TOBAGO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

TOBAGO ROADMAP TO RECOVERY

Recommendations for rebuilding the Tobago society in 2020



Contents

LIST OF FIGURES **4**

LIST OF TABLES **4**

LIST OF ACRONYMS **4**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **7**

1 INTRODUCTION **11**

2 KEY FINDINGS **13**

3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT **15**

3.1 TOBAGO'S SOCIAL LANDSCAPE AND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 15

3.1.1 Education *15*

3.1.2 Parenting and Childcare *15*

3.1.3 Domestic Violence *16*

3.1.4 Social Assistance Programmes *17*

3.1.5 Mental and Emotional Health *17*

3.2 TOBAGO'S ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE AND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 18

3.2.1 GDP and GDP Growth *18*

3.2.2 Labour Market Conditions *20*

3.2.3 Prices and Inflation *22*

3.2.4 Fiscal Operations *23*

3.3 IMPLICATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS 26

3.3.1 International Environment *26*

3.3.2 Regional Environment *27*

3.3.3 National Environment *29*

4 RECOMMENDATIONS **31**

4.1 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT - LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND 32

4.1.1 Vision *32*

4.1.2 Introduction *33*

4.1.3 Strengthening Our Institutions: Putting People First *33*

4.1.4 Social Safety Nets *37*

4.1.5 Health and Wellness *38*

4.1.6 Public Health and Education *41*

4.1.7 Training and Capacity Building *43*

4.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION 44

4.2.1 Vision *44*

4.2.2 Introduction *45*

4.2.3 Existing Important Cross Cutting Projects *46*

4.2.4 Key Agricultural Facilities *47*
4.2.5 Crop Production *57*
4.2.6 Livestock Production *60*
4.2.7 Fishing and Seafood Industry *63*
4.2.8 Apiculture Industry *66*
4.2.9 Agroprocessing and Food Manufacturing *67*
4.3 PRODUCTIVITY, GOVERNANCE, AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT 68
4.3.1 Vision *68*
4.3.2 Situational Analysis *69*
4.3.3 Recommendations *74*
4.4 FINANCE AND THE ECONOMY 85
4.4.1 Vision *85*
4.4.2 Fiscal Operations *86*
4.4.3 Foreign Direct Investment *90*
4.4.4 Businesses/Commerce *91*
4.4.5 Trade *97*
4.4.6 Financial Sector *100*
4.4.7 Transportation *102*
4.4.8 Construction *104*
4.5 CREATIVE INDUSTRY 109
4.5.1 Vision *109*
4.5.2 Situational Analysis *109*
4.5.3 Recommendations – Governance *110*
4.5.4 Recommendations – Performances & Exhibitions *111*
4.5.5 Recommendations – Education & Training *113*
4.5.6 Recommendations – Professionalisation *114*
4.5.7 Recommendations – Tobago Creative Industries Foundation *114*
4.5.8 Recommendations – Export *115*
4.6 TOURISM 116
4.6.1 Vision *116*
4.6.2 Situational Analysis *117*
4.6.3 Recommendations: *120*
4.7 SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION 131
4.7.1 Vision *131*
4.7.2 Sustainability and Resilience *131*
4.7.3 Climate Change *136*
4.7.4 Energy *139*
4.7.5 Proactive Sargassum Response *147*
4.7.6 Innovation and Entrepreneurship *149*
4.7.7 Digital Transformation and ICT *153*

5 IMPLEMENTATION 157

5.1 TOBAGO'S IMPLEMENTATION DEFICIT 157

5.2 CRITICAL IMPLEMENTATION NEEDS 159

5.2.1 Implementation Approach 159

5.2.2 The Task Force 160

5.2.3 The Task Force Objectives 161

5.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF AN *INDEPENDENT, WELL-FUNDED, WELL-STAFFED* TASK FORCE 162

5.4 INNOVATIVE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES 163

5.5 PRIORITISATION OF ACTIVITY/ ADAPTABILITY 163

5.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION 164

6 RESOURCES FOR RECOVERY 165

6.1 FINANCIAL RESOURCES 165

6.2 NON-FINANCIAL RESOURCES 166

6.3 COLLABORATION 166

7 APPENDICES 168

7.1 CONTRIBUTORS 168

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Tobago's GDP at Constant Prices 18
Figure 2 Headline, Core and Food Inflation Rates, 2015 - 2019 22
Figure 3 International Arrivals to Tobago by Air, 2004-2018 117
Figure 4 Domestic Arrivals to Tobago by Air & Ferry, 2007-2018 118
Figure 5 Hotel & Guest House Occupancy Rates in Tobago, 2008-2018 119

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Sectoral Contribution to GDP at Constant Prices, 2015 - 2019P 19
Table 2 Labour Market Summary, 2015 - 2018 20
Table 3 Budgetary Requests from the THA and Actual Allocations Received, 2015 - 2021 23
Table 4 Revenue Collection in Tobago, 2015 - 2019 25
Table 5 Crop Varieties Produced by the Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory 48
Table 6 Key Elements of the Plan of Action for Staples 58
Table 7 Personnel of the THA 70

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AHA – Animal Health Assistant

AI – Artificial Insemination

ATFA – All Tobago Fisherfolk Association

BATT – Bankers Association of Trinidad & Tobago

BDU – Business Development Unit

CARDI – Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute

CBC – Complete Blood Count

CCC – Civilian Conservation Corp

CDC – US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention

CEDP – Comprehensive Economic Development Programme

CEPEP – Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme

CFTDI – Caribbean Fisheries Development and Training Institute

COVID-19 – 2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease

DEIE – THA Division of Education, Innovation and Energy

DFE – THA Division of Finance and the Economy

DFPFF – THA Division of Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries

DHWFD – THA Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development

DIQE – THA Division of Infrastructure, Quarries and the Environment

DSYA – THA Division of Sport and Youth Affairs

DTCT – THA Division of Tourism, Culture and Transportation

EC – Energy Conservation

ECLAC – UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

EE – Energy Efficiency

ETP – Environmental Training Programme

EU – European Union

FDI – Foreign Direct Investment

FIPCOT – Fish Processing Company of Tobago

GBVU – Gender-based Violence Unit

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GLG – Government Loan Guarantee

IFMIS – Integrated Financial Management Information System

IHRIS – Integrated Human Resource Information System

ILO – International Labour Organization

IMF – International Monetary Fund

IPSAS – International Public Sector Accounting Standards

M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation

MDT – Multidisciplinary Team

MIC-IT – MIC Institute of Technology

MSMEs – Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

NESC – National Energy Skills Center

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

OCS – Office of the Chief Secretary

OPEC – Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

PMO – Project Management Office

PTSC – Public Transport Service Corporation

RE – Renewable Energy

SDG – Sustainable Development Goals

SMEs – Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

T&TEC – Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission

TADCO – Tobago Agribusiness Development Company

TAPA – Tobago Agro-processors Association

TATT – Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago

TCOSWAF – Tobago Cold Storage and Warehousing Facility

TCPL – Tobago Cassava Products Limited

TEMA – Tobago Emergency Management Agency

THA – Tobago House of Assembly

THTI – Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute

TIIS – Tobago Infrastructure Investment Strategy

TITL – Tobago Information Technology Limited

TPSA – Tobago Public Service Academy

TSERP – Tobago Sargassum Emergency Response Plan

TTAL – Tobago Tourism Agency Limited

TTFS – Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service

TTPS – Trinidad and Tobago Police Service

TVET – Technical Vocational Education and Training

UN – United Nations

UoT – University of Tobago

URP – Unemployment Relief Programme

UTT – University of Trinidad and Tobago

VO – Veterinary Officer

WEO – World Economic Outlook

WHO – World Health Organization

YTEPP – Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide advice and guidance to the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) on the initial decisions to be taken to help Tobago recover from the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown and social distancing guidelines, which were implemented in March 2020. Although protective, these interventions—enacted both locally and abroad—have disrupted almost every facet of life in every country, causing economic havoc. This report of the Tobago Road to Recovery team presents recommendations under the headings of Finance and the Economy; Tourism; Agriculture and Food Production; Creative Industry; Productivity, Governance and Human Resource Development; Sustainability and Innovation; and Social Development. These recommendations focus on the short term, though some will spill over into the medium term.

This report sets out a situational analysis of Tobago before and after the impact of COVID-19. It highlights some key areas where the island's economic situation was less than satisfactory, only to be compounded by COVID-19. Analytical comments are made on the current socio-economic state in Tobago, with specific reference to: education; parenting and childcare; domestic violence; social assistance programmes; mental and emotional health; the growth of Tobago's gross domestic product (GDP); labour market conditions; fiscal operations; and the impact of COVID-19 on the local, regional and international economy. Based on the situational analysis, more than one hundred recommendations have been made to treat with urgent and serious social issues, including the welfare of Tobago's children and the mental and physical health of residents in general.

The COVID-19 crisis starkly highlighted the need for food security, and this report presents several recommendations to improve the local production of crops, livestock, fish and honey, and support this with a sustainable agro-processing industry.

The Tobago House of Assembly is central to all facets of life on the island, and strategic recommendations have been made that should result in a vastly improved level of governance, more efficient administration, improved productivity and more effective delivery of services to the public. Some of these recommendations include leadership training for managers and supervisors; adoption of a Performance Management System in the THA; and the transition of the Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute into the University of Tobago

(UoT), with the establishment of the Public Service Academy and Tobago Productivity Council in the University of Tobago.

The THA typically receives an annual fiscal allocation of nearly 50% of the budget it requests from the Central Government, with minimal funding allotted for capital development. Recommendations in this area will improve efficiency of THA spending via the adoption of a robust Multiyear Strategic Planning and Budgeting Framework. There is also a focus on strategic education financing and capital funding. Fiscal research features in this report in an effort to quantify Tobago's revenue contribution to the national economy. Options for an increase in revenue have been explored, including accessing the Green Fund, monetising tourism assets, foreign direct investment and ensuring greater predictability in planning and revenue collection and generation. Other economic recommendations include determining Tobago's future human resource needs via a manpower audit, negotiating reductions in reserve requirement and repo rate and increases in foreign exchange for Tobago businesses. Improving financial literacy among the Tobago population is another key initiative, as is strengthening the technical and financial capacity of the credit union sector.

A strong recommendation has been made for the creation of a Board for Strategic Medium/Long Term Planning of transportation *and land use.* That board will be responsible for developing a Tobago Transport Policy.

The creative sector, which has never been formally organised, will need a firm policy to guide its development. The THA should appoint a new body, titled the Tobago Creative Industry Foundation (TCIF), to operate as an independent support implementation unit. TCIF will develop and implement workshops on the business of the arts, and will develop the Tobago School for the Arts with emphasis on the Performing Arts in its initial year, among other initiatives. The THA will be asked to develop a robust programme for the performing arts in primary schools, to appoint an independent board that will assess the merits of open calls for artistic proposals and to create a Tobago Artisan and Culture Market as a platform for showcasing Tobago's best art and artists in a continuous and sustainable manner.

The recommendations for the tourism sector cover the areas of Training & Education, Product Development and Enhancement, and foreign investment promotion. There is also a strong

recommendation to relax some of the administrative requirements for accessing state sponsored funding to simplify this process for accommodation properties. The main recommendations for tourism are based on the development of a rolling 5-Year Strategic Tourism Development Plan. The focus of training and education will be to create a service-driven and competitive industry that appeals to the discerning tourist, while product development will help to monetise Tobago's bounty of attractive natural, ecological and heritage-based assets. The destination marketing effort is for a sustained, integrated domestic staycation campaign, targeting the potential million-person market in Trinidad. Until the country's borders are opened, visitors to Tobago must come from Trinidad and this will boost the viability of the Tobago tourism sector.

The report continues by making some transformational recommendations for sustainability and innovation on the island. These include making Tobago a green economy, development of innovation and entrepreneurship, the digital transformation of governance and administrative processes and progressively moving to the use of renewable energy. Among the specific recommendations is the strengthening of the Sustainable Development function of the THA Planning Department, which will ensure all THA developmental and operational activities are conducted sustainably. It is recognised that the development of the innovation and entrepreneurial mindset is a long-term proposition. Still, there are short-term activities that can lay the foundation for a positive shift in this direction. This can be achieved by infusing a strong entrepreneurial component into the Youth Energised for Success (YES) and other programmes; orienting existing business support programmes and units to focus on export business; and the development of a Tobago Data Agency that institutionalises data collection, verification, and dissemination across the entire society. Clean energy recommendations include an energy efficiency project, development of an Energy Savings Fund, small scale solar photovoltaic systems, developing an energy information hub for residents and the engagement of energy companies to support implementation of renewable technology across the island.

This report concludes with an extensive look at implementation, after highlighting the many previous policy documents that have not been implemented. The comprehensive implementation plan presented within is based on the establishment of a Task Force that has the authority of the Chief Secretary and Executive Council, and yet is independent of the

conventional THA structure. This is heavily inspired by the lessons taken from the challenges and successes of previous implementation efforts. Finally, the report describes the resources needed for successful implementation of these recommendations, including financial and human resources, such as Tobago's sizeable diaspora. It ends by highlighting the critical need for collaboration.

1 INTRODUCTION

In December 2019, the first confirmed case of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was recorded in Wuhan, China. The virus quickly spread to other countries and in late January 2020, the World Health Organization ("WHO") declared a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern" regarding the outbreak of COVID-19. WHO later declared the coronavirus a "Pandemic". As of November 28th, 2020, Trinidad and Tobago has recorded 6,630 confirmed cases—of which 113 were reported in Tobago—including 118 deaths (2 from Tobago).

The COVID-19 pandemic has ravaged societies around the world, and Trinidad and Tobago is no exception. The impact on Tobago has been particularly severe, in part because of the island's heavy dependence on tourism, and also because of the socio-economic repercussions of social distancing measures instituted to contain the spread of the virus. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, countries around the world have employed a range of fiscal and monetary policy measures to mitigate its impact. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Tobago House of Assembly implemented various initiatives to support individuals and businesses adversely affected by the pandemic. These measures included strengthening the country's safety net, lowering the banking sector financial reserve requirement and repo rates, engaging institutions in order to secure moratoriums on loan payments for people whose employment statuses were affected by the lockdown and social restrictions and providing and expanding grant and loan facilities.

Additionally, countries have developed recovery plans to navigate the challenging period ahead and to guide the actions of policymakers. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Dr Keith Rowley, appointed a High-Level Multi-Sectoral Committee with the mandate to draft a Roadmap for Trinidad and Tobago in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding the fact that there are two representatives from Tobago on the national committee, the Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly, the Honourable Mr Ancil Dennis, established a Multi-disciplinary Roadmap to Recovery Working Group. Its mandate is to draft an Action Plan to guide Tobago's economic recovery from the fallout and devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Tobago Roadmap to Recovery Working Group comprises eighteen (18) members from seven (7) sectors:

1. Finance and the Economy
2. Tourism
3. Agriculture and Food Production
4. Creative Industry
5. Productivity, Governance, and Human Resource Development
6. Sustainability and Innovation; and
7. Social Development

The objectives of this report are to lay out immediate, short- and medium-term actions to:

- Protect vulnerable groups - leave no one behind
- Restart the Existing Tobago Economy, and
- Create the Tobago Economy of the Future

In preparing this report, the Working Group consulted with a wide range of stakeholders across various sectors in Tobago, inclusive of the state sector, private sector and civil society. The Working Group also reviewed the National Roadmap to Recovery and other existing Tobago-specific and national documents, as well as regional and international material that addressed the recovery of countries from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guiding principles of this report are to diversify the Tobago economy and to build resilience, making the Tobago society stronger than it was before the COVID-19 pandemic, and capable of withstanding exogenous shocks.

In this report, Section 2 summarises some key findings from this work. Section 3 examines both the social and economic landscapes of Tobago, as well as the associated impact of COVID-19. The section also discusses the implications of developments in the international, regional and national environment for Tobago. Section 4 discusses the recommendations by sector. Each sector presents a situational analysis, followed by detailed recommendations. Section 5 recommends how to execute this plan, while Section 6 identifies the resources needed for recovery.

2 KEY FINDINGS

The challenges created by COVID-19 in Tobago, though significant, are minor in comparison to Tobago's overall developmental needs prior to the pandemic. Those needs were highlighted in Tobago's most recent but incomplete development effort: The Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (CEDP) v2.0. The main impact of COVID-19 has been to expose the vulnerabilities of the island in terms of governance, non-inclusive decision-making, low public sector implementation capacity and continuity, and low private sector revenue generation. Tobago has also endured limited adoption of technology and innovative capacity, low workforce capacity, limited data collection to guide decision-making, poor integration across public sector agencies and frequent reassignment of staff and state agencies, which resets progress as well as personal lives.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also created excellent opportunities to effectively bridge the gaps within the public service. It has generated interest island-wide in changing how Tobago does business, and has given key actors time to pause and improve operations and service quality. Addressing some of these issues would catalyse Tobago's recovery from the pandemic and provide the platform for a more resilient and prosperous society, where every resident has more opportunities to fulfil their true potential. Some actions will remedy multiple problems at once, and others require immediate implementation to sustain the Tobago way of life.

Key themes for Tobago's recovery must therefore incorporate the following:

1. **Protection** of the socially disadvantaged, of livelihoods and of the island's food security
2. Increase in the Confidence and Capacities of Tobagonians through **Education and Coaching**
3. Improvement of **Professional Standards** in order to develop industries in Tobago
4. Enhancement of **Governance and Financial Management** to facilitate all additional action
5. Improvement of the **Ability to Implement** public sector initiatives
6. **Divestment** of misaligned holdings of the THA
7. **Diversification** of Tobago's revenues by increasing export-focused private sector activity

All the recommendations made in this document are linked to these broad themes, though they are classified under seven (7) “sectors” as identified by the Chief Secretary.

3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

3.1 Tobago's Social Landscape and the Impact of COVID-19

Socioeconomic status affects health through a variety of mechanisms, including psychosocial factors (factors involving aspects of both psychological and social behaviours), health practices and the level of available health care. This has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a significant impact on the social landscape of the world, including the twin-island republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The combination of physical distancing, social isolation, lockdowns, travel restrictions and quarantine orders significantly reduced workforce activity across all economic sectors, while simultaneously creating social dilemmas, such as a decrease in well-being. Alongside the response geared at "flattening the curve", individuals found that their sense of security and stability—employment, food, housing, relationships and otherwise—were compromised.

3.1.1 Education

One of the most notable consequences of COVID-19 was the shutdown of all schools and educational facilities, beginning on March 16th, 2020, throughout Trinidad and Tobago. For some families, this meant increased responsibilities in the area of child-rearing—especially home-schooling. Already affected by the slowdown in employment, low-income families, who relied on the School Nutrition Programme to supplement breakfast and lunch, were left without adequate resources to feed their children.

This challenge intensified with the decision to mitigate the negative effects of school closure, as institutions resorted to online teaching so learning could continue. There was already a significant disparity in access to digital learning tools between low-income and higher-income families. The COVID-19 pandemic has permanently heightened the need for digital tools to keep people connected. If not managed, this will further widen the gap for those at a lower socioeconomic status.

3.1.2 Parenting and Childcare

Furthermore, the prevalence of single-parent households in Tobago, combined with the closure of childcare facilities, meant that many parents were often left without alternative

agencies for childcare, and yet were still required to maintain a presence at their place of employment. Initially, the government proposed “Pandemic Leave” as a means to assist working parents who have no support system to care for their children. This attempt faced several legal barriers, including the unwillingness of employers to facilitate this leave; many parents were forced to abandon their jobs or to leave their children with family, friends or neighbours. From a social standpoint, the negative fallout of this action is that parents struggled with increased frustration, anxiety and depression as they attempted to balance meeting their need for childcare and their work obligations, while children became more exposed to abuses. During the “stay at home” period from March-June 2020, the Children’s Authority experienced an uptick in requests for protection and care of children in Tobago. In March, there were eight requests; this ballooned to 20 requests in April, 32 in May and 36 in June—an overall increase of 350%. Abuse tends to have a knock-on effect; research suggests that long term, victims of child abuse are at an increased risk of becoming perpetrators of abuse, engaging in juvenile delinquency and staying away from school.

3.1.3 Domestic Violence

Pre-COVID-19 statistics revealed an upward trend in the prevalence of domestic violence in Trinidad and Tobago—including physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse. The onset of lockdown and physical distancing measures brought on by the pandemic was accompanied by a rise in domestic violence reports. In 2019, there were 27 domestic violence cases reported in Tobago, whereas for the period of January 2020 to June 2020, the total number of domestic violence reports stood at 117. It is noteworthy that in recent times, a few new initiatives have been launched to treat with the prevention and handling of domestic violence cases. Among the most recent is the launch of a Gender-Based Violence Unit (GBVU) under the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) in January 2020. The GBVU focuses most of its efforts on handling breaches of protection orders and domestic violence cases. Additionally, in June 2020, representatives from the Trinidad offices of the United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU) paid a courtesy visit to Councillor Tracy Davidson-Celestine, Secretary of Health, Wellness and Family Development, and Assistant Secretary Councillor Nadine Stewart-Phillips at the Division’s Head Office to discuss executing the Spotlight Initiative in Tobago. The Spotlight Initiative works with governments and civil society organisations to prevent domestic violence

by raising awareness, establishing and implementing laws and policies and improving the quality of essential services for survivors.

3.1.4 Social Assistance Programmes

On March 12th, 2020, Trinidad and Tobago recorded its first confirmed COVID-19 case. The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, introduced social safety nets to buffer the impact of the financial crisis that arose from the stay-at-home regulations. Among those social support measures were the Public Assistance Grant, the Salary Relief Grant, the Rental Assistance Grant and the Temporary Food Support Grant. Initially, all grant applications were forwarded to Trinidad for processing. However, due to the nature of the Rental Assistance Grant and the need for an in-person site visit, the Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development assumed responsibility for processing and approving this grant.

3.1.5 Mental and Emotional Health

Beyond the social and economic impact of COVID-19 on families, the pandemic affected the mental health and emotional wellbeing of Tobagonians. In the face of adverse information, misinformation, disinformation, uncertainties, insecurities, confusion and a perceived deficit in medical resources, many people experienced increased levels of fear and related stress, anxiety, depression and insomnia. Those with vulnerabilities, such as pre-existing physical or mental health conditions, became more susceptible to relapses or exacerbating their condition. The use of alcohol too, and other addictive substances, increased significantly during this pandemic; for example, Angostura Holdings, an alcohol distributor, reported that while bars were closed, there was an increase in alcohol sales, as drinking habits shifted away from bars to home.

Having to navigate the “new normal”, while experiencing debilitating levels of mental and emotional decline, can have a negative impact on the workforce. This must be considered in planning to restore the economy. Poor mental health and emotional well-being are linked to higher rates of absenteeism, poor performance, increased staff turn-over, increased workplace accidents and reduced productivity. These factors will hamper efforts at economic rejuvenation, especially on an island where poor work ethic is perceived as the norm—particularly in the public service.

Overall, the global pandemic is likely to have a significant, negative socio-economic impact by increasing poverty and inflating inequality, two key factors highlighted for attention in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (UN). Containment and lockdown measures, while meant to preserve life, have had the side effect of impairing the profitability of small and large private sector businesses; sectors such as tourism, agriculture and culture and arts; and other revenue-generating opportunities.

3.2 Tobago's Economic Landscape and the Impact of COVID-19

3.2.1 GDP and GDP Growth

Figure 1 shows Tobago's GDP in constant prices for the period 2015 - 2019.

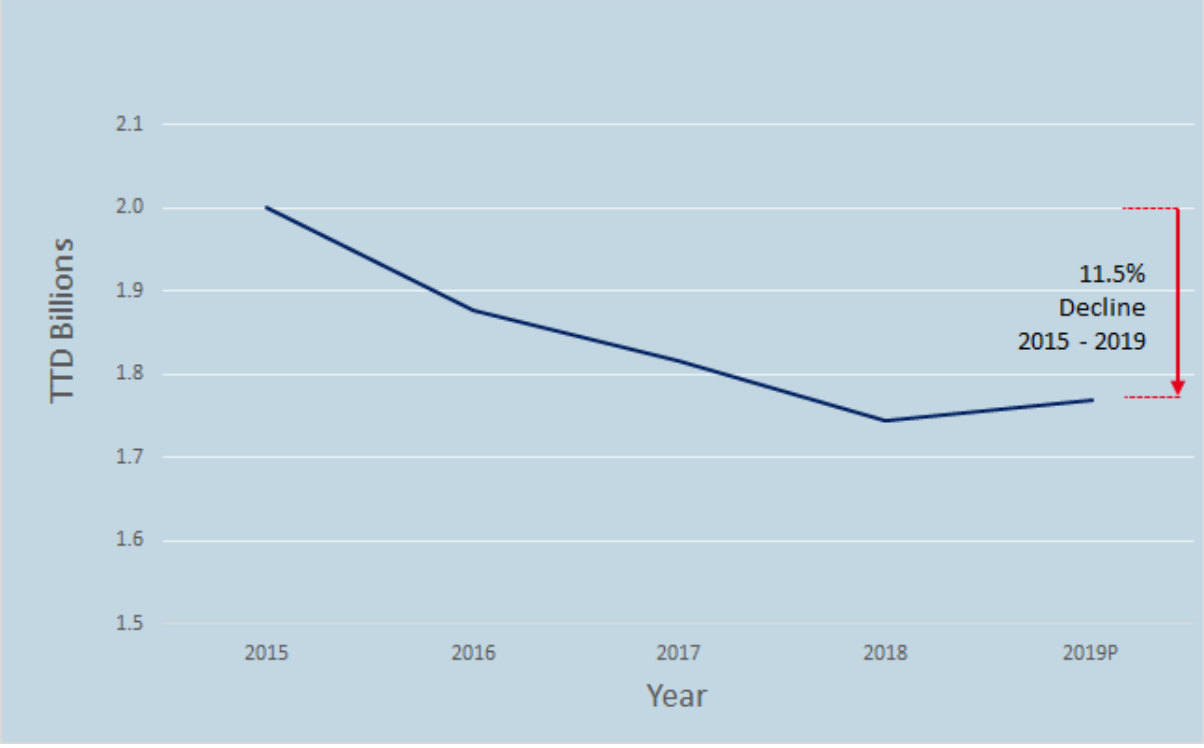


Figure 1 Tobago's GDP at Constant Prices with the 2015-2019 Decline Shown, 2015 - 2019P

As shown in Figure 1, Tobago's GDP trended downwards between 2015 and 2018, and was projected to marginally increase from TT$1.74 billion in 2018 to TT$1.77 billion in 2019. On average, Tobago's GDP accounts for less than 2% of the national GDP. Moreover, the Tobago economy is highly dependent on a few economic sectors.

Table 1 shows the sectoral contributions to Tobago's GDP over the period 2015 to 2019.

Table 1 Sectoral Contribution to GDP at Constant Prices, 2015 - 2019P

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019[P]	Avg.
Petroleum Industries	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Agriculture	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1
Manufacturing	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4
Electricity	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.5
Construction and Quarrying	8.8	7.8	5.8	4.5	6.2	6.6
Tourism	11.5	11.9	11.8	12.2	12.2	11.9
Transport, Storage and Communication	4.8	5.1	6.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	22.3	23.5	24.9	26.2	25.9	24.5
Government	46.8	45.2	44.5	44.8	43.5	45.0
Personal Services	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2

As evident in Table 1, government services dominate the economy, accounting for, on average, 45% of GDP for the period 2015 – 2019. In addition, finance, insurance, real estate, and business services contributed an average of 25% to GDP over the same period. The tourism sector, which comprises hotels, guesthouses and restaurants, accounted for 12%,

while the share of construction and quarrying was 7% and the share of transport, storage and communication averaged 6%. By contrast, the manufacturing sector contributed roughly 0.4%, and the agriculture sector contributed an average of 1.1% to the island's GDP over the five-year period. What seems evident from Tobago's GDP data is that the services sector dominates the Tobago economy and there has been limited diversification.

Given the impact of COVID-19, Tobago's GDP at constant prices for 2020 is projected to decline. Not surprisingly, the largest decline is expected in the tourism sector, followed by the manufacturing sector and the financial sector. Comparatively, the state sector is forecasted to grow, as government expenditure is buoyed by social welfare spending on relief programmes. Likewise, the agricultural sector is projected to grow moderately, aided in part by various initiatives aimed at boosting agricultural production on the island.

3.2.2 Labour Market Conditions

Table 2 below provides some summary statistics of labour market conditions in Tobago over the period 2015-2018.

Table 2 Labour Market Summary, 2015 - 2018

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	Avg.
Total Labour Force	34,100	32,800	32,700	31,800	32,850
Total Employed	32,800	31,600	31,300	30,900	31,650
Total Unemployed	1,300	1,200	1,400	900	1,200
Unemployment Rate (%)	3.7	3.7	4.2	2.9	3.6
Proportion of the Labour Force employed with the Government (%)	60	58	60	59	59

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	Avg.
Proportion of the Labour Force employed in the Private Sector (%)	40	42	40	41	41
Proportion of the Labour Force with Primary Education as their highest level of Educational Attainment (%)	30	27	25	27	27
Proportion of the Labour Force with Secondary Education as their highest level of Educational Attainment (%)	52	55	54	54	54
Proportion of the Labour Force with Tertiary Education as their highest level of Educational Attainment (%)	18	19	22	18	19

The most recent labour market statistics for Tobago from the Central Statistical Office is for 2018. As shown in Table 2 Labour Market Summary, 2015 - 2018, unemployment in Tobago for 2018 decreased by 1.3% from the 4.2% recorded in 2017. Overall, the annual unemployment rate in Tobago has remained below 5% for the period under review. Historically, Tobago's unemployment rate is generally slightly beneath the national average. The data also indicate that on average, approximately 59% of Tobago employees worked in the state sector, with the private sector employing approximately 41%. Given the impact of COVID-19 on the hotel and guesthouse industry and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), it is anticipated that there will be an increase in unemployment in the private sector.

