



UNITED NATIONS

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, ARUBA,
CURACAO AND SINT MAARTEN



2023

UN ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT



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FOREWORD BY THE UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR

On behalf of the United Nations System and the UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes comprising the UN Country Team working in Trinidad and Tobago and serving also Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten, I am delighted to present to you the **UN Annual Results Report 2023**.

The report provides a comprehensive overview of development cooperation in partnership with governments, civil society and people of the countries we serve. It focuses on results achieved in Trinidad and Tobago and demonstrates programmes and technical assistance provided by 22 Agencies, Funds and Programmes working across the region. It proves that development partnerships and bilateral and multilateral cooperation play a very important role in promoting Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals in Upper Middle-Income Countries such as Trinidad and Tobago.

The mandate of the UN Development System is to promote policies, institutional- and community-level solutions and business initiatives that respect the principles of sustainable development and human rights.

We take a holistic approach to growth and well-being, and we believe strongly that taking care of the most vulnerable and marginalised parts of our societies will make everyone better off. We know from global experience that the impact of climate change on infrastructure, livelihoods and the health of communities can be lessened by proper climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. We believe also that safety and security should be a public good and that violence and criminal activity have no place in peaceful, prosperous, and cohesive societies.

Trinidad and Tobago as well as the islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten continued to champion the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Much progress has been made over the years, especially in terms of reduction of poverty, access to health and education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation and climate action. However, challenges remain for some SDGs.

In September 2023, the UN and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago hosted national consultations on SDGs.

Participants of this large event spoke clearly about their vision for the future of Trinidad and Tobago, prioritising just energy transition, enhancing education, digitalisation, economic diversification and urban development. On other occasions, our programme stakeholders talked passionately about the health and well-being of communities, women’s and children’s rights, the plight of migrants from Venezuela, as well as needs of marginalised youth or disabled persons. We all discussed the importance of combating corruption, promoting institutional transparency, and counteracting practices that fuel gang-related crime and violence.

As the new United Nations Resident Coordinator in Port-of-Spain I was delighted to hear those voices and learn more about the culture and aspirations of the region, also during my visits to Aruba and Curaçao, all of which share the same “small country with big development challenges” dilemma.

Throughout the year, I was truly impressed by the clarity of vision and aspirations of all our partners. I was also delighted to repeat after the UN Secretary-General who visited Trinidad and Tobago in July 2023, that the country and region can be a leader of a positive climate action agenda.

Looking ahead, as 2024 marks an important year for the Small Island Developing States, the United Nations System reaffirms its commitment to forging even stronger partnerships in support of Trinidad and Tobago’s and the Dutch Islands’ development trajectories. We look forward to the outcomes of the SIDS-4 Conference in Antigua and Barbuda and we hope it will provide much-needed momentum to increase development cooperation and accelerate sustainable development progress. With only six years left until 2030, we depend on the continued leadership, collaboration and ambitious investments that will get the 2030 Agenda and SDGs back on track.

Looking at the report and the faces of people who took part in the numerous events, projects, and other activities that the UN System supported throughout last year, I am optimistic about the future. With the positive energy of the Caribbean, true commitment to UN values and goals agreed at international level, and the wealth of human talent that these countries represent, I am sure that we can achieve a lot!

I am grateful for the hard work of the United Nations Country Team and over 200 UN staff serving Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. Without your effort every day in partnership with the respective government partners, our donors and civil society and private sector actors, we would not have been able to achieve results in support of the people we serve.

I also want to extend sincere thanks to all line ministries cooperating with the UN and especially to the Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs and Ministry of Planning and Development for their close cooperation with the UN System to achieve a more effective coordination of our work.

Finally, I want to thank the UN’s development partners and donors for their strategic support and trust in the UN’s capacity to deliver. We are grateful and ready to do more to jointly deliver on the ambitious vision for accelerated development of the Caribbean region!



Joanna Kazana-Wisniowiecki

UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR AND REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, ARUBA, CURAÇAO AND SINT MAARTEN

United Nations Country Team



Key Partners



THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



THE COUNTRY OF ARUBA



CURAÇAO



SINT MAARTEN

DONOR GOVERNMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS



INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS





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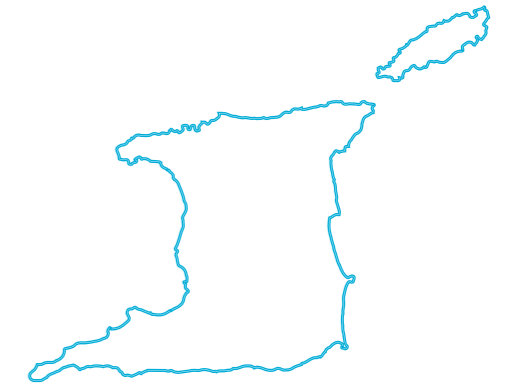


CHAPTER 1

Key Development Trends and the Regional Context

1.1 TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

In 2023, Trinidad and Tobago once again demonstrated its continued commitment to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its 17 sustainable and interconnected Development Goals. In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago has so far met some indicator targets associated with the achievement of the Goal of No Poverty. It has also now achieved 63% of the SDGs. In addition, 9 out of 14 Goals for which data is available have positive trends.



In the context of a relatively strong global recovery from Covid-19 and the food crisis of 2022, Trinidad and Tobago experienced economic growth of 2.1% in 2023, due to the performance of both its energy and non-energy sectors. This growth was further supported by an 8.4 percent reduction in inflation between December 2022 and January 2024, along with expanding credit and a stable financial sector. Nonetheless, one issue blocking the pathway to progress on some SDGs is access to financing, as Trinidad and Tobago is not eligible for Official Development Assistance because of its relatively high-income status compared to other SIDS.

In 2023, Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to gender equality was underscored through various outcomes of the EU-funded Spotlight Initiative, including the development of a comprehensive Women, Peace, and Security National Action Plan. Simultaneously, strides were made in technology and education, with investments in digital infrastructure and initiatives aimed at improving access to education and health for marginalised groups, showcasing a dedication to progress and inclusivity.

Trinidad and Tobago continued to exemplify leadership at the regional and global levels. In June 2023, Ambassador Dennis Francis, the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations assumed the Presidency of the UN

General Assembly, playing a critical role in shaping the global agenda on peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability. Sub-regionally, as the lead Government on Crime and Security within CARICOM, Trinidad and Tobago hosted a 2023 conference on Crime and Public Safety as a Public Health Issue. In addition, Trinidad and Tobago hosted the United Nations Secretary-General's visit to the CARICOM 50th Anniversary meeting in July 2023. Also in 2023, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago announced that it would chair the 2024 session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC), a permanent subsidiary and inter-governmental body of the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). The CDCC promotes and strengthens economic and social development cooperation and integration among Caribbean countries and within Latin America.

However, despite these advancements, Trinidad and Tobago continues to face significant challenges, particularly in addressing crime and violence, indicating areas of sustainable development that still require attention. High homicide rates persist, as do concerns over the influx of illegal firearms. These issues remain a critical focus for both domestic policies and regional and international collaborations as the Government strives to ensure citizen safety.



ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The IMF reported that Trinidad and Tobago, for the first time in a decade, is undergoing a gradual and sustained economic recovery.

Real Gross Domestic Product rebounded in 2022 and is estimated to have further expanded by 2.1% in 2023. This reflected the strong performance of the non-energy sector, which partially offset a contraction in the energy sector during the 3rd quarter due to the shut-down of a large facility.

Inflation decreased significantly from 8.7 percent in December 2022 to 0.3% in January 2024, mainly driven by lower prices on imported commodities. Banking sector credit lines for the private sector continued to expand. The current account is estimated to have remained in surplus in 2023, and foreign reserves coverage is adequate at 8.3 months of prospective total imports.



CRIME AND VIOLENCE

There were 576 homicides in Trinidad and Tobago in 2023 - the second-highest annual total - after the record 605 homicides registered in 2022. This 2023 figure includes Tobago, which had a record high of 14 murders in 2023. There were 10 murders recorded in Tobago in 2022.

The inflow of legal and illegal guns, many from the United States, continues to contribute to the crime and violence situation. Caribbean leaders, including those from Trinidad and Tobago, have made high-level representation to US authorities to tackle this problem and collaboration between US authorities and Caribbean nations is increasing.



CORRUPTION

Trinidad and Tobago's score on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index improved from 40 to 42 between 2017 and 2023. Additionally, in the past four years, the country moved six places higher in Transparency International's ranking of

countries from the least corrupt to the most corrupt. Trinidad and Tobago ranks 76th out of 180 countries globally. CARICOM notes that corruption is an important factor in the failure to stem the inflow of guns in countries across the region.

In this regard, in October 2023, Trinidad and Tobago joined forces along with seven other Caribbean countries to establish a regional platform to enhance collaboration and speed up implementation of the UN Convention Against Corruption.



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

In the 2023-2024 UNDP Human Development Report, Trinidad and Tobago's score was 0.814 which put the country in the "Very High human development category" – positioning it at 60 out of 193 countries and territories.

In the HDR, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) measures gender inequalities in three dimensions – reproductive health, empowerment and labour market. Trinidad and Tobago has a GII value of 0.264, ranking it 64 out of 166 countries.



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

As its SIDS, Trinidad and Tobago faces significant vulnerability to the direct and cascading impacts of climate change, as well as emergencies such as oil spills. A study by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean, in partnership with the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), evaluated the coherence of national policies and plans with a focus on the SDGs, Disaster Risk Reduction, and Climate Change Adaptation.

The assessment revealed partial coherence across various themes including strategic, conceptual, institutional, operational and monitoring and evaluation, with financial coherence being particularly limited. A key recommendation called for strengthened engagement with marginalised populations, support for community-based resilience initiatives and social protection schemes for those most vulnerable to climate and disaster risks.



In March 2023, a project was launched nationally to assess infrastructure resilience across seven critical sectors: oil and gas, energy, transportation, telecommunications, water and wastewater, education and health. Sector representatives evaluated the potential for hazards to disrupt critical infrastructure functions such as electricity distribution and transportation of goods and people. The assessment also analysed the impact of these disruptions on the country's economy. This initiative is a crucial step in implementing the Principles for Resilient Infrastructure in Trinidad and Tobago and aims to test the country's infrastructure systems' ability to adapt to, respond to, and recover from natural hazards.



EDUCATION

The Government announced plans in July 2023 to remove the legal and administrative barriers to the inclusion of refugee and migrant children into the national education system.

Meanwhile, post-COVID-19, sustained efforts were made to ensure fair access to online learning for underserved children through the continued distribution of electronic devices.



TECHNOLOGY

Trinidad and Tobago continued to develop its digital infrastructure to provide more of its citizens with

access to technology and the Internet. In 2023, Trinidad and Tobago was selected as the 16th winner of the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) Mobile World Congress Annual Global Leadership Award.

The award is given to the country that has demonstrated significant positive changes in digital policy and telecom regulation. Trinidad and Tobago was chosen as the 2024 winner specifically because of its prolific efforts to modernise its regulatory regimes and bring digital services to its citizens, with 10 public consultations held on topics including spectrum planning, 5G policy and maritime mobile services. This also included the roll-out of numerous initiatives to promote digital inclusion, such as creating 12 ICT Access Centers for skills training and device access across the islands, with additional expansions underway.

The 19th Caribbean Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was organised in Port-of-Spain from 22 to 24 September by the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU), under the theme "Evolving Caribbean Internet Governance Priorities for Sustainable Development". The UN System presented its regional initiatives aimed at bridging the digital divide and supporting Member States in better managing the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence and digital transformation through the development and application of tools such as the Digital Readiness Assessment and the UNESCO Artificial Intelligence Policy Roadmap for the Caribbean.

1.2 ARUBA, CURAÇAO AND SINT MAARTEN



For the Dutch Islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten, 2023 was a year of recovery and regeneration driving strong post Covid-19 economic recoveries.



Tourism continued to rebound as the main driver of economic growth; with efforts at implementation of economic reforms and strengthening of governance and fiscal management also moving forward. Additional developments impacting governance included: Sint Maarten's preparations for general elec-

tions in January 2024; the insolvency of ENNIA - apension insurer for Curaçao and Sint Maarten - which required the intervention of central Government, and the tripartite discussions held among therepresentatives of the Parliaments of Sint Maarten, Curaçao and Aruba on the reorganisation of the taxsystems to discuss possible pathways to achieve poverty alleviation.

As in other SIDS, the Dutch Islands continue to face the immense **challenges of climate change**. In late 2023, the IMF concluded its annual

consultations with Sint Maarten and Curaçao and confirmed the need for strong development planning focused on climate adaptation and improving the business climate to build resilient societies. In addition, to regenerating their economies, international partnerships and sustainable energy cooperation were also a key focus of the governments.

In Sint Maarten, the 2023 negotiations for the border between Sint Maarten and Saint-Martin were successfully completed and a new treaty

between Sint Maarten and Saint-Martin began on May 26th. The new treaty is advantageous for cross-border cooperation and has led to the reopening of a broader French-Dutch relationship and cooperation in areas of benefit to both populations, including education, health and security agreements. The two European countries also signed a pact for innovation and sustainable growth and committed to strengthening bilateral and regional collaboration to address pressing security challenges in the Caribbean region.



CARICOM 50th Anniversary and visit of the United Nations Secretary-General



UN Secretary-General António Guterres visited Trinidad and Tobago from July 2 to July 4, 2023, to participate in the Opening Ceremony of the 45th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM's Golden Jubilee was also celebrated alongside the event. The Secretary-General praised **Trinidad and Tobago for its imminent ascension to the Presidency of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly (2023-2024) and encouraged the country to lead on climate change adaptation and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) initiatives at the global level**, including by promoting multi-dimensional vulnerability as a metric to access concessional funding and debt relief for Caribbean middle-income countries. The Secretary-General echoed the call of CARICOM leaders for global action to reform the development finance system and underscored his support for an SDG stimulus for investments in sustainable

development and climate action; enhanced debt relief mechanisms, such as financial tools that convert debts into investments in climate adaptation; a Climate Solidarity Pact in which wealthier countries support emerging economies with facilitating emissions cuts; and the re-channeling of Special Drawing Rights.

