakeholder selection, mapping and analysis (reference to be made of the stakeholder consultation process in the preparation of Trinidad and Tobago's VNR 2020)

**Guiding Questions for Stakeholders** – (Using a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 being the best possible outcome and 1 being the least favourable outcome).

- How effective do you think the immediate actions were in reducing the overall socio-economic impacts of the pandemic on people, economic sectors?
- How important do you believe robust and inclusive stakeholder engagement is for a sustainable recovery process?
- How much of a role do you see for national stakeholders – public and private sectors, civil society organizations and academia in the recovery planning process and implementation efforts?
- How important is political commitment to the sustainable recovery process?
- How strong do you believe current policy coherence and policy coherence mechanisms are in Trinidad and Tobago?

*Participants would include responses to the questions in the Google Doc that will be made available throughout the consultation or via Mentimeter for this session.*

### **Session 3 (45 Minutes): Building Forward Stronger Post COVID-19: The Road to a Resilient Recovery, Selected Options for Consideration in Trinidad and Tobago**

#### **Brief Description**

This session will begin with a short presentation from UNDESA on Proposed Strategies and Transformative Initiatives for Consideration in Building Back Better, Building Forward Stronger, Fairer and Equal Post COVID-19. Initiatives that are aligned to the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (MSDCF) and the SDGs and which emerged from the research paper, “Impact of COVID-19 on 5 Caribbean SIDS... *Evaluating Progress in Recovery Planning, Emerging Policy Options, Best Practices and Lessons Learned*”. Other brief presentations will include:

- Policy initiatives that are jointly being developed to guide the tourism sector post-pandemic - The Trinidad Tourism Limited and Ministry of Tourism
- Overview of findings and progress from the Road to Recovery committee

Following these presentations, participants will engage in a brainstorming exercise.

#### **Brainstorming Exercise**

Participants will be asked to brainstorm using *Polling* to assess how they view each of the proposed initiatives presented. By using Polling, each participant will review the proposed initiatives and vote for the top 3 they believe are most critical for Trinidad and Tobago as the twin-island Republic seeks to build back stronger and to achieve a more resilient and sustainable recovery. The responses will then be collated and the top 5 priority areas for Trinidad and Tobago, based on the consensus of all groups will be shared. The analysis could also be further broken down to show top priority areas based on stakeholder groupings – e.g. public sector, private sector etc.

### **Session 4: (45 Minutes): Financing for Sustainable Recovery and Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond**

#### **Brief Description**

The session will take the form of a panel discussion of UN counterparts (starting with UN RCO, UNDP and ECLAC) involved in the recovery process in Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean. In an interactive format, these panellists will be asked to share perspectives on financing for development beyond COVID-19; and

innovative financing instruments/tools and other resources available for advancing onto the road to a resilient recovery. Other panellists will be asked to join in and provide their perspectives as the conversation unfolds.

This session will therefore take stock of the financial resources required and progress made so far to take the Caribbean Region and more specifically Trinidad and Tobago from vulnerability to resilient development; and from economic peril to sustainable recovery and dynamic growth, all within the thrust of 'leaving no one behind'.

Panellists will respond to the following:

- What are the COVID-19 related debt and liquidity challenges facing the Caribbean Region and, specifically Trinidad and Tobago and possible measures to address them?
- How to mitigate the impacts of key economic sectors, including sectors such as MSMEs?
- How to engage private creditors, international and regional development banks and access concessional funding, with debt cancellation?
- What are the non-traditional forms of financing that could be explored (e.g. international philanthropic organizations, foundations, public-private partnerships etc.)
- How to promote economic diversification and green and blue investments for resilience building in the Caribbean Region?
- What are some of the innovative financing tools available to Caribbean countries and how they can be applied (e.g. blended financing, debt swaps, green and blue bonds etc.)
- How can countries capitalize on the Addis Ababa Financing for Development Agenda which adopted a renewed global financing architecture to support the Sustainable Development Goals?
- What is the role of UN agencies to support countries in their thrust towards building back better and equal?

**Proposed Speakers**

- UN RCO
- UNDP
- ECLAC
- UNDESA
- ILO
- CDB

**Closing Remarks and Next Steps (15:00 Minutes)**

Government of Trinidad and Tobago

UN Agencies



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Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL)  
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