Additionally, the share of the labour force in Tobago with tertiary education as their highest level of educational attainment steadily increased over the period 2015-2017, then sharply declined by 4% between 2017-2018. On average, 19% of the labour force possessed tertiary education as their highest level of educational attainment for the period 2015-2018. Still, Tobago has been unable to attract and retain a cadre of high-quality professional staff to guide

its development. Consequently, the THA does not possess the range and depth of professional skills and capabilities to efficiently and effectively execute its developmental and regulatory responsibilities.

3.2.3 Prices and Inflation

Figure 2 below shows headline, food price and core inflation in Tobago for the period 2015-2019.

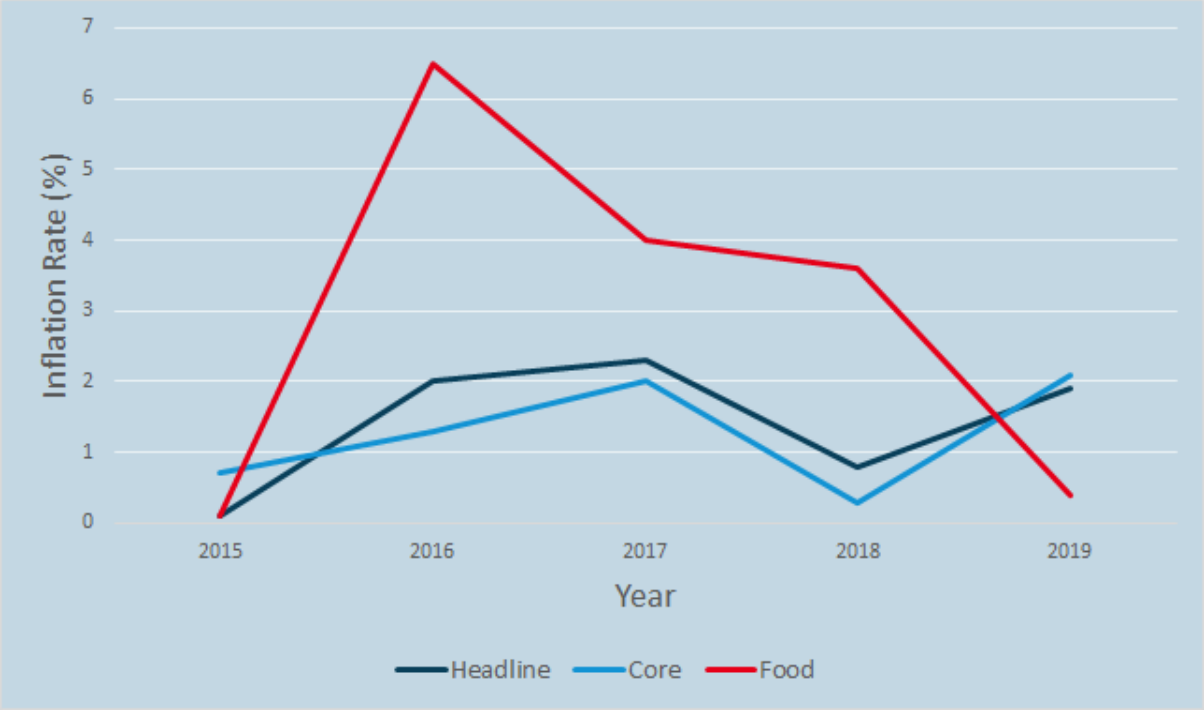


Figure 2 Headline, Core and Food Inflation Rates, 2015 - 2019

As shown in Figure 2 above, inflation in Tobago has been subdued, particularly over the last 3 years. In fact, for 2019, Tobago recorded relatively low inflation figures of 1.9% for headline inflation, 2% for core inflation and approximately 0.4% for food price inflation. Comparatively for 2019, Tobago recorded moderately higher headline and core inflation rates than the national economy, and a slightly lower food price inflation rate.

The emergence of COVID-19 may affect prices in Tobago, as global disruption in supply chains may result in higher import prices. Given that Tobago has a high food import bill, food price inflation could increase. Additionally, items that are used to minimise the spread of the virus, such as cleaning and sanitary supplies and certain health products, may also attract higher prices.

3.2.4 Fiscal Operations

Central Government transfers to Tobago House of Assembly have typically been significantly below the Assembly's budgetary request. Table 3 below shows the budgetary requests from the Tobago House of Assembly, and actual allocations received for the fiscal years 2015-2021.

Table 3 Budgetary Requests from the THA and Actual Allocations Received, 2015 - 2021

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Avg.
Total THA Budgetary Request - including URP and CEPEP* (TT$ Millions)	5,814.9	5,937.7	5,342.7	4,977.2	4,689.5	4,720.0	4,710.0	5,170.3
Total THA Allocation - including URP and CEPEP (TT$ Millions)	2,609.2	2,771.8	2,353.6	2,193.7	2,228.6	2,283.0	2,134.0	2,367.7
Share of Budgetary Request Allocated to THA (%)	44.9	46.7	44.1	44.1	47.5	48.4	45.3	45.8
Recurrent Expenditure Budgetary Request (TT$ Millions)	3,136.3	3,363.8	3,220.0	3,198.0	3,238.7	3,260.0	3,070.0	3,212.4
Recurrent Expenditure Actual Allocation (TT$ Millions)	2,201.8	2,345.0	2,045.0	1,860.0	1,979.0	2,033.0	1,916.0	2,054.3
% Shortfall in Recurrent Expenditure	29.8	30.3	36.5	41.8	38.9	37.6	37.6	36.1

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Avg.
Development Expenditure Budgetary Request (TT$ Millions)	2,546.1	2,441.4	2,052.7	1,709.2	1,380.8	1,450.0	1,500.0	1,868.6
Development Expenditure Actual Allocation (TT$ Millions)	384.4	403.8	288.6	315.7	231.6	231.6	200.0	293.7
% Shortfall in Development Expenditure	84.9	83.5	85.9	81.5	83.2	84.0	86.7	84.3

* URP - Unemployment Relief Programme
CEPEP - Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme

As shown in Table 3 above, on average, Tobago House of Assembly requested TT$5,170.3 million and received TT$2,367.7 million for the fiscal years 2015-2021, or approximately 46% of its overall budgetary request. Specifically, the shortfall in recurrent expenditure for the period averaged 36%, while the shortfall in development expenditure was about 84%. This indicates that Tobago House of Assembly faces an annual deficit, which has serious implications for Tobago's development. This situation could decline further as a result of the global reduction in energy prices and the COVID-19 pandemic, which have triggered significant financial losses to the national economy.

Table 4 below provides summary statistics of revenue collection in Tobago for the period 2015-2019.

Table 4 Revenue Collection in Tobago, 2015 - 2019

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Avg.
Total Tax Revenue (TT$ Millions)	277.1	234.7	207.2	203.1	199.3	224.3
Total Non-Tax Revenue (TT$ Millions)	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.3
102 THA Revenue[1] (TT$ Millions)	9.5	5.6	8.0	2.7	5.7	6.3
Total Revenue and Deposits (TT$ Millions)	287.7	241.7	215.2	207.2	206.2	231.6
Total THA Allocation - including URP and CEPEP (TT$ Millions)	2,609.2	2,771.8	2,353.6	2,193.7	2,228.6	2,431.4
Revenue as a percentage of Allocation (%)	11.0	8.7	9.1	9.4	9.3	9.5

As shown in Table 4, revenues collected in Tobago averaged TT$231.6 million for the period 2015-2019—roughly 10% of Tobago's actual allocation from the Central Government for that period. Notably, however, this figure does not include taxes, fees, duties and levies of

[1] 102 THA Revenue includes fees and payments received by Tobago House of Assembly for issuance of badges and licences, exams, rental of equipment, sale of plants and products etc.

companies and financial institutions in respect of their Tobago operations, since these are currently paid centrally in Trinidad by their head offices.

3.3 Implications of International, Regional and National Developments

3.3.1 International Environment

The brunt of the response to COVID-19 has involved stay-at-home orders for non-essential workers, leading to mounting deficits in national and global economies. Many countries have also banned visitors from specified regions considered COVID-19 hotspots, and have legislated mandatory 2-week quarantines or self-isolation for international arrivals from other countries. Due to low travel demand, the travel and tourism industry (aviation, hotels, bookings, tour operators etc) has been devastated by the pandemic, and many bankruptcies are expected. COVID-19 therefore has upended all previous forecasts for the global economy. In October 2020, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasted a sharp contraction in global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about 4.4% in 2020, a less severe contraction than forecasted in the June 2020 World Economic Outlook (WEO) Update of 4.9%. According to the IMF, the revision reflects better than anticipated second quarter GDP outturns, mostly in advanced economies, where activity began to improve sooner than expected after lockdowns were scaled back in May and June. There were also indicators of a stronger recovery in the third quarter. The IMF further projected global growth at 5.2% in 2021, a little lower than in the June 2020 WEO update of 5.4%, reflecting the more moderate downturn projected for 2020 and consistent with expectations of persistent social distancing.

The IMF also projected that global inflation (average, consumer prices) would decrease from 3.5% in 2019 to 3.2% in 2020, and then increase to 3.4% in 2021. Additionally, in September, the International Labour Organization (ILO) reported that global working-hour losses are expected to amount to 8.6 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2020, equivalent to 245 million full-time jobs. This, combined with quarantine restrictions, has major implications for the ability of persons to travel in the short term and medium term, whether for business or pleasure, and it reduces the pool of possible tourists visiting Tobago. Advanced countries worldwide have utilised at least 4.9% of their GDP to offset costs resulting from the spread of the virus (well over 10% in some cases). This will help them recover faster and approach some level of normalcy; some countries are already creating “travel bubbles”, where travel is allowed more freely among countries with low infection rates. A travel bubble within the

Caribbean—where many countries rely heavily on the tourism sector—has already been implemented by The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), but there have been issues since subsequent COVID-19 waves have forced some destinations to adjust their tourism policies.

Beyond the impact of COVID-19, there has been a precipitous fall in oil prices, partly due to the sharp decrease in demand for oil as a result of the global lockdown of economies. The deliberate over-supply of oil that emerged in the first quarter of this year, when there was division amongst Saudi Arabia, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia, also contributed to the decline of oil prices. The market began rebalancing during the second quarter of 2020, as OPEC agreed to temporary production cuts. Still, because of weak demand, prices should remain depressed.

In the natural gas market, prices have been trending downwards since September 2019, also as a result of weak demand, which is abetted by the restarting of nuclear power plants in Japan, and a sharp increase in the availability of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from non-traditional exporters.

These conditions have and will continue to adversely impact the real and fiscal sectors of the national economy; they will also have negative implications for the Tobago economy, which is largely dependent on Central Government transfers. Real normalcy will not return globally until a COVID-19 vaccine is found, rigorously tested, mass produced, and distributed to millions. This is expected to be at least 12 months away, although, biotech firm Moderna has already announced recent trial success of up to 94.5% with its new vaccine (*mRNA-1273*), while Pfizer/BioNTech is also reporting 95% success for *BNT162b2*. AstraZeneca/Oxford University have also publicised their new offering (70% efficacy), which they insist may be easier to distribute and cheaper than the aforementioned alternatives.

3.3.2 Regional Environment

COVID-19 has adversely affected the Caribbean region, with cases reported in almost every country or territory. Many countries have been forced to shut their borders to contain and control the spread. With the Caribbean being the most tourism-dependent region in the world, several of its islands have tried to reopen their borders to accept tourists from a shortlist of places. Some of those countries, as in the case of The Bahamas, were forced to curtail international travel once more to manage a second wave of the virus. The devastation

of the virus on the global travel and tourism industry is therefore having a significant short- and medium-term economic impact on the Caribbean.

In October, the IMF projected that the Caribbean economy would contract sharply by 5.4% in 2020, and expand by 3.9% in 2021. This decline is largely attributable to the decimation of the Caribbean's tourism industry by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the measures put in place to contain its diffusion. Credit rating agency Standard & Poor's Global Ratings expects that tourism in the Caribbean will decline by 60-70% from April to December 2020 when compared to the previous year. Given that Tobago is highly dependent on the tourism industry, it is anticipated that there would be adverse short- and long-term effects on Tobago's foreign exchange receipts and overall economic performance. Additionally, the contraction of the tourism-dependent economies in the region could adversely impact Trinidad and Tobago's revenues, as several manufacturing firms export products to those economies, and some construction companies provide services there. This reduction in revenue could negatively impact Central Government transfers to the Tobago House of Assembly.

The IMF also predicted that inflation in the Caribbean is expected to increase from 4.2% in 2019 to 7.1% in 2020, and then marginally increase to 7.8% in 2021. In July 2020, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) reported that the regional unemployment rate is expected to be around 13.5% by the end of 2020. This means 44.1 million people will be unemployed, an increase of nearly 18 million people compared with 2019 figures (26.1 million unemployed). Rising unemployment rates in neighbouring Caribbean and Latin American economies could spark an influx of illegal immigrants entering both Tobago and Trinidad.

Barbados and Bermuda have both taken innovative steps to bolster their respective tourism industries. They are offering incentives for remote workers to spend long periods on their islands. This idea has generated significant international attention due to the dramatic adoption of remote working practices across the world, the relatively low number of cases in the Caribbean, and the allure of the Caribbean as an attractive destination. Caribbean governments have declared their intentions to stimulate regional travel by developing Caribbean Travel bubbles, which would reduce travel restrictions among Caribbean nations and territories deemed to be low risk for COVID-19. Trinidad and Tobago is included in the list

of low-risk countries. CARICOM has already implemented one travel bubble with at least 5 countries, though some have had subsequent issues with COVID-19 cases.

These regional developments present significant opportunities and strategies for Tobago's tourism operations.

3.3.3 National Environment

The combination of the adverse, externally-driven economic shocks and the measures taken to mitigate their effects have worsened both the performance and the outlook for the Trinidad and Tobago economy. The Minister of Finance, in his 2021 budget presentation, stated that Trinidad and Tobago's output is now projected to contract in real terms by 6.8% in 2020, with recovery driven by an emerging digital economy and a recovering global economy expected by 2022.

To date, the global reduction in energy prices and the COVID-19 pandemic have caused billions in losses to the national economy in 2020. Additionally, the petrochemicals industry—ammonia and methanol—have been experiencing extremely low product prices since 2019, and this has been exacerbated by the fall in demand brought on by COVID-19. Several plants have remained idle in the last few months, with production rendered unprofitable.

The Minister of Finance, in his 2021 budget presentation, also indicated that initially, the Government forecasted a budget deficit of TT$5.3 billion or 3.4% of GDP for 2020. However, with the collapse in oil and gas revenues, and in the context of the new pandemic-related expenditure, the Government is now forecasting a deficit of $16.8 billion or around 11% of GDP for fiscal 2020. This increase in the deficit could mean reduced Central Government transfers to the Tobago House of Assembly.

The impact on consumer prices is difficult to determine, given the fact that reduced demand will lower pressures for price increases, while disrupted supply chains and shortages may trigger higher prices. The Government has projected that inflation is likely to continue at very low levels, between 1% and 2% up to 2022. With respect to unemployment, in April 2020, the IMF estimated that the unemployment rate in Trinidad and Tobago will exceed 5% in 2020 and 2021. Specifically, unemployment is projected to increase from the estimated 4.96% in 2019 to 5.04% in 2020, and to further increase to 5.12% in 2021. The Minister of Finance

stated in his 2021 budget presentation that the Government believes its policies to support incomes—which add to aggregate demand through direct government spending and make it easier for firms to hire people—will ensure that the unemployment rate returns to the previous levels of 4 to 5%.

4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The object of the recommendations made in this document is to fuel action to improve performance and outcomes for Tobago. They have been put forward by a team assessing 7 subcommittee areas, as assigned by the Chief Secretary at the start of the engagement. To develop the recommendations in this report, the Tobago Roadmap to Recovery Working Group reviewed several policy documents and reports, including the National "Roadmap for Trinidad and Tobago Post COVID-19 Pandemic", the Tobago Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (CEDP 2.0), the Medium-Term Policy and Planning Framework, Vision 2030, and other sector-specific plans and policies. The team also reviewed Tobago-focused submissions collected from within the business community and civil society during the national recovery planning effort. To ensure greater understanding of the deep issues surrounding implementation, and to ensure that the range of stakeholder perceptions was captured, the team also engaged stakeholders from a range of THA divisions, as well as from outside of the THA. Each subcommittee contacted and met with several institutional and individual stakeholders. As far as possible, the recommendations have taken into account all their submissions and ideas. Some recommendations also cover several sectors, and are repeated, with appropriate referencing, to encourage cross-Divisional and cross-sector work.

Many recommendations have been discussed and summarised below, but with the limited resources available to Tobago, a prioritisation procedure was used to identify resources that would provide the greatest impetus to the recovery and transformation of Tobago. These are called the "Critical Catalysts", and the priority should be to implement these recommendations first.

Critical Catalysts are those short-to-medium term recommendations the team believes meet at least 3 of the 4 following criteria:

- Is critical to recovery and survival during and post COVID-19
- Is likely to impact several sectors of the society
- Will likely create opportunities for adoption of other solution recommendations, and
- Can fundamentally change the structure of the society towards the Vision described for the sector

For the purpose of this report, ***Critical Catalysts*** are identified with this symbol:



The Recommendations are grouped under the following Sector headings:

- Social Development - Leave No One Behind
- Agriculture and Food Production
- Productivity, Governance and Human Resource Development
- Finance and the Economy
- Creative Industry
- Tourism
- Sustainability and Innovation

4.1 Social Development - Leave No One Behind

4.1.1 Vision

The Social Development Vision for Tobago is to achieve excellent preventative health care by promoting healthy lifestyles and wellness, social equity for vulnerable persons and effective care at health institutions across the island.

The analysis and recommendations below aim to steer Tobago towards that Social Development Vision and to lay a foundation that can, in the future:

- Increase focus on preventative care and healthy lifestyles, reducing the need for hospital or health centre visits
- Provide appropriate healthcare services to all vulnerable persons in the society
- Develop permanent systems for enhancing the mental, emotional and psychological welfare of all residents, with emphasis on reducing stress and improving childcare
- Position the hospital and health centre network to meet all applicable international performance benchmarks
- Integrate a high-quality healthcare system with the tourism industry and promote medical tourism

4.1.2 Introduction

Social development means a holistic approach to health and wellness. Our recommendations serve to address the physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing of the residents of Tobago. The government is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that all citizens have access to their basic needs. In essence, it is to "Leave No One Behind", a statement coined by the United Nations under its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Trinidad and Tobago, through the Ministry of Planning and Development, has partnered with the United Nations to eliminate discrimination and exclusiveness and foster equity among all people. The "Leave No One Behind" theme should be at the core of all policies, projects and programmes to be drafted and implemented. In every stage of planning and implementation in Tobago, the needs of the vulnerable people in our society must be adequately represented, and special provisions made where necessary to ensure our tax dollars are distributed equitably. Our vulnerable population include, but is not limited to:

- Persons living with disabilities
- The ageing population
- Street dwellers and the socially displaced
- Persons within the prison system
- Persons living with mental health issues
- Women and children
- Immigrants
- Persons living with HIV/AIDS

4.1.3 Strengthening Our Institutions: Putting People First

As mentioned in the Vision 2030 document, many governmental agencies are ineffective and inconsistent. COVID-19, and the economic challenges arising from it, have illuminated those inefficiencies, while simultaneously highlighting opportunities to make things better by strengthening Tobago's institutions and putting people first. "Putting People First: Nurturing Our Greatest Asset" is Theme 1 of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2030 document. The short-term goals under Theme 1 are as follows:

- A society grounded in the principles of social justice

- Improved Social Services Delivery to better support vulnerable groups
- Protection and support for the family
- A sustainable and modern healthcare system that delivers consistent, quality health care

The COVID-19 pandemic, has also made our people—our greatest assets—more vulnerable to mental health and family life struggles, as well as financial challenges. Residents of Tobago are enduring minimal access to childcare services, a reduction in household income, the limited availability of social activities and an overall decline in lifestyle.

4.1.3.1 Childcare

As employees try to navigate their new work and family obligations during the COVID-19 pandemic, they face a parallel crisis: the loss of childcare options through the closure of schools and day-care facilities. This must be critically navigated with the same fervour as mitigating economic fallout. Access to quality, affordable and safe childcare is a win-win situation for all. It enhances the physical and cognitive outcomes for children, strengthens employment opportunities—especially for women— boosts productivity, and supports overall socio-economic growth.

Employees providing essential services, like healthcare workers, shopkeepers, grocery staff, chefs and first responders, now have the additional responsibility of absorbing the day-to-day demands of home-schooling, while simultaneously juggling the rigours of their work. This is having a detrimental impact on parents, and suitable options must be provided as a way to support employees. They can include offering childcare services at the workplace—especially to essential workers—allowing home-based work where possible and offering flexi-time as an option.

4.1.3.2 Recommendations for Immediate Action:

- **Implementation of on-site or centralised childcare at THA Divisions**. Options can include full-time or drop-in childcare services in the event of emergencies. These can be provided at a significantly reduced cost and cater to children in the pre-and primary school age category.

Critical Catalyst

A specialised protocol for physical distancing should be developed, along with a response plan in the event of a child or staff member contracting COVID-19. This protocol should include the following:

- A caregiver to children ratio, keeping in mind that children should be kept in small groups
- Strict protection and sanitary protocols, including hand-washing and hand sanitiser use
- Temperature checks before admission into day care
- Screening for symptoms of the flu/COVID-19
- Adequate training, health support and supplies for workers (including PPE where needed)
- Children who are not feeling well or are ill would not be admitted into day-care

- **Establishing flexi-time and the increased use of technology within organisations**. Providing employees with the option of flexi-time allows them to schedule their family lives around work without sacrificing productivity. When employees can accomplish their personal objectives while still working full time, they are free to focus on doing their jobs without worrying too much about personal issues. Supervisors will need to clearly communicate tasks and expectations for this to be rolled out successfully



- **Recommendations for the use of predictable routines in the workplace**. Supervisors/managers/Heads of Departments can make work schedules predictable. Anticipated work schedules allow parents to plan and cater for childcare needs. In other words, schedule staff meetings on a specific day and time during the week so staff can plan their schedules accordingly. Emergency meetings are exceptions

4.1.3.3 The Ageing Population

The American Center for Disease Control (CDC) stresses that as you get older, the risk for developing severe illness from COVID-19 increases. Our government has also consistently highlighted the fact that having underlying medical conditions increases the risk of death due to COVID-19. National statistics confirm the elderly population has experienced the most

COVID-19 related deaths. This reinforces the idea that elderly people are a vulnerable group. The challenge is in ensuring the quality of life for senior citizens is preserved while maintaining their dignity and autonomy. Providing access to activities that keep seniors mentally and socially engaged will greatly assist in creating that balance. As such, the following proposals are being made to facilitate the ageing population:

- Specially-dedicated opening hours for seniors at supermarkets, banks, pharmacies and other essential services
- Increased access to caregiving services through the Division of Health, Wellness and Family Development
- More community-based visits by district health officers to support physical and mental wellness, and to reduce the burden on acute medical facilities

4.1.3.4 Prisoners

People confined in jails and prisons are some of the most vulnerable members of society. They are confined within systems of total control, as their liberty and agency are severely restricted. Incarcerated men and women are entirely dependent on staff to meet their health needs and typically face more health concerns than other citizens. The enclosed spaces they occupy also mean greater potential for mass spread of communicable diseases, which can also impact the health of correctional officers and other staff. The following will have a positive impact on social welfare and wellness within the prison system:

- A limited number of visitors entering the facility during the pandemic
- Video chatting and phone calls to supplement reduced family visitation, which is critical to the well-being of prisoners. Prisons can maximise the use of technology during this time
- Provision for basic healthcare needs behind bars, starting with the requisites for effective hand-washing. All prisoners should have access to hand sanitiser and soap
- Provision of sufficient paid sick leave for prison staff, who should be encouraged to stay at home if they or anyone else in their family shows flu/COVID-19 symptoms
- Increased protection of prisoners at higher risk for contracting COVID-19, with emphasis on sanitising accommodations for dining, programming and recreation within the prison

- Daily temperature checks and question/symptom screening for all incarcerated persons, particularly those working in close quarters, such as kitchen workers, porters and health aides

4.1.4 Social Safety Nets

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, swiftly introduced social safety net measures to buffer the impact of the financial crisis arising from its stay-at-home measures. Though these measures were anticipated by many, there were quite a few implementation issues that extended processing times. The lessons learnt here should better position the island to increase the efficiency of its social policies and programmes.

4.1.4.1 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth:

- **For greater efficiency in the processing and distribution of social safety net measures,** it is recommended that Tobago-based staff receive and process all grants for Tobago applicants. The team lead should make a process map (a visual description of the workflow) available to all internal and external stakeholders. The process map can help policymakers identify bottlenecks and the requisite solutions. Staff training should include customer service and advice on how to deal with difficult cases. The goal should be to process completed application forms within two weeks

- **Use of user/client reviews (e.g. through in-action reviews)** to strengthen the social safety nets (e.g. grants and programmes) and pandemic response in the healthcare system (COVID-19 hotline and COVID-19 crisis hotline, quarantine process, testing process, etc.). Client reviews will allow the gathering of a consistent flow of information on the progress and performance of all social safety net programmes and healthcare processes, which will inform budgeting and policy decisions. In essence, a dedicated team is needed to assess all new initiatives to ensure the target audience is being reached, and to avoid fraud and misuse of services. In addition to measuring the performance of existing programmes, the dedicated team will also provide support in the planning of new policies and programmes

- **Strengthening Community Groups and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)** so that they can distribute hampers and assist in meeting the needs of the vulnerable in society

4.1.5 Health and Wellness

COVID-19 has had a significant psychological and social impact on the population. The combination of these stressors has undoubtedly had a physical impact as well. While having to manage a crisis is anything but novel, the experience of COVID-19 was unprecedented, stoking and sustaining public anxiety, uncertainty and fear. For many, increased physical distancing, lockdown and quarantine also had a negative psychological impact. Any recovery effort, therefore, must focus on psychological recovery from the impact of COVID-19, and on building resilience to manage unresolved or new crises that may develop, as mental health and physical health are inextricably connected. Before COVID-19, Trinidad and Tobago was battling high rates of non-communicable diseases (NCDs)—such as strokes, diabetes, and ischemic heart disease (disease related to the restriction of blood vessels)—with the causes being linked to poor diets, a sedentary (inactive) lifestyle and minimal health-seeking behaviours.

The American Journal of Public Health (2014) reported that people who live near dedicated walking and biking infrastructure tend to exercise more than those who do not. The Journal further purported that these types of infrastructure can greatly aid in the fight against NCDs (especially diabetes, stroke and obesity) and support greater mental health. This supports the case for establishing walking/biking paths in housing areas, which can help minimise the prevalence of underlying conditions that increase the risk of people dying from COVID-19. Apart from the health benefits, cities that implement walking/biking as a viable alternative mode of transport see economic, social and environmental benefits (for instance, a reduction of the climate carbon footprint; see the Climate Change subsection of the Sustainability and Innovation recommendations).

As such recommendations are also made below, under the umbrella of improving the health and wellness of Tobagonians.

4.1.5.1 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth:



- **Creation of a sustainable and suitable Employee Wellness Programme that allows people to enhance their physical and mental health.** THA divisions and private sector firms can be guided on developing simple, science-based wellness programmes that are easily implemented
- **Creation of an incentive programme that allows people to be rewarded for engaging in healthy behaviours**. Apart from the expected physical health benefits, these types of programmes increase employee motivation, productivity and creativity
- **Launch of a healthy lifestyle marketing campaign** to encourage the population to make better food choices and help reduce the risk of citizens developing NCDs
- **Establishment of a Handwashing Station Protocol for all Public and Private entities.** The following recommendations are proposed to reduce or eliminate the need for touching surfaces before, during and after the handwashing process:
    - Ensure that there is a touchless paper towel dispenser or automatic air dryer
    - Only use touchless taps at handwashing sink
- **Hosting of health fairs.** This has a two-fold benefit: employees can determine current baseline levels of functioning and obtain critical health screening information. Health fairs also provide opportunities for public engagement and education, and to share various health tools, which the public can try without committing to any purchases
- **Collaboration between THA Divisions to host Inter/Intra Departmental Challenges**. These can be facilitated by the Sport Development Officers of the Division of Sport and Youth Affairs (DSYA) and used as a tool to generate healthy competition, increase cohesion among THA workers, and increase support for wellness initiatives
- **Creation of a policy and approach within the public healthcare system in Tobago to facilitate payments from non-nationals who opt to access any healthcare services**. A system should be in place to identify non-nationals who are not residents of the island of Tobago and provide them with the opportunity to pay for health care and social services that they have accessed from the public sector (e.g. emergency room services, cancer treatment, psychotherapy). Currently, non-nationals access healthcare for free

on the island, and this can burden our healthcare system and increase our healthcare spending

- **Pursuit of accreditation for the Tobago Regional Health Authority** to allow for Health Tourism on the island of Tobago. It is strongly recommended that the Tobago House of Assembly urge the Central Government to enact legislation to create the Health Services Accreditation Council.