In addition to participating in the official programme of meetings organized by the CARICOM, the UN Secretary General held a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. The Honourable Keith Rowley and key ministers of the Cabinet. The Secretary-General highlighted Trinidad and Tobago's Presidency of the General Assembly, and its leadership in global debates on climate action, finance justice, and sustainable development, the need for increased support for Haiti's democratic institutions, and the urgent action required to address the climate crisis threatening small island

and low-lying coastal states. Secretary-General Guterres emphasised also the importance of international cooperation to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs and Agenda 2030 and regional solidarity in tackling these challenges.

In addition to the official programme, the UN Secretary-General and his delegation had a chance to enjoy the beautiful nature, biodiversity and local hospitality of Trinidad and Tobago while visiting the Asa Wright Nature Centre.

The Secretary-General also met with the United Nations Country Team and about 200 staff working for the United Nations in Port-of-Spain. The Secretary-General encouraged the UN System to continue delivering solutions and tailor-made innovations relevant to the needs of a highly-developed country such as Trinidad and Tobago.





CHAPTER 2

UN Development Support to National Development Priorities in 2023

2.1 Overview of Cooperation Framework Results

The UN System development cooperation in the English and Dutch speaking Caribbean is guided by priorities of the **UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the Caribbean (UNMSDCF) 2022–2026** developed collaboratively by UN agencies, government entities and regional institutions. It focuses on four priority areas of cooperation designed to foster resilience and achievement of all SDGs, including:

- 

1 Economic Resilience and Shared Prosperity
- 

3 Resilience to Climate Change and Sustainable Natural Resource Management
- 

2 Equality, Well-being and Leaving No One Behind
- 

4 Peace, Safety, Justice, and the Rule Of Law

Based on the high-level priorities outlined in the UNMSDCF, on a bi-annual basis, the UN Country Team, in consultation with government and civil society organisations, develops a Country Implementation Plan (CIP) that aligns the UN's actions with national priorities outlined in the Vision 2030 National Development Strategy for Trinidad and Tobago (NDS).

Every year, the Ministry of Planning and Development and the UN Resident Coordinator convene the Joint National Steering Committee (JNSC) to review and assess implementation progress of the CIP. The Committee comprises senior UN officials and senior representatives of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

2.2 Cooperation Framework Priorities, Outcomes and Outputs



PRIORITY 1 ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND SHARED PROSPERITY



160,000
people

reached with education and advocacy communications on renewable energy in T&T



12
community facilities

piloting the use of solar power



Vision 2030
Theme 1



Vision 2030
Theme 4



OUTCOME 1

More productive and competitive business ecosystem designed to improve people's standards of living and well-being.

OUTCOME 2

The Caribbean has fully transitioned to a more diversified and sustainable economy that supports inclusive and resilient economic growth.

Ongoing support and delivery under this priority area is intended to improve economic competitiveness and resilience of agriculture and agri-business sectors, achieve accelerated and more expansive adoption of renewable energies and the building of a green economy, advance the adoption of digital technologies by the Government in operations and services provision, and generate more economic opportunities by the private and public sectors with greater gender equality.

CATALYSTS FOR THE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION

Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to the SDGs particularly intersects with Clean Energy under SDG 7, which focuses on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. For Trinidad and Tobago, a nation rich in oil and natural gas, the transition towards clean energy is crucial not only for reducing greenhouse gas emissions but also for fostering economic sustainability as global energy markets shift towards renewables.

Investing in clean energy technologies like solar and wind power aligns with Trinidad and Tobago's economic diversification plans, reducing the country's historical reliance on fossil fuels. This shift can spur job creation in new sectors, promote technological innovation, and increase energy security. Additionally, clean energy projects contribute to environmental sustainability, helping mitigate

the effects of climate change - a critical concern for the Caribbean region, which is vulnerable to its impacts.

By focusing on clean energy, Trinidad and Tobago can enhance its energy matrix, improve energy efficiency and support global efforts to combat climate change, thereby contributing to the achievement of several SDGs, including those related to Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11), Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9), and Climate Action (SDG 13). This holistic approach not only advances environmental goals but also drives economic and social progress, ensuring long-term resilience and prosperity for the nation.

KEY RESULTS

Steps to **reduce greenhouse gas emissions** & to create a more sustainable, resilient energy supply taken



Members of **12 local communities** have started to use solar power generated as part of new photovoltaic installations



8 out of every 10 people are interested in **installing solar panels** in their homes



UNDP supported Government efforts to **increase awareness of the benefits of renewable energy & energy efficiency**, reaching **160,000 people** with public education content



In 2023, Trinidad and Tobago continued to take concrete steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to create a more sustainable, resilient energy supply, having worked with the UN System on a draft Renewable Energy Policy. This framework can create the enabling environment required for the production of clean energy and energy efficiency and promote sustainability, resilience and environmental protection. UNDP, with financial support from the European Union (EU), produced the Policy in partnership with the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries under the GCCA+ project. The project also equipped the Government with new mechanisms to implement the Policy through action plans to establish feed-in-tariff and licensing systems.

With the data revolution taking place globally and data and information seen as the oil and gas of the 21st century, effective decision-making and allocation of resources depends on the availability of statistics in every sector. In this vein, to promote evidence-based policy making for clean energy, UNDP provided the Government with new data on the public's knowledge of, and attitudes towards, renewable energy and energy efficiency. A GCCA+ survey conducted in 2023 found that 8 out of every 10

people in Trinidad and Tobago are interested in installing solar panels in their homes.

Taking part in a pilot programme promoting photovoltaic installations commissioned by UNDP through the GCCA+ mechanism, members of 12 local communities across the country - including school children and environmental conservationists - have started to use solar power generated as part of new photovoltaic installations

Showcasing solutions and promoting renewable energy have been an important part of the UN System's work. Overall, UNDP supported Government efforts to increase awareness of the benefits of renewable energy and energy efficiency, reaching 160,000 people with public education content via social media and outreach at universities and schools.





E-money has revolutionised the way transactions are conducted, allowing individuals to make payments, receive remittances and access credit without the need for a traditional bank account.



Financial inclusion – which can be defined as the availability, access and use of appropriate Digital Financial Services (DFS) delivered responsibly to financially-capable consumers – is a critical enabler for eradicating poverty and promoting inclusive growth.

Financial inclusion and e-money play a crucial role in promoting economic growth and reducing poverty by providing easier access to financial services for the unbanked and under-served populations. **E-money, in particular, has revolutionised the way transactions are conducted.** This not only enhances financial empowerment and independence but also drives financial inclusion by bringing more people into the formal financial system. By promoting financial inclusion and embracing e-money, governments and organisations can foster economic development, reduce income inequality, and improve the overall well-being of individuals and communities.

Thanks to cooperation between the UN Capital Development Fund and the EU, **the financial system in Trinidad and Tobago has significantly advanced digital finance, a financial inclusion agenda and can better tap into the transformative potential of digital financial services to promote inclusive economic growth and fortify economic resilience.**

In January 2023, more than 150 regional policymakers - including representatives from Trinidad and Tobago - attended the

UNCDF “Advancing Digital Payments Across the Caribbean” technical workshop in Port-of-Spain. The training focused on developing robust e-money regimes and covered a range of topics from agent banking to consumer protection, financial education, and e-money supervision. Minister of Finance of Trinidad and Tobago, The Honourable Colm Imbert, delivered the keynote address, outlined the country’s strategies to move towards a cashless society and the broader role of financial inclusion in economic growth and national development. As part of this activity, the UNCDF offered technical training services to over 50 policymakers and 13 firms in Trinidad and Tobago (along with roughly 100 additional policymakers across the region) to build capacity and certify policymakers through various programmes for building an enabling digital finance ecosystem.

Following these activities, the UNCDF initiated its digital finance technical assistance facility providing regulatory and legislative support to the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago for e-money and payments. In 2023, four e-money issuers were been licensed.

The UNCDF also supported the drafting of a **National Digital Economy Strategy** with the Ministry of Digital Transformation, providing the framework for a holistic approach to the digital finance ecosystem that can support low-income individuals, women,youth and MSMEs to seize economic opportunities and withstand shocks. Additionally, the UNCDF supported the launch of the drafting of a National Financial Inclusion Strategy with

the Ministry of Finance to help make more available financial products and services, thereby better serving last mile consumers and small businesses.

In March 2023, the UNCDF-EU programme entered into a strategic partnership with the Ministry of Finance and the Trinidad and Tobago International Financial Centre (TTIFC) and - together with the EU - launched One FinTech Avenue, a Caribbean Regional FinTech Innovation Centre to help bring investments, acceleration, grants and critical industry and regulatory linkages to FinTechs throughout the region and international FinTechs wanting to operate in the Caribbean. The establishment of the hub underscored Trinidad and Tobago’s ambition to drive innovation within the Caribbean’s financial sector. The technical assistance, capacity building, and training programs initiated by UNCDF and the EU were critical to the establishment of the Centre.

The partnership with the TTIFC also included support to accelerate the digitisation of Government payment initiatives, thereby expanding access to public services and promoting financial inclusion. This allowed for digitisation of payments collected and made by the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Housing Development Corporation (HDC), as well as an expansion of the Judiciary’s Court Pay platform.

Funding for these initiatives was made available through a UNCDF partnership with the EU and the Organisation of the African Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

KEY RESULTS

- ✓ In 2023, 150 regional policymakers attended the UNCDF “Advancing Digital Payments Across the Caribbean” technical workshop
- ✓ The UNCDF offered technical training services to over 50 policymakers & 13 firms in Trinidad and Tobago
- ✓ In 2023, four e-money issuers have been licensed
- ✓ In 2023, the UNCDF-EU programme entered into a partnership with the Ministry of Finance & launched **One FinTech Avenue**, a Caribbean Regional FinTech Innovation Center to help bring investments, acceleration, grants & critical industry and regulatory linkages to FinTechs throughout the region
- ✓ **Digitisation of payments collected and made by the Ministry of Trade & Industry & the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) & an expansion of the Judiciary’s Court Pay platform were introduced**



Forging an Inclusive Digital Economy

Trinidad and Tobago made progress in dismantling the barriers that limit financial inclusion when the TTIFC partnered with the EU-UNCDF Programme to build the first private sector initiative to crowd in regional regulators to share problem statements and markets - the Caribbean FinTech Sprint for Financial Inclusion. Regional implementing government partners included the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Finance, Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, RHAND Credit Union Co-operative Society Limited, CLICO Credit Union and NAMDEVCO.

The Caribbean FinTech Sprint invited both local and global FinTechs to present market-readysolutions that can address pressing challenges identified by various implementing partners within Trinidad and Tobago focused on the usage of digital payment solutions for

credit unions’ underserved users, piloting and scaling online marketplaces for smallholder farmers, and establishing new core banking software for credit unions.

A Bootcamp, held with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago from July 19th to 21st at One FinTech Avenue, was an intensive technical workshop where applicants met with implementing partners and key players and emphasised the importance of financial inclusion in reducing crime, bolstering economic resilience, and fostering regional collaboration. Awards were presented to winning FinTechs and awardees including; in Trinidad and Tobago Paymaster Limited (Trinidad & Tobago & Jamaica), Unqueue Distributors Limited (Trinidad & Tobago) and Zed Labs Limited (Trinidad & Tobago).





INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION



In today's globalised world, food systems play a vital role in ensuring the accessibility and availability of nutritious food for all. However, supply chain challenges such as natural hazards, pandemics and economic disruptions can greatly impact the stability of food systems.

Innovative business practices are essential in overcoming these challenges and ensuring the smooth flow of food from farm to table. By implementing technologies such as blockchain or artificial intelligence, businesses can improve transparency, traceability and efficiency in their supply chains. Additionally, diversifying sourcing strategies and investing in local and regional supply chains can help mitigate risks associated with global disruptions. Ultimately, by embracing innovation and collaboration, food systems can become more resilient and better equipped to address the complexities of our rapidly changing world.

To address these challenges, Trinidad and Tobago's farmers and agricultural policymakers are embracing new

technologies and farming practices to unlock resilient, competitive food systems. In partnership with the UN System, they promote an innovative business ecosystem for local food production.

Focusing on the specific issue of increasing costs and problems with access to high quality feed for poultry and livestock, FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture of Trinidad and Tobago have worked to analyse the feasibility of creating insect farms to provide a high-quality and affordable alternative to imported feed.

The groundwork is being laid for a pilot, as FAO and the University of the West Indies St. Augustine established an Insect Bioreactor production facility in 2023 which is set to be outfitted in 2024. FAO also opened access to holistic, real-time digital support for farmers - backed by an online repository and trained technical staff at the Ministry - as part of the UN System's continued modernisation of data systems and e-extension services.

KEY RESULTS

Investigating the feasibility of insect farming to provide a high-quality & affordable alternative to the imported feed



FAO opened access to holistic, real-time digital support for farmers, backed by an online repository & trained technical staff at the Ministry



DRIVING GENDER EQUALITY

Economic opportunities can be greatly enhanced by Gender-sensitive budgeting which represents a critical approach in shaping economic policies that directly address the disparities faced by women in society. By incorporating gender perspectives at all levels of budgetary processes, governments can enhance economic opportunities for women, promote fair treatment and support the overall advancement of gender equality.

This strategic focus not only helps in breaking down long-standing barriers but also ensures that public resources are allocated in a way that benefits everyone equitably. The effective implementation of gender-sensitive budgeting can lead to more inclusive economic growth and social development, setting a foundation for women to participate more fully in the economy.

In 2023, Trinidad and Tobago has demonstrated that the needs of women and girls can be systematically factored into the process of creating the National Budget, allowing financial policy measures to stimulate gains for gender equality and women's empowerment. To do so, the Office of the Prime Minister - Gender and Child Affairs collaborated with UN Women to complete a Gender Budget Assessment for the National Budget. This approach was endorsed by the Government for mainstreaming into the budget preparation process across the public service. Additionally, UN Women trained personnel from multiple ministries, civil society organisations and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) on gender-responsive budgeting.





SUPPORTING CULTURE, STRENGTHENING PROSPERITY



Culture and national heritage play indispensable roles in economic development, serving as foundational elements that contribute significantly to a nation's identity and prosperity. These cultural assets attract tourism, fostering economic growth through increased spending in local businesses, hotels and restaurants.

Moreover, they inspire creativity and innovation, crucial for the development of new products and services, particularly in arts, crafts and design industries. By preserving and promoting their unique cultural heritage, countries can enhance their global competitiveness and attractiveness as destinations for cultural tourism and international events. This not only generates revenue but also helps in sustaining local traditions and providing employment opportunities, thereby supporting sustainable economic development.

The preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and diversity of cultural expressions continued to be a priority in the UN System's cooperation with Trinidad and Tobago. The country successfully completed its Quadrennial Periodic Report reflecting its commitment and progress in implementation of the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

It is notable that Trinidad and Tobago was one of 15 Caribbean countries that received grants under the 'Creative Caribbean: An Ecosystem of "Play" for Growth and Development' project that creates inclusive, diversified and sustainable growth of the cultural economy.

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

Naparima Bowl with the project Upgrading the Database & Website for the National Registry of Artists & Cultural Workers

Secondary Schools' Drama Association (SSDA) with the project Facilitators and Educators Training in Education

DianJen with the project The Online School of Music Industry Studies

Dominant Seventh Productions with the project Rellon Brown and the Dominant Seventh Calypso Jazz Band at Reconre Autour du Piano 2023

The Bocas Literary Festival with the project Caribbean Writer & Industry Development Programme

Animaie Caribe with the project Animaie Caribe Pitch Deck Finishing Accelerator

Koru Green with the project "Music Making Money": Koru Green Artist Management Software Development Project

The University of Trinidad and Tobago with the project WeCapture's audio-visual content production and an online platform as a data outlet for networking, marketing, promotion, and distribution



GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH TO SUPPORT TRAFFIC SOLUTIONS



Policymakers now have solutions they can implement to alleviate the economic burden created by manpower hours being lost to productivity-stalling traffic congestion. In 2023, ECLAC conducted a case study in Trinidad and Tobago to assess the economic cost of vehicular traffic congestion. The research found that traffic imposes a direct economic burden of TT \$2.26 billion per year or 1.37 percent of GDP, with the average commuter spending a cumulative 33 days – one month of the year – stuck in traffic. The study proposes short- and medium-term policy recommendations to alleviate the economic cost and impact on productivity, including approaches to strengthen public transportation services and ways to improve the accessibility of public transportation.

\$2.26 billion

of direct economic burden per year to TT

1.37%

of GDP per year to TT

33 days

that the average commuter spends a year stuck in traffic





PRIORITY 2
EQUALITY, WELL-BEING AND LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND



OUTCOME 1

National governments and regional institutions use relevant data and information to design and adopt laws and policies to eliminate discrimination, address structural inequalities and ensure the advancement of those at risk of being left furthest behind.

OUTCOME 2

People in the Caribbean equitably access and utilize universal, quality and shock-responsive social protection, education, health, and care services.



14,122

migrants and refugees

who received healthcare, specialist support, educational opportunities, food support and rental assistance monitoring



1,175

women and children

who received prevention and risk-mitigation training and services for Gender-Based Violence



2,854

officeholders and NGO staff

trained on child protection, trafficking in persons, inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and data governance for child welfare



30

pharmacies

now using a pharmaceuticals inventory monitoring programme to reduce stock shortages in the public health system



3

laws

for which amendments were proposed to help eliminate discrimination against Persons with Disabilities



Dr. Felicia Matthews has the language skills required to communicate with Spanish-speaking patients, after UNHCR funded her participation in a Spanish for Frontline Medical Workers course at the University of the Southern Caribbean.

"I actually imagined how I would feel if I had to have an important interaction with somebody and I didn't speak their language. Refugees and migrants are now part of our population, and it is important to take care of everybody. For example, with infectious diseases we must ensure that everybody is treated and we prevent spread, but also because they are part of our economy. Making sure that they are well and able to function benefits everybody, not just them. They are part of a whole."

Dr. Matthews was one of 108 frontline workers, including healthcare practitioners, police officers and immigration officers, who benefited from Spanish language training through partnerships between UNHCR and the University of the Southern Caribbean.





SPECIALISED SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

Implementing Agenda 2030 and Leaving No One Behind means ensuring provision of inclusive services for all.

Refugees in search of safety and security, and migrants seeking better economic opportunities are key vulnerable groups at high risk of exclusion from social systems and basic protections. For the last several years, mixed movements to Trinidad and Tobago have been marked by continued arrivals of Venezuelan refugees and migrants, requiring efforts to support social cohesion and to respond to humanitarian needs and integration challenges.

The global experience of countries dealing with large-scale mixed movements shows that providing specialised support to refugees and migrants helps in achieving equality and enhancing the overall well-being of society. By ensuring that migrants have access to regular status, formal employment, healthcare, education, legal assistance and social services, we can mitigate the risks of marginalisation and exclusion that often accompany these movements. Creating an enabling environment helps to level the playing field, allowing migrants to fully participate in the economic, social and cultural life of their new communities. Such participation not only benefits the migrants but also enriches the broader society by fostering diversity and intercultural dialogue, enhancing social cohesion and driving economic growth. Ultimately, inclusive services are a cornerstone in building a fair and prosperous society where everyone can thrive.

In 2023, the UN System continued buttressing Trinidad and Tobago's efforts at improving access to health care and education services for vulnerable groups, particularly refugees and migrants.

Nearly 3,000 refugees and migrants in vulnerable situations were afforded access to healthcare thanks to sustained, robust collaborations among IOM, UNFPA and UNHCR and their civil society partners. Beneficiaries – most of whom were women – received direct specialised services, including psychosocial counselling, pre-natal and post-natal clinical care and other sexual and reproductive health services. The UN and its partners also facilitated referrals to other services and provided case management support. Notably, 138 migrants and victims of human trafficking received case management and psychosocial support to guide their transition to independent, resilient lives.

This work represented a continuation of the UN's robust support to fulfil its pledge to Leave No One Behind. The UN System was proud to continue its collaborations with Families in Action (FIA), Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago, Living Water Community, La Casita Hispanic Cultural Centre, Archdiocesan Ministry for Migrants and Refugees, Amethyst School of Martial

Arts and Security Training Academy, Trinidad and Tobago Midwives Association and Rape Crisis Society.

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Persons Living with Disabilities are also often left behind.

In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), ensuring access to education and health services for people with disabilities is vital for fostering an inclusive society that values equality and human dignity. Education opens the door to personal development and economic opportunities, while accessible healthcare is critical for maintaining one's quality of life and independence. When Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are provided with appropriate educational resources and health services, it not only enhances their ability to contribute actively to the community but also reduces inequalities. By removing barriers and creating supportive environments, society benefits from the diverse perspectives and talents of all its members. Thus, investing in accessible education and healthcare for PWDs is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic move towards a more just and prosperous community.

To advance Government's effort to eliminate structural inequalities that exclude PWDs from equitable access to healthcare and other essential services, the UN System, through a joint programme supported by PAHO/WHO and UNFPA, continued to leverage the United Nations Partnership for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Partners Trust Fund (UNPRPD-MPTF) to empower PWDs in Trinidad and Tobago.

This project broke down barriers that often keep PWDs out of policy-making, enabling their organisations, the Central Statistical Office (CSO), and various ministry representatives to collaboratively review and suggest amendments to three key pieces of legislation: the Education Act, the Mental Health Act, and the Equal Opportunities Act. These changes aim to eliminate systemic discrimination against PWDs and have been submitted for government review. Additionally, the UN trained 80 PWDs from 31 organisations to help them advocate for their needs and secure funding for inclusion projects. The project also developed disability data guidelines in line with international standards and finalised a survey to better capture the size and needs of the PWD community.

PWDs in Trinidad and Tobago face inequalities, a general lack of access to services and poor socio-economic outcomes.

In 2023, UNFPA and PAHO/WHO, through the Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) Project, hosted capacity-building workshops to equip PWDs and organisations that represent them with the knowledge and skills to advocate for their needs.

Charlene Ford, the President and Founder of the Trinidad and Tobago Association for Differently-Abled Persons (TNTADAP), participated in the workshops.

"Knowledge is power," Charlene said. "There are many flaws in the laws that pertain specifically to the way in which the words 'person with a disability' or 'differently-abled persons' are referred to in legal documents. The workshops were not only eye-opening, but they helped empower the participants to better understand the way forward."





ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CHILDREN



Ensuring access to education for refugee and migrant children is crucial for their educational advancement, integration and long-term success in new communities. Education provides these children with stability and a sense of normalcy amid the upheaval of displacement, while equipping them with the skills necessary for economic independence and societal contribution in the future. Furthermore, schooling fosters inclusion, allowing refugee, migrant and local children from diverse backgrounds to interact, facilitating second-language

learning, relationship-building and understanding of different cultures, often becoming a guide to their parents. By prioritising educational opportunities for refugee and migrant children, societies not only uphold the rights of every child to learn and grow but also invest in a more cohesive and resilient future for all.

Strategic initiatives by the UN System throughout 2023 complemented Government efforts and preparations to make the public education system more inclusive as approximately 5000 refugee and migrant children are without access to the national education system in Trinidad and Tobago (based on UNHCR statistics). To equip the system to accommodate these new students, the UN System and its civil

society and faith-based partners trained teachers and identified 170 refugee and migrant children who meet the Government's criteria for school admission. The UN System also sustained its support for temporary learning alternatives to the public education system. As of December 31, 2023, 908 primary school-aged children and 583 secondary school-aged children were enrolled in Equal Place. The System also facilitated: online secondary education; access to online learning platforms; school readiness activities; and the purchase of electronic devices. These initiatives were made possible through partnerships with the Ministry of Education, the Living Water Community and the US Government Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration.



Supporting Refugees and Migrants with Meeting Essential Needs


**more than
6,000**

refugees and migrants accessed a variety of UN-supported safety nets in 2023, enabling them to meet essential needs, reduce their socioeconomic vulnerability and sustain their families so they could focus on earning a stable income.

5,896

refugees and migrants assisted with food and hygiene support in 2023, led by IOM and UNHCR.


**145
people**

provided with short-term rental assistance by IOM, alleviating concerns about possible eviction.

**246
households**


with migrant and refugee children offered cash grants by UNICEF, to cover family expenses for online secondary education.

These initiatives were funded by the US Government Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund.



DATA AND DIGITALISATION FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION

Data plays a pivotal role in sustainable development by providing the insights needed to make informed decisions that address environmental, social, and economic challenges. Accurate and timely data allows stakeholders to track progress, evaluate the effectiveness of policies and identify areas and communities requiring intervention. This critical information supports the optimisation of resources, helps predict future trends, and fosters innovation. Essentially, robust data underpins all efforts to achieve a more sustainable and equitable world, guiding actions that lead to long-lasting positive development impact.

One of the most important intended outcomes of the UNMSDCF is to assist national governments and regional institutions in the use of relevant data to design and adopt laws and policies to eliminate discrimination, address structural inequalities and ensure the advancement of those at risk of being left furthest behind. By undertaking joint efforts across many UN System agencies, the UN has helped to create the data mechanisms which different officeholders can use to formulate policy solutions for sustainable development.

Data helps achieve well-targeted social programmes that address the specific needs of the most vulnerable populations. By precisely identifying and reaching disadvantaged groups, such programmes can prevent poverty, reduce inequality and promote economic stability.

Targeted social protection also maximises the impact of limited resources, avoiding the dilution of benefits across too broad an audience and ensuring that assistance is not wasted on those who do not need it.

Data and digitalisation are increasingly vital in enhancing social protection systems for children and families. Digital platforms facilitate streamlined access to social services, ensuring that assistance reaches those in need quickly and

effectively. Moreover, data analytics play a crucial role in monitoring and evaluating the impact of social protection programs, enabling continuous improvement and adaptation to change in circumstances. In essence, embracing digital solutions and data-driven approaches is key to building robust social protection frameworks that can adapt to future challenges and protect children and families against economic and social shocks.



Thanks to UNICEF support,

disaggregated data about the social protection needs confronting the nation's children is available to policymakers as a baseline for the formulation of policy and programme support in Trinidad and Tobago. In 2023, as the UN continued accelerating Trinidad and Tobago's progress toward universal social protection, UNICEF worked with the Central Statistical Office to finalise the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 6 survey report – the culmination of a data collection exercise that pinpointed crucial information on child health, nutrition and development, child protection and reproductive and maternal health.

In December 2023, the UN System - led by UNICEF - joined hands with the Central Statistical Office to launch the DataNETT

online platform, which makes the MICS 6 data and other statistical information available to the public in user-friendly dashboards.

This data also generated important insights into Trinidad and Tobago's progress on the SDGs, thereby enhancing the Government's reporting capabilities and identification of areas in need of further investment or action. Additionally, the MICS 6 data allowed UNICEF to produce a multidimensional child poverty analysis for the Office of the Prime Minister Gender and Child Affairs. This analysis can form the starting point for design of a national child poverty reduction strategy.

Also in 2023, UNICEF complemented Government efforts to monitor child rights and welfare, helping to ensure that all children

- including migrants and refugees - have access to essential services such as health, education and social protection. UNICEF delivered the National Children Registry, the first digital tool in the Eastern Caribbean to support child rights monitoring, in 2022. In 2023, UNICEF sustained its administrative and technical support to complete the data capture process required to populate the Registry, which is managed by the Office of the Prime Minister – Gender and Child Affairs. UNICEF helped to operationalise the Registry by creating a data governance framework for public officials to standardise and safeguard data on child welfare. To round out this comprehensive package of support, UNICEF trained 60 officeholders on data governance to ensure optimal quality assurance of data in the Registry.

In a similar vein, the UN System created mechanisms to collect and store key information on the needs of people who rely on the State's social safety net. UNDP designed and finalised the National Register of Vulnerable Persons, in partnership with the Ministry of National Security and the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services. Meanwhile, State agencies, NGOs and UN agencies continued relying on IOM to provide data on migration trends and protection needs which could inform policymaking and programme design. For the fifth consecutive year, IOM published the findings of its Displacement Tracking Matrix, providing stakeholders with insights into the movement of migrants in and out of Trinidad and Tobago, labour trends within this demographic and challenges in accessing health services, education and birth certificates.

To ensure sexual and reproductive health services are continuously accessible, particularly to the most vulnerable in society, UNFPA partnered with the Ministry of Health to improve the efficiency of the procurement and distribution of pharmaceuticals to public health facilities. In 2023, UNFPA continued rollout of the SALMI Logistic Management Information System, enabling 30 of the public health system's 36 pharmacies to reduce the frequency of stock shortages that render some medications unavailable to patients. The Ministry has reported that the 30 pharmacies using the system are experiencing improved efficiency in tracking their inventory.