  This was previously recommended by the Ministry of Health's 2008 Policy White Paper for the Establishment of the Health Services Accreditation Council. The Council will be able to set standards and conduct evaluations of all healthcare systems and services at the ambulatory, primary, secondary and tertiary care levels. This body will focus on accreditation of health services/health care delivery to ensure that Trinidad and Tobago develops a modern, responsive, high-quality healthcare system. Once the Health Services Accreditation Council is established and accredited by the International Society of Quality in Health Care, it can proceed to accredit the various Regional Health Authorities, Hospitals and Health Centres. With this in place, Trinidad and Tobago—especially Tobago—will be positioned for health tourism and medical education tourism, and will have a resilient healthcare system capable of withstanding the demands of pandemics such as COVID-19, SARS, Ebola and other types of viruses, and mass casualty disasters (natural or man-made)
- **Introduction of frequent breaks in the school timetable.** Frequent breaks can aid concentration and allow time for students to engage in light exercise
- **Establishment of a protocol that allows for the safe re-opening of beaches in Tobago.** Due to the unpredictability of COVID-19, beaches may have to be closed again. The US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has published considerations for public beaches, including recommendations for maintaining healthy operations and healthy environments, and promoting behaviours that prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus. These can be useful in developing local guidelines. Additionally, having beaches open between 5:00am and 11:00am can be explored; this is a period when beach bars are closed, and social gatherings are less likely
- **Improvement of contact tracing by encouraging public and private sector organisations (e.g. malls, banks) to document and date the name and contact**

number of all visitors to their buildings. This will be invaluable in the event of community spread of COVID-19 or any other pandemic. It can be done by having the customers complete their own forms (of course, with appropriate sanitisation) to ensure minimal delay in accessing the buildings

- **Facilitation of non-motorised road safety through prioritisation of walking and biking in specific areas, including housing developments, Scarborough and Crown Point**. This should include traffic calming measures like speed bumps, and separation of walking and biking paths from vehicles. Where separation cannot occur, the number of vehicles crossing the walking and biking paths should be minimised. Visibility at intersections with roads and natural areas should be paramount
- **Connect walking and biking lengths as far as possible**. This helps to lengthen paths, which increases its usefulness as an exercise tool or commuting alternative
- **Ensure that walking and bike paths cater to human diversity.** Walking/biking trails should be inclusive and cater to the needs of all ages and abilities so that everyone can benefit. This includes adequate shading from the sun

4.1.6 Public Health and Education

A major consequence of having to endure a global pandemic while managing other physical, psychological and social effects is cognitive decline—a marked deterioration in people's ability to process, to reason, to make decisions and to remember information. Insufficient information, misinformation or disinformation can easily erode trust in public service and governmental institutions, decrease safety-behaviours or prevent citizens from accessing essential services. Furthermore, failure to share important information contributes to an overburdened healthcare system: for example, when persons visit the Accident and Emergency Department for services that can be carried out at a Local Health Centre. Providing easily accessible, age-appropriate and relevant information on COVID-19, and on the programmes and services developed to ease the burden caused by the virus, can mitigate the negative psychosocial effects created by the pandemic. The crisis also presents distinct prospects for reaching a more receptive public with educational messages that are necessary for changing public health behaviour (e.g. chronic disease management, HIV/AIDS). Public health information and education campaigns are key in protecting and improving the health

of a population, promoting healthy lifestyles, detecting, preventing and responding to infectious diseases, and aiding and prolonging life in general.

4.1.6.1 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth:

As such, the following, some of which are already implemented, are recommended for Tobago:

- **Information on Safety Guidelines for COVID-19** (e.g. preparing a response plan, protocols for when someone is suspected of contracting COVID-19, on how to disinfect and sanitise schools and workplaces and on how to support hygiene practices in public spaces). Social and health programmes should be accessible on the Tobago House of Assembly website, television and radio ads and print material at public locations (e.g. malls). The information should cater to all categories of citizens (e.g. aged, primary school, Spanish-speakers, people living with disabilities etc.). (This recommendation is repeated in the Recommendations – MSMEs subsection of the Finance and the Economy Section)
- **Information on public and private sectors** should be made easily accessible to the public at various strategic locations (e.g. community centres, Youth Zones, billboards, print materials) throughout Tobago
- **Information on private sector services and non-governmental organisations** that facilitate social, psychological and emotional support (e.g. First Citizens' Domestic Violence Programme) should be available to the public via the Tobago House of Assembly website, TV and radio ads, and print material at public locations (e.g. malls)
- **Investment in permanent public wash stations** for frequently crowded areas, as hand washing facilities could reduce the spread of infectious diseases
- **Clearly Visible Public Signage** on safe hygiene practices at all governmental and private entities
- **Design of new and/or upgraded existing public service facilities** to reduce overcrowding and improve pedestrian flow
- **Establishment of Public Health Mobile or Stationary Units** in public spaces for education on services offered by public, private and community-based organisations, and on COVID-19 testing

- **Video and pictorial tutorials available online and in braille for all new systems and grant applications.** The aim is to reduce incomplete and inappropriate use of the resources provided by the public and private sector. For example, tutorials can be shared on filling out the business development grant application form, using online banking, paying utility bills online and for any other new innovative systems

4.1.7 Training and Capacity Building

Capacity building is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "the development of knowledge, skills, commitment, structures, systems and leadership to enable effective health promotion...[with] actions to improve health at three levels: the advancement of knowledge and skills among practitioners; the expansion of support and infrastructure for health promotion in organizations; and the development of cohesiveness and partnerships for health in communities".

Any outbreak of a new disease comes with many gaps in understanding the nature of the disease, treatment and its impact on individual lives and society as a whole. The burden of care then falls on the shoulders of healthcare workers, first responders, epidemiologists, community workers, policymakers and others in their efforts to save lives and ensure optimal health and economic outcomes. A good prognosis is dependent on training and capacity building to ensure all responders can meet their learning skill development needs.

4.1.7.1 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth:

- **Stress-Management Training.** These programmes can begin as early as primary school. Stress is an inevitable part of life. The more an individual—and by extension, society—is able to manage and cope with stress, the more likely post-traumatic growth and resilience are sustained
- **Assessment of Current Capacities** within respective organisations to identify the resources and structural changes required
- **Training in Telemedicine and Telehealth** as a modern health model, to help improve access to healthcare and specialist physicians



- **Crisis Training.** All responders, regardless of expertise, should have access to the best COVID-19 training resources, and other key crisis-related training resources (e.g. First

Aid, Psychological First Aid, Communicating Bad News, Grief Counselling, effective use of PPE)

- **Establishment of a Standard Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) for emergencies** that can provide support to other response teams (Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), Police Service, Fire Service etc). The aim would be to eliminate or reduce the risk of the person who has been exposed to a crisis situation from suffering psychosocial injury or distress following a traumatic event. This team can consist of a primary healthcare physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, crisis counsellor, social worker, community representative and NGOs that can provide peer and humanitarian support
- **Continuous Training and Education Opportunities within Organisations**. Places of employment can benefit from investing in their most useful resource, humans, through a focus on providing opportunities for continuous learning and improvement. Employers can also create systems that allow their employees opportunities to pursue further education. This is further developed in the Productivity, Governance, and Human Resource Development Section

4.2 Agriculture and Food Production

4.2.1 Vision

The vision for the Agricultural sector in Tobago is one that is competitive; stimulates viable agroindustry development and opportunities for job creation; ensures food and nutrition security for the island; and improves the livelihood of all stakeholders, while promoting environmental sustainability.

The analysis and recommendations below aim to steer Tobago towards that Agricultural Vision and to lay a foundation that can, in the future:

- Turn agriculture in Tobago into a **business-oriented activity**
- **Increase productivity** among agricultural producers
- Support many producers in their efforts to meet **international quality standards**, which would enable them to export, and

- **Develop intra- and intersectoral links**, especially with tourism and the agroprocessing subsector

4.2.2 Introduction

The narrative around Tobago's agriculture always alludes to its former "Glory Days", when Tobago exported food to Trinidad. The importance and contribution of agriculture to Tobago's economy has waned significantly in the last several decades due to a number of factors, among them:

- The decreasing competitiveness of agricultural commodities
- Inadequate marketing
- Competition from cheaper products out of Trinidad and elsewhere
- Pests and diseases
- Small plot sizes
- Limited use of technology
- Costly inputs
- Part-time farming and scarce labour
- Contempt for agricultural work

Today, Tobago's Agriculture Sector contributes around 0.7% to the Tobago Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while imports account for approximately 80% of the food consumed on the island.

Interestingly, the constraints have remained the same throughout the years. As noted by Kairi Consultants, the impact of policy measures instituted by the THA regarding agriculture continues to be marginal, evidenced by the low levels of commercialisation, high imports of agricultural produce from Trinidad and low levels of agroprocessing.

The consultants also pointed out that there are few intersectoral linkages, e.g. tourism and agroprocessing. Most produce utilised by the local agroprocessors are reportedly imported e.g. cassava, sweet potatoes and hot peppers.

The advent of COVID-19 has exposed the very fragile and vulnerable nature of food security in Tobago, given that the island produces less than 20% of the food it consumes. Most of the fresh produce comes via the sea bridge. Tobago is therefore directly affected by both regional

supply shortages and interruptions in the operations of the local sea-bridge. To ensure its own food security, Tobago needs to immediately embark upon a strategy to increase food production and productivity, which will foster resilience and sustainability in agriculture.

The Division of Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries, (DFPFF) has recognised in its COVID-19 response that the consistent supplies of most demanded planting materials (cuttings, slips, seedlings and seeds) and starter livestock/breeding stock is vital to increased production. It has also acknowledged that production efforts must be supported equally by efficient marketing systems (infrastructure, facilities, marketing intelligence and strategies) and agroprocessing initiatives along the value-chain. The suggested approach will ensure that:

- Local production can satisfy demand at all times
- There is greater diversification (and stability) of the agri-sector beyond the supply of fresh produce
- The potential of selected commodities is maximised through value-addition, and results in increased revenues
- There is job creation through facilitation of downstream agroprocessing industries, and
- There is sustainability of the sector through more efficient use of resources

4.2.3 Existing Important Cross Cutting Projects

The following programmes illustrate that the Division is determined to address the major problems associated with the decline of agricultural development in Tobago. Some have been ongoing and will be intensified to increase production and productivity. Food safety is of great concern, particularly in this global environment, and the issue must be addressed.

4.2.3.1 Eat Local

The Eat Local Initiative started in May 2018 under the slogan “Eat Tobago, Grow Tobago”. The theme “Celebrate our local foods: Produce, Process, Promote” was chosen. The Division wanted to ensure that: “The Tobago public [becomes] more aware of the positive effects of eating local produce e.g. roots and tubers (sweet potato, cassava, dasheen, yams etc.) and fruits”, and that this would lead to an increase in local food production to meet the expected

increase in demand. It would also guarantee a healthier consumer and more economic viability for the Tobago farmer.

4.2.3.2 Eco-Food Branding

The development of a Tobago Eco-Foods brand is an attempt to develop a competitive advantage for Tobagonian products that would help open export markets (including the tourism sector) for these branded Tobagonian products. The selected crops would also have the potential for added value creation.

4.2.3.3 Restructuring of Marketing Department

The Marketing Department is being restructured to make it more responsive to consumers' needs. It would be responsible for:

- The development and aggressive implementation of the Eco-food branding
- The development and implementation of an agribusiness information service
- A robust Quality Assurance Unit to monitor and ensure safety in the production and handling of fresh and agroprocessed products

4.2.3.4 Tobago Agribusiness Development Company

It is important to note that The Executive Council of the THA has agreed to the creation of the Tobago Agribusiness Development Company (TADCO) through the consolidation of three existing Special Purpose Companies: Fish Processing Company of Tobago (FIPCOT), Tobago Cassava Products Limited (TCPL) and Tobago Cold Storage and Warehousing Facility (TCOSWAF). This is in progress.

It is hoped that the resulting restructured and repositioned agribusiness sector would be characterised by large volumes and a diverse range of high quality, safe domestic primary and processed/value added products; innovativeness; competitiveness; and increased food and nutrition security.

4.2.4 Key Agricultural Facilities

Some facilities of the Division of Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries are fundamental to agricultural development on the island and their functions will be described in more detail. It

is important to point out that several of them are now operating at sub-optimal levels. Recommendations are suggested for their improvement.

4.2.4.1 Challenges faced by Government Farms

It appears that the intent and purpose of some of the government stock farms have been outlived, and operations are inefficient. The government farms cannot meet the demand to provide stock animals for registered farmers. Consequently, registered farmers have been exploiting the efforts of the government farms by selling or fattening stock for market to supply local consumption rather than breeding livestock to sustain their farming activities.

4.2.4.2 Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory

Situational Analysis

This facility was officially commissioned on October 5th, 2013 with the main objective of providing large quantities of disease-free planting material of targeted crops. This was expected to boost agricultural productivity in Tobago and to lead to enhanced food security.

Information provided by the Manager of the lab indicates that the lab employs 4 technical workers and one semi-skilled worker. The production capacity is 100,000 plants/annum but it currently produces 30-40,000 plants/annum. The total number of plants produced to date (2014-2020) is 147,234, of which approximately 54% were available for sale. Plantain varieties were the most requested as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Crop Varieties Produced by the Plant Tissue Culture Laboratory

Crop Type	No. of Varieties
Plantains	16
Bananas	12
Dasheen	2
Ginger	2

Crop Type	No. of Varieties
Avocado	1
Eddoes	1
Tannia	1
Yam	4

Limitations to production efficiency at the lab include lack of reliable staff, lack of necessary equipment, equipment malfunction and issues with culture necrosis (death or degeneration of plant tissue or cells). The constraints identified need to be addressed to make this valuable resource useful and relevant to agricultural production in Tobago.

Recommendations

- Address problems to increase laboratory efficiency
- Increase the number of crop species available for sale to the public (suggested by the Manager)
- Ensure laboratory certification, and
- Make the laboratory a commercial unit

4.2.4.3 Tractor Pool

Situational Analysis

Tractor Pool exists to supply wheel tractor services to farmers, schools, organisations—including non-governmental organisations (NGOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs)—and agencies of the Tobago House of Assembly in Tobago. Services include:

- Land tillage for crop production

- Brush cutting of animal pastures
- Brush cutting of open/public spaces and terracing of hillside areas, and
- Cutting of access roads to farmers' holdings

The most commonly requested land preparation service is land tillage for crop production, brush cutting, ploughing, rotavating/harrowing and banking (ridging). Operations are carried out by a fleet of four (4) to five (5) wheel tractors drawing the respective implements.

The predominant challenge remains the timely supply of land tillage for crop production. This is mainly due to: the large number of applicants and their frequent requests for yearly land tillage operations; soil compaction due to a lack of irrigation systems; mechanical failure and "down-time" of tractors and implements; and the unavailability of funds to purchase tractors, implements and parts.

Recommendations

- Acquire new tractors and implements (additional two (2) wheel tractors will bring the complement to six (6) tractors)
- Improve Logistics of Service Delivery  *Critical Catalyst*
- Develop and implement a proactive preventative maintenance schedule for tractors under the charge and care of the Tractor Pool Unit  *Critical Catalyst*
- Increase the subsidised cost of services provided to farmers to facilitate operational expenses of Tractor Pool
- Encourage Farmers to adopt more sustainable methods of irrigation such as drip irrigation, Capturing and Storing Water, Irrigation Scheduling, Rotational Grazing, Compost and Mulch and Cover Crops

4.2.4.4 Lure Estate Repository

Situational Analysis

This is a twelve (12) acre area in active production for support of the industry. The project, which initially had twenty-one (21) male and female labourers supervised by one (1) Field Foreman in 2009, now has 10 workers. The project was originally intended for:

- Maintaining healthy germplasm (plant tissue for growing new plants; e.g. seeds, stems) of selected crops: banana and plantain, dasheen, tannia, eddoes, ginger, cassava, sweet potato, sorrel, pumpkin and pineapple
- Providing farmers, homeowners and schools with disease-free planting materials of the selected crop species
- Ensuring the maintenance of at least ten (10) acres of cocoa field

The Division has invested in the construction of the basic facilities to accommodate the workers on the station, which include a chemical room, a tool room, a worker facility with a potable water supply and a post-harvest room. There is no electricity on the estate, however, and approximately 10% of the area is irrigated. A security firm is being engaged by the Division to guard the area. Some relevant constraints of the project are that:

- Praedial larceny is a concern
- The cocoa trees need maintenance work
- Training is needed for workers in pruning methods
- Reduced funding is affecting productivity

Recommendations

- Farmers consider this facility to be a valuable source of free planting material. Improving delivery of planting materials can enhance production and productivity in the agricultural sector
- More fertiliser and agrochemicals (weedicide, fungicide, etc.) are needed to produce high quality planting material. There is also a need for increased production of planting material
- The estate must be electrified to enable a more optimal use of the facility

4.2.4.5 Hope Farm (Government Stock Farm)

Situational Analysis

The operations of the Old Government Stock Farm were transferred from its original location in Shaw Park to Hope Estate, which was acquired by the Government.

During the operational period of the farm there were many areas of focus, but it was generally recognised as carrying out the following services:

- Providing quality breeding and replacement stock for beef cattle, pigs, goats, rabbits and ducks to farmers and to the public
- Providing animal health and Artificial Insemination (AI) services to livestock farmers
- Providing a livestock extension service to farmers
- Acting as a demonstration station; for example, exhibiting deep litter layer production systems to promote development of intensive poultry production in Tobago

During the early years, the livestock enterprises were quite successful and provided a significant supply of breeding stock, training and information to the sector in Tobago. Since the nineties however, there has been a continuous decline in the Farm's operations and output. In fact, all livestock operations are way below the levels needed to have a significant impact on the sector in Tobago.

The literature shows that in an effort to revitalise and improve production at Hope Farm, the Division has included the following projects in its Development Programmes:

- Increasing the acreage of pasture and silage grass
- Expansion of the irrigation system
- Establishment of an animal quarantine unit
- Establishment of a microbiology laboratory
- Construction of a recreation/lunchroom facility for workers
- Establishment of a sheep and goat semen export facility
- Improvement of the drainage system on the farm
- Repair of all roads on the farm
- Rehabilitation of the dairy unit
- Construction of a model pig pen (10-sow unit)

The Division, in fact, has begun this improvement programme; it has contracted the services of Jamaican-based consultancy firm, Agro-Tech.

There is a significant unit of Technical and Daily-Paid staff on the Hope Farm. The management team comprises of one (1) Agricultural Assistant III (AAIII), one (1) Agricultural Assistant II

(AAII) and two (2) Agricultural Assistant I (AAI). There are also 113 workers of varying levels (stock, fodder and field).

In 2006, the Government Stock Farm, Hope, was considered to have had a good supply of electricity, water and telephone service. Other physical infrastructure (office buildings, livestock pens, bay oil processing unit) were also in good condition. Today, the situation basically remains the same, although there is no longer a bay oil project on the farm.

Recommendations

The deterioration of Hope Farm seemed to be steady and persistent. Understanding the complex reasons for this decline is key to arresting it. Recommendations are therefore to:

- Conduct a detailed study of the current operations of the Farm and determine the best way to optimise the present resources. Steps can then be taken to increase the delivery of services, which will boost the island's livestock sector
- Examine the potential for subleasing portions/parcels of land to small and medium scale registered farmers whose livestock productivity is gravely constrained by land availability
- Establish forage banks[2] and engage in silage production to provide fodder for farmers (this recommendation is repeated in the Livestock Production subsection)
- Re-train and increase capacity building of current staff to improve the human resource to better manage the services of farms, e.g. creating opportunities for professional development by providing and supporting academic training in various disciplines. Training might include livestock breeding and nutritional management, and regional and international exchange programmes
- Create starter livestock programmes to encourage select, proactive farmers to establish efficient breeding units. This would reduce the demand for stock animals from the government farms and supply other farmers with stock

[2] A forage bank refers to an area of land which serves as a reserve of highly nutritious grasses and shrubs

4.2.4.6 Animal Health Services (located at Hope Farm)

Situational Analysis

Seven Veterinary Officers (VOs) and three Animal Health Assistants (AHAs) provide ambulatory health services to registered farmers at this facility. The veterinary and advisory services enable farmers to manage herds' health and their production challenges, which is extremely important in ensuring livestock productivity. Samples obtained from the field are analysed at the Veterinary Diagnostic Lab. Farmers access this service by contacting the Unit via telephone to report their request. VOs and AHAs closest to that farmer typically respond in a timely manner. Technical advisory services are free but treatments and routine procedures (castrations, C-sections) are conducted at a subsidised cost to farmers.

The chief issues here are:

- The current location of the Animal Health Office and Veterinary Laboratory is greatly constrained by physical working space, and the Veterinary Lab provides a limited range of diagnostic services. There is a lack of diagnostic devices for blood and serum chemistry analysis and ultrasonography for food producing animals which causes VOs to practice "shotgun medicine" (use of drugs without being able to diagnose the cause of a problem). This results in poor treatment, monitoring, and surveillance of pests and diseases, which negatively affect the productivity of livestock animals.
- Farmers often complain about not receiving ambulatory services because the animal health professionals are either unknown or unreliable.
- Through retirement, the Animal Health Unit currently operates with limited competent stockmen to assist VO and AHA in the restraint of large and aggressive animals.

Recommendations

- Funding should be sought for a newly constructed and professionally designed Tobago Laboratory Facility and office building to accommodate staff and the provide regulatory diagnostic testing and other functions of the veterinary service to the Tobago livestock farming community.



- The names and contact details for every VO and AHA within the DFPFF, as well as their jurisdiction and on-call services, must be published and made readily available to the

public. The same information should be available for Extension Officers, since their work supports the Animal Health Unit. There should also be a promotion of the office numbers, working hours as well as emergency contact numbers outside of working hours.

4.2.4.7 Artificial Insemination (AI) Services (located at Hope Farm)

Situational Analysis

The AI Unit provides artificial insemination services in rabbits and pigs. Farmers request this service from AI technicians at a subsidised cost.

AI services are not consistent due to the financial constraints which hinders the procurement of hormones and other equipment necessary for an efficient service at the Unit.

Recommendations

- Establish a genetic semen repository for stock animals (pigs, rabbits, small ruminants).
- Provide AI technicians with the devices such as the AI guns and six months' supply of semen extenders and hormones needed for successful insemination services.

4.2.4.8 The Blenheim Sheep Project

Situational Analysis

A 1983 report on the Blenheim Sheep Project indicated that the Project was based on 60 acres of the Blenheim and Studley Park Estates, with a breeding stock of 250 ewes and 13 rams of Barbados Black Belly, West African and Persian Black Head breeds, and their crosses. At the time, the stated objectives of the project were to:

- Develop superior performance for certified breeding stocks of hair sheep
- Improve management and marketing systems appropriate to the production systems of the Caribbean and
- Establish training programmes locally and regionally to extend these practices and stocks to farmers

The Division of Agriculture, through the Blenheim Sheep Project, developed and implemented a system to improve backyard rearing of sheep using the cut and carry system.

It also encouraged the use of housing with slatted wooden floors (5 cm) spaced 1.5 cm apart. The sheep were fed a diet of elephant grass (*Pennisetum purpureum*) together with dairy ration. The housing system was able to protect the animals from dog attack. The project allowed for:

- More efficient use of grass fields
- Higher survival rates of post-weaned lambs
- Increased growth rates due to restricted energy uses
- Reduced incidences of internal parasite due to less opportunity and
- Reduced deworming costs

Through the Extension system, the new technology was extended to farmers and was adopted by several farmers.

Through CARDI (the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute), the Central Government received Canadian and European funding to execute two major projects: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and European Development Fund (EDF). These projects featured the following activities:

- Improved productivity of local breeds of sheep and goats and transfer of technology to farmers
- Technology transfer and applied research, Part of Regional Sheep and Goat sub-project 1990
- Infrastructure upgrades at Blenheim and Studley Park (animal housing, equipment)
- Outreach programmes and Extension Officer training; Studley Park capacity for 700 ewes generate 1200 lambs/year

4.2.4.9 Other Government Stock Farms

Situational Analysis

Louis D'Or Demonstration Station – demonstration of agricultural production techniques in livestock husbandry, crop production and retail breeding pig stock for registered farmers.

Charlotteville and Runnemede Breeding Units – provide starter livestock (West African Sheep) for registered farmers. This stock of sheep is obtained from the Blenheim Sheep Research and Multiplication Project.

Recommendations

The production and marketing potential of small ruminants has been recognised, and farmers are encouraged to exploit this for further development because:

- Tobago's terrain is better suited to small rather than large ruminants
- Historical and economic factors favour small ruminant production
- Small ruminants are easier to manage
- They can be reared in backyards for meat and income
- Farmers can utilise local forages, eliminating need for imported forages
- By-products (skin, hides) can also be used in craft

4.2.5 Crop Production

4.2.5.1 Situational Analysis

Tobago was once a major exporter of staple food crops. In recent times, however, the limited use of modern technologies has not increased production, productivity or efficiency. Crop production is still primarily rain-fed, and mainly comprises small scale production of vegetables, root crops and field crops. Roots and tubers are imported via Caribbean Community (CARICOM) intra-regional trade and obtained from Trinidad via the local-sea bridge.

Given the large quantities of imports into Tobago, root and tuber crops such as cassava, sweet potato, dasheen and yams, as well as plantains, will be targeted for increased production and value addition as seen in Table 6.

Table 6 Key Elements of the Plan of Action for Staples

Commodity	Current production (kg)	Targeted production (kg)	Acreage needed (ha)	Possible Stateland areas for production	Possible value-added products
Cassava	35,189	320,995	21	Indian Walk, Richmond, Goldsborough	Logs, wedges, fries, flour, farine, bread, pastries
Dasheen	43,575	322,718	22	Mason Hall/ Les Coteaux, Richmond, Bloody Bay	Wedges, fries, pastries, wines, punches
Sweet potato	29,666	129,103	11	Goldsborough, Richmond, Indian Walk	Logs, wedges, fries, pastries, flour, pone, mixes.
Plantain	25,420	127,104	10	Kendall, Richmond, Bloody Bay	Chips, bread, pastries.
Yam	14,083	46,778	5	Kendall, Richmond, Goldsborough	Chips, bread, pastries, flour.

A discussion on crop production in Tobago would be incomplete without mentioning the wildlife pests that hinder agricultural production. There is a desperate need for a resolution to this epidemic. The conflicts are between the Agouti (*Dasyprocta leporina*) and root crop farmers, the Cocrico (*Ortalis ruficauda*) and legume farmers, and Psittacines (birds that are

part of the parrot family)—in particular the Orange–winged parrots (*Amazona amazonica*)—and cocoa and citrus farmers.

4.2.5.2 Recommendations

The following projects will contribute to an improvement in crop production:

- **Using improved technologies to produce bananas and plantains with sweet potato by intercrop**

  At least 10 graduates from the Youth Apprenticeship Programme in Agriculture (YAPA) would be targeted as potential farmers and processors. They would be required to plant two acres of intercropped plantain, bananas and sweet potato. Planting material would be obtained from the tissue culture laboratory and DFPFF repository at Lure. Linkage would be made with a banana-ripening facility to add value to the green bananas and plantains.

  Sweet potatoes would be processed at the Tobago Agribusiness Development Company (TADCO) facility. This will require action by DFPFF, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), TADCO, YAPA graduates and farmers. This project will increase production and productivity of bananas, plantains and sweet potato. It will also increase the range of high-quality value-added products available in Tobago, and grow stakeholders' income by at least 25%.

- **Increasing production and productivity of selected Root and Tuber crops in Tobago through intensive cultivation**

  This project seeks to increase the production and productivity of root and tuber crops (cassava, sweet potato, dasheen and yams). Additionally, increasing the number of potential value-added products (flour and meal) is also an objective. Thus, the project aims to explore and establish the synergies along the value chain with respect to cassava, sweet potato, dasheen and yams that can be developed and utilised in value-added products through agroprocessors on island. This will require action by DFPFF, TADCO and farmers. The project will increase local (Tobago) availability of selected root and tuber crops, and reduce importation from Trinidad. It would also aid the

development and promotion of cassava, sweet potato, dasheen and yam-based value-added products, which can increase stakeholders' incomes by at least 25%.

4.2.6 Livestock Production

4.2.6.1 Situational Analysis

Information provided by the DFPFF indicates that the activities of the Department of Livestock are carried out by three units: The Hope Farm (Government Stock Farm), the Blenheim Sheep Project and the Animal Health and Livestock Extension. The information sheet details that together, these units:

- Maintain an on-station genetic pool of the various breeds of livestock used in animal production in Tobago
- Carry out the multiplication and sale of breeding stock (sheep, cattle, goats, rabbits, pigs and poultry) to farmers on the island
- Serve as a practical classroom for training students and farmers through the demonstration of the various aspects of animal husbandry and farm management involved in the rearing of the various classes of livestock. This includes housing, pasture management, feeds and nutrition, sanitation, breed selection and breeding
- Operate disease control and prevention programmes geared towards the maintenance of the health of the livestock population in Tobago through the Veterinary Section, which offers ambulatory, laboratory and regulatory services
- Assist farmers in expanding their units by providing artificial insemination services

The quality of Tobago's livestock products compares favourably with that of Trinidad.

In the past, Tobago farmers practiced subsistence agriculture to provide food for their households and sold the surplus in local markets. In contrast to larger commercial livestock farms, economic gain is not the main priority as many small-scale farmers seem to practice farming as a hobby (a source of quick cash or meat for special occasions) rather than as a lucrative business.

The lack of pastures available for grazing results in farmers excessively using concentrates (grain feed) to feed their animals, which is costly and unproductive. Improper husbandry practices are also common due to the limited skills and training available to farmers.

In Tobago, the lack of a registry for our local livestock breeds, poor record keeping of production and the lack of animal genetic resources (e.g. semen and embryos) and limited human capacity in assisted reproductive techniques (e.g. artificial insemination and embryo transfer) hamper good genetic selection and breeding management of food-producing animals for desirable traits (high growth rates, high milk yields etc.), which are profitable.

There is a need for another abattoir, complete with a processing facility that features modern equipment for small ruminants and poultry produce. This service will curb the practice of backyard slaughtering, which increases the incidence of inhumane slaughtering of animals, and does not facilitate proper handling and inspection according to public health standards. Such a processing facility will also ensure that all animals entering the food chain are safe for human consumption. Tobago livestock producers would have added revenue because health-conscious consumers would be more motivated to support local agriculture, and purchase locally-sourced meats.

There are many challenges for food animal producers in Tobago that limit the innovation required to boost the industry. Both short- and medium-term strategies should focus on improving production efficiency. They are discussed by subsector below.

4.2.6.2 Nutritional Management of Small Ruminants

Situational Analysis

In Tobago, roadside tethering, and zero-grazing (cut and carry) continues to be the most common production system practiced by small ruminant (sheep and goats) farmers. Roadside grazing has deleterious effects on the health of livestock practice due to heavy metal pollution from automotive emissions. The lack of pastures available for grazing and the seasonality of nutritious forages has made it difficult for farmers to manage the nutritional requirements of their animals. During the dry season, there is a severe nutritional deficit to feed small ruminants. Consequently, farmers are forced to sell animals to Trinidad vendors, which hinders the productivity and profitability of their farms.

Recommendations

The following projects would contribute to an improvement in livestock production:

- **Establishing two five-acre forage banks, one in east Tobago and the other in the west**

  A forage bank refers to an area of land that serves as a forage reserve (for highly nutritious grasses and shrubs) that farmers can access throughout the year as required. These forage banks would be managed by DFPFF and would consist of varieties of pasture grass and leguminous species. Farmers would pay a small fee for access, revenue that will support the maintenance of the forage banks. Excess forage will be conserved by making silage, which can be produced in bulk, stored and sold to farmers during the dry season. This will require action by DFPFF, CARDI and farmers. Forage banks would mitigate the hasty sales of animals during the dry season because of inadequate feed supply. Another benefit is that with adequate feed, productivity—measured by increased growth rates and pregnancy rates—would increase the population of small ruminants in Tobago. One of these banks can be sited at Hope Farm (See Hope Farm subsection).

4.2.6.3 Livestock Production - Pigs

Situational Analysis

Tobago's livestock production has traditionally been small-scale farming. One of the constraints is an inadequate supply of quality breeding stock for pork farmers. The Government livestock stations are unable to meet the demand for starter livestock for new and existing farmers.

Recommendations

- **Increase the availability of breeding stock for pig production**

  DFPFF will identify and partner with private farmers to undertake the breeding operations required to boost pig production in Tobago. This initiative would sustain the demand for piglets from both new and existing farmers, allowing them to focus on fattening operations for the market. DFPFF will be responsible for ensuring weaned piglets are of good weight and body condition, and are healthy for purchase. These

piglets will be sold at a subsidised price to farmers, so the profits of pig breeder farms are not affected. The partners identified to undertake this project will be DFPFF, Tobago Agricultural Society and livestock farmers. There will be added business and employment for farmers in the pork industry, which will increase the production of local pork and value-added pork produce—e.g. sausages and hams—available in the market.

4.2.6.4 Livestock Production - Poultry

Situational Analysis

Poultry meat is the most common meat consumed in Tobago, and its supply is highly dependent on imports. The high production and feed costs and cheaper imports of chicken and eggs from Trinidad have discouraged persons interested in becoming poultry producers.

Recommendations:

- **Establish commercial poultry farms in Tobago**

  DFPFF will provide incentives for existing and new small-scale backyard poultry farmers to expand their enterprise to large-scale commercial poultry farms. There is great economic viability in large-scale commercial poultry meat production in Tobago because the demand greatly exceeds the current local supply.

  The partners identified to undertake this project will be DFPFF, Tobago Agricultural Society and livestock farmers. This initiative would support the efforts of local farmers and significantly expand the poultry industry in Tobago, reducing the need for imported poultry produce. This will also increase opportunities to produce value-added poultry produce—e.g. sausages and hams—made available to consumers.

4.2.7 Fishing and Seafood Industry

4.2.7.1 Situational Analysis

Several challenges to industry development have been identified by various stakeholders, consultants and interest groups over the years. Seemingly, these challenges remain unresolved, including:

- A lack of strategic direction for the industry
- Depletion of nearshore fishing stock
- Malfunctioning of recently-upgraded fishing infrastructure (landing sites and fish centres) due to structural faults
- Lack of clarity on the part of the fishers of the role of the Marketing and Fisheries Departments in the management of the newly-constructed fish centres
- Inadequate training of fisherfolk to meet the needs of a modern fishing industry
- Inadequate data collection and lack of a management system for decision-making
- Interferences in fishing activities and reportedly decreased catches caused by seismic surveys for hydrocarbons

There are currently 1,000 registered fishermen on the island, operating approximately 500 fishing vessels out of 31 landing sites. The Division has invested in several fishing facilities (18) and one shed at Plymouth. However, only 10 of these, along with the shed at Plymouth, are functional. Data collectors were placed at these landing sites in 2013 to collect information on the quantities and types of fish caught, yet the statistics are still not available.

4.2.7.2 Recommendations:

The following projects are suggested for immediate to short-term impact on the sector. They follow discussions with various stakeholders involved in fishing and other marine activities.

- **Development of a live bait industry for the fisheries sector in Tobago**

  Fishermen would be trained in using improved technology (Set nets), to attract and harvest live bait on a large scale. Training would be done both at the Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute (CFTDI) and in St Vincent and the Grenadines, where live bait is now purchased. The community-based project would be led by the Fishing Association in the selected District. Districts for consideration are Parlatuvier and Castara. The organisations responsible for this initiative are the Fishing Association, Tobago Agribusiness Development Company (TADCO), and the Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries. On completion, there will be a consistent and sustained supply of live bait available for fisherfolk in Tobago and beyond. This effort can improve and create a more efficient fishing industry.

- **Regularisation and improvement of the smoked fish industry in Tobago**

One of the fastest growing value-added products for fish in Tobago is smoked fish. There are reportedly 30 smoked fish producers on the island. The quality of the finished product is often cause for concern. This would be addressed under this project, leading to the production of high-quality smoked fish in sanitary conditions. The packaging for fish would be stamped with the Eco-Food label and suitable for export. In addition, processors would be encouraged to form themselves into a cooperative. The organisations responsible for this initiative would be TADCO, processors, the Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries and the local fishermen. This initiative will increase income for fish agro-processors. The final product will be high-quality smoked fish, stamped with the Eco Food brand that is supported by TADCO.

- **Establishment of a sustainable outboard engine motor repair and maintenance service for fisherfolk in Tobago**

  At least four persons would be trained to repair and maintain outboard engines. Strategic alliances would be forged with the agencies responsible for the sale of these engines e.g. Yamaha, Mitsubishi and Honda. These agencies can be approached to provide training. The project proposes the establishment of at least two facilities (east and west Tobago) where the repairs would be done. Locations should be close to landing sites or fishing facilities. These facilities should be managed by the All Tobago Fisherfolk Association (ATFA). This will require action from the DFPFF, ATFA and the Business Development Unit (BDU). Two small-engine workspaces for repairing and maintaining outboard engines—located in the east and west Tobago—will result in a more efficient and confident fishing fleet.

- **Construction of two additional slipways for fishermen, one in Northside Tobago and the other in east Tobago, to serve the Castara/Parlatuvier fishing community**

  There are currently only two slipways (loading ramps) in Tobago, one located at Buccoo Bay and the other in Scarborough near the fishing depot. These slipways allow boats to be hauled ashore for cleaning and repairs. More slipways are needed if the effectiveness of the industry is to be improved.

4.2.8 Apiculture Industry

4.2.8.1 Situational Analysis

The constraints on Apiculture (bee-keeping) development in Tobago that were noted in 2004 still persist in 2020. The six key issues identified then still need to be addressed, namely:

1. The provision of technical knowledge to trainers
2. The provision of technical knowledge to new and existing beekeepers
3. Improved possibilities for entry into the sector
4. Market development
5. Strengthening of the Tobago Apicultural Society
6. Policy development

In 2010, there were reportedly approximately 16 beekeepers managing 450 colonies in Tobago. In 2018, 50 beekeepers managing 1,025 hives were recorded, a significant increase. The number of beekeepers on the island continues to rise. Research indicates that this apparent resurgence provides a unique opportunity to explore the sector's innate linkages with agriculture. Establishing pollinator zones can be a win /win situation for both farmers and apiarists.

4.2.8.2 Recommendations

The following projects would contribute to an improvement in the apiculture industry.

- **Establishment of pollinator zones in selected agricultural areas**
  At least six active farming zones would be identified as possible sites for the placement of apiaries. The following options for the management of the hives can be explored:
    - Site identified and prepared by DFPFF; the beekeeper then moves his hives to the site. Beekeeper manages hives and harvests honey etc. Bees belong to the beekeeper. Farmers in the area benefit from pollination.
    - DFPFF provides hives and the site. The Beekeeper manages hives, supplying labour and extraction equipment and harvests honey etc. Farmers benefit from pollination. Bees belong to DFPFF.

This will require action from the DFPFF and the Tobago Apiculture Society. The benefits include production of sustainable crops, characterised by optimum unit size and more symmetrical shape units at maturity. More commercially viable produce will boost yields and farmer income, and increase honey production and income for the beekeeper.

- **Establishment of a development centre for Tobago Apicultural Society**

  The Beekeeping Development Centre (BDC) will serve as a much-needed physical home for the Tobago Apicultural Society, and the administrative centre for the Beekeeping Development Programme. The Centre will also accommodate the processing of primary and value-added hive products, as well as the packaging of products from its training and production apiaries. The laboratory will be equipped with basic laboratory equipment and supplies to enable the preliminary identification of honeybee pests and diseases, and to conduct basic analyses related to moisture content and specific gravity of primary and value-added products. The DFPFF and the Tobago Apiculture Society would be responsible for identifying suitable accommodations and launching this centre. This ensures a better organised and strengthened Apicultural Society that can meet the needs of beekeepers on the island. It will also provide adequate training in beekeeping practices for both existing and aspiring beekeepers.

4.2.9 Agroprocessing and Food Manufacturing

4.2.9.1 Situational Analysis

The Tobago Comprehensive Economic Development Plan 2.0 (CEDP) has identified Agro-Processing as one of the key/primary pillars not only for diversification of the local economy but also for economic and social development where food and nutrition security and value addition are concerned. Adding value to farm produce through agro-processing techniques will create many opportunities to grow markets, turn over profits and ensure food security, while ensuring higher outputs and reduced post-harvest losses.

The Tobago Agro-processors Association (TAPA) has an active membership of twenty-five (25) producing several value-added products: pepper sauces, teas, wines, green seasonings, juices, frozen pone mixes and other gourmet products. One of the constraints to expansion by several

of these small- and medium-sized producers is lack of capital to invest in modern and efficient equipment, among them band sealers, vacuum sealers, teabag machines and mixers. It is recognised that these processors also need improved sanitary conditions at their home kitchens.

These SMEs need assistance to grow and contribute to the agro-processing effort. During the COVID-19 lockdown, there was a significant increase in agricultural production, particularly by homeowners. Adding value to some of these products through agro-processing can help stimulate economic growth and enhance food security.

4.2.9.2 Recommendations:

The following project would contribute towards the development of Agro-processing and Food Manufacturing:

- **Providing incentives to the members of the Tobago Agro-processing Society to purchase much-needed equipment**

  It is vital to identify and support a core of new entrepreneurs who are willing and able to take on the challenge of setting up and developing private sector agro-processing companies. High-quality, modern equipment is needed to comply with health and safety standards and phytosanitary requirements of developed markets to facilitate exports. The DFPFF, the Tobago Agro-Processing Association and the BDU and other funding organisations would collaborate to provide these incentives. This initiative would enable the acquisition of modern equipment by Tobago agro-processors. There will also be growth in primary production to satisfy the needs of agro-processors.

4.3 Productivity, Governance, and Human Resource Development

4.3.1 Vision

The Vision for Tobago is an inclusive, dependable, and transparent governance system leading a highly competent, trustworthy and innovative workforce that can manage risk and uncertainty well.

The analysis and recommendations are aimed at steering Tobago towards that Human Resource and Governance Vision and laying a foundation that can, in the future:

- Allow for effective selection, management, and development of people across all units of the THA
- Provide an internationally-accredited university in Tobago that attracts foreign students
- Provide other internationally-rated training opportunities for residents of Tobago
- Enable a transparent public sector decision-making and implementation process (THA, Central Government, State Agencies) that fairly involves all affected stakeholders in a way that generates trust, commitment and successful execution

4.3.2 Situational Analysis

The global pandemic has changed the way we live and operate, simultaneously creating opportunities to review, streamline and reengineer our bureaucratic processes. Success in this area will improve the delivery of government services to citizens in the most cost-effective manner possible. COVID-19 has exposed the vulnerabilities of the island in terms of governance structure, high dependency on the public sector, low productivity, an inadequate health system, a weak private sector, low adoption of technology and innovative capacity, inadequate human resource capacity, limited data collection to guide decision-making and poor integration across public sector agencies.

Productivity refers to worker performance, and output is linked to measures of workplace efficiency. It also involves adopting attitudes and measures for continuous improvement and progress as a key component of human resource behaviour. While historical and cultural expectations have had negative impacts on productivity, the principles of good governance are strongly linked to productivity, since they involve accountability, transparency and value for money.

The principles of governance are embodied in the Tobago House of Assembly Act No. 40, 1996 but there are deficiencies in its actual practice, as is often articulated by users of goods and services throughout Tobago. In response to COVID-19, it is necessary to improve productivity and achieve good governance. Emphasis must therefore be placed on human resource

development at all levels in the society. The development of the human resource will determine the extent to which the capacity, skills and competencies of the workforce are developed to meet the social and economic needs of the society.

To effectively respond to the pandemic, these three interrelated elements (Productivity, Governance and Human Resources) are expected to deliver the required societal improvements that would lead to a resilient Tobago and improve the quality of life of citizens. Given the public perception of low levels of productivity, in particular among the daily-rated workers, the pandemic presents a significant opportunity to formulate strategies to address worker output.

This is, however, largely a public sector problem in Tobago. According to Central Statistical Office data, the public sector employs 60% of the workforce on the island. Table 7 below provides data on current employment in the nine Divisions of the THA.

Table 7 Personnel of the THA (nine (9) Divisions, the Office of the Chief Secretary and the Assembly Legislature). It does not account for staff at state agencies such as the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA).

Category	Headcount	Percentage
Public Officers	1,214	10%
Teachers	721	6%
Contract Officers	1,853	16%
Daily Rated	7,570	65%
Short-Term Employees	214	2%

Category	Headcount	Percentage
Total	**11,572**	**100%**

Note: The 2018 employed labour force of Tobago was 30,900 (See Table 2), and it's expected that 18,540 (~60%) were in the public sector, so it's estimated that an additional 6,900 people worked in other state agencies based in Tobago in 2018.

This high dependence on government is not matched by high levels of productivity and service delivery. The low quality of service delivery is, in fact, causing problems throughout the entire society. The perception of the international community on business operations in Trinidad and Tobago as evidenced by the Global Competitiveness Index is one of "[a] ***lack of transparency in public procurement, inefficient and complicated government bureaucracy".*** According to a recent US State Department report[3], "TT's investment climate is generally open and most investment barriers have been eliminated, but ***stifling bureaucracy and opaque procedures remain***."

The 2020 World Bank Report alludes to the difficulty of doing business. Of 190 countries surveyed, Trinidad and Tobago ranked 158 for registering property, 174 for enforcing contracts and 160 for payment of taxes[4]. Some of these rankings may be better or worse for Tobago, but a significant deviation from the national situation is unlikely.

In light of the above, the platform for Tobago's post COVID-19 development can be built on Tobago's effective governance structure, innovation, technology and investment in human capital, from which it can derive productivity gain.

[3] US Department of State (2020) 2020 Investment Climate Statements: Trinidad and Tobago, https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-investment-climate-statements/trinidad-and-tobago/, accessed 8 November, 2020

[4] The World Bank (2020) Ease of Doing Business in Trinidad and Tobago, https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/data/exploreeconomies/trinidad-and-tobago#, accessed 8 November, 2020

4.3.2.1 Governance

The authority of the THA is written in the Section 25 (1) of Act 40, 1996. In relation to Section 75 (1) of the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago, a Minister has full authority, whereas, under the THA Act, limited authority is given to the Assembly. Consequently, Act 40, 1996 is superseded by Section 75 (1) of the Constitution. As such, Tobago's response to the pandemic is subject to the national response, as espoused by the Minister of Health. This is also the case for other sectors.

4.3.2.2 Productivity

Productivity refers to the effective management of resources. Productivity can be viewed from three (3) pillars:

- **Worker productivity**: Improving employee productivity through performance management. This would entail introduction of a performance management system based on outcomes.
- **Financial Capital**: Optimising the use of limited financial resources, given reduced budgetary allocation.
- **Physical resources**: Utilisation the physical resources to obtain optimal output.

In a post-COVID environment, given a reduction in resources, there is need to employ mechanisms for better management of resources. The introduction of *Performance or Output Budgeting*, which focuses on outcomes, will facilitate more effective governance and accountability for resources. This would entail training, as well as reengineering of internal processes, to improve efficiency and effectiveness. A move from line item budgeting to *Performance* Budgeting is within the ambit of Section (52) of the THA Act, which provides for adoption of the THA Financial Rules.

Line Item budgeting accounts for expenditure but is not directly aligned with productivity and outcomes. On the other hand, *Performance* Budgeting focuses on measurable outcomes. Furthermore, it promotes accountability for performance. In order to facilitate its implementation, the Assembly will require each Division to set its strategic priorities and determine its output measurement indicators (Performance Budgeting is also discussed in the Finance and the Economy Section).

4.3.2.3 Human Resource Development

Training

The critical role of human resource in the recovery efforts means staff training is paramount to ensuring the success of the recovery plan. The Assembly should consider the following:

- The adoption of Management by Objectives and Performance Management as fundamental management strategies for all areas under its control
- Determination of key Result Areas for each THA Division and Department
- Realignment of the budgeting process to Key Results areas (Performance Budgeting as discussed above)
- Training in performance management
- Output assessment
- Implementation of Performance budgeting
- Strategic management
- Human resource planning
- Human resource management training for HR officers

Jobs in any economy are organised in a pyramidal structure, with the majority of the workforce at the Levels 1 and 2 out of 5 occupational levels[5]. The largest numbers of the workforce are usually at Level 1 and require levels of training typically lasting 6 to 9 months. Organised training could be delivered within communities with support from the private sector. Employees of the Unemployment Relief Programme (URP), the Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP), the Environmental Training Programme (ETP) and unemployed persons could be transferred into workforce training programmes. Workers from within the THA could be encouraged to upgrade their skills and

[5] Five occupational levels of certification created by the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA) that must be considered are:
Level 1: Operational Level - Directly supervised/entry-level worker – basic certification needed. Training is unstructured and conducted on and off the job.
Level 2: Supervised Skilled Worker – worker who could work on his own with limited or no supervision. For example, skilled craftsman or licenced plumber or electrician.
Level 3: Independent or Autonomous Skilled Worker with Diplomas or Associate Degrees
Level 4: Managerial and/or Professional Worker – University graduate degrees
Level 5: Advanced Professional or Chartered Professional – Advanced Degrees, Masters, and PhD

to transition into self-employment or into the private sector. The THA could partner with existing training providers such as Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (THTI), Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP), National Energy Skills Centre (NESC), MIC Institute of Technology (MIC-IT), Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Kendall Farm School to deliver programmes for each sector. This training should have a significant entrepreneurial component, as discussed in the Sustainability and Innovation section.

Supervision, Management and Leadership

Fact finding meetings with Administrators and Human Resource Officers of the Tobago House of Assembly revealed that the THA has enthusiastic and willing members of staff in critical administrative and decision-making positions. These staff members, however, had limited leadership and management knowledge and experience, very limited autonomy, and worked with ancient, restrictive processes and over-engineered control systems, and with an abundance of perfunctory approval points. This severely hampers productivity.

4.3.3 Recommendations

As a result of COVID-19, the island suffered severe economic and social setbacks. The issue, then, is how do we get back on track? What are some practical solutions that would be required post-COVID-19? What fundamental changes are required? This roadmap offers suggestions on how Tobago can recover. The recommendations provided are not intended to address the perennial challenges of the island. Such challenges can be tabled at a different forum.

The dependency on the THA as the major employer will not be sustainable post COVID-19. Greater effort should be expended towards export-oriented private sector development—skills development, human resource development and job creation—through extensive workforce development, business development and entrepreneurship expansion. Many of these areas are dealt with in other sections, including the Finance and the Economy and the Sustainability and Innovation sections.

The following recommendations are designed to create an efficient work environment and develop the leadership and management capability of those in administrative, decision-making, management and leadership positions. Many of the recommendations focus on the

THA staff but the THA should also examine ways to stimulate similar initiatives in other state agencies on the island.

- **Business Processes Remapping**

  Map and analyse the business processes in the THA. Eliminate all the non-value adding steps and use information technology in a transformational manner to reengineer the processes. (This is linked to the Sustainability and Innovation Section Recommendations on Digital Transformation and ICT.)

- **Job Enrichment**

  Administrators should enrich the jobs of their employees by a process of cross training, job rotation, communication, feedback and self-development. Job enrichment is a common motivational technique used by organisations to enhance employee job satisfaction. It means empowering employees. The THA should adopt the following actions to enrich the jobs of its employees:

  - **Cross-Training Experience**: Arrange for employees to be cross-trained in tasks and duties of other departments via a process of job rotation. Where possible, Administrators and Human Resource Officers should be given the opportunity to work in progressive private sector organisations for limited periods of time. This will enable them to gain valuable career training that will help them grow in their positions in the THA
  - **Communication and feedback**: There should be regular departmental meetings where employees are given the opportunity to share their views and participate in the decision-making process. This will help to improve their communication and critical thinking skills
  - **Identify Key Tasks and Prioritise**: THA employees should be given sufficient autonomy to determine the best way to get their jobs done effectively and on time. Efficient use of time and material resources should be the underlying tenets of all jobs. The more time they have after completing their work, the more possibilities of them learning something new. Employees should also be encouraged to participate in relevant training sessions, seminars and online training

- **Own Path to Enrichment**: Employees should be encouraged to take personal responsibility for self-development

- **Employee Engagement – Survey to Action**

  The various Divisions of the THA should conduct employee engagement surveys to determine the level engagement of their staff members, and develop and implement action plans to remedy the weak areas highlighted in the survey.

  Employee engagement is the level of mental and emotional commitment an employee has towards her/his job, the organisation, and its goals. An engaged employee is driven to assist the organisation to achieve organisational goals. They believe in the organisation, and they will work to ensure that the organisation succeeds. It is important to note that employee engagement should be distinguished from employee satisfaction. Satisfied employees will not necessarily commit extra time and effort into the organisation's success; rather, they will perform their job competently without expending extra effort. Job satisfaction tends to be transactional, corresponding to salary and benefits. Employee engagement is not transactional; an employee with a higher salary will not necessarily be an engaged employee. The benefits of employee engagement within an organisation include the following:

  - **Improved customer satisfaction**: Engaged employees will go above and beyond to provide greater service to customers and will take pride in performing their jobs to the best of their ability
  - **Improved productivity and efficiency**: An engaged employee wants his/her work to benefit the organisation, so they will find ways to produce great quality work in a more efficient manner. An employee who is not engaged might simply want to come in and collect a paycheque with the least amount of work; an engaged employee will use discretionary effort to ensure that their work yields the highest result
  - **Lowered rate of absenteeism**: Engaged employees are more committed to their tasks as they believe in what they are doing. They are less likely to miss work, and will even make an effort to work on their own time
  - **Enhanced organisation culture**: Organisation culture is very important to employees, and a bad culture can break an organisation. When employees are

properly engaged with the organisation, they understand their own importance in the organisation, and are far more likely to take time to help train, advise and lead those around them. They are invested in the organisation's success, so they will ensure that other employees are able to contribute to that success effectively

- **Decrease number of safety incidents**: Engaged employees pay attention to what they are doing because they care about doing their job right. Workers will be more mindful of their surroundings and actions, and will go the extra mile to perform their duties in a safe and efficient manner. Engagement also encourages and increases innovation, with workers offering solutions to avoid safety incidents in the future, streamlining processes and increasing productivity

Employee Engagement Survey and Strategy

The THA should administer an employee engagement survey to identify the areas where it needs to improve, then develop strategies for improvements.

There are seven main areas that have the greatest impact on employee engagement:

- Work-life balance
- Communication and goal setting
- Organisational transparency
- Autonomy and challenge
- Rewards and recognition
- Training and learning opportunities
- Compensation and benefits

Selecting two or three of the most urgent of these areas is a good place to start.

Employee Engagement Action Plan

After the THA has chosen the areas on which to focus, it must develop an Employee Engagement Action Plan with concrete, actionable steps. Creating initiatives is the best way to do this. The following principles should be embedded in all initiatives. These practices will help the THA to construct and effectively implement an Employee Engagement Action Plan:

- **Holistic Thinking**: Given the number of hours spent at work, employees desire their workplace to be a pleasant one. This covers everything from the space in which they work to the small perks like coffee, tea and snacks. Changing the environment to better suit employees shows them that the THA values their comfort
- **Respect**: This approach is all about the individual value that each person brings to the organisation. Employees must feel that their opinion and work are respected. Engaged employees are willing to come to their leadership team with opinions and suggestions, even if those opinions are negative, because they know their opinions will be considered. This one of the ways organisations can quickly learn where issues are, but it will only happen if employees know that there are no negative repercussions for speaking out
- **Regular and Conspicuous Achievement Recognition**: If employees feel their work is not properly recognised, they will quickly lose engagement. This does not mean that each time a project is completed successfully the THA should be giving out cash prizes; even a simple announcement at a weekly meeting can be enough to energise an employee and make them feel valued. Management teams should focus on recognising individual achievements regularly
- **Increased Transparency**: It is no good to work behind the scenes to increase engagement; employees should be updated often about what their leadership is doing. Using strategies like all divisional meetings, weekly team updates and newsletters, a THA division can let employees know that they are taking employee well-being seriously, and are working to make the Division a better place. Employees will become more engaged if they believe that their leadership values them and is working to make the Division a better place
- **Show employees that you listen**: If the THA wants truly engaged employees, it must make the action a priority. If there are complaints, there should also be solutions proposed and acted upon by the THA. If employees feel like their complaints, suggestions and thoughts on improvement fall upon deaf ears, they will quickly stop trying to engage
- **Help your employees understand their role in their THA Division**: A key part of an employee's engagement is the feeling that their actions help the Division

achieve its goals. To help employees better understand how they contribute, timely communication is critical so that they can better understand their role, and how that role is a key part of the overall Division. Notwithstanding their specific job, each person contributes to a Division's success, and from Day One employees should understand their contribution

- **Empower your leaders to coach**: The Administrators, Executives and Supervisors are on the front line of empowering and engaging their teams. Their roles should involve coaching, advising and nurturing their employees' growth, rather than simply managing. When you have engaged leaders, their employees will respond in the same way

- **The THTI must become the University of Tobago**



The Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (THTI) is pursuing Conferment of Title to become the University of Tobago (UoT). However, this process has been very slow. In addition to THTI, the UoT will include Kendall Farm School and the Buccoo Reef Trust.

While the programmes currently being offered are in hospitality and tourism, the University will be able to seek approval from the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago (ACTT) to add programmes as Tobago's capacity and needs allow. Fields in the areas of agriculture and marine sciences that could create Level 1 and Level 2 full-time jobs should be explored. Fortunately, the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) now offers some programmes at THTI and has agreed to deliver programmes and courses in keeping with the needs of Tobago

- **The Tobago Public Service Academy**

THTI, in conjunction with a local university such as the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), will be responsible for the establishment of the Tobago Public Service Academy (TPSA) (and Tobago Productivity Council, both within the planned University of Tobago). It will be mandated to provide workplace training and development for public officers. The Academy will be critical to the development of Tobago, and will improve the delivery of goods and services to the public and private sectors. It is anticipated that the programmes offered by the Academy will lift the levels of

productivity, service excellence, efficiency, accountability, professionalism and competence in Tobago

- **Establishment of a Tobago Productivity Council**

  The purpose of a Tobago Productivity Council is to promote productivity as a critical element of sustainable growth and development. The establishment of such a Council is embodied in the Tobago Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (CEDP 2.0). The need for such a body is further stated in the National Strategic Plan, Vision 2030, which emphasises creating a productive and competitive society with innovative people and a well-educated workforce, where all citizens can enjoy a high standard of living and quality of life. Moreover, successive budget statements by the Tobago House of Assembly have identified the need for a Productivity Council of Tobago

- **Leadership for Managers and Supervisors**

  The Tobago Public Service Academy should be tasked with developing and administering training programmes in the following areas, which will help leadership, management and supervisory staff in leading their respective areas of the THA.

  These courses will help supervisors build their personal skills like negotiating, planning and organising and problem-solving. They also include instructions for improving interpersonal skills like coaching, encouraging employee input, and training employees. Courses also cover what supervisors need to know to stay legal in their role as a representative of the THA when handling complaints and managing employee performance.

  Recommended courses:

  - Business Writing for Supervisors and Managers
  - Coaching for Superior Employee Performance: Techniques for Supervisors
  - Communicating Up: How to Talk to High-Level Management
  - Conflict Resolution and Consensus Building
  - Dealing with Change: How Supervisors Can Help
  - How to Conduct Effective Meetings
  - Encouraging Employee Input

- Handling Employee Complaints
- How to Manage Challenging Employees
- Leadership Skills: What New Managers and Supervisors Need to Know
- Motivating Employees: Tips and Tactics for Supervisors
- Negotiation Skills for Supervisors
- New Supervisors' Guide to Effective Supervision
- Performance Goals: How Goals Help Supervisors Manage Employees More Effectively
- Planning and Organising Skills for Supervisors
- Problem Solving for Supervisors
- Professional Behaviour: What Supervisors Need to Know
- Time Management for Supervisors
- Top-Down Communication for Supervisors
- Workplace Ethics for Supervisors

- **Competency model**

  It is strongly recommended that the Tobago House of Assembly develop core and leadership competency models, and utilise them for staff recruitment and development, career planning and performance management.

  What is a competency?

  The term "competency" refers to a combination of skills, attributes and behaviours that are directly related to successful performance on the job. Core competencies are the skills, attributes and behaviours that are considered important for all staff of the organisation, regardless of their function or level. Managerial competencies are the skills, attributes and behaviours that are considered essential for staff with managerial or supervisory responsibilities. Core and managerial competencies are not specific to any occupation. One could demonstrate the competency of "teamwork" or "client orientation" in performing any job. To complement the core competencies, individual departments may choose to define functional competencies related to their respective areas of work.

Why are competencies important?