Lastly, to support digitisation of social benefit payments, UNCDF partnered with the Ministry of Social Protection and Family Services and the Tobago House of Assembly to conduct a mapping of digital payments for social benefit wallets. The initiative mapped the various payment systems and flows of funds to ultimately recommend digital solutions that streamline benefit disbursements and transition payments onto digital rails, particularly for vendors. The project continues in 2024, with efforts in partnership with the TTIFC and the Ministry of Digital Transformation to introduce Social Benefit Wallets or other digital tools to support the shift into digital benefit disbursements.



HARNESSING DATA TO DRIVE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



With financing from the UN's Joint SDG Fund, four UN agencies (PAHO/WHO, UNEP, ILO and ECLAC) co-implemented a national project to modernise the data and statistics ecosystem. In partnership with the Ministry of Planning and the Central Statistical Office (CSO), UNEP developed an online statistics repository to improve Trinidad and Tobago's monitoring of SDG progress and aid in the identification of priority areas for national action on sustainable development.

The UN System piloted this SDG Statistics Repository by collating data for all 17 SDGs, in line with the country's national priorities for sustainable development. Another facet of the Joint SDG Fund project was the work done by PAHO/WHO to create an enabling environment for the integration of Big Data Analytics (BDA) into official statistics by staging the Caribbean's first, in-person Big Data Forum which attracted attendance by over 300 stakeholders and by assessing the country's readiness to host a Centre of Excellence for BDA. The latter proposed modes of coordination between public and private sectors and aca-

demic institutions to collate and share anonymised data. Finally, ILO equipped CSO staff with additional expertise to produce high quality, disaggregated data by facilitating online access to capacity-building training.

To further equip policymakers and key Government stakeholders with an understanding of the value and culture of data in a knowledge economy, seven participants from Trinidad and Tobago's public sector attended the ECLAC seminar, 'Positioning the Caribbean in the Knowledge Economy: The Role of Data.' The seminar acknowledged that, while structural constraints limit the statistical capacity of many Caribbean countries, non-traditional and unofficial sources of data should be leveraged to complement official statistics. Discussions focused on artificial intelligence, the Caribbean data revolution, harnessing citizen-generated data and unofficial sources of data and advancing digital inclusion through data and measurement. Participants from the CSO, the Ministry of Digital Transformation and the Ministry of Planning and Development benefited from this knowledge exchange.



Strategic Direction for National Policymaking to Leave No One Behind



Addressing needs of people living with HIV, LGBTQ communities and victims of trafficking helps them to mitigate risks to both individual well-being and societal stability. For people living with HIV, inadequate support can lead to increased transmission, reduced life expectancy, and greater healthcare costs. LGBTQ individuals face heightened risks of discrimination, violence and mental health issues when their needs are ignored, perpetuating social exclusion and inequality. Similarly, failing to assist trafficking victims can result in ongoing abuse and exploitation, severely damaging their physical and psychological health. Collectively, neglecting these groups undermines human rights and

public health, and it impedes progress towards inclusive, equitable societies. Addressing their specific needs is crucial for fostering social cohesion and ensuring the well-being of all community members.

In Trinidad and Tobago, with the help of the UN System, the Government is better positioned to implement policy solutions and programme interventions to enhance the national response to vulnerable and marginalised groups.

In 2023, the UN System delivered assistance for the formulation of strategic plans to combat Trafficking in Persons, meet the needs of Persons affected by HIV/AIDS and safeguard

women's and children's health. With funding from the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund, IOM commenced work with the Government to craft a referral and resource map that can underpin the work of local authorities, service providers and partners who manage national and community-based protection systems. In 2023, IOM trained **662 officeholders and humanitarian partners on protection, trafficking in persons** and psychological first aid.

In 2023, IOM trained **662 officeholders and humanitarian partners on protection, trafficking in persons** and psychological first aid. In the same year, UNAIDS worked with the Government to finalise a draft **National Strategic**.

Plan on HIV/AIDS for the period of 2024-2025 which was submitted to the National AIDS Coordinating Committee of the Office of the Prime Minister. The Action Plan is aligned with the National HIV and AIDS Strategy 2024-2030, and its implementation will require collaboration among stakeholders to meet the global target of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

UNFPA collaborated with PAHO/WHO and the Ministry of Health on a **Programme of Action for Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Adolescent and Child Health**. This Programme pinpoints essential sexual and reproductive health interventions, including those in humanitarian settings.



Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Roadmap and Strategy crafted by IOM



National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS for the period of 2024-2025 crafted by UNAIDS



662 officeholders and humanitarian partners trained in protection by IOM



UNFPA collaborated with PAHO/WHO and the Ministry of Health on a **Programme of Action for Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Adolescent and Child Health**.



Livia Rincon is a specialist clinician who provides mental health and psychosocial support to children who are Victims of Trafficking. She also trains psychologists, counselors and social workers to build their capacity to support this demographic. IOM has engaged Livia's services through its NGO partner, Families in Action. Through her work, Livia will do her part to strengthen support systems for survivors of human trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago while empowering survivors to heal from their trauma and fulfil their dreams.

"After all, a migrant's experience is uniquely vulnerable and traumatic," the psychologist said. "The reason to leave home, the journey to the Caribbean and adapting to a new language and culture are all traumatic. You have to know how to deal with trauma. We, as a society, need to talk more about trauma to remove the stigma."

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Support for the COVID-19 recovery journey of Caribbean SIDS came via a policy tool developed through a UN System partnership with The University of the West Indies. Led by UNESCO, the UN System delivered the policy tool to foster inclusive post-pandemic public policies that ensure progress and prosperity are equitably distributed. Similarly, UNESCO produced a Knowledge Series on the role that frontier technologies, including artificial intelligence, can play in tackling inequalities in the Caribbean. In this same light, recognising the increased and multifaceted role of AI in society, UNESCO led the drafting of an Artificial Intelligence Policy Roadmap for the Caribbean which benefited from an extensive multi-stakeholder consultation. To be launched in 2024, it shares a vision for ethical AI deployment that respects human rights and promotes sustainable growth.



capacity for implementing these Guidelines, PAHO/WHO trained **123 staff members** from the five Regional Health Authorities to be trainers for their respective healthcare teams. PAHO/WHO also developed two self-paced online training courses to ensure the continued availability of the training materials for new and existing healthcare professionals.

Another vulnerable group – Persons Living with HIV/AIDS – is set to benefit from data-driven, strategic approaches to treatment to ensure the health system can adequately meet their evolving needs, as the UN System embarks on the HIV Drug Resistance Survey. In the Caribbean, HIV Drug Resistance rates are gradually rising, potentially diminishing the effectiveness of first-line anti-retroviral therapy. Jamaica and Cuba have reported resistance rates as high as 12.3% and 14.8% respectively. In line with PAHO/WHO guidelines for robust assessments of the emergence of drug resistance, PAHO/WHO worked with the Ministry of Health and the Medical Research Foundation of Trinidad and Tobago to collect and analyse **200 blood samples** as a baseline for the HIV Drug Resistance Survey. Implementation of the Survey will continue in 2024, to calculate the prevalence of HIV Drug Resistance among individuals who have and have not undergone anti-retroviral therapy.

Increasing the health system's resilience to antimicrobial resistance and infection prevention and control practices are being solidified as a priority on regional and national agendas with support from PAHO/WHO. In 2023, PAHO/WHO conducted lab training with national and regional technicians on phenotypic diagnosis of antimicrobial resistance, improving laboratory diagnostic capabilities. Across the five Regional Health Authorities, a group of staff members was engaged in "train-the-trainer" workshops on infection prevention and environmental cleaning in healthcare settings. PAHO/WHO also engaged national stakeholders in a Caribbean workshop on designing National Action Plans to respond to antimicrobial resistance.



these standards helps prevent abuses such as unlawful detention, forced return to danger (refoulement) and discrimination, fostering a legal and ethical framework that supports the vulnerable in their time of need.

By upholding international norms, countries contribute to a more stable and humane international order, facilitate peaceful and cooperative international relations and reinforce the global commitment to protecting individuals fleeing persecution and conflict. This adherence not only safeguards the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers but also strengthens the credibility and effectiveness of the international human rights system as a whole.

Thanks to the efforts of the UN System, various officeholders in key segments of the public sector have a deeper understanding of international refugee protection standards and the importance of safeguarding access to human rights. To advance these standards, UNHCR and OHCHR jointly trained **81 members of the Defence Force** on international human rights law and protection of refugees and asylum-seekers. UNHCR also trained an additional **1,971 police and judicial officers**.

The United Nations has a foundational mandate to promote human rights globally, a commitment enshrined in its Charter and operationalised through various agencies and initiatives. This mandate involves not only advocating for the universal respect and observance of human rights but also increasing the capacities of nations to protect these rights effectively. By providing technical assistance, facilitating educational programmes, and supporting legal reforms, the UN works to empower governments, civil society, and individuals to uphold justice, equality and dignity. This comprehensive approach helps ensure that human rights are integrated into national policies and practices, fostering a global environment where human rights are universally respected and protected. Through these efforts, the UN plays a crucial role in promoting peace, security, and sustainable development across the world.

Institutional standard operating procedures are crucial in case management and the provision of social protection and health services, as they ensure consistency, efficiency and compliance with legal and ethical standards, enhancing the overall effectiveness and reliability of support delivered to those in need.

These principles apply in particular to responding to the needs of women, men and children as survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and other vulnerable persons.

Survivors of GBV will encounter a health system that is better prepared, across all five Regional Health Authorities, to administer patient-centred care and referrals for holistic support services, after the UN System worked in 2023 to strengthen standard operating procedures for the healthcare response to violence. Under the EU-funded Spotlight Initiative, PAHO/WHO launched the National Clinical and Policy Guidelines on Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence. These Guidelines represent the first effort to standardise the process for medical and social services staff to seek consent from GBV survivors in a clinical setting, to validate their experiences, to standardise the kinds of clinical information recorded and to provide seamless referrals to related healthcare services. To build human resource



STRENGTHENING NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO REDUCE INEQUALITIES



Adhering to international standards in the protection of the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers is critical for ensuring their safety, dignity and fair treatment under international human rights law. Compliance with

In 2023, OHCHR partnered with the Commonwealth Secretariat on a regional capacity-building workshop for treaty body reporting and strengthening national mechanisms to implement, monitor and follow-up on treaty body recommendations. This training focused specifically on UN Conventions that protect economic, social and cultural rights and reporting to Voluntary National Reviews. The team at UNFPA also supported the Ministry of Planning in reporting implementation of commitments under the Montevideo Consensus, the most significant inter-governmental agreement on population and development in Latin America and the Caribbean. This enabled the Government to report Trinidad and Tobago's progress on various population and development issues, including ageing, social protection, the rights of boys and girls, gender equality and access to sexual and reproductive health.



PROTECTING WOMEN AND CHILDREN, PREVENTION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



The SDGs prioritise the protection of women and children and the prevention of GBV as fundamental to achieving global equity and sustainability. Specifically, Goals like SDG 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, emphasise the importance of addressing and preventing violence against women and children. This focus is critical as such violence not only constitutes a gross violation of human rights but also perpetuates cycles of poverty and limits overall development. Effective prevention strategies and protective measures are essential to break these cycles. By implementing policies that actively protect women and children and address the root causes of GBV, countries can foster safer, more inclusive societies that advance progress across all SDGs and move closer to achieving a just and equitable world.

Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to eliminating GBV and advancing progress on this important facet of gender equality remained steadfast in 2023.

The UN System collaborated under the Spotlight Initiative, with UN Women serving as technical lead of to support Government's efforts in prevention and response. Nearly **1,500 people** – the majority of which were children - received GBV risk mitigation, prevention and response services from UNICEF. UNFPA worked with **49 faith-based organisations** to promote the need for minors to have greater access to sexual and reproductive health information and services. Access to this information is critical to help minors navigate their transition from adolescence to adulthood and to reduce the risk of exposure and the detrimental effects of sexual and physical violence. Complementary to the UN's work on the Spotlight Initiative, IOM initiated a separate programme aimed at empowering victims of human trafficking with marketable entrepreneurial skills and English language proficiency. This skills training project equipped **40 women** between the ages of 18 and 55 with the expertise to pursue independent livelihoods and lead healthy, sustainable lives.



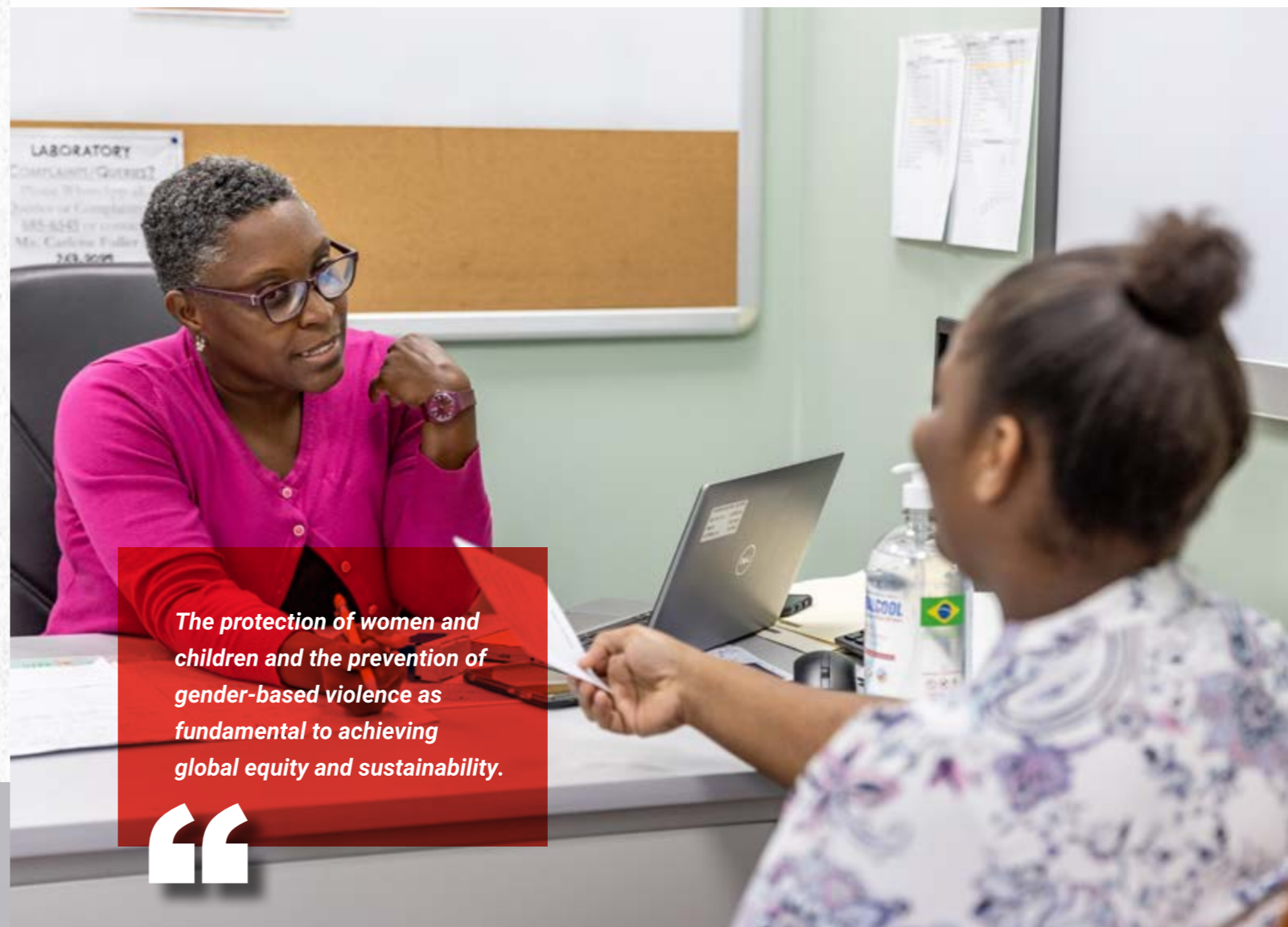
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between the ages of 18 and 55 were equipped by the skills training project with the expertise to pursue independent livelihoods and lead healthy, sustainable lives



The protection of women and children and the prevention of gender-based violence as fundamental to achieving global equity and sustainability.