Defining competencies is important both for the Tobago House of Assembly and its staff. Competencies are forward-looking. They describe the skills and attributes staff and managers will require in order to build a new organisational culture and meet future challenges. They help the THA clarify expectations, define future development needs, and promote more focused recruitment and development planning. Competencies provide a sound basis for consistent and objective performance standards by creating a shared language about what is needed and expected in the THA.

How will the competencies be used?

- **Staff Development**: Staff development programmes will be aligned with the competencies and new programmes introduced to support their development. A guide must be prepared to explain the various means available to acquire and strengthen competencies
- **Career Planning**: Competencies will increasingly be used as a basis for identifying individual and organisational needs, and planning for development. Support must be provided to staff through publications and career support workshops
- **Performance Management**: Competencies will be useful to staff and managers in assessing development needs and setting performance standards. Competencies must be incorporated into the Performance Appraisal System

What do competencies look like in practice?

- As competencies relate more to what a person does than what a person knows, they are observable. For each competency, it is possible to describe "behavioural indicators"—actions or behaviours that exemplify the competency in practice. These may be helpful in promoting shared values and common standards of performance and behaviour throughout the Tobago House of Assembly

- **Succession Planning and Management**

It is strongly recommended that the Tobago House of Assembly immediately develop and implement a succession planning and management programme to ensure that it possesses high bench strength (an organisation's ability to immediately fill critical positions with talented internal candidates following the loss of an employee) and a very high probability of leadership continuity when persons leave the organisation.

Succession planning has been defined as a means of identifying critical operational management positions, starting at the levels of supervisor and extending up to the highest position in the organisation. Succession planning also describes management positions to provide maximum flexibility in lateral management moves, and to ensure that as individuals achieve greater seniority, their management skills will broaden and become more generalised in relation to total organisational objectives, rather than to purely departmental objectives.

Succession planning should be paired with succession management, which assumes that a more dynamic business environment in the capacity building of talent should occur in real time. It recognises the ramifications of the new employment contract, whereby the THA no longer (implicitly) assures anyone of continued employment, even if he or she is doing a good job. Succession management focuses on continuing daily efforts to build talent, and may include the manager's role in coaching, providing feedback, and otherwise assisting individuals to realise their full potential. Both succession planning and succession management emphasise the importance of developing internal talent to meet the current or future talent needs of the THA.

The Succession Planning and Management Programme will thus be a deliberate and systematic effort by the THA to ensure leadership continuity in key positions, to retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future and to encourage individual advancement.

- **Increased Autonomy in HR Management**

  The Administrators reported that acting appointments of THA employees have to be approved initially by the Director of Personnel Administration (DPA) in Trinidad and that this process can take over one year. They said the initial acting appointment comes from the DPA and that subsequent appointments can be done by the Chief Administrator. They lamented that this arrangement is demotivating to THA

employees and advocated for this situation to be changed. They also stated that the THA has no responsibility for permanent employment of public sector employees. Therefore, the THA should negotiate with the Central Government to fully implement section 25 (3) of the Tobago House Of Assembly Act, Chapter 25:03, Act 40 of 1996, Amended by Acts 4 of 2001 and 17 of 2006, which state:

"Where a statutory authority or a State enterprise provides services in Tobago, that authority or enterprise shall, in exercising its duties in relation to those services, act in accordance with the policies or programmes of the Assembly and to this end may enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Assembly".

The THA should enter a Memorandum of Understanding with the Service Commissions Department of Trinidad and Tobago for the functions that are executed by the Director of Personnel Administration on behalf of the Tobago House of Assembly, to be carried out by the Chief Administrator of the THA.

- **Re-implementation of the Integrated Human Resource Information System (IHRIS)**

  This is a national human resource system that was implemented in Trinidad but was only partially implemented in Tobago. When fully implemented, it will provide real-time information on employee records, thereby facilitating smooth processing of employee terminals and other benefits. Despite failed attempts at implementation, its importance for improving governance and execution is still high. There is a need to take a more determined approach to implement IHRIS.

- **Adoption of a Performance Management System**

  A Performance Management System is the systematic approach to measuring and managing the performance of employees. It is a process where the organisation aligns its mission, goals and objectives with the performance objectives of each employee.

  The adoption of a new Performance Management System will enable more effective monitoring and feedback on employee performance and ensure that the Divisions of the THA deliver on their mandate. The use of the 360-degree feedback system will form the basis for the ongoing development of Supervisors and Managers, and cause them

to be more effective leaders in the THA. The purpose of the 360-degree feedback system is to assist each individual in understanding their strengths, and to contribute insights into aspects of their work that need professional development.

- **Ending Frequent Reshuffling of Staff and Agencies Across the THA**

  Frequent reassignment of senior administrative staff of the THA has restricted the effective implementation of policies and new initiatives across the body. Staff are forced to learn the culture, new personnel and initiatives of a new Division, sometimes only for a few months before being moved again. This is counter-productive to Tobago's development goals and should be abolished as a practice across the THA. Frequent moving of agencies, such as Special Purpose Vehicles, also forces reorganisation of strategic direction and programmes, and acts as a barrier to programme and project implementation. This too should be stopped. Staff and agencies should be assigned to individual line divisions for the entire period between THA elections. Staff should only be removed from their positions due to issues of performance, and contracts should be updated to match this direction

- **Ensure Clarity of Roles through MOUs with State Agencies**

  The ambiguities in the THA Act 40, 1996 has created challenges for the THA in executing its powers efficiently. In the absence of legislative amendments, establishing MOUs with the various Ministries and Agencies of the Central Government would improve delegation of powers and harmonisation with the THA Act. The Assembly would therefore be able to make the best possible use of its autonomy in its designated areas of responsibility

4.4 Finance and the Economy

4.4.1 Vision

The financial vision for Tobago is to develop a resilient, diversified and stable economy; one where inflation is low, there is a more even distribution of jobs between the private and state sector and there is continued economic growth.

The analysis and recommendations hereunder are aimed at ensuring the above vision is fulfilled and laying a foundation that can, in the future:

- Ensure greater efficiency in THA expenditure and better management of public funds
- Enhance the revenue generating capacity of the Assembly
- Generate foreign direct investment for Tobago
- Enhance the capacity of businesses, and ensure business continuity, resilience and growth
- Promote and facilitate trade, particularly through the export of goods and services to regional and international markets
- Ensure continued support from financial institutions for individual and entrepreneurial activities
- Create an efficient internal transportation system, and
- Ensure efficiency and sustainability of the local construction sector

4.4.2 Fiscal Operations

4.4.2.1 Situational Analysis

In 2000, the Dispute Resolution Committee proposed that Tobago be allocated between 4.03% and 6.9% of the national budget for recurrent and development expenditure. Historically, the typical provision for Tobago has been close to the lower boundary of 4.03%. For the period 2015–2020, the Tobago House of Assembly received an average of TT$2,386.6 million for both recurrent and development expenditure, of which a disproportionate share of the allocation was apportioned to recurrent expenditure. In fact, Tobago received an average of TT$2,077.3 million for recurrent expenditure and an average of TT$309.3 million for development expenditure. Specifically, on average, 87% of the allocation was apportioned to recurrent expenditure, with about 13% being allocated to development expenditure for the period 2015–2020. The restrictions to the THA's off-budget development spending has serious implications for developmental activity in Tobago. In light of COVID-19, it is expected that transfers to Tobago from the Central Government might be negatively impacted for future periods. In fact, the 2021 budget presentation by the Minister of Finance highlighted a 5.8%

decline in the allocation for recurrent expenditure and a 13.6% decline in the allocation for development expenditure when compared to 2020.

Revenues collected in Tobago only represent a small proportion of Tobago's allocation. Notably however, this figure does not include taxes, fees, duties and levies of companies and financial institutions in respect of their Tobago operations, since these are currently paid centrally in Trinidad by their head offices. Firms such as banks and insurance companies with head-offices in Trinidad and branches in Tobago have given tremendous resistance to paying taxes in Tobago on their Tobago operations. While this may be a convenient arrangement for the companies involved and may align with internal policies, there is need for a mechanism that enables all such companies to make payments in Tobago, as required under Section 49 (2) of the THA Act # 40 of 1996. In light of COVID-19, it is expected that revenues collected in Tobago might decline on account of reduced business activity, resulting in lower profit margins and ultimately lower tax revenue.

4.4.2.2 Recommendations – Expenditure Management and Control

In order to ensure greater efficiency in THA expenditure and better management of public funds, the following **immediate to short-term recommendations** should be implemented:

- Appoint a regional or international independent body to **conduct an expenditure review of the THA** to identify areas of inefficiency in public spending, and to make recommendations to address these inefficiencies. The expenditure review should be akin to the expenditure review conducted for the Central Government by the World Bank
- **Review the current procurement system** of the Tobago House of Assembly to identify areas of deficiency and improvise measures to address them. Two such measures to improve the current system include:
    - Building procurement capacity through IT literacy and E-tendering training for THA contractors; and
    - Implementing an Electronic System to enable e-business and greater financial transparency between the THA and contractors. These should integrate well with similar national initiatives

- **Accelerate the implementation of the Integrated Financial Management Information System** (IFMIS) and the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). This will facilitate real-time expenditure review and control, as well as more informed decision-making, which cannot be achieved using the current archaic financial architecture that has been in existence since the inception of the THA. Furthermore, the implementation of IFMIS would greatly enhance the Assembly's planning and operational capabilities, and allow the Assembly to better serve its stakeholders



- Improve Public Financial Management and the Policy Cycle Framework by systematically aligning the planning and expenditure priorities through the **introduction of a robust Multi-year Strategic Planning and Budgeting Framework** to prioritise projects.

  This recommendation is made in recognition of the Assembly's limited financial resources and unlimited development needs. This will support the work of the Sustainable Development Unit, which is recommended in the Sustainability and Innovation section of this document



- Undertake a Manpower Audit to **determine Tobago's human resource development needs** and use the Audit as a basis to restructure the Financial Assistance Programme, which supports tertiary education of Tobagonians. To benefit from the Financial Assistance Programme, applicants must pursue a degree in one of the priority areas of study that was identified from the Manpower Audit



Additionally, the following **medium-term to long-term recommendations** should be implemented to supplement the immediate to short-term recommendations, and ensure Tobago's long-term recovery and growth.

- The Assembly should **adopt a performance budgeting approach** as opposed to the current line item budgeting approach. A performance budget will reflect both the input of resources and the output of services for each Division in the Tobago House of Assembly. Furthermore, performance budgeting will result in increased accountability of the Assembly to the taxpayers, communication about priorities to the public, and

quantification of specific goals. (This is repeated in the Productivity, Governance, and Human Resource Development section)

- **The accounting departments across the Assembly's Divisions should be restructured** to ensure efficiency in public accounting. All accounting staff, especially those in decision-making positions, must possess formal accounting qualifications
- **A Tobago Stabilisation Fund** akin to the national Heritage and Stabilisation Fund should be established to support and sustain public expenditures during periods of economic downturn

4.4.2.3 Recommendations – Revenue Generation

In order to enhance the revenue generating capacity of THA, the **following immediate to short-term recommendations** should be implemented:

- A baseline research project to **accurately quantify Tobago's revenue contribution** to the national economy. The research must be conducted periodically to monitor and evaluate changes in Tobago's contribution
- **A research project to identify potential revenue generating activities in Tobago** and to monetise them. Focus should be placed on activities in the tourism industry, as these present an opportunity for Tobago to earn additional foreign exchange
- Aggressive **exploration of the option of grant funding** from multilateral agencies in collaboration with NGOs and CBOs
- Collaboration with the Central Government to **ensure the passage of the Self-Government legislation** to allow greater predictability in planning and revenue collection and generation



Additionally, the following **medium-term to long-term recommendation** should be implemented to supplement the immediate to short-term recommendations, and ensure Tobago's recovery and growth in the longer term:

- Collaboration with Central Government to **make the necessary legislative adjustments** that would mandate businesses operating in Tobago to either pay their taxes etc. as per Section 49 (2) of Act #40 of 1996 in Tobago, or to disaggregate financial information to show the taxes etc. attributable to Tobago

4.4.3 Foreign Direct Investment

4.4.3.1 Situational Analysis

The Tobago economy has numerous development needs and has failed to attract any significant level of foreign direct investment (FDI) to address these needs. The current business environment inhibits FDI. There is great uncertainty surrounding the processes and procedures for foreigners to invest in Tobago, while the Foreign Investment Act is viewed as a deterrent to foreign direct investment on the island. The advent of COVID-19 highlights the need for Tobago to explore funding alternatives for development, particularly in the tourism sector. A viable option is foreign direct investment, which is generally considered the catalyst for development.

4.4.3.2 Recommendations

In order to improve the current investment climate of Tobago and to allow the island to attract FDI for Tobago's development needs, the following **immediate to short-term recommendations** should be implemented:

- **Creation of an investment policy** that would identify key sectors and activities to be targeted for foreign direct investment
- Research and **improvement of the fiscal incentives** that are currently offered to major investors



Critical Catalyst

- **Streamlining of the processes and procedures** for foreign investors entering the Tobago market. The processes and procedures should also be easily accessible and available to both locals and foreigners
- **Undertaking of a baseline assessment** of the ease of doing business in Tobago to identify areas for improvement. The study must be conducted continuously to allow for further improvements. (This recommendation is also in the Businesses/Commerce section)
- **Collaboration with Central Government to amend the Foreign Investment Act** and allow more foreign direct investment flow into Tobago. This is also noted in the Tourism section



Critical Catalyst

- **Establishment of an Investment Promotion Agency** to target suitable foreign investors and become the link between them and the Tobago economy 

Additionally, the following **medium-term to long-term recommendations** should be implemented to supplement the immediate to short-term recommendations and ensure Tobago's recovery and growth in the longer term:

- **Launch of an aggressive investment marketing campaign** to encourage first-time foreign direct investors and foreign direct investors from the large diaspora to invest in Tobago. (The diaspora is discussed in the Resources for Recovery section of this report.)
- Negotiation with the Central Government to **use Trinidad and Tobago Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates abroad to facilitate investment**

4.4.4 Businesses/Commerce

4.4.4.1 Situational Analysis

The Central Statistical Office defines a small business as having a staff complement of between six (6) and twenty-five (25) employees, and a medium enterprise as having a staff complement of between twenty-six (26) and fifty (50) employees (Business TT Magazine, 2019). Conversely, micro enterprises employ fewer than six (6) persons, while large enterprises employ over fifty (50) persons. Based on these criteria and the 2015 Business Register (which is the latest available register that features Tobago), approximately 92.2% of businesses operating in Tobago are MSMEs and 1.1% are large businesses. The remaining 6.7% were unclassified.

In Tobago, MSMEs account for a significant percentage of employment in the private sector and operate in a range of sectors in the economy. Large businesses, however, are generally concentrated in the retail and distribution and tourism sectors. The advent of COVID-19 adversely affected Tobago's businesses but the magnitude of the effect was related to the size of the business and the sector in which the business operates. MSMEs and establishments in the tourism industry experienced the brunt of the impact. Businesses in the retail and distribution sector were also largely affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The "stay-at-home" order, which was instituted to reduce the spread of the virus, resulted in businesses

temporarily losing their customer base. This dramatic and sudden loss of revenue led to cashflow problems and potential permanent business closures. Moreover, the issues plaguing the light manufacturing sector were brought to the forefront as a result of COVID-19.

4.4.4.2 Recommendations – MSMEs

The Central Government and Tobago House of Assembly have implemented a wide range of support programmes to assist businesses. However, a number of other initiatives can be introduced to provide further relief to MSMEs in Tobago. It is paramount that the beneficiaries of these initiatives are registered business entities which are tax- and NIS-compliant. If an applicant does not meet these requirements, the applicant should be given an opportunity to qualify for the particular initiative. Specifically, the applicant should be advised to register the business, settle outstanding debts with the National Insurance Board and/or file a declaration of tax with the Board of Inland Revenue. In order to ensure the survival of businesses, preserve and create jobs, enhance the capacity of businesses and ensure business continuity, resilience and growth, the following **immediate to short-term recommendations** should be implemented:

- **Establishment of** a **Business Incubator/Accelerator at Cove** to assist in nurturing businesses in their embryonic stage and preparing them for export. This programme should assist businesses in achieving international standards, such as HACCP, where relevant. (This recommendation is also in the Trade subsection, and Sustainability and Innovation Section)



- Deepening of the Tobago House of Assembly's COVID-19 Response for MSMEs **through BDU's two signature programmes, by expanding the programmes to other sectors.** The initial focus of these programmes was on providing support to essential businesses in the various sectors: agriculture and agro-processing, light manufacturing and food
- **Direction of all state enterprises under the Tobago House of Assembly to pay their bills** within ten working days to provide liquidity support to small businesses
- **Temporary redirection of government procurement to MSMEs** to boost demand and improve cash flow of these businesses
- Collaboration with the private sector to **launch a "Buy Local" campaign** to restore and encourage purchasing habits that help to support local MSMEs. Tobago House of

Assembly should use its traditional and social media platforms to showcase the products and services of local MSMEs. This would complement the "Eat Local" campaign of the Division of Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries (See Agriculture and Food Production Section), and should dovetail with any national initiatives

- Offering of incentives to **MSMEs to adopt IT solutions and develop e-commerce sales channels**, thereby boosting their online presence e.g. concessions on the purchase of computer equipment and software
- Collaboration with the private sector to **enhance the current technology available to MSMEs** to reduce transactional frictions related to e-commerce and payment platforms
- Provision of incentives to **skills-based MSMEs to offer training to vulnerable income groups** that would supplement the current income earned via MSMEs
- Partnering with existing educational institutions or training agencies to **offer subsidised or free training to owners of MSMEs and their staff to improve capacity**. The training programmes must be focused on upgrading the skills of all workers, including owners
    - The workforce and management personnel should receive training in areas including, but not limited to, enhancing service delivery, digital transformation, continuity planning and cybersecurity
    - Business owners should receive technical knowhow and management lessons
- Commission of a research project to **determine the impact of COVID-19 on businesses** in Tobago. The reasons for business failure in Tobago and the ease of doing business in Tobago should also be examined. (This recommendation is also in the Foreign Direct Investment section)
- Negotiation with the Central Government to **revise the proposed Liquidity Support Government Guarantee Programme** (primarily for wages, rent and working capital)—which targets private firms and employees—to extend coverage for self-employed persons and debt restructuring operations
- Negotiation with the Central Government to **create specialised bridge loans with subsidised interest rates for start-ups,** since these firms will generally struggle or completely fail to meet the criteria set to access liquidity programmes announced in relation to the COVID-19 crisis

- Negotiation with Central Government for **further reductions in the reserve requirement ratio** and the repo rate to further lower commercial lending rates. This will result in MSMEs accessing lower interest rates on loans



- Collaboration with Central Government to negotiate an **extension on existing moratoriums until at least December 2020**
- Collaboration with businesses, labour, healthcare professionals and others to **develop emergency response guidelines for businesses,** which would be made available to businesses. (This recommendation is also in the Social Development - Leave No One Behind Section)
- Encouragement of businesses to **adhere to social distancing guidelines, to increase their store cleaning regime and to engage in temperature screening** of employees and customers. (This recommendation is also in the Social Development - Leave No One Behind Section)

Additionally, the following **medium-term to long-term recommendations** should be implemented to supplement the immediate to short-term recommendations and ensure Tobago's recovery and growth in the longer term:

- **Establishment of a special fund through BDU** to encourage small businesses to engage in innovation
- Negotiation with Central Government to implement **stricter enforcement of NIS payments and business registration** to ensure that in the event of future stay-at-home policies, employees are better able to access government's assistance
- **Formulation of a Diaspora Engagement Strategy** to leverage the capital, skills and networks of citizens living abroad by creating a structured community for persons to donate or market their knowledge capital in specific areas. The Diaspora is discussed in greater detail in the Resources for Recovery section
- Identification and launch of mechanisms to **devise and operate parish business councils for Tobago's seven regions**, which will craft small business opportunities that exploit the iconic elements of each region
- **Establishment of four NGO/CSO-managed Community Credit Programmes** around Tobago for on-lending to individuals/cooperatives aimed at:

- Creation of SMEs at the community level
- Utilisation of local/community resources
- Building an entrepreneurial class at the community level and
- Promotion of community participation and empowerment

4.4.4.3 Recommendations – Retail and Distribution

The 2015 Tobago Business Register stated that 48.2% of businesses in Tobago have their core operations in Distribution, which includes wholesale trade, retail trade, restaurants, bars, parlours and related business activities. Many of the businesses in this sector have been severely affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The aforementioned recommendations for MSMEs are generally applicable to firms in this sector. However, the following **immediate to short-term recommendations** should also be implemented to ensure that the Retail and Distribution Sector survives the COVID-19 pandemic, and is positioned to contribute to Tobago's recovery and growth:

- Ensuring that the proposed **liquidity assistance schemes are accessible to retail and distribution firms**, irrespective of their size. The value of the financial assistance received should at least cover the short-term obligations of the firms
- Ensuring that retail and distribution **firms benefit from the incentives offered to MSMEs to boost their online presence.** To capitalise on this opportunity, the private sector should mobilise retail and distribution firms, including grocery stores, to offer online shopping with curb-side pick-up and/or home delivery
- Building alliances by **engaging large retail and distribution companies to adopt value chains for input supplies and marketing for small businesses** in the retail and distribution sector, and other sectors
- Ensuring that competition in the sector remains sufficient in the aftermath of the crisis by **facilitating the emergence of new retail firms** through collaboration with the Central Government to ease registration and licensing requirements. Workers who have been affected by the closure of businesses can apply to the new firms

4.4.4.4 Recommendations – Light Manufacturing

According to the 2015 Tobago Business Register, 6.2% of businesses in Tobago have their core operations in Manufacturing. The sector contributes an average of 0.5% to Tobago's GDP but has the potential to diversify the Tobago economy and augment Tobago's GDP. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the forefront some of the challenges experienced by businesses involved in Light Manufacturing in Tobago. It is critical that targeted recommendations be implemented to address these challenges and to position the Light Manufacturing Sector to contribute to Tobago's recovery and growth. In addition to the aforementioned recommendations for MSMEs, the following **immediate to short-term** recommendations are proposed:

- Examining the possibility of working with the private sector to **establish an Agro-Processing Facility and an Essential Oils Facility at Cove;** this will create greater value from selected agricultural products
- **Establishing a Food and Beverage Testing Facility at Cove** to treat with the issue of food safety among MSMEs, and in other areas e.g. School Nutrition Programme, Restaurants and Hotels. (This recommendation is also in the Trade section)



- **Creating a maker space[6] within Cove Industrial Estate** for entrepreneurs and small businesses to use as a base to do research for new products they aim to produce



- Providing financial incentives via BDU for **new business ideas and innovation coming out of the COVID-19 response**, with priority given in technology, health, food security and education
- **Establishing a special fund to assist firms in undertaking external productivity assessments** and implementing productivity improvement strategies
- **Promoting and supporting local supply chains** by collaborating with the private sector to:

[6] Maker spaces are collaborative work spaces for making, learning, exploring and sharing. These spaces have a variety of maker equipment including 3D printers, laser cutters, soldering irons and even sewing machines to allow experimentation, product development and testing.

- Promote and facilitate horizontal, as well as vertical linkages within the light manufacturing sector; and
- Strengthen backward and forward linkages with other sectors in the economy

4.4.5 Trade

4.4.5.1 Situational Analysis

Tobago is a small, open economy. Most of the products consumed in Tobago are imported from the sister isle, Trinidad, and other regional and international markets. Although there are businesses on the island that engage in production, the lion's share of the products are locally consumed and very few are exported. Historically, there have been numerous challenges preventing Tobago's businesses from accessing global markets. Some of these include limited finances to expand production, inability to meet international standards, burdensome customs procedures and limited avenues for export logistics advice and support. Moreover, the national trade data is not disaggregated, so there is no record of how much of the overall national export is attributable to Tobago. There is also no representation from the Assembly in national trade negotiations. The advent of COVID-19 highlights the need for Tobago to promote and facilitate trade, particularly exports to regional and international markets.

4.4.5.2 Recommendations

Encouraging import substitution while increasing exports will enhance Gross Domestic Product and position Tobago on the path to recovery. To this end, the following **immediate to short-term** recommendations should be implemented:

- **Developing a comprehensive digital database** of the raw material needs and the required intermediate goods for producers in Tobago and identifying locally-sourced inputs
- **Accelerating the construction of the cargo port** to allow producers to import raw materials in a hassle-free manner and ensure the seamless export of finished products. The location feasibility study has been completed, so the next phases of the process should be expedited



- Commissioning a research project to disaggregate national export data to **determine how much of the overall national export is attributable to Tobago**. The research

project should also propose mechanisms to collect, process and disseminate data on Tobago's trade

- Lobbying the Central Government to **include a representative for the Tobago House of Assembly in all national trade negotiations**, particularly those that have implications for producers in Tobago
- Commissioning baseline research to **assess the export readiness of all sectors in Tobago**. Specifically, the baseline research should examine the export potential of each sector and the constraints facing each sector, and recommend measures to address these constraints
- **Establishing a Business Incubator/Accelerator Programme at Cove** to help nurture businesses in their embryonic stage and prepare them for export. This programme should assist businesses in reaching international standards, such as HACCP, where relevant. (This recommendation is also in the Businesses/Commerce subsection, and Sustainability and Innovation section)



- **Establishing a Food and Beverage Testing Facility** at Cove to ensure that products adhere to international standards. (This recommendation is also in the Businesses/Commerce section)



- Partnering with existing educational institutions or training agencies to **offer subsidised or free capacity enhancement training** for entrepreneurs who are interested in or already involved in exporting their products
- **Sponsoring the participation of entrepreneurs** in national, regional and international trade shows
- Collaborating with the Central Government to **review and amend cumbersome and inconsistent import and export procedures and documentation** to improve trade facilitation. Specifically, primary focus should be placed on:
    - Upgrading import, export and transit procedures and administration to International Best Practices
    - Effectively integrating customs procedures into the port systems
    - Harmonising the procedures at different ports, and

    - Promoting greater coordination among the various agencies involved in cross-border trade
- Collaborating with the Central Government to ensure **Tobago's businesses are included in and benefit from the proposed platform for domestic and regional buyers, sellers, and investors to conclude business deals.** This will strengthen production linkages and create new value chains
- Collaborating with the Central Government to negotiate with the Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago to **establish a Tobago booth at the Piarco terminal**. There, delicacies, craft and other items made in Tobago will be made available to regional and international travellers

Additionally, the following **medium-term to long-term** recommendations should be implemented to supplement the immediate to short-term recommendations, and to ensure Tobago's recovery and growth in the longer term:

- Collaboration with the Ministry of Trade to **designate certain areas in Tobago as export processing zones**
- Collaboration with the private sector to **create and promote an e-commerce website** that would feature products from various businesses in Tobago. The website should offer a collection of products in entertainment, fashion, fashion accessories, food, home accents, packages and souvenirs
- Leveraging of the diaspora to build meaningful and lasting trade relationships by negotiating with the Central Government to **use Trinidad and Tobago Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates** to assist in identifying market opportunities in the diaspora, and to lead and support initiatives aimed at promoting Tobago's exports. The diaspora is discussed in detail in the Resources for Recovery section



- **Identification and allocation of adequate resources to enhance relevant infrastructure development and destination marketing** to support the development of a thriving export market. Efficient and cost-effective trade requires optimum crane capacity, berthing facilities, adequate road and telecommunications infrastructure, and little to no interruptions in the supply of water and electricity

4.4.6 Financial Sector

4.4.6.1 Situational Analysis

The financial sector is essential to the Tobago economy. On average, commercial banks contribute 6% to Tobago's GDP, while credit unions contribute a further 2%. Currently, there are four commercial banks operating in Tobago, all of which have head offices in Trinidad. In each case, the management and operating decisions are made in Trinidad, then communicated to the branches in Tobago for implementation. Conversely, there are currently nine (9) indigenous (Tobago-based) credit unions operating in Tobago, with a membership of 36,000 and total assets of TT$546 million. Additionally, eleven (11) active Trinidad-based credit unions and seventeen (17) active non-financial co-operatives—inclusive of agricultural/fishing co-operatives, service co-operatives and junior co-operatives—operate in Tobago.

Although financial institutions remained open during the "stay-at-home" phase, many of them reduced their operating hours and temporarily discontinued some of their products and services during that period. Both commercial banks and credit unions face the possibility of loan defaults as some borrowers have been out of employment because of COVID-19. Additionally, individuals and businesses have opted not to incur more debt. Financial institutions, therefore, have been facing a reduced demand for loans even though excess liquidity was injected into the system and the Liquidity Support Programme was introduced.