UNICEF supported Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (CATT) in the implementation of the Primero Child Protection Information Management system (CPIMS+), an open-source web-based software that strengthens case management through modern information management technology. CPIMS+ offers intuitive digital forms and clear workflows to assist with documenting case management processes, from identification and registration, to assessment, case planning, referrals, tracking service provision, and case closure. In 2023, UNICEF and CATT pioneered an integrative approach where CPIMS+ was expanded to other sectors including health, police, social services, and education. The approach contributes to increased efficiency in referrals, child-centred case management, deconstruction of silos, and reduction in duplication of services and information management on a national scale. The novel approach also led to the development of a new alert feature in Primero software development, which was approved by the Primero team and adopted as a new feature which is now globally available to all countries using the CPIMS+.

Additionally, UNICEF supported CATT with the development of the first national InterAgency Protocol for Child Abuse Prevention and Management which was launched in May 2023. The protocol establishes a comprehensive framework that ensures all stakeholders work together seamlessly to prevent, detect, and effectively respond to instances of child abuse. This enables agencies to strengthen their coordination, enhance information sharing, and optimize resources to safeguard children from harm. By streamlining processes and establishing clear guidelines, this marks a significant step forward in creating a safer environment for every child in Trinidad and Tobago.



PRIORITY 3
RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

<p>OUTCOME 1</p> <p><i>Caribbean people, communities, & institutions have enhanced adaptive capacity for inclusive, gender responsive Disaster Risk Management & climate change adaptation & mitigation.</i></p>	<p>OUTCOME 2</p> <p><i>Caribbean countries manage natural resources & ecosystems strengthening their resilience & enhancing the resilience & prosperity of the people & communities that depend on them.</i></p>
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100,000 children
 who rely on schools stand to benefit from improved meal planning at the National Dietary Services Limited

177,251 residents
 in flood-prone communities to benefit from flood early warning systems

29 disaster management officials
 trained on emergency humanitarian logistics

557 people
 equipped with climate change resilience management and response techniques

40 farmers
 trained on preventing crop loss caused by natural hazards

25,196 kg of plastics
 kept out of landfills thanks to community projects on plastics collection and upcycling

Boosting Disaster Prevention, Risk Management and Response

Boosting disaster prevention, risk management and response is integral to the achievement of several SDGs, particularly those related to building resilient communities, ensuring sustainable cities, and combating climate change. Effective disaster risk management practices help to mitigate the impacts of natural hazards, reduce vulnerability and enhance preparedness across urban and rural areas. This directly supports SDG 11, which focuses on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Additionally, improving disaster response capabilities aligns with SDG 13, which calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. By strengthening these areas, societies can better protect their populations and infrastructure, ultimately fostering a safer, more resilient future for all. This approach not only saves lives and reduces economic losses but also supports broader development objectives by ensuring that communities can recover and continue to progress toward sustainable development.



Ensuring that national infrastructure is designed and built with resilience in mind, in the event of natural hazards and emergencies was an objective which received significant support from the UN System in 2023. Through UNDRR, the UN System offered technical assistance on the application of principles for resilient infrastructure and delivered a stress test evaluation tool. Trinidad and Tobago also accessed the *UNDRR Risk Information Exchange (RiX) platform* to promote the development of risk-informed national policy and aid in the transition to impact-based forecasting.



Expanding the national disaster response mechanism to include private sector was a key UNICEF achievement in 2023. With support from USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance - a tripartite arrangement between the American Chamber of Commerce Trinidad and Tobago - the *ODPM and UNICEF established an operational approach for supporting disaster prevention and response mechanism*. In 2023, UNICEF completed a mapping exercise and guidelines for improved coordination between private sector and the OPDM on disaster prevention and response. Major commitments arose from this engagement, notably the inclusion of the *private sector in Trinidad and Tobago's Cabinet-appointed National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Multisectoral Committee and the National Emergency Operations Centre*.



National institutions responsible for disaster prevention, risk reduction and response have stronger capacities to execute climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. As a result of UN System efforts, an estimated *20,000 residents in 7 communities across Trinidad and Tobago can benefit from improved flood early warning capacity*, thereby reducing the detrimental impacts of flooding. The UN System, led by UNDP, continued advancing the Community Flood Early Warning Systems Initiative with funding from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Operation (ECHO). UNDP installed *7 stream gauges, 3 antennae and 1 high-speed computer*, which collectively allow real-time monitoring of water levels at seven rivers in Trinidad and Tobago: the Couva, Cunupia, Diego Martin, Maraval and Paourie Rivers in Trinidad and the Crooks and Bacolet Rivers in Tobago. These devices are all connected to a centralised early warning system that alerts national authorities and the public about potential flooding and flood impacts. UNDP empowered residents in these areas to play a role in community resilience and response by training them to monitor the stream gauges and supply timely updates to national management authorities. To expand the capacity to gather and communicate flood early warning information, the website *floodwarnings.gov.tt* was established. On the website, members of the public can access real time information about flood risks and response and can upload their own reports of flooding. Finally, UNDP trained partner agencies on flood hazard detection, monitoring and forecasting. These achievements were made possible through collaboration with the Ministry of National Security, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM), the Water Resources Agency, the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, the Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), the Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Services (TTMS), the Ministry of Works and Transport and the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society.

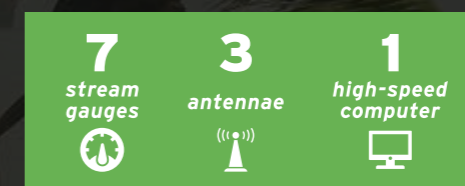


The team at WFP focused on strengthening humanitarian supply chains and beefing up logistics capacities to protect food systems and livelihoods. Partnering with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), *29 disaster management officials were trained on emergency humanitarian logistics to improve national operational readiness on disaster response and relief as well as warehouse management processes*. Additionally, the ODPM now has stronger human resource capacities on humanitarian logistics with the addition of a WFP-supported Logistics Associate to their team. This Associate is responsible for rollout of the CDEMA Logistics System and the implementation of Trinidad and Tobago's efforts on the regional emergency logistics strategy.

KEY RESULTS



in 7 communities across Trinidad and Tobago can benefit from improved flood early warning capacity, thus reducing the detrimental impacts of flooding



were installed to allow real-time monitoring of water levels at seven rivers in Trinidad and Tobago



were trained on emergency humanitarian logistics and warehouse management processes, to improve national operational readiness on disaster response



offered on the application of principles for resilient infrastructure and a stress test evaluation delivered for natural hazards and emergencies



included in Trinidad and Tobago's Cabinet-appointed National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Multisectoral Committee and the National Emergency Operations Centre

Adapting to Climate Change, Conserving Biodiversity

Adapting to climate change and conserving biodiversity are critical components of the SDGs, specifically addressing SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land). Climate adaptation measures are essential to reduce vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change, such as extreme weather events and rising sea levels, thereby supporting SDG 13's aim to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards. Simultaneously, conserving biodiversity helps maintain and restore healthy ecosystems, which is vital for achieving SDG 15, as it ensures the sustainability of ecosystems and the services they provide, such as clean air, water, and food. Together, these efforts contribute to broader SDGs, including SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), and SDG 14 (Life Below Water), by promoting a resilient environment that can sustain future generations. By integrating strategies for climate adaptation and biodiversity conservation, we can foster an inclusive approach to sustainable development that protects our planet and ensures well-being for all.



Trinidad and Tobago is taking important steps in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management to safeguard its food systems, with support from UNDP's Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) and the BES-NET Initiative. As a result of these two initiatives, Trinidad and Tobago has more information about pollination cycles among bats, seagrass and stingless bees, allowing the country to optimise these pollinators in the preservation and expansion of agriculture and fisheries. *The BES-Net project also resulted in the identification of new stingless bee species in Trinidad and Tobago and captured genetic coding information. Additionally, UNDP is working with Government to develop guidelines on stingless bee management to conserve this vital building block in the country's biodiversity and food systems.* Finally, a draft theory of change was submitted to Government to support development of a national policy and strategy on pollinator conservation. As a result of all these efforts, *Trinidad and Tobago became the 32nd country in the world to join the Coalition of the Willing on Pollinators, signaling its deep commitment to protect pollinator species.* To help give effect to this commitment, UNDP partnered with the German Federal Ministry for the Environment and The University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus to invest in research that identified pollinators, their behaviours and the need for habitat preservation efforts.



Cross-sectoral partnerships advanced the frameworks and action plans required to meet Trinidad and Tobago's Nationally Determined Contribution to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by 2030. With funding from the Global Environment Facility, UNDP and the Ministry of Planning and Development strengthened national frameworks for energy efficiency in the Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning (RAC) sector to reduce emissions and curtail the use of Ozone-depleting refrigerants. This effort saw the creation of procurement roadmaps, disposal protocols for end-of-life equipment, minimum energy performance standards and a *Refrigerant Code*. Energy efficient cooling projects were piloted with the private and public sectors - from design to installation - at demonstration sites including Sheppard's Inn, Bananaquit, HADCO Asa Wright and the MET Office in Tobago.



In a complementary initiative, the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol financed UNDP's continued support for the administration of a refrigerants licensing system. Partnering with the National Ozone United under the Ministry of Planning and Development, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards, UNDP facilitated rollout of *national compulsory labelling standards for refrigerant cylinders and refrigerant and air conditioning equipment.* These efforts help reduce imports of Ozone-depleting substances. To bolster this aim, border control agencies and procurement officers involved in the purchase of RAC equipment and appliances received training. RAC technicians were also trained in new technologies and approaches to transition the sector to environmentally-friendly substances.



Efforts at climate change mitigation through effective waste management resulted in communities *preventing 25,196 kg of plastics from entering the environment in 2023.* UNDP, through GEF SGP, supported seven community projects that tackled plastic collection, plastic alternatives and the upcycling of waste plastics. Through these community initiatives, *317 people were trained in plastics management, including 16 PWDs; six waste management or plastic alternative facilities were established; 244 young people were included in these environmentally friendly projects and 2,564 people reported behaviour changes after their exposure to these efforts.*



UN System support is reinforcing the resilience of Trinidad and Tobago's agriculture and water sectors, ensuring that food systems can adapt to climate change and remain available to the people who depend on them. Finances from the Green Climate Fund enabled FAO to train *240 people in climate risk identification, strategic planning and impact pathway analysis to help monitor climate risk resilience of food systems.* This initiative was implemented collaboratively with the CSO, The University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus and the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.



Tobago continued making strides to preserve its environmental, community and cultural heritage for the benefit of its residents, particularly those in Northeast Tobago, and *the island's commitment to sustainable tourism.* With support from UNESCO through its Man and the Biosphere programme, the Northeast Tobago Man and the Biosphere benefited from training administered to the Tobago Tourism Agency to better promote Biosphere tourism to sustainability-conscious travellers. UNESCO also continued widening the involvement of local groups and national institutions that focus on science and the environment to deepen their participation in the conservation and research objectives of the Northeast Tobago Man and the Biosphere programme. Communities within the Biosphere were also equipped to take ownership of the landscape management process. This work was made possible through robust partnerships with the Tobago House of Assembly and national tourism authorities.

PRIORITY 4
PEACE, SAFETY, JUSTICE AND THE
RULE OF LAW

OUTCOME 1

Regional and national laws, policies, systems and institutions improve access to justice and promote peace, social cohesion and security.

OUTCOME 2

People in the Caribbean and communities actively contribute to and benefit from building and maintaining safer, fairer, more inclusive and equitable societies.



Vision 2030
 Theme 1



Vision 2030
 Theme 2



125,000 people

educated on positive parenting and child abuse



39 victims of cybercrime

identified through collaborations between the UN System, FIU and INTERPOL



1 landmark FIU investigation

making history as the first trade-based money laundering investigation in the region



9,259 refugees and asylum seekers

who registered with UNHCR, received resettlement case management or got legal representation support



470 family members

trained in conflict resolution to avoid family violence



600+ police officers

trained to date under the Gender-Responsive Policing Programme



First National Strategic Action Plan

costed and approved by Cabinet to launch a holistic response to Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Violence.



SAFEGUARDING PEACE AND SECURITY THROUGH STRONGER NATIONAL SYSTEMS

The SDGs underscore the importance of safeguarding peace and security by strengthening national systems to prevent organised crime, including money laundering, cybercrime, and trafficking. SDG 16, which promotes peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, highlights the necessity of robust legal frameworks and law enforcement capabilities to combat these pervasive threats. By enhancing judicial effectiveness and policing capacities,

nations can disrupt criminal networks that undermine governance and economic stability. Such preventive measures are crucial not only for maintaining national security but also for ensuring global stability, as organised crime often has transnational implications. Effective action against these crimes promotes a safer, more just world, fostering progress across all SDGs by creating environments where sustainable development can thrive.

KEY RESULTS

- ✓ **With UN System support, Trinidad and Tobago is leading the Caribbean region in improving systems to detect cross-border financial crimes.** Through financing from the Government of Canada and collaboration with CARICOM IMPACS, UNODC assisted the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) in conducting the **first trade-based money laundering investigation** in the region. In fact, this investigation was nominated for the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force's Best Case Award. UNODC also supported the FIU's strategic analysis of trade-based money laundering within the national context, solidifying its status as a priority for the FIU. These significant results came from Trinidad and Tobago's continued participation in the UNODC Global Programme against Money Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and Financing of Terrorism, which strengthens national capacities to detect, investigate and prosecute trade-based money laundering.
- ✓ **National authorities are developing an efficient, effective system for sustained cybercrime prevention and response, especially in online child sexual exploitation and abuse.** In 2023, **39 victims of cybercrime** in Trinidad and Tobago were identified through UNODC-supported collaboration with INTERPOL. To date, UNODC has trained **411 people** – including law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judicial officers, NGOs and UN Agencies - on digital forensics, admissibility of digital evidence, cross-border requests, open-source investigations, due process and human rights in cybercrime investigations.
- ✓ **Trinidad and Tobago has adopted a more harmonised approach to detection and interdiction of illegal trafficking, bolstering the capacity of the country's border control systems and institutions to respond effectively to transnational organised crime.** Supported by the Government of Canada, through the Anti-Crime Capacity Building Programme (ACCBP), the AIRCOP programme harnesses cooperation between UNODC, INTERPOL and the World Customs Organisations to improve the detection and interception of drugs, firearms, ammunition and high-risk passengers, including victims of trafficking and foreign terrorist fighters.

After the establishment of the AIRCOP Joint Airport Task Force at the Piarco International Airport in 2022, officers received additional training in intelligence – led targeting, gender and human rights in 2023. UNODC sustained its partnership with CARICOM IMPACS for this initiative.
- ✓ **Enhanced efficiency in criminal justice administration** was made possible through UN System support for digitalisation. UNDP procured ICT equipment and software for the Judiciary, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the TTPS to improve data management and communication.



Promoting Peace and Social Cohesion



By supporting the creation and strengthening of national systems, the enforcement of policies and public education, the UN System contributed to peace and social cohesion efforts in Trinidad and Tobago in 2023. The Government has affirmed its commitment to finalising the asylum policy. Concurrently, UNHCR supported that process while continuing the registration of refugees and asylum-seekers. In April 2023, UNHCR made its registration system more accessible by switching to a walk-in system. This resulted in **8,068 asylum-seekers** - more than double the number in the previous year – **registering with UNHCR in 2023**. Through its case management work, UNHCR identified 274 people who progressed with the resettlement process. UNHCR also continued training the TTPS, the Judiciary and NGOs on the asylum process. **917 asylum-seekers and refugees received legal counselling and representation** through collaborations between UNHCR, the Living Water Community and the Caribbean Centre for Human Rights (CCHR).

Addressing and preventing child labour is integral to achieving the SDGs, particularly SDG 8, which aims to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. Thanks to a partnership with the UN System, the Government is better equipped to enforce national laws that safeguard young children from hazardous forms of work.

In 2023, the Ministry of Labour, in partnership with the ILO, took **significant steps to enhance national systems for preventing human rights violations**, particularly those related to child labour. This collaboration was grounded in the principles of ILO conventions, focusing on the identification and regulation of hazardous child labour and establishing guidelines for permissible 'light work' for children aged 16 and above. These efforts were aligned with international labour standards to ensure that work environments are safe and do not impede the development or education of minors. Additionally, capacity-building initiatives equipped Ministry officials and labour inspectors with the necessary skills for conducting thorough psychosocial assessments and ensuring occupational health and safety for young workers. The ILO's provision of 16 electronic devices further augmented the efficiency of data collection and management, bolstering the overall effectiveness of labour inspections and compliance with global standards.

The strengthening of national systems for **mental health and psychosocial care for children**, supported by UNICEF and UNDP, serve as a critical component in achieving SDGs related to health, well-being and social cohesion.



The development and finalisation of a mapping report for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) enhances the infrastructure necessary to provide effective support to vulnerable children and their families. The creation of the first-ever cross-sectoral print and online directory of MHPSS services enables accessible and coordinated care, furthering the goal of universal health coverage (SDG 3). Additionally, the **MyChildline mobile application**, which has already benefited over 3,000 individuals with counseling and self-coping tools, aligns with SDG targets on mental health and well-being.

Moreover, the UNDP's pilot project at St Jude's School for Girls not only promotes mental health through innovative therapeutic activities such as art and sports therapy but also contributes to SDG 16 by fostering peaceful and inclusive societies. This project equips young women to become peacebuilders within their communities, thereby enhancing social cohesion and empowering a new generation to advocate for peace and inclusivity. Together, these initiatives demonstrate a holistic approach to mental health and psychosocial support that is vital for sustainable development and building resilient communities.

The comprehensive educational and advocacy initiatives led by UNICEF and UNFPA also significantly contribute to the SDGs. By educating 125,000 people on **positive parenting and the prevention of child abuse and GBV**, UNICEF's campaigns across social media, radio and community workshops play a critical role in cultivating safer and more informed communities. This widespread awareness and engagement help to mitigate conflicts and foster environments where children and families can thrive in security and harmony.

Furthermore, the Spotlight Initiative's Collaborative **HIV Adolescents Mental Health Programme (CHAMP)**, facilitated by UNFPA, emphasises the importance of communication and healthy relationships between parents and children. This initiative trained 470 individuals, enhancing their abilities to address and resolve conflicts surrounding challenging topics such as puberty, family violence, sexuality and HIV prevention. Such training is pivotal in strengthening familial bonds and community support systems, which are essential for social cohesion and peace.

These programmes not only address direct needs but also build the foundations for peaceful, inclusive communities by promoting understanding, respect and cooperation among individuals. By doing so, they directly support SDG 16, which aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, and indirectly contribute to achieving other goals through the creation of stable and supportive environments for all community members.



A COHESIVE NATIONAL RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND GENDER INEQUALITY



Multi-faceted and historic progress was made on the national development priority of achieving gender equality, particularly through the elimination of violence against women, with a suite of initiatives coordinated by the UN System under the Spotlight Initiative. As a result, Trinidad and Tobago benefited from national policies, systems, digital management platforms, human resource expertise and survivor support services being in place.

Hundreds of thousands of women and girls in Trinidad and Tobago will benefit from Government's strategic, coherent national action to prevent and respond to GBV and sexual violence. With UN System efforts, led by UN Women, the Cabinet of Trinidad and Tobago approved the first-ever costed, comprehensive and coordinated GBV prevention and response strategy - a milestone that will offer significant impetus for the protection of women and girls. This National Strategic Action Plan on GBV and Sexual Violence for 2023-2027 was the culmination of Government-led efforts under the Office of the Prime Minister - Gender and Child Affairs, with UN Women providing technical advice, facilitating national consultations and drafting the Strategy.

The TTPS is now positioned to equip all **7,000 police officers with the training required to enhance the quality of service offered to GBV survivors.** Led by UNDP, and in collaboration with UN Women, the Gender-Responsive Policing programme is now integrated into the Police Academy's core curriculum. The TTPS has committed to administering the programme to new and existing recruits. Since 2021, more than 600 officers have been trained, with 118 trained in 2023 alone. Training sessions covered best practices on gender roles, human rights, legislative frameworks and victim-centred approaches to policing.

Survivors of GBV will benefit from smoother case management and monitoring with the **Central Registry and Case Management System** developed with the support of UNFPA and set to be operationalised by the Office of the Prime Minister - Gender and Child Affairs. This system will be used by first responders and service providers. When these cases interact with the legal system, survivors living in Mayaro/Rio Claro can receive support to navigate the judicial system through UNDP's efforts Court Accompaniment Programme.

In the workplace, employers can now implement systems to protect their staff from GBV through UNFPA's collaboration with the Caribbean Employers' Confederation to create a workplace policy on GBV. Major corporations, including Massy Group, G4S, KPMG and Caribbean Bottlers, have adopted the policy - yet another milestone achievement of the Spotlight Initiative.



GBV survivors relying on support from National Family Services can encounter a more inclusive, effective support system with the implementation of **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Case Management.** UNFPA worked with the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services to develop these SOPs, which can be used to guide case management protocols and practices for working with GBV survivors. Such SOPs ensure no survivor is left without help and can receive guaranteed access to excellent standards of care.

More officeholders possess the knowledge and political will to position Local Government as an important community-level source of prevention and response to address family violence. After supporting the development of a Family Violence Prevention and Response Strategy in 2022, UNICEF worked with the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross to integrate the Strategy into the Mayaro/Rio Claro and Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporations. Now, there is a mapping tool for both communities which identifies locally-available GBV services.

National agencies with responsibility for State-sponsored residential facilities are better positioned to improve the quality of care

administered to children, with support from UNICEF. In partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister - Gender and Child Affairs, UNICEF implemented **the Work Plan recommendations outlined in the Judith Jones Report, which evaluated the mistreatment of children in State-supported residential facilities.** This Work Plan included institutional strengthening of the Child Affairs Division. UNICEF also continued efforts to improve the effectiveness of case management to better support children facing abuse and neglect. Building on the launch of the PRIMERO child protection information management system in 2022, UNICEF collaborated with the Children's Authority in 2023 to integrate this system into national systems operated by the TTPS, Student Support Services, medical social workers, probation officers and National Family Services.

National capacity and systems to prevent and respond to Trafficking in Persons received comprehensive UN System support in 2023. Led by IOM, the UN partnered with Government to identify needs for **proposed shelters/community residences intended to accommodate survivors of trafficking.** As a result, six Government facilities were provided with vocational, counselling and medical resources with financial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Additionally, IOM worked with the Ministry of Labour and the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs **to train 28 Government officials on victim identification and response planning.** These efforts were aimed at helping Trinidad and Tobago meet recommendations outlined in the United States Trafficking in Persons Report 2022. IOM also conducted two Situation Analyses and Training Needs Assessments to evaluate the framework of care services available to trafficking survivors and help determine resource requirements. The assessment revealed a need for more comprehensive awareness on Trafficking in Persons policies, guidelines and procedures and specialised shelters, particularly to address the multidimensional needs of migrants, male victims and children. To heighten public awareness, advocacy and information campaigns included a World Day Against Trafficking in Persons Walkathon and a focus on Trafficking in Persons for the Global Migration film Festival. In collaboration with the Counter-Trafficking Unit and CARICOM IMPACS, information pamphlets were distributed to locals and placed in airports throughout the Caribbean and South America through the CARISICA project.

In 2023, UNODC partnered with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago **to launch the internal Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Counter Trafficking Unit (CTU).** UNODC also led capacity-building sessions for 27 first-line officers, including those from the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Counter Trafficking Unit, Immigration, labour inspection and social work officials. These efforts aim to enhance the criminal justice response to human trafficking, focusing on a victim-centered and multidisciplinary approach to identify, prevent and prosecute cases at regional and local levels.

To create a foundation for the development of robust legislation and policies that tackle GBV in public spaces, **UN Women explored the risk of GBV exposure in the use of public transportation.** Recognising that men and women have different experiences using public transportation, a study conducted in August 2023 aimed to provide insights

to improve the accessibility and safety of public transportation spaces. This initiative is part of a UN Women effort to create and implement Inclusive Resilient, SMART and Safe (iRIS) spaces in the Caribbean.

Moreover, as part of broader efforts to promote gender equality, Government can now improve mainstreaming of women's needs into its programming across the public service. Recommendations from a UN Women-led assessment of the National Gender Machinery can help strengthen Government capacity to fulfil its obligations under major conventions, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Results achieved in this area of programming are due to strong technical capacities of national experts, robust funding provided by the EU and a critical role played by the Spotlight Initiative National Champions for prevention of GBV, Ms. Sharon Clark-Rowley - wife of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago - and Mr. Muhammad Muwakil, alongside Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Gender and Child Affairs. Their leadership has played a pivotal role in the efforts to prevent violence against women within the country. Through consistent engagement and public advocacy, they spearheaded numerous initiatives aimed at raising awareness of the issue and enhancing the legal and support frameworks for victims and have contributed significantly to the ongoing fight against GBV, marking a critical step forward in protecting and empowering women in Trinidad and Tobago.

The UN System has also worked to promote the role of youth in achieving the SDGs. Young people bring unique perspectives, energy, and innovative solutions to the global challenges we face. They are not only beneficiaries but also essential drivers of change, advocating for sustainable development practices in their communities and through digital platforms on a global scale.

By creating more robust opportunities for all youth, Trinidad and Tobago will be better able to tap into and harness the power of young people to maintain peace, promote non-violence, advance gender equality and achieve women's empowerment. The UN System is committed to expanding programming in this area. Two youth consultations were conducted focusing on **"Meaningful Youth Engagement in the Caribbean."** These sessions gathered insights and recommendations from young people across the sub-region, including participants from Trinidad and Tobago. Furthermore, the UN System works to advance **the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) Agenda** in line with SCR 2250. Led by UNESCO through its regional programming, youth from Trinidad and Tobago participated in the Youth Power for Peace Training to foster their skills in conflict resolution and prevention of violence. Additionally, the Caribbean Heroes Academy Initiative equipped young people from Trinidad and Tobago with the skills to design community projects that strengthen gender equality and positive social norms. Centered around the theme of "Leaving No One Behind," the Academy equipped young advocates with knowledge and skills to promote gender equality, regional networking opportunities and mentoring sessions.

Strengthening Food Systems Resilience



To accelerate progress towards the SDGs, a “food systems approach” is essential. This approach considers the interconnections between all elements of the food system - from production and processing to distribution, consumption, and waste management - and aims to achieve sustainability across economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

On the regional level, FAO is promoting the “25 by 2025” initiative which aims to reduce the Caribbean region’s food import bill by at least 25% by the year 2025. This initiative is a comprehensive effort involving member states, regional private sector and various organisations to enhance food and nutrition security through increased local agricultural production and reduced dependency on imported food. The strategy focuses on removing trade barriers, increasing private sector participation, and improving transportation and logistics for agricultural products. It also emphasises investment in climate-smart agricultural practices and digital agriculture to modernise the sector.

Cooperation between the UN System and national partners in Trinidad and Tobago in this area is led by FAO and WFP as local champions of a food systems approach to development.