4.4.6.2 Recommendations – Commercial Banks

The Central Government has implemented a range of support programmes through commercial banks to assist individuals and businesses. However, additional initiatives can be introduced **in the immediate to short term** to further support Tobagonians and Tobago's businesses:



- Collaboration with commercial banks to **promote greater financial literacy** through programmes at the school and community levels
- Negotiation with the Central Government and commercial banks to **make more foreign exchange available to Tobago's businesses**

- Negotiation with the Central Government and commercial banks to **further reduce credit card interest rates for businesses and lower rates for LINX point-of-sale card machines**
- Collaboration with the Central Government and the Central Bank to advise commercial banks to **review and where necessary, simplify and streamline Know Your Customer** (KYC) requirements. The aim will also be to improve financial inclusion and to implement digital and portable KYC, and remote onboarding for low value transactional accounts

4.4.6.3 Recommendations – Credit Unions

The Central Government has implemented a range of support programmes through credit unions to assist individuals and businesses. However, additional initiatives can be introduced in the **immediate to short term** to further assist Tobagonians and Tobago businesses:

- Providing incentives for **credit unions to improve their online presence** through the facilitating of online transactions etc.; e.g. concessions on the purchase of computer equipment and software
- Encouraging credit unions to take a policy position to **suspend charging of late fees and interest on delinquent loans**, *i.e.* loans that are 90 days overdue, to preserve liquidity for firms and individuals
- Sensitising **credit unions on the need to work together** and providing incentives to facilitate collaboration among cooperatives
- Collaborating with credit unions **to ensure the sustainable growth of small and micro enterprises** and expansion into new diverse markets by providing guaranteed incentives through the credit unions for small and micro enterprises; e.g. financial assistance for the purchase of machinery and other equipment
- Encouraging credit unions to create a product that **provides financing to members for starting new businesses, expanding current business ventures and for working capital purposes** that would ensure business continuity and growth of the business sector. Special rates can be offered to youth members who are involved in entrepreneurial activities



Additionally, the following **medium-term to long-term** recommendation should be implemented to supplement the immediate to short-term recommendations listed above, and to ensure Tobago's recovery and growth in the longer term:

- Collaboration with the Central Government to implement the concept of matching grants, whereby the government matches financial resources made available within the co-operative sector to assist businesses, irrespective of their size, to ensure sustainable growth and expansion into new diverse markets

4.4.7 Transportation

4.4.7.1 Situational Analysis

Tobago's transportation system is not being managed holistically. The management of individual elements of infrastructure is distributed among several agencies within the THA, and some national state agencies, including some in Trinidad. This means the movement of people and goods is not being collectively managed, although this is considered best practice worldwide for proper functioning of this critical economic system. For instance, the planning of bus routes and services is centrally performed at the Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC) in Port of Spain, with minimal input from Tobago. Moreover, the lack of direction in the transport system of Tobago has led to an influx of cars, greater congestion and reduced efficiency. This trend has been temporarily subdued by COVID-19 but is very likely to return once the virus is better controlled.

Sustainable movement of people and goods is critical to the recovery of Tobago post COVID-19. Typical tools for improving sustainability in transportation systems are based on ***reducing*** physical space between people and goods during movement. This encourages more compact and shared-vehicle scenarios, such as buses and ride sharing arrangements, which help reduce congestion on the nation's roads. However, fighting COVID-19 is based on the need to ***increase*** the distance between travellers, thereby reducing the risk of transmission. This raises a unique conflict that few standard approaches to transportation systems management address.

4.4.7.2 Recommendations

In order to establish an efficient transportation system in Tobago for the sustainable movement of people and goods, the following **immediate to short-term** recommendations should be implemented:

- **Creating a Board for Strategic Medium/Long Term Planning of transportation and land use** issues in Tobago. The board should comprise 3-5 persons, including transport and urban planners. Additionally, the board must work closely with the Transportation Unit of the Division of Infrastructure, Quarries, and the Environment (DIQE); the Division of Settlements, Urban Renewal and Public Utilities; the Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC); the Traffic Management Committee; the Airports Authority; and the Port Authority. Moreover, the board must have the authority to guide the location, right sizing, and facilities of all major transport infrastructure in Tobago based on internationally accepted tools and analysis, in collaboration with other authorities

- Mandate the aforementioned Board to conduct a study of the demand and supply of transport in Tobago, and to use the results to **develop a Tobago Transport Policy**, in collaboration with all stakeholders. The Policy must clearly outline medium and long-term goals and strategies for the effective movement of people and goods to/from Tobago and within the island. The following items should form part of the Tobago Transport Policy:

    - Devolution of PTSC's Tobago Service Planning function to THA to increase efficiency, attract more bus users and reduce congestion
    - An increase in Tobago's involvement, representation and management within the Port Authority for the Inter-Island Ferry
    - The building of an Integrated Transport Management System for Tobago, inclusive of parking management, pedestrian areas, traffic management and regularisation of informal taxi operations

4.4.8 Construction

4.4.8.1 Situational Analysis

The construction sector could be a significant contributor to the recovery of Tobago's economy because of its ability to create sustainable jobs on the island. In fact, this sector is highly responsive to changes in other sectors, and is usually accepted as the engine that triggers economic growth. Using the tourism sector as an example, when this sector grows, there will be the need to construct, upgrade and repair hotels and guesthouses. There is also the need for continuous maintenance of properties, guest rooms, restaurants and swimming pools. A similar matrix exists for the agricultural sector, where buildings must be constructed for plant and animal farms, homesteads, hydroponics, retaining walls etc.

The construction sector can therefore make a remarkable contribution to sustainable economic development by satisfying some of the basic goals and objectives of sustainable development. These include output generation, employment creation and income generation and re-distribution. This often-neglected sector also has a significant role to play in meeting and satisfying basic physical and social needs. These needs are not confined to providing shelter for households or infrastructure for public and private investments; the sector responds favourably to the changes in other aspects of the economy.

The construction sector in Tobago could be used to drive economic growth by mobilising and effectively utilising local human and material resources to develop and maintain housing and infrastructure. This will promote local employment and improve economic efficiency. Whatever happens to this sector will directly and indirectly influence other sectors, and ultimately, impact the wealth and economic development of Tobago. To achieve this, however, emphasis must be placed on stakeholder consultations, extensive human resource training and development and creating the environment for construction to flourish.

The Construction Environment in Tobago

Currently, the sector consists of small and medium-size contractors, who provide building and repair services to the Tobago House of Assembly and to private businesses and households. The Division of Settlements, Urban Renewal and Public Utilities also engages contractors to build homes for residents, while others work for small businesses and private buildings. In

addition, there is one large contractor who has undertaken the construction of homes for sale on the open market. Skilled, semiskilled and unskilled labour is sourced from Tobago, Trinidad and immigrant workers from neighbouring countries. The Division of Infrastructure, Quarries and the Environment (DIQE) also employs the three categories of workers involved in construction and repairs of government buildings, roads, bridges, sidewalks and drains. Over the last five years, workers in the Unemployment Relief Programme (URP) have produced high-quality caskets, household and office furniture, cupboards, student desks and other wooden items for public and private clients, though they are operating as employees in this programme.

The Quality of Work in The Construction Sector

The closure of the Bon Accord Trade Centre and the de-emphasising of the role and activities at the Roxborough Trade Centre created a dearth in opportunities for construction training in Tobago. Consequently, the skilled workers in the construction sector are elder persons, while the semi-skilled and unskilled are younger and are recruited by contractors and trained on the job. However, the quality of work produced by contractors is often criticised for its quality.

4.4.8.2 Recommendations

- **Changing perceptions and rebranding the construction sector**

  The precursor to creating a vibrant construction sector is engaging in comprehensive outreach, consultations and discussions with and among existing skilled and unskilled trade workers already involved in the sector. Traditionally, persons within the construction sector were ranked at a low level on the social ladder. Fortunately, this stratification has changed to the extent that construction contractors and workers have matched and surpassed the standard of living of public sector workers and other businessmen. Nevertheless, there is an urgent need to rebrand the sector to make it more attractive as a career option for Tobagonians. Strategies for rebranding include:

  - Community consultations and discussions
  - Social media, radio and television programmes
  - Selection of successful contractors and skilled construction workers to transmit positive messages

- Education and training programmes for Tobagonians in construction sector skills

The rebranding of the construction sector could begin immediately and continue for a period of six (6) months.

- **Expanding opportunities for education and training and workforce development**

  The THA, in placing significant focus on workforce development, must provide easy access to education and training to attract and transition Tobagonians now employed in social programmes for minimum wages to meaningful and sustainable jobs. Two "state-of-the-art" multipurpose education and training centres should be re-established and should be superior to the once-functional Roxborough and Bon Accord Trade Centres. These centres should not focus on construction only, but should cater for a wide spectrum of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). All programmes must include an element of entrepreneurship and business management and development.

  Contractors must also be trained in the knowledge of how to improve and upgrade their construction competencies to deliver a higher quality of service and product to their client. The areas for training should include:

  - Safety and health policies and plans for construction projects
  - Hazard and risk analyses
  - Physical safety precautions (e.g. personal clothing and equipment)
  - Site induction - Trade union policies on Occupational Safety & Health
  - Preparation of business plans
  - Procurement procedures
  - Small business management
  - Preparation of bids in response to tenders
  - Costing of projects and scopes of works
  - Supervisory staff management
  - Performance management
  - Basic management accounting

The recovery process for the construction sector must focus on providing the necessary and suitable physical environment to facilitate education and training for all construction stakeholders. This should include re-purposing of existing spaces and partnering with existing institutions to deliver training programmes. The following will be required:

- Conversion and repurposing of one secondary school (possible the Roxborough Secondary School) into an Eastern Technology Centre with appropriate teaching and learning materials and technological resources
- Partnership with National Energy Skills Centre (NESC) to deliver programmes in air-conditioning and mechanical skills. **This could begin immediately and be fully operationalised within one year**
- Partnership with MIC-IT to re-establish a similar centre—Canaan/Bon Accord or Western Technology Training Centre. **Start date:** January 2021
- Provision of scholarship for potential tutors and teachers with certification at Level 3 and 4 to be instructors for the centres. **Start date:** April 2021
- Development of introductory construction programmes for primary schools
- Expansion and improvement of TVET programmes at secondary schools
- Provision of incentives for higher level training to students who demonstrate interest in construction and other vocational areas

The following could be implemented when school-based teaching resumes (expected: January 2021):

- Expansion and development of programmes at Levels 1 and 2 for persons in social programmes such as URP, CEPEP, OJT etc.
- Expansion of the existing Construction Certification Training Programme
- Graduation of participants from the training programmes into more sustainable jobs and into private enterprise

- **Expected expansion of the construction sector in Tobago**

  During and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the construction sector is expected to play a major role in the road to recovery. Skilled and semi-skilled workers will be needed for shovel-ready projects, such as:

- Construction of the new airport terminal at Crown Point
- The anticipated upgrade of Sunwing Hotel
- The expected upgrade of Magdalena Grand Beach and Golf Resort
- Refurbishment of hotels and guesthouses that received stimulus and upgrade packages
- Expansion of the THA's housing programme
- Construction of homes by private contractors
- Mitigation of coastal erosion in south west Tobago by DIQE
- Construction of a marina(s) in Tobago
- Construction of an indoor sporting complex
- Construction of 5 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) centres

Training for all categories of workers for this sector **should begin** by January 2021

- **Putting quality mechanisms and support systems in place**

  One of the medium-term goals for the construction sector is to create and accelerate the necessary legislative, regulatory and operating mechanisms to improve the quality of output and expand the sector into a viable industry. To achieve these, the following should be considered:

  - Improving the procurement procedures at the THA level
  - Creating the legislative processes and procedures to expedite approvals for construction projects on the island
  - Sensitising persons undertaking building and construction projects in Tobago to the required Environmental Management Authority (EMA) processes and procedures and providing any necessary clarification
  - Providing incentives to contractors, skilled and unskilled workers to move from THA jobs to private enterprise (See greater detail in the Innovation and Entrepreneurship subsection of the Sustainability and Innovation Section)
  - Encouraging contractors to utilise local labour for Tobago projects
  - Registering and licensing Tobago contractors
  - Continuous training and development for all persons involved in the construction sector

In addition to the mechanisms listed above, the regulatory and legislative framework outlined in the National Roadmap to Recovery must also be adopted by the THA.

4.5 Creative Industry

4.5.1 Vision

The Creative Industry Vision for Tobago is to create opportunities for individuals to expose their creative talents to the world and to build successful independent careers in music, literature, the performing arts, film, photography, art, craft, fashion, graphic design and software design.

The analysis and recommendations below are aimed at steering Tobago towards that Creative Industry Vision and laying the foundation that can, in the future:

- Quickly identify talented, creative youth and steer them towards training opportunities
- Provide a rich environment for creatives to develop and strengthen their creative talents and business acumen
- Develop a persistent platform for creatives to expose their talents to the world
- Give residents and visitors regular opportunities to experience the talents of Tobago creatives

4.5.2 Situational Analysis

COVID-19 has affected the Creative Sector in several ways. It has caused loss of earnings, jobs and opportunities, along with forfeiture of artistic engagement. COVID-19 has changed every sphere of life across the globe. Still, creatives in Tobago can take heart from all the opportunities presented by the “new normal”, and the potential for economic growth in the sector. The pandemic also provides a perfect juncture for the Tobago House of Assembly to address the challenges of and significantly invest in the industry. In the Tobago context, there is an urgent need to look at the current state of the Creative and Cultural Industries.

Tobago has no structured music industry or creative industry. There is no organised value chain, and creatives operate in several silos on the island. There is an urgent need for research and data collection in the Creative Industries, and for policy formulation to recognise and

respect the contributions of the creative sector to the overall economy of Tobago, and by extension, the national economy.

The **Creative Industry includes several fields within visual arts, performing arts, media and software, literary arts, theatre arts and fine arts**.

When the sector is well managed, the creative economy can contribute to economic transformation, job creation, and innovation, and add to social inclusion and sustainable human development. There is no doubt that the Entertainment Economy and the Creative Cultural Industries can boost the GDP of Tobago. The Creative Industry in Tobago has excellent potential for contributing to the island's GDP.

Substantial investment in the sector must be made a priority now to ensure that the industry develops over the next five-year period. The following are the key pillars to be considered:

1. Governance
2. Performances and Exhibitions
3. Education and Training
4. Professionalisation
5. A Tobago Creative Industry Foundation
6. Export

All recommendations fall under these pillars.

4.5.3 Recommendations – Governance

- **Policy on the Arts and Research**

  The Tobago House of Assembly must develop a firm system for the development and research of the Creative Industry in Tobago, and recognise that the industry has the potential to contribute significantly to the GDP of Tobago. The key objectives are for the creatives to recognise that investment must return, and for Government to recognise its responsibility to support the development of the sector. This policy will include employing researchers to conduct a workforce audit in the creative industry in Tobago. The audit will afford proper planning for courses and programmes in the arts in the future

- **Festival Tourism | Event Tourism**

There must be a firm policy on Event Tourism/Festival Tourism for the island. The policy will seek to engage Tobago promoters and event personnel to implement a coordinated approach to event productions on the island. The event industry will integrate its objectives with the Tourism sector and the Economic interest of the THA. This policy should include collaboration with Tobago Tourism Agency, Festivals Commission, and the Tobago Performing Arts Company (TPAC)

4.5.4 Recommendations – Performances & Exhibitions

- **Virtual Streaming Platforms |Virtual Shows**

  There are several platforms available to creatives to create and showcase content, which can be shown on live Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Social media will allow creatives to reach a much wider audience and market the destination and its cultural products. This avenue should be available to all creatives for their shows.

  A Tobago Creative Industry Foundation will establish prescribed criteria and a vetting process. These requirements will address the quality and benefits of the proposed content, as well as the branding and marketing of the artiste and the destination. The highest costs to be considered will come in the form of physical layout of venues and artiste fees. The creatives who wish to conduct performances, exhibitions and shows will have to settle for either a hybrid of small live audiences and virtual streaming platforms, or purely virtual streaming. This would be applicable during the COVID-19 period and would also develop as the new normal beyond the pandemic period

- **Film Script-to-Screen Projects**

  This is an excellent opportunity for film creatives to submit proposals for funding for films to be created as local productions. It will also entail the marketing of locations in Tobago to outside filmmakers.

- **Art Facelift for Scarborough**

  The Project is a unique initiative designed to assist in the Facelift of Scarborough through Art. It will be an outlet for young art students to be innovative and to showcase their talent. The art community will identify the spaces in the Scarborough area to be used for this project.

- **Appointment of a Grant Jury**

  THA should appoint an independent jury/board/panel to assess the merits of open calls for creative proposals. The jury will determine the funding and quality of engagement. This will ensure that the jury will follow a fair process. The disbursement of funds and the proposals must benefit community strengthening, skills development or the export of innovative products from Tobago.

  Grant proposals will be evaluated for the following:

  - Touring
  - Productions – Content creation | showcase
  - Distribution
  - Capacity Building Workshops

  The THA recognises the value that the arts, culture and creatives contribute to Tobago and the economy. As such, the Grant Jury will be appointed to adjudicate on submissions for funding.

  Jury Objectives

  - Collaborating with the Business Development Officer in the Division of Tourism, Culture and Transportation
  - Reviewing and evaluating applications submitted quarterly to the Grant Jury
  - Recommending a fair allocation of the available funds based on the assessment criteria laid out by the Division of Tourism, Culture and Transformation
  - Jurors should have regard for the THA's support and growth of the Tobago arts and culture sector
  - The Grant Jury's recommendations will be submitted to the Division to determine and finalise funding allocations

  Jury Composition

  - Jurors should be selected with consideration given to fair representation of cultural/artistic disciplines, gender, generations and cultural diversity. The jury will comprise professional creatives, administrators from arts and culture organisations and community members at large
  - Nominees must be residents of Tobago and at least 18 years old
  - Jury appointments will be unpaid, volunteer positions

The Grant Jury will evaluate applications based on three criteria: artistic/cultural merit, community impact/benefits and organisational/financial health

4.5.5 Recommendations – Education & Training

- **Tobago School for the Arts**

  Develop and start the **Tobago School for the Arts** with emphasis on the Performing Arts in the initial year. The proposed site can be Shaw Park Complex (SPC), where three rooms are already identified as creative spaces in the overall

  Critical Catalyst

  business model of SPC. The primary emphasis can be contemporary music, dance and drama. The process can start immediately with a part-time school, which will develop into a full-time academy within three years. This funding will also cover online payments for certified courses with established and accredited institutions, e.g. *Coursera and Berklee College of Music*. The list of programmes that can be developed immediately in the short term would include the following:

  - The Tobago Steelpan Making and Tuning Course
  - The Tobago Tambrin Making and Playing Course
  - Traditional and Contemporary Drumming Course
  - Rudiments of Drama
  - Contemporary Keyboard
  - Fundamentals of Bass Playing
  - The Beauty of Strings
  - The Power of the Brass
  - The air of the woodwinds
  - Dance Workshops
  - Music Theory
  - Folk Song Arranging
  - Steelpan Arranging
  - Vocal Coaching
  - Photography 101
  - Fashion Basics

- **Performing Arts in Primary Schools**

  The THA should immediately develop a robust programme for the performing arts in Primary Schools. It is necessary to pay attention to building early creative capacity in the Creative Sector; this will enhance long term plans for developing the Tobago Youth Steel Orchestra, a Tobago Symphonic Orchestra, a Tobago Dance Company, and a Tobago Drama Company

4.5.6 Recommendations – Professionalisation

- **The Business of the Arts Workshops**

  There is a need to develop and implement several workshops on the business of the arts. This Project will entail collaborating with national agencies such as CreativeTT and the Intellectual Property Office to craft courses that will help to advise and build capacity on the island for all creatives in the business of the arts. Tobago creatives will learn and appreciate the importance of patents, copyright, trademarks and overall intellectual property rights for all their creations

4.5.7 Recommendations – Tobago Creative Industries Foundation

- **Tobago Creative Industries Foundation**

  The Tobago House of Assembly should appoint an implementation committee titled ***The Tobago Creative Industry Foundation*** (TCIF), which will comprise competencies from the THA, the Business sector and Civil Society.

  The committee will operate as an independent support implementation unit with a small staff. The committee will ensure that the recommendations outlined for the Creative sector are implemented by the various Divisions, which will be tasked with executing the initiatives, e.g. Division of Tourism, Culture and Transportation

- **Creation of a Tobago Artisan and Culture Market**

  One of the first projects for the TCIF to address is identifying a space for the Tobago Artisan and Culture Market to be designed and built. There is also the possibility of adapting existing spaces owned by the THA to achieve the same results. This market would become a platform for showcasing the best artists and their works continuously and sustainably

- **Media and Marketing for Creatives Department**

  The THA should task the TCIF with employing at least three (3) persons who have competencies in Creative Graphics, Media, IT, Marketing and Website Development. These persons will work as part of the Media and Marketing for Creatives sub-department of the Tobago Creative Industry Foundation. This sub-department will assist creatives in raising their level and quality of work to meet global standards. The initiative will ensure creatives have the opportunity to adopt international best practices and become competitive as the destination prepares to become a tourism hub post COVID-19. This process will also feature evaluations that are based on established criteria

4.5.8 Recommendations – Export

Tobago has a rich pool of cultural assets that can be developed further and exported to the broader world. The indigenous Tobago Tambrin can be further extended and fused with other contemporary forms of music to create a new Tobago sound. There are rich choral entities that tour and perform at various festivals worldwide with a unique sound and performance style. Tobago's rich cultural content can be scripted into films for export. The island's artists are world-class and can undoubtedly offer exhibitions across the globe and unique art pieces for sale. The industry can look at developing a Tobago dance suite that is commercial and broad in scope.

- **Tobago Arts Ambassadors**

  There is a need to highlight and celebrate the island's top creatives, who can become ambassadors of Tobago. The THA should develop a system to prepare some of Tobago's top market-ready artistes to maximise opportunities to perform at trade shows globally, e.g. MIDEM[7], SXSW[8], Arts Trade Shows.

  These initiatives will involve the following:

  - Liaising with music export professionals to determine the path Tobago can follow to maximise its potential

[7] Marché International du Disque et de l'Edition Musicale (International Record and Music Publishing Market)
[8] South by Southwest

- Creating a database of trade shows and other events that can give traction to Tobago's creatives. This action should be treated with urgency
- Proactivity from creatives in developing and selling their careers

This area of engagement can certainly facilitate domestic economic activity and afford some elements of international trade.

With the right preparations now, in the COVID-19 period, the island and its creatives could become primed to take advantage of opportunities to engage the international community, and to guarantee international awareness and visibility of the destination.

4.6 Tourism

4.6.1 Vision

The Tourism Vision for Tobago is to emerge as an island uniquely attractive to tourists from all over the world, with sustainable offerings that merge the best of the island's human, cultural and natural assets. This would provide a uniquely fulfilling experience for visitors, and for the hosts who appreciate and understand their relationship with tourism.

The analysis and recommendations below are intended to steer Tobago towards that Tourism Vision and lay the foundation that can, in the future:

- Produce a sector whose establishments are resilient and flexible enough to adapt to changes in the global market
- Transform Tobago into a high-quality, responsible destination that evolves to meet tourist demand while maintaining the integrity of its cultural and natural environment
- Deepen coordination among local and international operators, state and policymakers and workers and other residents
- Develop highly-trained tourism employees that can meet the standard of any establishment worldwide
- Generate millions of social media and traditional marketing impressions for Tobago from prospective worldwide tourists annually

4.6.2 Situational Analysis

In the context of the recovery and economic development of Tobago, tourism remains a core feature. For Tobago, tourism has been the main driver of development outside of the Tobago House of Assembly. Although the industry's growth has been hard-pressed in recent years, the responsible development and management of tourism has tremendous potential to positively impact the destination and the lives of its residents. Tobago can strategically reposition itself by refocusing on tourism development and reimagining tourism as a tool to stimulate real growth and to transform the local economy by generating foreign exchange.

Private sector economic activity in Tobago continues to be largely driven by the tourism sector, and in recent years, the sector has grappled with the consistent decline in international arrivals, limited capital funding and foreign direct investment and an inter-island transportation system that has faced multiple challenges. The onset of COVID-19 further impaired the fledgling industry, which reeled in shock from the closure of the country's borders, a sharp drop in inter-island travel and social restrictions and other health protocols.

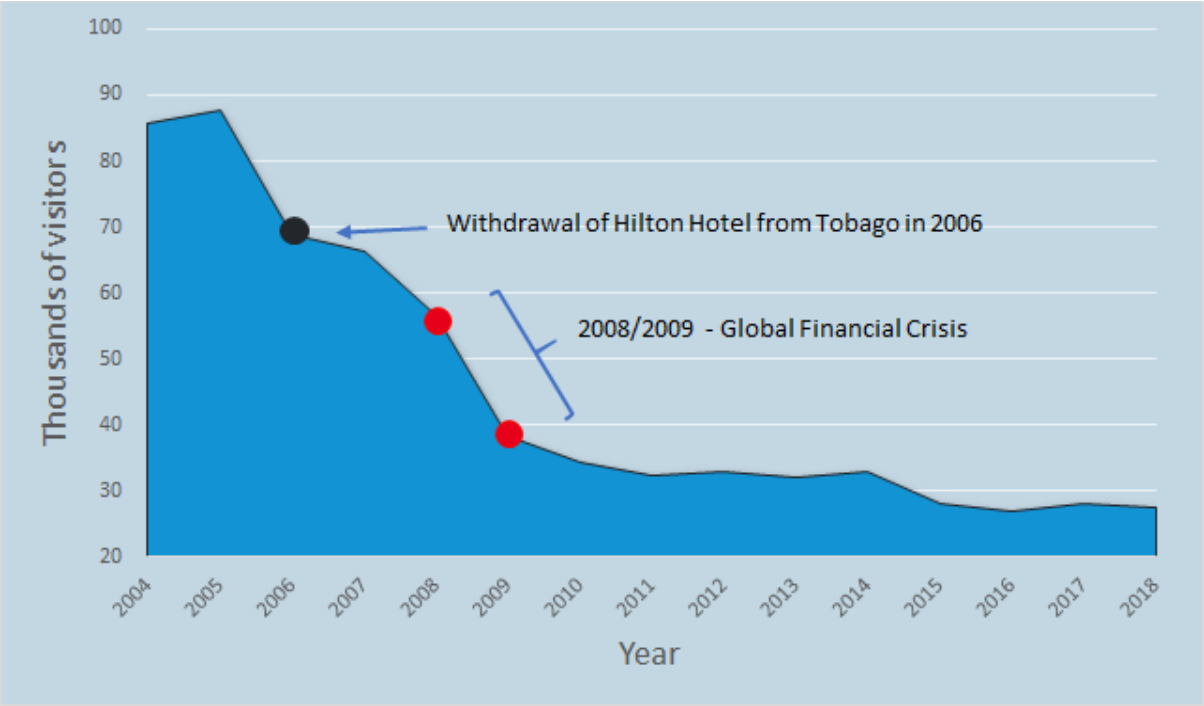


Figure 3 International Arrivals to Tobago by Air, 2004-2018

Figure 3 above highlights the sharp fall in international arrivals from a peak of 87,000 in 2005 to fewer than 30,000 in 2018. The destination has struggled to recover from significant events

before 2010, including the withdrawal of the Hilton brand in 2006 and the 2008/2009 global financial crisis. Now, even after the introduction of the Tobago Tourism Agency Limited (TTAL) in 2017, any momentum from marketing and development efforts have now been effectively stymied by COVID-19.



Figure 4 Domestic Arrivals to Tobago by Air & Ferry, 2007-2018

Figure 4 highlights the steep decline in domestic arrivals, which coincided with the inter-island ferry challenges of 2014-2017. It should be noted that preliminary data indicate an increase in ferry passengers after 2018.



Figure 5 Hotel & Guest House Occupancy Rates in Tobago, 2008-2018

As shown in Figure 5, from the period of the global financial crisis in 2008 to the end of 2018, occupancy rates on the island have never moved beyond 50%. With the interruption of global tourism and domestic travel and the uncertainty of future travel as a result of COVID-19, ***drastic improvements in occupancy rates are highly unlikely without drastic action***.

Moving forward, the non-regulation of the industry, a lack of enforcement regarding standards, poor linkage between ancillary sectors and silo-based operation of key stakeholders (DTCT and TTAL) and other linked Divisions must be addressed head-on as the island seeks to recover and grow. Policymakers should move towards the philosophical underpinnings of **Responsible Tourism** development to ensure the growth and sustainability of tourism for the island of Tobago and tourism business survival and recovery post-COVID-19.

Responsible Tourism is a contemporary concept that gained prominence following the 2002 Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism. Sustainable Tourism, recognised by World Travel Market in 2007, and Responsible Tourism have the same end goal: positive economic, social and environmental impacts on the host destination. Responsible Tourism, however, is about making “better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit” in that

order. It is about ***using tourism*** rather than ***being used by it***. Responsible tourism requires every individual actor, from policymaker to resident and visitor, to be intentionally responsible in their approach to tourism and their interaction with the destination. It is culturally sensitive, engenders respect between tourists and hosts and builds local pride and confidence. This is the basis for the recommendations below.

4.6.3 Recommendations:

The tourism sector recommendations are being proposed under three broad headings: Training & Education, Product Development & Enhancement and Destination Marketing. These headings cover a range of strategic and comprehensive short- to long-term measures. Immediate recommendations related to the announced accommodation and business grants for the sector must be the first priority. These are listed below, and followed by the broader tourism sector recommendations.

4.6.3.1 Recommendations for Immediate Action:

- **Review and Update Programmes for Government Funding**

  This will encourage maximum participation and capture of tourism business information towards increased tax collection, and ease the transition towards a regulated tourism industry and the establishment of the Trinidad & Tobago Revenue Authority.