Trinidad and Tobago is better positioned to meet the nutritional needs of vulnerable groups

through its efforts to build more resilient food systems. **Approximately 100,000 children who rely on school meals can benefit from more nutritious meal plans** after WFP worked with the National School Dietary Services Limited to improve efficiency and resource management in designing school menus. WFP provided access to its **AI-driven School Menu Planning tool**, a software that saves users time and resources in designing school menus that are customised to the local context. WFP also trained nutritionists at the National School Dietary Services to use the software.

People who rely on social programmes can fulfil their basic nutritional needs using the State’s food assistance measures, after WFP partnered with the Office of the Prime Minister – Gender and Child Affairs to support the composition of a nutritious food basket. Additionally, WFP worked with the ODPM to **train nearly 40 farmers on best practices to prevent crop loss caused by natural hazards**. WFP also continued collecting data, on behalf of CARICOM, in the sixth round of its Food Security and Livelihoods Survey. The Survey found that significant price increases in the cost of food, housing and fuel continue posing a challenge for people’s livelihoods in Trinidad and Tobago.

Improved land use planning to support natural resources management, biodiversity protection and resilient food systems is underway with UN System support. FAO worked

with CANARI on the development and piloting of a methodology for participatory land use planning through a land use mapping exercise and socioeconomic and stakeholder analysis. **168 people were trained to progress towards certification on good agricultural practices and land degradation mapping**. FAO worked with the Environmental Management Authority to train 24 stakeholders on land degradation mapping using open-source monitoring tools.

Cocoa producers will benefit from the landscape restoration and biodiversity efforts in cocoa growing communities supported by FAO and the Cocoa Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago. Efforts to create enabling environments for a green, biodiversity-friendly cocoa value chain received a boost from FAO’s research and technology services, in partnership with the Cocoa Research Centre at The University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus.





2.3 Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda



The work of the UN System in Trinidad and Tobago and in the Caribbean Dutch Islands of Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten is a good example of strength in unity. By embracing collaborative and coordinated approaches, the UN Country Team was able to better leverage expertise, resources and networks to address complex development challenges more effectively and comprehensively.

In the leadup to the UN General Assembly SDG Summit in September 2023, the UN country team partnered with the Ministry of Planning and Development to host a Roundtable on National Commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals in advance of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly and the SDG Summit convened by the UN Secretary-General. The Roundtable benefited from the contributions of over 100 participants, including senior members of Government, private sector, civil society, academia, and development partners working in Trinidad and Tobago. This resulted in the identification of ten national priorities for SDG acceleration.

The UN system has been making efforts to ensure sustainability of its programmes and impact. A good example of this effort is the success of Spotlight Initiative implemented by UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, and PAHO/WHO with funding from the EU, with the aim of eliminating gender-based and family violence in Trinidad and Tobago. One of the key results of the programme designed to ensure sustainability of work in this area is a comprehensive National Strategic

Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Violence (NSAP-GBV) for Trinidad and Tobago. The Action Plan implementation is funded by the Government and provides a whole-of-government approach to preventing and responding to GBV. The UN System, with technical lead of UN Women, has also developed its internal "Spotlight Sustainability Plan" that will serve as a programmatic framework complementing the activities under the National Strategic Action Plan.

Financing and funding for development have been high on the regional agenda in the run-up to the SIDS-4 Conference in Antigua and Barbuda in May 2024. In preparation for the event, the UN System supported the Government in drafting of a National Report on Implementation of the SAMOA Pathway commitments. This study - one of a kind in the Caribbean region - will provide a solid basis for UN common country analysis and programming in follow-up to the SIDS-4 conference.

The UN System is increasingly collaborating on joint programmes that consolidate and streamline operations, which then translate into efficient use of resources, faster and more agile implementation and better outcomes for the target populations. Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, UN entities increased collaboration including through joint programmes, thereby ensuring catalytic and strategic impact, aligned to national priorities. In 2023, in close partnership with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the UN System advanced implementation in critical areas of GBV, enhanced SDG data development and empowered Persons with Disabilities.

MODERNISING TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S STATISTICAL ECOSYSTEM THROUGH ENHANCED SDG DATA DEVELOPMENT



This two-year joint programme was implemented by PAHO/WHO, ILO, UNEP and ECLAC with finance from the UN's Joint SDG Fund.

Working together, the UN System's interdisciplinary outcomes included:

- 1 A national data and statistics architecture that makes greater use of digital technologies and international standards, including on gender and human rights. This architecture can now draw on an online SDG Statistics Repository, two digitalised national survey instruments, and a review of the National Statistical Landscape to identify digitalisation capacity gaps.
- 2 Greater partnership among development actors on data and statistics. This was achieved through the Anglophone Caribbean's first international Big Data Forum (2023), a coordinating mechanism for a Centre of Excellence for Big Data Analytics in Trinidad and Tobago, and the training of at least 100 government officers were trained in standardised production, use and sharing of quality, disaggregated data.
- 3 Increased partnership on data and statistics between the UN System and the private sector. This was the result of training 31 CFOs and senior company accountants in SDG-data-related Integrated Reporting and Sustainability for Finance; the development of an Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) guide disseminated to 276 companies; three ESG capacity-building workshops delivered to 121 executives from 45 companies; and dissemination of a Philanthropy Field Book to help private philanthropic bodies align their corporate social responsibility funding with the SDGs.

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND: EMPOWERING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES TO PROMOTE INCLUSION, AWARENESS AND ACCESS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



This joint programme implemented by PAHO/WHO and UNFPA with finance from the UN Partnerships on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UNPRPD MPTF). Working together, the UN System was able to support:

- ✓ A more unified and empowered disability community that can fully participate in formulating, amending and implementing policies, laws and services, which can lead and advocate for the changes needed for accelerated implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in Trinidad and Tobago.
- ✓ More CRPD-compliant laws and policies, data systems and service-delivery systems, through the review of key pieces of legislation and creation of recommended amendments, as well as the development of Guidelines for inclusive, CRPD-consistent data collection practices by the Government.
- ✓ A UN System whose work and personnel are better equipped to engage with Persons with Disabilities, with budgets and monitoring processes that are disability-inclusive, based on an analysis of the UN System's programming landscape in Trinidad and Tobago was conducted.



In 2023 the UN System in Trinidad and Tobago continued to engage the private to achieve stronger engagement, accountability, and partnership towards aligning its business practices with the SDGs. This outreach included with the American Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad and Tobago (AMCHAMTT), the European Business Chamber in Trinidad and Tobago (EUROCHAMTT), the Association of Chartered and Certified Accountants (ACCA), and other business groups to build companies' capacities for Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) issues.

In collaboration with AMCHAMTT, the UN developed a pocket ESG Guide that was distributed to 276 companies; facilitated three ESG workshops that were attended by more than 120 executives from over 45 companies; supported the staging of an ESG Conference and a Health, Safety, Security and Environment Conference, each with international participants (including from the UN Global Compact) and audiences of over 250; and contributed to the Chamber's five-year ESG Strategy.

The UN System also supported the EUROCHAMTT with implementing its *first annual Business Sustainability Champion Awards 2023*, as well as training sessions on commitments under the 2023 United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP28) and other multilateral environmental agreements. These encouraged over 40 companies, including Trinidad and Tobago's largest, to report on their ESG-related performance and plans. Additionally, the UNCT also arranged for free training from the ACCA to Chief Financial Officers and professional accountants from more than 30 firms on integrating sustainability into their companies' annual reports and other disclosures. As a direct result of the UN's partnership with the private sector chambers, several of them convened ESG committees to promote the integration of sustainability principles by their member companies.





2.4 Results of the UN Working Better Together: UN Coherence, Effectiveness and Efficiency



Regional Inter-Agency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V)



In 2023, the Trinidad and Tobago National Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V) co-led by IOM and UNHCR, continued to provide assistance and protection to refugees and migrants under the 2023 Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan (RMRP). In all, 8,218 refugees and migrants were reached through RMRP response activities, with a priority on protection services, legal orientation, counselling, and community-based assistance to support vulnerable individuals, including survivors of GBV. Partners strengthened anti-trafficking efforts through targeted capacity-building efforts for public sector officials and NGO personnel; offered information sessions, counselling, and support where needed to ensure Venezuelans' have access to rights and services; supported health access with primary health care, mental health support, and telehealth consultations; and facilitated food security initiatives, like distribution programmes and vouchers and non-food items.

Four instalments of the R4V Humanitarian Breakfast Series in Trinidad and Tobago brought together Government stakeholders, donors, the diplomatic community, and international humanitarian and development partners to address refugee and migrant needs, focusing on education, integration, healthcare, legal support and GBV. The Series also supports resource mobilisation and coordination efforts for the R4V Platform. By convening this multi-stakeholder dialogue space, the international development community and development agencies can more directly advocate with the Government; opportunities for funding support can be identified; and areas requiring technical and in-kind assistance from the international community and development agencies can be pinpointed. In December 2023, the R4V National Platform, Sub-Regional Platform,

and Regional Protection Sector organised the *First Forum of Indigenous Peoples in Trinidad and Tobago* to implement outcomes of the 2021 National Consultation Roundtables. Representatives from the Venezuelan Warao community, local communities, the UN System, NGOs, donors and Government officials participated, discussing how to address challenges faced by these groups and identifying collaboration opportunities, including with the First Peoples of Trinidad and Tobago.

R4V partners' advocacy efforts led to the Government announcement on the inclusion of refugee and migrant children on the move in public schools as partners continue to support their inclusion in national education.



Business Operation Strategy

The UN's inter-agency Operations Management Team worked collaboratively to deliver the work plan for the **Business Operations Strategy (BOS)**. Thirteen UN entities participated in the BOS exercise in 2023. Through the provision of common business operations by one UN agency for one or more UN agencies, the UN System was able to realise budget savings of USD\$321,866 in areas of travel services, plants management, meeting room and conference facility management, cleaning services, security services, parking services and help desk. Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, the UN will continue to advance efforts to realize efficiency gains in its operations.



COMMUNICATING AS ONE UN

A UN Communications Group (UNCG) in Trinidad and Tobago was convened as a collaborative initiative between UN entities operating in the country. Its purpose is to promote the mandate of the UN system in Trinidad and Tobago in advancing sustainable development within the framework of Agenda 2030 and the MSDCF and to mobilise partnerships and engagement to achieve the SDGs. By so doing, the UNCG aims to facilitate new or deeper collaboration between the UN System, Government and other development actors and to influence behavioural change among general and targeted audiences that can lead to action on the SDGs.

KEY ACTIONS



A schools outreach tour in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which allowed seven UN agencies to reach 300 students with key messages on discrimination and equality (November - December 2023).



UN Day Partners Event with Government Ministers, donor representatives, other public sector leaders & implementing partners (October 2023).



Promotion and visibility of the UN Big Data Forum, the first in-person, international conference on Big Data Analytics in the Caribbean (including a two-hour, live morning TV show solely devoted to the Forum, November 2023).



Support of implementation of the UN Spotlight Initiative's Communications Strategy, including a national Conference with international attendees & over 150 participants (November 2023).

In 2023, the Office of the Resident Coordinator initiated in consultations with the SDG Commissions the design of an SDG Communication Strategy for implementation in Aruba and Curaçao. These Strategies will support the Governments of Aruba and Curaçao in strengthening their SDG communications efforts to raise awareness among public sector officials, civil society, private sector, academia, and the wider citizenry.

2.5 Results Report in Multi-country Office

The UN System in 2023 made a concerted effort to reinvigorate its engagement with the Dutch Islands after the Covid-19 pandemic, with these islands becoming first-time signatory countries to the UNMSDCF for the English- and Dutch- speaking Caribbean.

COOPERATION WITH ARUBA AND KEY RESULTS



In February 2023, UN System for the Dutch Islands conducted a joint visit, led by the UN Resident Coordinator ad interim along with ILO, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, ECLAC, UN Women, UNFPA, WFP, UNHCR, IOM, FAO and UNEP, to engage with the government to better understand the development priorities which UN programming should address. Based on UN System analysis, a set of strategic priorities for the period 2023 to 2026 was defined.

Further discussions were advanced in the context of the new UN Resident Coordinator during her first visit to Aruba on 5-6 December 2023, where meetings were held with the Prime Minister and Governor.

UN agencies working in Aruba include UNHCR, IOM, UNOPS, UNESCO, UNDP, PAHO/WHO, UN Women and WFP. Despite the UN's limited physical presence on the island, the UN collaborated with the Government of Aruba, local communities and diverse stakeholders to propel sustainable development, economic enhancement, societal welfare and environmental protection.



KEY RESULTS

- ✓ Legal intervention supported by UNHCR prevented the refoulement of 13 individuals & 4 strategic litigation cases led the Government of Aruba to reassess migration detention legislation
- ✓ UNHCR, HIAS and the National Bureau of Women's Affairs (FCVR) established a National Gender Council, to support the implementation of the National Gender Policy, the development of which was supported by UN Women.
- ✓ A Protection Monitoring Exercise conducted by UNHCR & HIAS targeted 567 respondents. The exercise highlighted the need for a revision of the current outreach approach and the increased request for food, medical care, shelter & information on labour exploitation. It also facilitated the identification of cases eligible for resettlement.
- ✓ Cash and vouchers, including for medical needs, were distributed to 340 refugees & migrants as part of a collaboration between UNHCR & HIAS. UNHCR submitted 253 people for resettlement to the United States.
- ✓ Rehabilitation of the historic Maria Convent Building as part of the Sustainable Island Solutions through Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (SISSTEM) programme, a joint initiative by the Government of Aruba (GoA) & the University of Aruba (UA), which seeks to establish a new SISSTEM Faculty at the University, with special focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics).
- ✓ National Coordination Platform for Refugees & Migrants from Venezuela (R4V) partners reached 3,430 refugees, migrants & host community members in Aruba with protection, integration, health & other support under the 2023 RMRP.
- ✓ R4V partners reached 1,279 refugees, migrants & host community members in the health sector in 2023. Health activities included primary health services, orthodontal/dental health services, medical examination, family planning & lab testing, among others.
- ✓ Strengthened national health programmes on non-communicable diseases & improved capacities for mental health & substance abuse.
- ✓ Aruba was one of 12 Caribbean SIDS that participated in a global Needs Assessment for Artificial Intelligence (AI), Digital Transformation & Open Data for Small Island Developing States. The survey provides an assessment of SIDS capacity to leverage AI, Digital Transformation & Open Data for sustainable development and will guide the UN System in addressing gaps in policy, capacity & practices.
- ✓ A Digital Readiness Assessment to evaluate the country's level of digitalisation.
- ✓ Support for enterprise development, workers' activities & employers' activities with the Aruba Trade & Industry Association (ATIA) in developing an Action Plan for Membership Strategy.
- ✓ Support for the development of the Aruba National Park into a Biosphere Reserve, as well as the CARIDIMA network of youth in the environment & promoting traditional knowledge solutions for climate adaptation & resilience.
- ✓ Support for the establishment of a Quality Assurance Initiative to increase the efficiency, adaptability & integrity of the national asylum system. The UN System also provided legal assistance through a strategic litigation project in collaboration with local law firms. Additionally, the UN System supported the pilot of a local law clinic focused on the rights of refugees, asylum-seekers & migrants.
- ✓ Case Study on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Aruba as part of wider research on Shock-Responsive Social Protection in the Caribbean (2018-2020).
- ✓ Support for an assessment of the National Gender Machinery as part of a multi-country assessment.
- ✓ Delivery of an entrepreneurship program for migrants, graduating 10 students as beneficiaries.
- ✓ Trafficking In Persons training, in collaboration with the National Coordination Office against Human Trafficking & Migrant Smuggling, for 38 government officials & stakeholders from key entities such as the Ministry of Labor, Police, Migration/DIMAS, Airport Security, Victim Assistance Unit, Family Justice, NGOs & international organisations.
- ✓ Meaningful Youth Engagement (MYE) Training targeting Youth Directors, policy-makers & youth practitioners from youth-related Ministries in Aruba, Curaçao & Sint Maarten, to unpack the concept covering principles, preconditions, forms, benefits & barriers for MYE.



COOPERATION WITH CURAÇAO AND KEY RESULTS



UN agencies working in Curaçao include UNHCR, IOM, UNDP, UNOPS and ILO. In 2023, the UN collaborated with the government of Curaçao, local communities and diverse stakeholders.

In October 2023 the UN Resident Coordinator led a mission of the UN System with the participation of UNOPS, UNHCR, UN Women, ILO and IOM and had the opportunity to engage with the Government and learn about key development challenges, namely in migration, vulnerability to climate change, social protection system and food security.



KEY RESULTS

- ✓ UNHCR partnered with Human Rights Defense Curaçao to provide legal aid to 64 asylum-seekers, yielding ground breaking jurisprudence on access to interpretation & the establishment of maximum immigration detention timelines.
- ✓ UNHCR partner Salu Pa Tur provided free-of-charge access to primary health care to 6,710 unique patients, who are unable to access medical assistance through the national system.
- ✓ As the GBV & child protection working group lead in Curaçao, UNHCR developed a prioritisation & action plan focusing on legal & policy advocacy & awareness raising. UNHCR trained 45 stakeholders on GBV prevention, risk mitigation & response.
- ✓ Support for the National Development Plan to implement the 2030 Agenda through the establishment of an SDG Dashboard, an electronic tool used to record data on SDG indicators & track progress over time. This work is being led by the Statistical Office.
- ✓ National Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V) partners reached 7,022 refugees, migrants & host community members in Curaçao with protection, integration, health & other support under the 2023 RMRP. This included a cash-for-rent initiative in collaboration with local partners to provide temporary accommodation for Venezuelan migrants.
- ✓ R4V partners reached 2,782 people in Curaçao with health services, including primary health services, other health services, dental, medical examination, family planning & lab testing, among others.
- ✓ 6,290 unique refugee & migrant patients received healthcare support from Salu Pa Tur. These patients would otherwise not have access to healthcare.
- ✓ Distribution of school kits and uniforms for children, to support positive education outcomes.
- ✓ A media workshop "Building Capacity for Inclusive, Quality and Sustainable Journalism" was held 10-12 May, 2023 at the University of Curaçao. The workshop facilitated by the Media Institute of the Caribbean (MIC) raised MIL awareness of 28 participants (16 females, 12 males) from private/public media operating in print, radio, tv & digital platforms. Two public lectures held during the week attracted a wider public audience including teachers & social workers to explore media & information literacy. The workshop has stimulated the establishment of a local Media Association.



COOPERATION WITH SINT MAARTEN AND KEY RESULTS



In 2023 the UN's cooperation in Sint Maarten was led by PAHO/WHO, UNESCO and UNDP in partnership with the Government.



KEY RESULTS

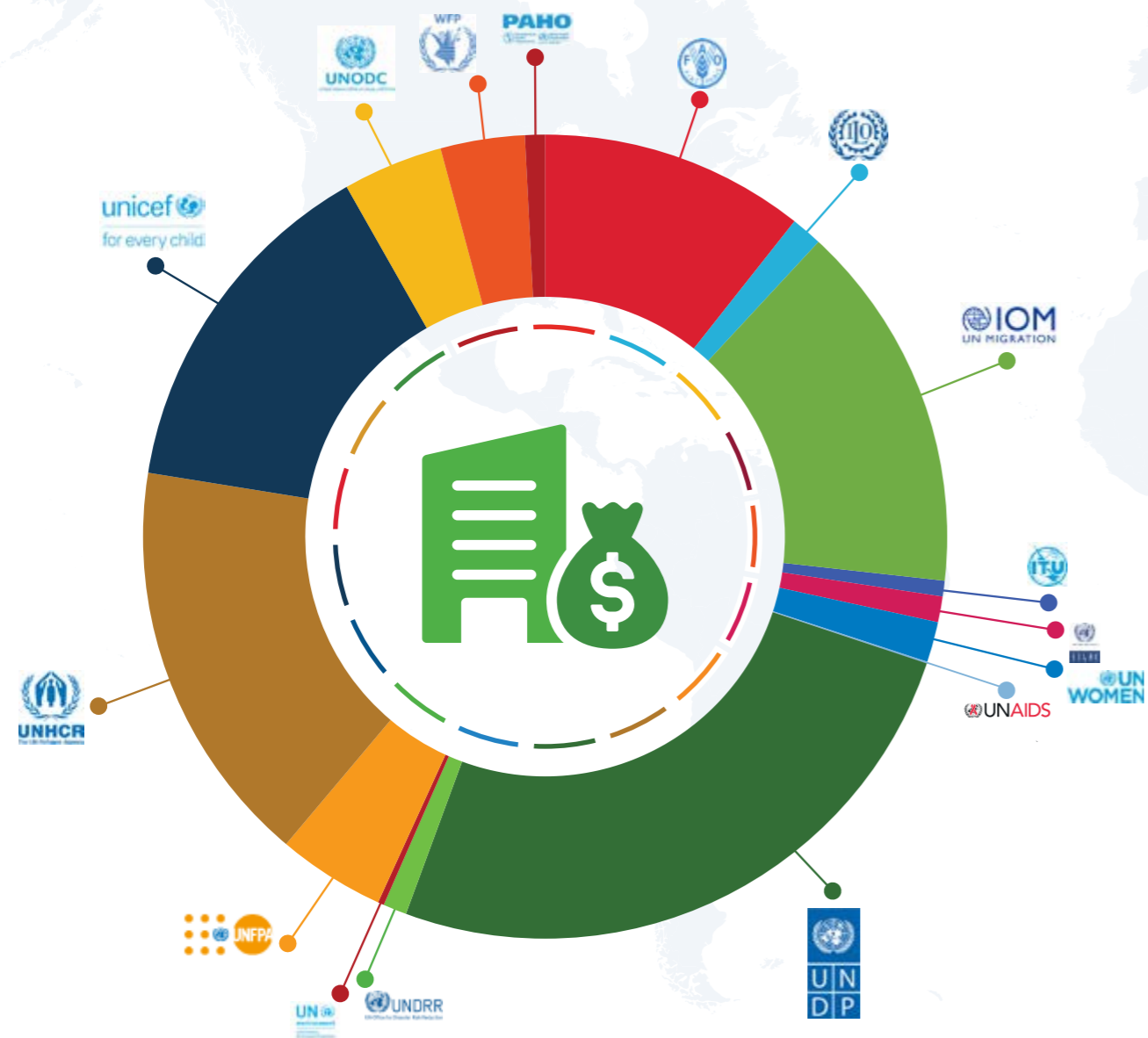
-  Support for the Government's engagement as a member of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA).
-  Support for youth engagement training, culture and education projects, SDGs awareness, climate change and sustainable development initiatives.
-  Efforts to enhance Sint Maarten's rule of law facilities which have been impacted by climate change, by defining a new model of prison infrastructure that will benefit both the prison population and its staff, ensuring full compliance of human rights and the consideration of social, gender and environmental components in its design.

The UN enjoys a positive partnership with Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten and looks forward to strengthening engagement in 2024 with a more coordinated approach in support of development priorities.

2.6 Financial Overview and Resource Mobilisation

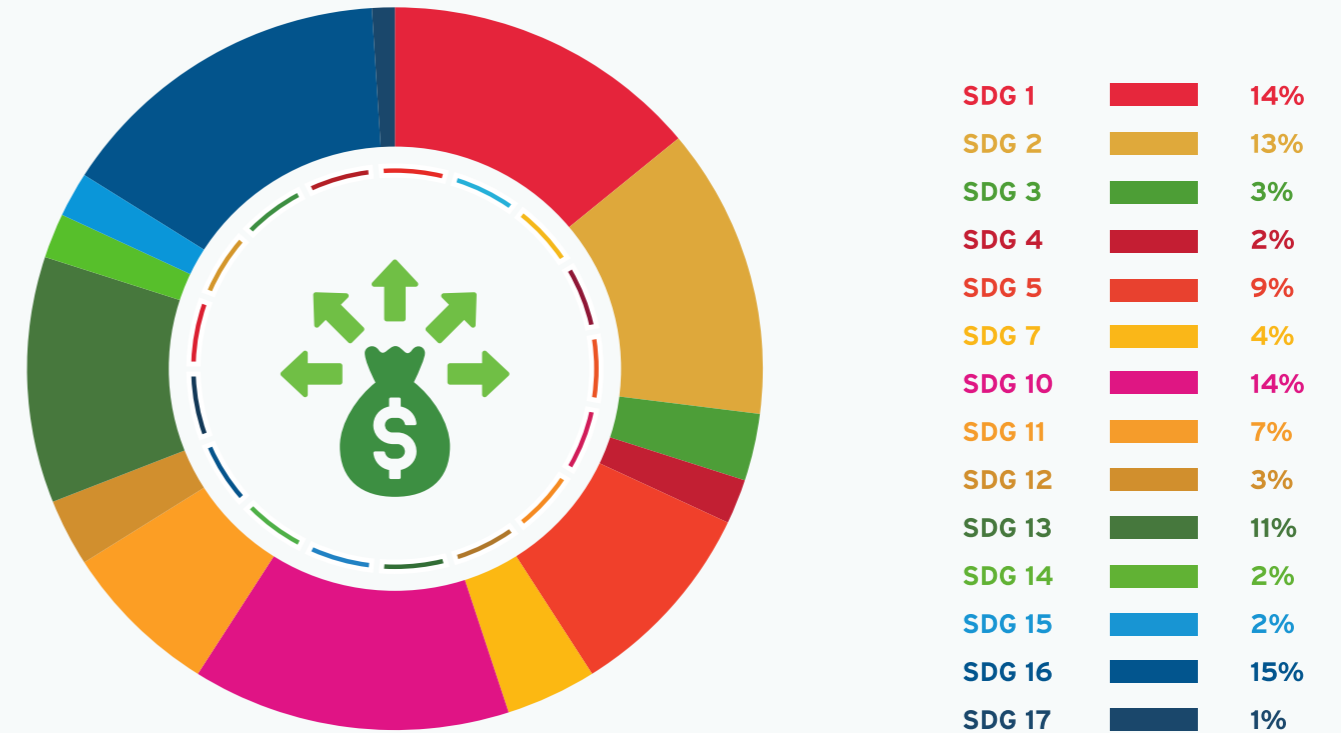
2023 Total Expenditure
\$15,804,497

UN AGENCY SPENDING



UNESCO has also contributed USD \$293,523 towards programmes supporting the creative industries which will be implemented through 2023 and 2024.

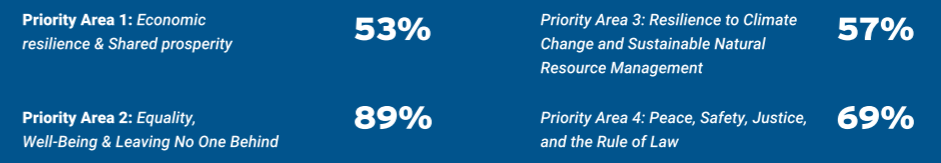
EXPENDITURE BY SDGs



KEY

- SDG 1: No Poverty
- SDG 2: Zero Hunger
- SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being
- SDG 4: Quality Education
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities
- SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- SDG 13: Climate Action
- SDG 14: Life Below Water
- SDG 15: Life on Land
- SDG 16: Peace and Justice - Strong Institutions
- SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

EXPENDITURE BY PRIORITY



KEY

FAO	\$1,683,000	UNAIDS	\$11,250	UNHCR	\$2,592,206
ILO	\$197,824	UNDP	\$4,032,788	UNICEF	\$2,251,303
IOM	\$2,347,053	UNDRR	\$150,000	UNODC	\$636,128
ITU	\$100,000	UNEP	\$38,607	WFP	\$535,065
UN ECLAC	\$163,369	UNFPA	\$683,302	PAHO	\$126,802
UN Women	\$255,800				



CHAPTER 3

UNCT Key Focus for 2024



In support of putting the SDGs back on track, in 2024 the UN System for Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten will use the UN Multi-country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026 to focus its attention and support on integrated approaches to key transition areas that can have a catalytic and multiplier effect across the SDGs, where these are also prioritised by their respective governments. These key areas are: (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3)

digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. In focusing on these catalyst areas in the national development contexts, the UN System's efforts in 2024 will include the following:



Engagement with Youth in the lead-up to the Summit of the Future.



Joint advocacy on key thematic issues.



Supporting vulnerable populations to leave no one behind.



Strengthen partnerships with civil society, development actors and the private sector.



Prepare in partnership with governments Country Implementation Plans 2024-2025 for Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten.



Support governments mobilization for the SIDS4 Conference.



Consolidated UN support for Summit of the Future.



UNITED NATIONS

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, ARUBA,
CURACAO AND SINT MAARTEN



2023 UN ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO, ARUBA,
CURACAO & SINT MAARTEN

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