  Update Tourism Accommodation Upgrade Programme (TAUP)

  - Negotiate with the Ministry of Finance to secure amnesty for properties that are not registered with the Companies Registrar and Board of Inland Revenue (BIR). These properties can be given an opportunity to qualify themselves for the programme. (Same as TBRG below)
  - Negotiate with the Ministry of Finance to secure amnesty for properties that are registered but not tax compliant by offering deferral of payment and interest to 2022 once a declaration of tax owed is filed with BIR. (Same as TBRG below)

  Update Tourism Business Relief Grant (TBRG)

  - Negotiate with the Ministry of Finance to secure amnesty for properties that are not registered with the Companies Registrar and Board of Inland Revenue

(BIR). These properties can be given an opportunity to qualify themselves for the programme. (same as TAUP Above)

- Negotiate with the Ministry of Finance to secure amnesty for properties that are registered but not tax or national insurance scheme (NIS) compliant by offering deferral of payment and interest to 2022 once a declaration of tax owed is filed with BIR. (same as TAUP Above)
- Allow access to grant and loan facilities for businesses in operation for at least **one** year prior to March 2020
- Eliminate the need for final sign off and approval by the political head of the Division
- Validate the need for scope of works review and local supplier-requirement
- Engage private sector and other relevant state agencies to assist with effective review of applications ("peer review")
- Expand Areas for Fund Usage to include
  - Sanitisation and Health & Safety
  - Staff Training Through THTI
  - Security Costs

- **Government Loan Guarantee (GLG), Banking & Utilities Intervention**

  GLG

  - Collaborate with Central Bank and commercial banks to revise the criteria for accessing the guarantee facility, including a review on the conditions and provision for extension of payment breaks
  - Consider re-purposing some of the Tourism GLG Programme funding into a fund to continue supporting tourism businesses over the next three to five years as the economy recovers. The fund could be managed by a specialist Board of Directors comprising tourism and economic development experts

Banking

- Discuss/Negotiate with Bankers Association of Trinidad & Tobago (BATT) to support industry recovery following prolonged shutdown, with extension of moratorium to at least one (1) year for mortgage consolidation

Utilities

- Negotiate with the relevant authorities for the removal of penalty interest for (one) 1 year to support the survival and recovery of tourism businesses, and ultimately the local tourism industry

Phased Reopening & Tourism Workers Protection

- Urgently design and execute a plan for the phased and sustained reopening (domestic, then regional and international) of the destination in collaboration with Central Government and industry stakeholders
  - Core areas of focus must be standard: establishing estimated time-frames for border re-opening, biosecurity protocol implementation to boost visitor confidence, inspirational domestic and international messaging and improved data and market intelligence towards effective marketing and attraction of foreign investment
- Appoint and immediately activate an airlift working team to reconnect the destination with the international market. Post-crisis, there will be significant constraints to air service globally. Tobago must be positioned now to secure attractive, economically beneficial airlift partnerships that will bring preferred flights to the island and boost tourism efforts. Failure to position Tobago now will result in the island having to settle for the lesser options available
- Review Occupational Safety and Health Agency (OSHA) and Industrial Act for Tourism Workers in line with new Health Ordinances

4.6.3.2 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth:

- **Develop 5-Year Strategic Tourism Development Plan**

The development of a strategic five (5) year tourism plan with inputs from the Division of Tourism, Culture, and Transportation (DTCT), Tobago Tourism Agency Ltd (TTAL) and

other relevant public and private industry stakeholders is critical to streamlining the industry, and must be renewed every five (5) years. This overarching document will guide the industry and should inform approaches, investments, growth strategy, accountability and stakeholder operations from the ground level to policymaker.

The following areas of focus must be included, and it should also be noted that this list is not exhaustive. Needs and impact assessments will ensure a well-aligned plan.

- The re-establishment of the tourism standing committee/standing tourism council
- A clear nexus between DTCT and the TTAL
- Industry regulations and taxes
- International certifications, standards and service delivery
- Digitalisation of industry
- Cruise infrastructure, ground operations and policy development
- Research, data collection and disaggregation of Tobago-specific data
- Customs and immigration
- Zonal/cluster development for community tourism and establishment of a duty-free zone(s) for Destination Tobago
- Niche development, identification and promotion; inclusion of indigenous elements in product development
- Regeneration of the capital, domestic and international airlift; investment, incentives and ease of doing business
- Room stock
- Infrastructure development
- Crime
- Disaster and crisis management
- Environmental preservation and rehabilitation
- Sites and attractions management and development
- Ground transportation management
- Targeted industry capacity building for indigenous senior and management human resources

- Internal capacity building, staff retention and performance management and training (DTCT & TTAL)
- Industry health protocols

Core/Urgent areas for early focus:

- Operationalisation of Tourism Standing Committee/Standing Tourism Council
- Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities and allocation of necessary capital and human resources to ensure success. The DTCT (THA) should be focused on policy; this should be clearly communicated and understood, and should be reflected in programme activities. TTAL should be the empowered implementation/executing body for the destination. The relationship between both should be symbiotic, not competitive
- Establishment/enforcement of industry regulations and standards
- Improvement of Data Collection for Destination Tobago; use of data to rebuild industry and drive decision-making. Data collection is discussed in detail in the Sustainability and Innovation section
- Establishment of a payment system for visitors accessing healthcare services

- **Develop Training and Education**



Sustained capacity building, industry awareness and education are key to altering negative perceptions and attitudes in the tourism industry, as well as addressing the gaps in service delivery and available workforce. The benefits will include the

re-creation of a service-driven and competitive industry that appeals to the discerning tourist; a trained, proud and dedicated populace and tourism workforce; the transformation of service delivery and improved public attitudes towards tourism and tourists; and an increased awareness of tourism's value and importance to Tobago's economy. This is linked to the various educational initiatives recommended in the Productivity, Governance, and Human Resource Development section of this document. The following are the suggested core elements of this recommendation:

- **5-Year Island-wide Industry Training Initiative**, which should:
  - Incorporate a 'Train the Trainer' component

- Be guided by needs assessment and collaborative effort with THTI for certification (such as voluntary eco-label Green Key)
- Explore topics inclusive of, but not limited to service delivery; digitalisation of business, health safety and sanitisation; and reputation and crisis management
- Extend beyond public and private tourism workers
- Develop an accredited and annually renewable industry seal
- Link to an 'Annual Tobago Service Awards'

- **Industry Tourism Awareness Programme**, which should:
  - Design and implement a comprehensive and cohesive multimedia tourism awareness campaign, inclusive of an ongoing series for traditional and new media; to be sustained over a 5-year period in the first instance
  - Focus on benefits/value, industry linkages and interconnectedness, success stories
  - Expand youth tourism initiatives at primary and secondary school and community and civic engagement through competitions and unique programmes
  - Approach the private sector as key sponsors

- **Curriculum Development**, which should:
  - Be based on collaboration between the DTCT, THTI and the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy's Curriculum Unit with the aim of developing and implementing Tobago-centric and tourism-focused components into the primary and secondary school curriculum
  - List specialist stakeholders, including Buccoo Reef Trust, Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville (ERIC), Caribbean Tourism Organization, Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association and other relevant organisations
  - Ensure that components are integrated, interactive and include field engagement, with a focus on Tobago's history, tourism history, tourism careers and the role of Destination Ambassador for the ordinary citizen.

Components should also involve the preservation of Tobago's environment and indigenous culture (creative arts, foods, festivals, music, language etc)

- **Develop & Enhance the Tourism Product**



Implement immediate to medium-term strategies for the development and enhancement of the local tourism architecture, with community tourism as the nexus. This architecture should include natural and heritage assets, and be aimed

at creating a heightened and positive visitor experience and increasing on-island revenue. The following are actions of focus to support ongoing and planned initiatives of DTCT and TTAL:

  - **A comprehensive destination product audit**, and the development of destination product assets management, monetisation, maintenance and protection policy to be linked to the 5-Year Strategic Plan presented earlier
  - Hiring of additional Product Development Officers within DTCT and TTAL with the specific mandates to regularly collect product data, ensure industry standard compliance, interact with stakeholders and make recommendations. Having just two (2) officers is woefully inadequate given the needs of the destination at this stage of recovery and development
  - Establishment of a cross-sector team between DTCT, TTAL, the Division of Food Production, Forestry and Fisheries (DFPFF), the Division of Infrastructure, Quarries and the Environment (DIQE) and relevant private sector stakeholders to align product identification, development and destination branding/marketing
  - Establishment of the Tobago Transfer Desk at Piarco International Airport to provide engagement and a 'Tobago customer touch point' that is consistent with global standards
  - Geo-mapping/tagging of the destination's natural and heritage assets, which would be made available via an app/website and Google Maps. Collaboration

with the Tobago Heritage Conservation Society is recommended as it has already completed extensive data collection and digital mapping

- Management and maintenance of natural and heritage assets through transparent procurement processes that are open to civic and community organisations (as priority) and the private sector, which is necessary to effectively manage and monetise these assets
- Enhancement of the visitor experience through imagery and signage, possibly featuring QR Codes or another interactive feature that links to geo-tagged/mapped sites and attractions
- Information centre upgrades to reflect the new destination brand and to allow for income generation through the sale of Tobago-branded items
- Establishment of integrated visitor hubs in Scarborough, Crown Point and Northside Tobago
- Elevating the cleanliness and appeal of the destination by implementing litter clean-up programmes, installing bathroom conveniences and removing illegal vending structures, especially in tourism hubs and the capital
- Review of current events/festivals tourism thrust to ensure maximum benefit and integration of tourism and the Orange Economy (creative industry) through creation of a clear plan of engagement and development targets for next 5 years. This aligns with recommendations from the Creative Industry section of this document and should be linked to the 5-Year Strategic Tourism Development Plan
    - All signature festivals/events must be reviewed towards determining true viability
    - New festivals/events should also be explored. Invite private sector proposals towards having greater private sector involvement and leadership while government facilitates on a decreasing basis as events become sustainable

- Regeneration of Scarborough, inclusive of near-port experiences, and training of local/courtesy guides for improved visitor experience in capital
    - Free Wi-Fi, development of trails, improvement of Botanical Gardens, walking and guided tours, establishment of artisan space (see recommendations from Creative Industry section of this document), duty-free shopping, information kiosks and other relevant additions

- **Investment**
    - Public review of the Foreign Investment Act to determine ways to improve its overall competitiveness, attractiveness and effectiveness, where applicable. This is developed further in the Finance and the Economy section



        - Administration, final approval and issuance of tourism incentive and land license applications in Tobago, as well as a review of the stamp duty on select tourism inputs, to be critically assessed in this review
    - Establishment of an investment desk/unit, as deemed appropriate, and a user-friendly online space that provides easy access to sites, relevant details and applications
    - Engagement of international players who can offer the perfect mix of brand and operational model that is consistent with the destination's blue-green development thrust. Areas of focus should include accommodation and recreation developments/ projects (land and sea)
    - Exploration of linking community tourism to the health and wellness niche and the agro-tourism value chain by establishing relevant activities/experiences. This should include Farm-to-Table experiences, tours, standardisation of natural medicine and exploration of nutraceuticals
    - Explore opportunities for investing in a proactive strategy to treat with the annual sargassum flooding of beaches. Presently, the THA has an established Tobago Sargassum Emergency Response Plan that reactively addresses the influx after it has reached Tobago's shores and has negatively impacted the

industry. As the island moves to recover and grow, the THA may find merit in exploring options to implement a proactive strategy that intercepts the sargassum before landfall, and stimulates entrepreneurship by converting the seaweed for beneficial use and potential income. This option is explored in detail in the Sustainability and Innovation section

- **Destination Marketing**

  Destination Tobago is fortunate to have more than one million travellers at its doorstep who do not have any major restrictions by way of travel documents, vaccination requirements or long-haul journeys. For an extended time, the domestic market has sustained the destination, even amidst its previous challenges and poor destination marketing. While there was failure in the past in balancing the focus on both international and domestic marketing, COVID-19 has placed the spotlight once more on the domestic market.

  - **A Sustained Integrated Domestic Staycation Campaign** should:
    - Include traditional and new (internet-based) media, with a strong presence on digital spaces in key locations
    - Highlight the four pillars of the ***Tobago Beyond*** marketing thrust: *Sea & Beaches, Nature/Environment, People, Culture, Heritage; Romance*
      - In addition to core niches in the new "Tobago Beyond" marketing thrust, explore a high-impact focus on promoting a dual experience for visitors—Eco Traditional Northeast Experience and Contemporary Southwest Experience. Domestic visitors are known to largely stay in and explore the western end, but with the recent UN designation of Northeast Tobago as a Man and the Biosphere Reserve, there is great potential for attracting more tourists to that area
    - Collaboration with Caribbean Airlines and local stakeholders to offer packaged holidays

- Creative focus on long weekends (with collaboration among stakeholders, including Caribbean Airlines and Trinidad and Tobago Inter-island Ferry Service for competitions/loyalty programme etc.)
- Collaborative showcase/initiative between TTAL and stakeholder associations (Hotel Association, Bed & Breakfast, Tour Operators & Guides, Bridal/Romance, Reef Operators, Dive, Restaurant & Bar, Jet Ski etc.)
- Centralised platform to access information on partners and participants in domestic campaigns
- Local Brand Awareness (Tobago) to ensure new brand penetration and buy-in and to develop brand loyalty.
- Creation of "Freedom/Free to move" campaign with special packages to align with the removal of inter-island travel restrictions

- **Incentivised Local Travel**
  - DTCT and TTAL to explore, with the Board of Inland Revenue and relevant authorities, the possibility of incentivising local travel over a determined period to further stimulate domestic travel

- **International Marketing Focus Areas**
  - Crafting a high-impact, targeted regional campaign
  - Prioritising international traveller segmentation and market selection through refined research to ensure targeted and results-driven marketing as the country's borders and global travel are re-energised
  - Allocating a fraction of the locally-collected room taxes into a fund to further support initiatives to maintain the Destination's presence in the international marketplace
  - Exploring a Destination Loyalty/Welcome Back Programme
  - Exploring weekly/monthly "Virtual Tours" in line with global trends as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. The virtual tours should focus on community assets and highlight creatives. This can be linked to the Virtual Platforms for Creatives discussed in the Creative Industry section

- Explore possible diaspora and colonial connections campaign with specifically designed visitor programmes, possibly in partnership with an air service provider (the diaspora is discussed in detail in the Resources for Recovery section)
    - Tobago Diaspora – Return Home & Reconnect
    - Europeans – Visit Tobago & Trace History

4.7 Sustainability and Innovation

4.7.1 Vision

The Sustainability Vision for Tobago is to achieve holistic and effective management of resources, including natural resources, human resources and financial resources, with an inclusive, transparent decision-making system built on innovative problem-solving to create a resilient and successful society.

The analysis and recommendations below are aimed at steering Tobago towards that Sustainability Vision and lay a foundation that can, in the future:

- Stimulate and harness the natural ingenuity and creativity of Tobago residents
- Transform the THA into the nation's most efficient and effective state agency
- Ensure the improvement of the lives of residents goes hand in hand with the improvement of the state of the environment
- Make Tobago resilient to natural and socio-economic disasters
- Make solar and wind energy the main power sources
- Make the Internet the default method for all government and business transactions and
- Generate an export-focused entrepreneurship culture in Tobago

4.7.2 Sustainability and Resilience

Sustainability refers to provision of present human needs without prejudicing the ability of future generations to provide for their own needs**. It has economic, environmental, and social elements that must be considered for all major decisions**. There is little evidence that Tobago holistically uses sustainability for its development, and this is leading to wastage of financial and human resources, worsening environmental quality and poor overall well-being of

Tobagonians. An economy that generates low carbon, is resource efficient and is socially inclusive is considered a ***Green Economy***. Tobago should be working towards a Green Economy.

Regarding the environment, Tobago has been blessed with nature that was formally recognised as special as early as the 1700's, before any environmental movement, when the Main Ridge rainforest was made a protected area. That has limited development in the forest but other sensitive environmental areas of Tobago are not given as much respect. The mangroves around Tobago, as well as the waters around the island—especially the Buccoo Reef and the Bon Accord Lagoon—are experiencing pollution pressure from human activity. There is a constant runoff of toxic wastewater from domestic activities, concentrated in the south west of the island, which have caused dangerous pollution that can harm mangroves and corals and facilitate the growth of bacteria in the beaches where locals and visitors bathe. Tobago's poor wastewater management has even been highlighted internationally[9]. It must be noted, however, that recently, a new wastewater treatment plant was opened in Southwest Tobago which should reduce, but not eliminate, the flow of waste water that leaks into the surrounding waters.

There have been many helpful initiatives over the years such as collaborative efforts by the THA (Department of the Environment), private sector (Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Association) and civil society (Environment Tobago and others), along with partners in Trinidad and internationally. These have attempted to incorporate sustainable environmental planning and analysis in all economic activity of the island. Some other initiatives, such as the recent implementation of greater regulation for the Buccoo Reef Marine Park, are excellent steps in the right direction for Tobago's long term. Additionally, North-East Tobago was recently designated a UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserve, which are "learning places for sustainable development"[10]. This brings an excellent opportunity for Tobago to be a national and global leader in sustainable development. The work rests on actors within Trinidad and Tobago however, to develop and implement a programme to take advantage of this international recognition.

[9] https://www.wri.org/blog/2016/06/history-untreated-sewage-sours-tobagos-waters
[10] https://en.unesco.org/news/twenty-five-sites-join-unescos-world-network-biosphere-reserves

Challenges still exist. Despite the existence of the Environmental Partnership, there is not always early communication when the state enables major construction that strongly affects the environment, such as recent roads built in Eastern Tobago that led to damaged hillsides and pollution of formerly pristine beaches. Extensive pollution from economic activity, damage to animal habitats, illegal hunting, litter, illegal dumping (on land or in water) and an official dump that is past its useful life are some of the chief challenges for Tobago's environment. The broader and more ominous challenge of climate change looms over all of these since, it's considered the "threat multiplier". Climate change, for instance, is posing an immediate threat to Tobago, while the frequent flood of Sargassum is affecting many aspects of Tobago life (Climate Change and a Proactive Sargassum Response are discussed in greater detail in later sections). All of this must be considered when making long-term plans for the island. The sustainability of Tobago requires that the environment be front and centre in major decisions, considering how dependent Tobago is on the island's natural assets.

Sustainability is closely related to the concept of resilience—the ability to recover quickly from change or misfortune. The THA and the Central Government had access to emergency healthcare and financial resources to help reduce social and economic fallout from COVID-19. This was recognised by international bodies as key to the country's relative success in managing the pandemic. However, pivoting THA to virtual operations or reducing recurrent spending, or pivoting Tobago's economy to find alternative income sources has not been as smooth or as rapid as the rollout of those social support measures. Some senior staff in the THA have complained of the difficulties in having staff work remotely. Additionally, severe risks exist in Tobago's digital communications system (such as the sole fibre optic cable connection to Trinidad, on which almost 100% of the island's digital communications depends – most Caribbean islands have 2-4 of such cables), and Tobago's natural catastrophe management system (such as risk management infrastructure of the Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) which needs updating).

4.7.2.1 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth

- **Create a Sustainable Development Policy Supported by Applicable *Assembly Laws***
  This policy would establish an overarching framework and key principles to guide and coordinate sustainable development in Tobago in line with the global 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development. Tobago has to use **sustainable development (in its broadest sense: *environmental, economic, social*)** as its north star for all public and private spending. These aims can be mutually reinforcing, so the Policy will set out a framework to harmonise the THA's activities towards a common goal, and will help strengthen Tobago's unique heritage, facilitating sustainable livelihoods ***by aligning development with sustainability.*** It should also codify the right of the people of Tobago to a healthy environment, transparent public spending and good governance. And this would build on the recent UNESCO Man and the Biosphere designation for north east Tobago.

Supporting legislation in Tobago can come via ***Assembly Law(s)*** on Sustainable Development[11], which THA has the power to implement for Tobago via Section 29 of the THA Act. Implementation of this Policy and any supporting laws would require them to be incorporated into the work of all THA Divisions

- **Strengthen the Sustainable Development function of the Planning Department**



There is a need for a body to direct Tobago's sustainability thrust in its broadest sense (economic, environmental, and social). It would review, advise and/or

approve any proposal across all of THA costing more than a specified amount (such as TT$500,000). This unit should also advise the Executive Council on sustainability issues broadly; respond to any requests from any Technical Lead from across the THA for advice on sustainability of their operations, projects, and proposals; liaise with any external experts as needed to adequately evaluate proposals; and provide workshops to educate the public sector on sustainability issues. Besides using internationally-accepted protocols for sustainability, the unit should be guided by existing policy of the THA and the Central Government and the Multi-year Strategic Planning and Budgeting Framework as recommended in the Finance and the Economy section of this document. The Planning Department already performs some of these functions, and should be supported in providing all of them. Additional considerations:

[11] Milligan, B., & Mehra, M. (2018). Environmental Law Making and Oversight for Sustainable Development: A guide for Legislators. UN Environment

- **Require policy alignment in project proposals** – each Division or unit that submits a proposal responds to a Call Circular issued by the Planning Department, which details the needs. This circular should also require proposed projects to show how they are aligned with existing policy and sustainable development more broadly. Divisions should then have the ability to engage the Planning Department for advice in proposal writing
- **Include Contingency Funds Spending** – the Contingency Fund stores unspent funds of the THA and is used in emergencies (such as COVID-19 pandemic recovery). This special fund should still, however, be subject to the Sustainable Development procedure described above

- **Update Strategic Plans**

  Ensure that each Division and entity of the THA **has a strategic plan** that is aligned with the national strategic planning documents, and with the THA's guiding policy

- **Project Management Office**

  Develop a **Project Management Office** (PMO) in the Office of the Chief Secretary (OCS) to employ and enforce international project management best practices and to implement large THA projects. The PMO, though reporting at a high level to the Chief Administrator, will be required to work closely with all Divisions requiring its services to meet their needs as efficiently as possible, through interaction with divisional Directors and Administrators as needed. Effectively the office will have to meet the needs of its clients (Divisions) to fulfil its mandate within the OCS

- **Expand use of Green Fund with CSO's**

  Review and update existing and new project proposals (especially in the tourism, construction and agriculture sectors) to **add to them elements of environmental remediation and conservation. This should be done in collaboration with civil society and community groups in order to apply to the environment-focused Green Fund**. The Green Fund is a TT$6 billion business-levy financed national fund earmarked for environmental remediation and conservation across Trinidad and Tobago

- **Institutionalise Data Collection and Sharing**

  Create a **Tobago Data Agency** to collaboratively develop automated data collection and verification systems (including human processes) with all THA Divisions for all parts of the Tobago society and economy, and a web platform (e.g. data.tha.gov.tt) to widely share data on Tobago.

  Data collection to include governance (e.g. THA policies and relevant legislation); demographic data (e.g. population distribution); social data (e.g. health statistics, domestic violence, child protection, service use); and economic data (companies registered in Tobago, economic activity by sector, movement of goods and people, Tobago exports and imports etc). The data collection and analysis resources of the Economic Management and Research Unit (EMRU) and the Policy Research and Development Institute (PRDI) should be judiciously integrated in this initiative

- **THA Succession Planning and Management**

  Succession planning is the means by which an organisation prepares to replace managers, executives and other key employees who leave their positions to ensure continuity of the work. It is critical to the organisation's continued and future success. This is an important part of the sustainability of the Tobago Public Sector. The THA needs a comprehensive succession planning policy, and until this is developed, we should ensure that THA staff who are a few years to retirement (particularly those with decades of experience) are shadowed by younger staff with adequate qualifications and qualities to fill the role of the departing staff member. This is developed in greater detail in the Productivity, Governance, and Human Resource Development Section

4.7.3 Climate Change

COVID-19 has underscored the need for Tobago to explore and adopt more economical and environmentally sustainable measures through use of its readily available natural resources. Parallel to the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, global warming (climate change) is threatening Tobago's environment and human life. It is therefore briefly discussed here, with climate change-specific recommendations included. Tobago's geographical position, size and low-lying coasts make the island susceptible to climate change impacts like coastal erosion, landslides, flooding due to heavy rains and increasingly intense hurricanes. Several of the

island's coastal roads are at risk of being lost to the sea. Ocean acidification and elevated air and sea temperatures have adversely affected the corals in our marine area—evidence of this can be seen at the Buccoo Reef. Moved fishing areas and nurseries threaten the fishing industry and warmer oceans facilitated the invasion of the Sargassum seaweed.

Climate change, caused by greenhouse gas emissions such as carbon dioxide, is a global crisis that must be tackled immediately. Tobago's carbon footprint[12] is relatively small, therefore it cannot independently alter our climate change vulnerabilities, as the emissions from other countries are vast.

Fortunately, Tobago is endowed with naturally occurring environmental sustainability assets. Tobago's mangroves span a spatial extent of approximately 197 hectares and aids in carbon capture and storage. At its spine stretches the Main Ridge Forest Reserve, another carbon sink and a massive potential contributor to the green economy. Tobago's natural resources have revenue-earning potential, and immense universal value in biodiversity, climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation.

Tobago's focus must therefore be on preserving and marketing its carbon sinks, adapting to climate change impacts, and effecting a drastic paradigm shift towards a cleaner and greener Tobago through energy efficiency, energy conservation and the use of RE technology. Infrastructural improvements, operational changes, and behavioural changes are therefore required to maximise on these advantages.

4.7.3.1 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth:

- **Establish a Climate Change and Energy Department**

  The Climate Change and Energy Department, under the Office of the Chief Secretary, would consolidate expertise in climate change, renewable energy, and also allow water resources, waste management, and the land and marine environment to work cohesively (and not in silos). The Department would develop a Climate Change and Energy Policy and Roadmap (see also Energy Conservation (EC) and Energy Efficiency (EE) section); monitor and guide the THA in climate change-related decision-making; collect, analyse, manage and house climate change-related data; and implement and manage projects to reduce climate change vulnerability and emissions. The

[12] The Carbon footprint is the amount of Carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that are emitted due to the behaviour, lifestyle and operations of people in a place.

Department will also serve as the local focal point for collecting and reporting climate information to the THA and the Ministry of Planning and Development, and for managing public education on climate change and energy issues. This Department must work effectively with the Planning Department, as well as the Data Agency, the Department of the Environment (in DIQE), the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment (in DFPFF) and all other relevant agencies, since climate change will need to be mainstreamed into the work of the THA. **This Department should incorporate existing resources of the Coastal Zone Monitoring Unit (DIQE) and the Energy Unit (DEIE)**

- **Estimate Disaggregated Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sequestration[13] for Tobago**

  One of the first roles of the Climate Change and Energy Department would be to develop methodologies to perform **the first ever Tobago-specific estimate of greenhouse gas emissions,** broken down by sectors (transport—cars, trucks, public transport, ferry, aviation—housing, electricity, manufacturing etc.) and by gases (carbon dioxide, methane etc.), and **create a system within THA to develop these estimates in the future**. Additionally, estimation of the climate impact on the Main Ridge and other major carbon sinks, where carbon dioxide is absorbed, should be included

- **Promote Rain Water Harvesting**

  Tobago's water supply is strained, and climate projections show likely decline in rainfall in the future. Furthermore, a large portion of the rain that falls in Tobago currently runs off into the sea and cannot be used for consumption**.** Rainwater harvesting is an old idea that has never been significantly promoted in Tobago, though it can supplement the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) water supply of Tobago and will be increasingly important over time. It is therefore imperative to encourage the installation of rainwater tanks in hotels, offices, and homes, and encourage the utilisation of rainwater for activities such as landscape irrigation, gardening, pools, and

[13] Sequestration is the absorption of carbon dioxide by plants for photosynthesis. It's the main method by which greenhouse gases already emitted are removed from the atmosphere.

washing of vehicles, dishes and clothes. Fiscal incentives can be offered temporarily to facilitate and reward rainwater harvesting.

4.7.4 Energy

4.7.4.1 Energy Conservation (EC) and Energy Efficiency (EE)

Situational Analysis

Tobago, under its current energy system, can immediately benefit from operational cost savings if energy conservation and energy efficiency become prevalent and consciously practiced across all sectors in Tobago, particularly within the THA. At present, there are no active programmes to incentivise energy conservation and energy efficiency. If such programmes are promoted and adopted, Tobagonians will: (1) experience reduced utility bills; (2) insulate themselves in the event of increased T&TEC rates; and (3) protect the environment by reducing the island's carbon footprint.

Within the THA, operational cost savings in this area will create fiscal space, and the additional funds can then be channelled towards social and infrastructural development on the island and increasing renewable energy (RE) penetration. Energy conservation and energy efficiency in Tobago will generate more output for less input, reduce demand on energy consumption, aid in combating climate change, reduce the capital cost for RE technology, and improve its performance potential. It is therefore imperative that an energy management culture is infused in all sectors in Tobago to boost economic, social and environmental performance as the island seeks to diversify its energy mix and achieve sustainability.

Recommendations – Short to Medium Term

- Draft a **policy** that outlines energy conservation (EC) and energy efficiency (EE) measures, sets firm **Renewable Energy (RE) targets** specific to Tobago and plans an RE development strategy
- Develop and implement projects related to the Tobago-focused policy goals and the strategic actions and initiatives outlined for Tobago in the **EC and EE Policy and Action Plan for Trinidad and Tobago (2020 – 2024),** which addresses the economic, political,

social, environmental and planning aspects of energy utilisation and supply in the nation.

- Launch the ***LED by Example*** programme, designed to measure, monitor and encourage EE and EC practices across all Divisions in the THA and the private sector by addressing four major components: institutional values, policy and



regulatory framework, public awareness and financial schemes. The programme will involve:

  - Conducting **energy audits** in phases across all Divisions in THA and publishing the findings of energy consumption, energy savings potential and recommendations to improve efficiency. The public publishing of cost savings and recommendations can form part of incentivising businesses, communities, and households to adopt similar measures through the energy savings potential that will be outlined and proven by the audits
  - Load management workshops and strategies with THA employees to reduce consumption; turning off lights, computers and air conditioning units at the office when not in use; routine maintenance of air-conditioning (AC) units
  - Tracking of energy consumption post load management workshop
  - Launching **energy efficiency and energy conservation competitions** within THA Divisions, and among schools, village councils and communities through the Energy Unit
  - Public Awareness campaigns
  - Assessing capital expenditure, risk assessment and management associated with the need to:
    - Outfit buildings with motion sensor lights
    - Retrofit buildings with light emitting diode (LED) lights or do a phased replacement of incandescent or compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) with LED lights
    - Install inverter type air conditioners where required, or install devices to existing AC units to increase efficiency and
    - Install solar heaters in buildings with a demand for hot water
- Implement standards for energy efficiency, energy conservation, and energy

management. This should include requiring the use of ENERGY STAR-rated appliances, air conditioning units, and equipment across Tobago. Advocate for the mandatory labelling of the energy performance or energy rating of energy-consuming products that are clear and easy to read

- Promote low cost certified training of candidates in the field of energy efficiency to develop human resource capacity and strengthen the institutional framework in Tobago, which will enable monitoring, evaluating, managing and reporting on the progress of initiatives and projects to the Energy Unit every quarter
- Establish a **special fund within the THA that can be accessed by Civil Society Organisations** to support, promote and implement environmental projects, and Renewable energy initiatives in Tobago.

  This fund can be activated by the monies saved from becoming energy efficient



- Mandate that, moving forward, all street lights to be installed utilise LED bulbs

Recommendations - Medium to Long Term

- Develop training in building energy simulation tools to model energy consumption for cooling, ventilation and water use in buildings
- Mandate large energy consumers to have routine energy audits
- Retrofit all street lighting bulbs with LED bulbs
- Mandate that new buildings follow energy efficient building designs and building codes, including those of the TT Bureau of Standards (TTBS) and the US Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). This should be synergised with the Town and Country Planning Division and the Integrated Coastal Zone Management initiatives
- Incentivise retrofitting of existing buildings to become more energy efficient

4.7.4.2 Renewable Energy

Situational Analysis

Tobago benefits from a low and stable unit cost of fossil fuel-generated electricity. As a result, there has been, over the years, no motivation for Tobagonians to aggressively pursue cleaner, more sustainable forms of energy such as wind and solar power generation. Apart from the non-renewable nature of natural gas and its association with greenhouse gas emissions, the

falling prices of oil and gas during the COVID-19 pandemic accentuated the need to utilise non-renewable energy resources more effectively by:

- Becoming more conservative and efficient with our current power generation
- Diversifying our energy mix and integrating renewable energy technology in various sectors
- Increasing its revenue-generating capacity in the petrochemical sector

Tobago's power generating potential from both wind and solar is relatively high. Tobago experiences 2,500 to 3,000 hours of sun per year and 3-6 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per square metre per day of radiation. The North East Trade Winds, the primary regional wind system, also provides a reasonably stable wind regime along windward Tobago in villages such as Charlotteville, Speyside and Bacolet. Tobago has sufficient wind speeds to produce grid-scale generation, since surface roughness and friction are much reduced given the island's size.

Tobago's use of Renewable Energy (RE) at the building and utility scales is negligible. Transitioning from unsustainable non-renewable energy and its negative environmental effects to the clean, green and sustainable renewable energy provides an excellent opportunity to:

- Preserve the pristine Tobago environment *and* reduce its carbon footprint
- Align with Central Government's commitment to **increase RE penetration to 10% by the year 2021** and **reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by the year 2030**
- Provide new private sector opportunities and create diverse employment
- Diversify Tobago's energy mix, build energy and climate resilience and promote environmental sustainability in Tobago
- Reduce the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission's (T&TEC) coverage and distribution issues across Tobago, which include lack of electricity access to residents who live in remote areas or where the land is hilly, and voltage levels of less than 100V

Tobago can generate 100% of its energy from renewable technologies. The island's current 95MW installed capacity is projected to cover our growing electricity demand for the next 8-10 years; thereafter, all future electricity demand should be supplied by renewable energy sources until the current non-renewable generation systems are phased out. Tobago is in an ideal position to be a major contributor to Trinidad and Tobago's renewable energy transformation since the island isn't bound to power production contracts like Trinidad, can

supply Trinidad (as it has been doing) with excess power via cable ***and Tobago (THA) has responsibility over public utilities on the island through the THA Act[14].***

The utilisation of renewable energy on all scales will offer an excellent marketing strategy and promotion product for Tobago's tourism sector, conveniently support the production of agricultural by-products, support the transformation of the transportation sector, support innovation in Tobago and introduce climate adaptation measures.

Recommendations – Short to Medium Term



- Launch a **Tobago Energy website** to publish all initiatives, projects, energy management practices, interesting facts on how to conserve energy and become efficient and testimonials of projected and actual cost savings. The website will

  also have **a central renewable energy database** that identifies the zones and the extent of RE resource potential (solar, wind, etc.) available at various locations across Tobago, i.e., data from the wind resource assessment plan, solar statistics, and any natural resource data that forms a nexus with energy
- Establish **capacity building and apprenticeship programmes** to prepare a competent RE technology workforce for both the private and public sector. This can be done through a technical exchange programme, sponsoring internships at renewable energy and energy efficiency centres regionally or internationally, and/or offering **postgraduate or PhD scholarships annually (between 2020 and 2023)** to Tobagonians who have an interest in Renewable Energy Technology to study locally or regionally
- Conduct a **wind resource assessment plan** (WRAP) specific to Tobago to clearly identify wind energy zones in Tobago and potential sites for wind farm development across the island. The WRAP will also inform the feasibility and scale of wind farm investment
- The Energy Unit should collaborate with the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) to research the **viability of transitioning small communities in Tobago** toward solar or wind. The research will include onsite testing to determine the energy potential at the

[14] THA Act Chapter 25:03 of 1996 – Fifth Schedule of Areas of Responsibility of the Assembly - http://laws.gov.tt/ttdll-web/revision/download/106026?type=act

identified sites, the design of a renewable energy technology solution for the identified community and the associated cost of RE implementation

- **Engage the private sector** to support and implement RE technology in Tobago; build a relationship with upstream oil and gas operators like Shell and BHP to facilitate design challenges, competitions and programmes for EE, EC, and RE



- Install **solar-powered charging and Wi-Fi kiosks/stations** at tourism hotspots to charge digital devices and to provide Wi-Fi to enable internet access (this aligns with the recommendations of the Tourism section). Two possible business models can be tested: 1) charging for power use where, with enough usage, the kiosks can be self-financing (this is likely only viable for locations of heavy tourist use), or 2) THA pays for the power and Wi-Fi of the kiosks to encourage broad digital participation of the local and visitor population (Digital Transformation and ICT is discussed later in this section).
- **Illuminate road signage** using stand-alone renewable energy technologies; outfit recreational grounds and tourism sites with **solar powered** flood lights, street lights, and camera systems across Tobago to reduce electricity costs and fossil fuel energy consumption, aid in the RE transition, promote safety and attract eco-tourists
- Design and install **isolated solar photovoltaic (pV)/solar rooftop systems** for power generation at small health centres, earmarked emergency shelters, community play parks and popular beach facilities across Tobago to run critical electricity loads. This small scale RE technology project will increase public awareness on clean energy, cost savings and energy management; remove barriers to RE technology—catalyse its penetration on the island, facilitate technical data acquisition for scaling up, boost entrepreneurial activity and develop new job streams
- In collaboration with the private sector, examine potential for **solar dehydration in Tobago** for drying and preserving local fruits or making teas. As an agro-processing project, it should feature strong collaboration with agriculture stakeholders

Recommendations - Medium to Long-Term

- Transition some of the smaller, more isolated communities in Tobago towards renewable energy sources; design all new THA-constructed homes to accommodate solar water heaters (SWHs) and to be powered by micro-grid solar pV systems, which

provides an excellent opportunity to kick-start this transition. Use data from pilots to advocate for the update of regulations that will enable T&TEC to allow individuals to connect to the grid and participate in incentives such as feed-in tariffs, green energy rebates, and discounts

- Establish rules and regulations through Town and Country to govern underground electricity distribution lines for new housing communities—whether constructed by THA or privately—to build resilience against climate change impacts. This must be measured against cost, affordability, aesthetics, vulnerability and localised potential hazards of the community
- Invite private investors to finance large scale wind and solar projects in Tobago to accommodate the island's electricity demand when the current threshold has been reached in the projected 8 to 10 years. Energy storage will be needed for these large scale, intermittent renewable energy systems to ensure stability of supply where economically feasible. These projects should therefore include ample amounts of energy storage to facilitate a smooth, 24/7 supply
- Investigate the market, demand and avenues/routes to export excess RE from Tobago to Trinidad and neighbouring Caribbean countries
- In collaboration with the private sector, examine the potential for **biogas energy** in Tobago. This can be coupled with power generation for off-grid applications, including on farms. Depending on results, larger farms could install in-situ (on site) biogas production capacity for electricity generation and/or burning. The potential for producing biodiesel for localised farm transportation should also be explored. Standards and protocols for health, safety, minimising environmental pollution via biogas/bioenergy production and use, as well as treatment of biogas would have to be developed
- Plan and develop a system to recycle or dispose of expired renewable energy equipment and associated technologies, inclusive of batteries. This may include exporting
- Explore wave energy potential off the coast of northeast Tobago
- In partnership with T&TEC, install trial electric vehicle charging stations at popular car parks in Scarborough to test for usage, demand and operations.

4.7.4.3 The Blue Economy

Situational Analysis

The Blue Economy features sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and environmental protection. The Environmental Sustainability and Fishing and Seafood Industry recommendations, therefore, all fall under the blue economy. Hence this section will focus on the other aspects of the blue economy. Tobago's blue economy has untapped revenue generating and business potential. The actual and proposed oil and gas drilling activities, around and just off the coast of Tobago (Block 22 and NCMA4, for example), can stimulate the public and private sectors through the development and issuance of royalty mechanisms for Tobago, and the creation of support services on the island. This, though, must be put in context of the world moving towards renewable energy. Furthermore, the discussion of Tobago's maritime boundary, which by law currently extends only 6 nautical miles around the island, must be revisited and addressed.

Additionally, Tobago's geographic position lies along major shipping lanes that connect South America to the Caribbean, the Panama Canal, the US, Europe and Africa. The island's location allows for an achievable, strategic and lucrative intervention that can be negotiated with the energy and transhipment industries. This can boost the private sector, create employment opportunities, generate revenue and develop new industries on the island. These opportunities will have to be carefully thought out for the medium and long terms to identify Tobago's competitive advantages, since the competition around the Caribbean is strong (Jamaica and Trinidad already have large port and energy operations for instance).

COVID-19 has magnified the fragility of our economy and the need to build a more resilient and sustainable future. Tobago can play a major role in attaining energy independence and environmental sustainability by diversifying its energy forms; unlocking the blue economy potential; and strengthening the green economy through RE, Energy Efficiency (EE) and Energy Conservation (EC); combined, these efforts can lead to sustainable economic development. Notably, the DIQE is engaged with a multilateral agency on a project to improve Tobago's Blue Economy.

Recommendations – Medium Term

- Examine the potential for a small auxiliary launching pad or a **marine bunkering access point** facility in North East Tobago to service tankers, containerships, general cargo vessels, dry bulk/chemical/gas carriers, pleasure crafts, offshore service vessels and cruise ships. Marinas have been proposed around the island, so the relationships amongst all these facilities should be examined.

4.7.5 Proactive Sargassum Response

4.7.5.1 Situational Analysis

Since 2011, Tobago, like other Caribbean Islands, has been experiencing a deluge of floating sargassum on our Atlantic beachfronts. This extensive growth in sargassum is linked to global warming and has significantly challenged the tourism sector, with hotels having to deal with cancelled bookings and the fishing industry being challenged in crossing the floating mass of sargassum. It clearly also reduces the ability of residents to enjoy beaches and coastlines of this beautiful island.

A committee was established ***in 2016*** and led by the THA Division of Infrastructure, Quarries and the Environment (DIQE) and the Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) to develop the Tobago Sargassum Emergency Response Plan (TSERP). The committee collaborated with a broad coalition of THA; State (Met Office, IMA etc.[15]); civil society (ET[16], All Tobago Fisherfolk Association etc.); research (UTT, UWI etc.[17]); and international organisations (FAO, UNDP etc.[18]). The plan considers research and development, early warning systems, communications, response and vulnerability as they relate to sargassum. It accounts for the important ways that ***Tobago can become a proactive community*** with respect to Sargassum, which threatens all aspects of the island's way of life. ***This plan has not been officially accepted by THA leadership*** and is not widely distributed ***despite all global indicators that sargassum is part of the new normal for Tobago***.

[15] T&T Meteorological Service, Institute of Marine Affairs
[16] Environment Tobago
[17] University of Trinidad and Tobago, University of the West Indies
[18] Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, the United Nations Development Programme

Sargassum can be used for compost or forage, but certain heavy metals may have dangerous effects on animal, plant and human life, so these uses must be explored with ongoing testing. Currently, collection and on-land storage of the weed occurs annually when the beaches are already inundated. Some farmers go to collect the sargassum to use on their operations with the warning that potential effects of impurities are still unknown. Sargassum comes annually, and preparing for it with an early warning system is important, so that businesses and individuals can take appropriate action. Across the Caribbean, enterprising individuals have been profiting from using Sargassum to create internationally-recognised businesses, including fertiliser in St Lucia[19] and Skincare products in Barbados[20]. Tobago's Sargassum Emergency Response Plan has addressed all of these issues and needs official acceptance and implementation.

4.7.5.2 Recommendations:

- **Approve the Tobago Sargassum Emergency Response Plan**

  Publicly accept/approve and widely disseminate the Tobago Sargassum Emergency Response Plan (TSERP)



- **Implement an Early Warning System**

  Implement the Early Warning System called for in the TSERP

- **Establish Sargassum Testing in Tobago**

  Sign an MOU with the Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA) to provide sargassum testing to feed decision-making on sargassum use across Tobago. This might include developing guides on use for THA staff, farmers and others

- **Stimulate Sargassum Entrepreneurship**

  The Division of Finance and the Economy already has several programmes for stimulating entrepreneurship, including grants and loans. Some of this funding can be used to stimulate sargassum-specific businesses. This can



[19] https://www.thegef.org/news/communities-innovate-address-sargassum-seaweed-coasts-saint-lucia

[20] https://www.stemcaribbean.com/worlds-1st-producer-of-sargassum-skincare-products-is-a-barbadian-company/

also be linked to youth programmes and competitions that stimulate creative uses for Sargassum, as has been done in other Caribbean islands. It's an approach that would help to align financial incentives for innovators with the economic benefits to Tobago

4.7.6 Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Innovation is the use of the human imagination to develop new products and services that can save time and effort, or generate income. While there is room for improvement and there are limitations in how we monetise some of these products and services, there have been innovations in Tobago particularly in the form of novel, globally attractive events on the island such as the Muhtadi Drum Festival, Beach Sports tournaments, and the Tobago Jazz Experience, events that harness the ingenuity of the people. Innovation is a part of every sector and comes in many forms (including new processes and operations); it doesn't only have to be about new business. Innovative government for instance, can effect new forms of efficiency, transparency, accountability and trust, which enable a better and more diversified and resilient society.

Within the THA, there are path dependencies and structural and digital inertia, which adversely affects productivity, creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation. Divisions are still heavily paper-based, communication is slow, and there are very few services provided digitally. Changes in services that save time and effort are few and far between, and an innovative culture doesn't exist. During the COVID-19 lockdown, digital drawbacks and low innovative culture resulted in an even lower productivity than is normally associated with the public sector. Deficiencies in the digital infrastructure were exposed when remote working could not be immediately and effectively implemented after the stay-at-home measures were instituted. COVID-19 highlights the need to develop infrastructure, systems and human resources capable of adjusting in the face of any change, whether a pandemic, changing demands of the population or changing technologies. It also provides an opportunity for all sectors on the island to explore, use and help co-create an innovation ecosystem.

There is no Diversification without Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship, a related term, is identifying, creating and extracting new ***value*** for some customer, and it is also not reaching its potential in Tobago. Entrepreneurship is focused on innovating to provide new business and new value, so it's closely linked with innovation. While

there are several micro-enterprises in Tobago and some larger businesses, there is limited evidence of true innovation among these businesses. Tobago's human and natural resources can produce premium products and services to compete in the regional and international markets, but innovators and entrepreneurs must also have easy access to an entrepreneurial community, knowledge networks, capital and copyright and patent protection. As industries evolve, our private sector, public sector and civil society must engage in techniques and product evolutions with marketable value to maintain a competitive advantage in the various industries in which they operate. Tobago's economic resilience on a sustainable basis is hinged on diversification, research, development and innovation.

Tobago's private sector is supported by a series of entities across multiple THA Divisions, and special purpose entities—the Business Development Unit (BDU), the Strategic Business Support and Development Unit (SBSDU), the Venture Capital Equity Fund Ltd (VCEFL) and the Eco-Industrial Development Company of Tobago (E-IDCOT). It's also supported by state agencies like the National Entrepreneurship Development Company (NEDCO). Despite years of these services being offered to entrepreneurs, including tens of millions in grants and loans, ***innovative entrepreneurship*** on the island is very low (e.g. The Tobago Business Register indicated that 48.2% of Tobago businesses have their core functions in retail and distribution or merely buying and selling of goods). Complicating things is the lack of monitoring of the economic impact of these investments. Also, these supporting entities seem to have limited coordination or official relationships to ensure holistic management of the entire process of imagining, starting, nurturing, pivoting and scaling new businesses. Finally, there is no facility or environment designed to ***nurture entrepreneurial thinking, mindset and grit,*** which is not teachable in a classroom, but is critical to moulding successful, innovative entrepreneurs in Tobago.

4.7.6.1 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth:

Developing innovative and entrepreneurial thinking is a long-term endeavour, full of trial and error, and **requires building a culture that is not afraid to try and fail and try again**. The fact is, the vast majority of new businesses fail, but those that survive can become large contributors to the economy. This contrasts with the dominant culture in Tobago, and no short-term initiatives can spontaneously create this desired culture. Some actions today can

start to lay the groundwork that will be needed for a serious innovation and entrepreneurial effort on the island. This is not easy, but it is necessary. The following are recommended:

- **Entrepreneurship Assessment and Entrepreneurship Policy Framework**

  Assess the entrepreneurship ecosystem in Tobago and develop a **policy framework for stimulating and managing impactful entrepreneurship.** The policy would guide the most effective use of available resources, and identify additional resource needs. This assessment should include examination of the existing institutions that facilitate entrepreneurship and business development, as well as a survey of existing and potential entrepreneurs themselves—their motivations, aspirations, skills and needs. Some of these needs may include product testing facilities on the island.

- **Youth Entrepreneurship Training and Exposure**

  Reconfigure all youth training programmes in Tobago to have a **significantly-expanded entrepreneurial component,** where youth work alongside active entrepreneurs in Tobago who can help mentor them and provide insight into the life of an entrepreneur, and more generally teach them to be independent thinkers and doers. This should include the Youth Energized for Success (YES), Youth Apprenticeship Programme in Agriculture (YAPA), the On-the Job Training Programme (OJT), MIC Institute of Technology, the Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP) and others.

- **Export-Focused Business Development**

  Reorient all existing entrepreneur or business services to have an export-growth mandate for goods or services, including export to Trinidad. Focus should be placed on those, with links to the local tourism and agriculture industries; partnerships with other operations in those industries should be encouraged.



- **Establish a Business Incubator/Accelerator**

  Preparing entrepreneurs and businesses to take advantage of the existing business units (such as the Business Development Unit–BDU etc) requires



support for entrepreneurs in developing the right mindset and skills to **identify and de-risk opportunity**, design and adjust business models[21], access the right resources—**including people, financing and infrastructure**—and **persistently take on greater challenges**. Successful Entrepreneurship requires immense perseverance and commitment, which is unique to the experience of starting a company, and these can be developed in Tobagonians through a Business Incubator. An incubator is a company that nurtures, trains, mentors and coaches selected start-ups to develop and grow successful business models; these activities overlap with those of an Accelerator, which is focused more on scaling a successful business. They typically have admission criteria, use benchmarks to measure company progress, provide common business services to support the start-ups and may also invest in them. It's therefore recommended that a business incubator for businesses with export potential be established and **led independently by a successful entrepreneur**. Three possible streamlines should be considered: companies related to the tourism industry, companies related to agriculture and graduates of the URP[22] or CEPEP[23] programmes. Services offered would have to be tailored in each stream. This is also presented in the Finance and the Economy section.

- **Require Agency Coordination and De-duplication**

  To ensure coordination among all the various entrepreneurship and business support entities (including BDU, SBSDU, VCEFL, NEDCO, E-IDCOT and the new Business Incubator described above), **have them sign Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)** to commit to collaboration and coordination in providing uniform *customer-centric services* to the entrepreneurs and businesspersons of Tobago. This should help reduce duplication in training and other services in the short term, but the long-term aim should be the consolidation of these services. Services should all be adapted to allow constant feedback from entrepreneurs, including the start-up founders and the experienced successes. Data on entrepreneurial outcomes (revenue increase, employment increase etc.) should guide all strategic services.

[21] A Business Model is a company's high-level plan to make a profit, taking into account its products and services, costs and customers. A Business Plan typically serves to explain the Business Model.
[22] Unemployment Relief Programme
[23] Community-Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme

- **Perform Business Succession Planning**

  Despite the prevalence of small and micro businesses in Tobago, continuity and growth are limited, very often, to a single generation. Business succession, for instance, in the form of family businesses, is rare. Yet there is immense potential for the successor to compound all the business development the founder has performed once the founder retires. This new leader may be the child of the founder or a trusted protégé who can bring new ideas and skills to expand the business. This sort of planning is common worldwide, and needs to be infused in the small businesses of Tobago.

4.7.7 Digital Transformation and ICT

A key pillar of innovation worldwide is the use of digital technologies for more efficient communication, operations and management of information, and for development of totally new services that were not previously possible. As described above, the public sector of Tobago, as the largest economic actor, is a limited user of digital technologies for providing high-quality, customer-focused service to residents. The public sector, however, must be the driver of digital transformation of Tobago. Discussions with the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) stakeholders within the public sector of Tobago and in Trinidad revealed that the most critical need for Tobago's digital transformation is a system for governance of technology implementation in the public sector. Further, for the development of this Roadmap, a survey[24] was created to ascertain the use of technology, and was completed by 58 persons across units in 7 THA Divisions and 10 other public agencies in Tobago. It revealed the status of and some of the major reasons for low technology use across the public sector in Tobago. Key results show that:

- Over 60% of respondents indicated that their unit provided no other digital services besides contact information or other information online, and 50% of respondents' units provided only press releases and announcements or no online information at all

[24] Note that the survey was designed by the THA Roadmap to Recovery Working Group, shared via email to several persons across Tobago (from June 23 –July 11, 2020), and completed online. It is therefore not statistically representative of the Tobago public sector, and since it was completed on a digital platform, it is likely not capturing persons who have low digital skills The reality of Tobago's public-sector technology use is, therefore, likely worse than the survey's results.

to the public. Only 2 respondents' units share data freely on their website and other platforms. This helps explain the difficulty in communicating effectively with the public

- Over 20% of respondents' units do not use email for engaging cross-unit work, and the use of other digital productivity tools is even lower
- On a scale of 1 (very unconfident) to 5 (very confident), around 33% of respondents report 1, 2, or 3 when asked about their confidence in connecting to and troubleshooting the internet, or their confidence in learning a new digital platform. The figure is over 50% for the use of productivity tools (Google Suite, box.com etc.) or for making a website. This illustrates the need for extensive training and support in digital skills building for the digital transformation of the public sector

Additionally, schools have to incorporate digital learning as an active and permanent feature of their pedagogy to have any chance of meeting educational goals. The future school system in Tobago may include staggered physical learning (with some students at home while others are at school), smart classrooms (with digital boards that can transmit over the internet) and/or changes to learning materials to deeply incorporate internet-based content, which is increasingly freely available online. Some of these transformations are already underway, led by the Division of Education, Innovation and Energy. However, all these changes require students and schools to have broadband access to the internet and devices that allow connection from near to their homes. An estimated 4,000 disadvantaged students are in need of such devices and access. The Division has already public committed TT$7.8 million towards purchasing devices for needy students, and is working with some private sponsors and other contributors to get additional devices. The Division will also be working with existing community computer facilities to ensure that students get access. But there remains a gap for some students (still no devices and/or no connectivity and/or difficulty in achieving educational outcomes even with connected devices). Furthermore, access to the educational content via these devices is not guaranteed by the purchase of the device.

4.7.7.1 Recommendations for Immediate Action

The following recommendation is critical for immediately ensuring that educational outcomes of our students are not hampered significantly by COVID-19:

- **Ensure Digital Access to Education for School Students**

  To ensure that all students are digitally-enabled for primary and secondary school, each must be ensured to **have access to broadband internet and a digital device** that can enable learning via the internet (such as a tablet or laptop, but not a cell phone). Several thousand students in Tobago are still confirmed (by teachers) to be in need of such devices. Support for providing such access may be partly funded by the Universal Service Fund, which is managed by the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) specifically for underserved population groups

4.7.7.2 Recommendations for Recovery and Growth

The following recommendations are needed for Tobago to establish itself as ready for a post COVID-19 world. These actions were required well before COVID-19, and are increasingly needed in the new normal:

- **Office for Digital Transformation**

  Creating, within the Office of the Chief Secretary, an Office for Digital Transformation to strategically guide, govern and coordinate the digital transformation of Tobago, with a focus on the public sector (THA Divisions).

  This office must have the **authority** to coordinate the design, structure, selection, implementation and use of communication technology across all parts of the THA to effect the greatest change

- **Digital Agenda/Digital Strategy**

  The first task of this office is to develop a Digital Agenda/Digital Strategy for Tobago—defining the steps that will be taken to digitally transform the island over ten (10) years—that is in alignment with National ICT plans and the Ministry of Public Administration and Digital Transformation

- **Train THA Staff**

  The Office for Digital Transformation must also **facilitate training** of THA IT staff to better support their Divisions, and training of THA staff in the use of technology and adaptation of their workflow. This training can be carried out by the Tobago

Information technology Ltd (TITL), which has developed an extensive set of training resources

- **Reconfigure Operations to Digital-First (Business Process Remapping)**

  The Office for Digital Transformation has to guide all Information Systems Management Units of the THA to **upgrade the administrative processes** of the Tobago House of Assembly by making more effective use of ICT in the Assembly's operations across all Divisions. Performing manual operations on computers will not create this transformation. Operations must be redesigned so that digital services are the default and manual options are added to support the elderly or other vulnerable persons in the society. This redesign would have the added benefit of improving Tobago's ease of doing business, as discussed in the Finance and the Economy section.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Tobago's Implementation Deficit

"Too often we focus on the inspirational aspects of leadership and not enough time talking about the perspirational aspects of it."
— Marty Linsky, Professor, Harvard University

Trinidad and Tobago does a lot of planning, but often fails in execution of plans. Currently, in Tobago, Divisions and Units of the THA use several different—and possibly conflicting—planning documents as guides: Vision 2030; Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (CEDP) v2.0; Medium Term Policy and Planning Framework; Divisional Strategic Plans (which are sometimes outdated); the Tobago Infrastructure Investment Strategy (TIIS); and the current document, the Roadmap to Recovery Working Group Report. What's more, some THA Divisions use plans that other Divisions do not even have access to, discouraging alignment of operations and deepening the silos and discoordination of the THA. Often, plans are not fully accepted by leadership and remain in *draft* form for several years, creating confusion about what the official plan is for staff across the public and private sectors. Finally, when new political administrations are elected, their manifestos are used sometimes without transparent updating of existing plans. All of this is a dangerous system that results in wastage of scarce resources (including financial and human resources), confusion and resignation of THA staff and the public. The outcome is a long-term stagnation of national development, especially for Tobago.

Coupled with this confused planning process is the large gap between planning and implementation of existing plans. It's not clear what fraction of the existing development plans listed above was actually implemented, since little independent monitoring and verification—and therefore accountability—seems to take place. There is limited evidence suggesting full and successful implementation of these plans, however, or that they are being followed. A sample of CEDP performance indicators as itemised in the CEDP v2.0 Implementation Plan bears limited evidence of achievement. For instance, one of the top indicators of increased GDP was not met. Division of Finance data indicate a decline in GDP for every year between 2016 and 2018 (CEDP v2.0 covered the 2013-2017 period). Despite the possibility of numerous

external factors affecting the GDP decline, many other indicators either have not been achieved or there is limited data to verify that they have been, at least not publicly available data. Additionally, several sector-specific recommendations discussed in this report come from analyses and studies conducted several years ago, but these recommendations, though still critically needed, are yet to be implemented.

> **"No battle was ever won according to plan, but no battle was ever won without one."**
>
> — Dwight D. Eisenhower

Proper planning is a gap in Tobago's policy implementation. Without ***disciplined*** use of the planning resources and institutions already existing in Tobago, we see the discoordination described above. Proper planning requires integration of approved and new policy directions; regular and clear communication among policymakers, technocrats, implementers and the public; and disciplined use of science-based tools to guide policy, including outcome measurement and data. Though planning is critical, it seems that the island's greatest need is execution, and fixing what is called its ***Implementation Deficit***, but this is partly dependent on disciplined planning across the THA.

Unless there is a focus on execution of this Roadmap Plan, there is strong evidence that Tobago will not achieve the benefits of the numerous well-designed proposals within it. This means that far more important than the existence of this or any other policy document is its execution or implementation, which hinges on integration with existing policy. Tobago, Trinidad, and the wider Caribbean have significant implementation issues, which must be addressed for this plan to have its promised impact. Successful implementation requires focused attention on critical lessons learned from past initiatives to account for misalignment of public and private incentives of implementers, imbalanced reliance on certain entities for implementation, and apathy in the public sector and general public for execution.

To support this process, a review of past challenges and successes was performed, which led to discussions with experienced persons within and outside of the public sector, and the examination of crucial projects. An important one was the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan, 2013-2017 (CEDP 2.0). This initiative was designed as a follow-up to the earlier CEDP to transform and diversify Tobago's socioeconomic growth and increase

sustainability by improving its adaptability and readiness for the global market. A focused approach was utilised where eight strategic priorities were identified. In a review of implementation progress of the CEDP, past implementation deficits were outlined as follows:

1. Lack of consensus and buy-in at all levels (THA, private, NGO, etc.)
2. Lack of readiness to institutionalise and manage new activities
3. Lack of institutional coordination
4. Failure to diversify products and services while investing in new sectors and activities
5. Failure to tackle challenges promptly
6. Inadequate resources
7. Lack of monitoring and evaluation and up-to-date reporting
8. Inconsistent data collection

5.2 Critical Implementation Needs

> **"We, and other West Indians, *already have what we need to be high achievers*."**
>
> – Dr Terrence Farrell [25].

5.2.1 Implementation Approach

To avoid the CEDP's challenges, and increase likelihood of successful implementation of the Tobago Roadmap to Recovery Action Plan, the following approach is recommended:

- Creation of an ***Independent Implementation Team/Task Force*** to drive execution of the plan, which should be led by the Chief Secretary and should report to the Executive Council, since authority and leadership are critical to progress
- ***Securing buy-in*** at multiple levels – Secretaries (authority), implementers (for action), the public and the business community (political support). In particular, it's important that leaders of the society set the example in trusting that this implementation will succeed where others have failed. Public demonstrations of trust in the systems being developed or improved is critical for public buy-in and

[25] Farrell (2017) We like it so?: The cultural roots of economic underachievement in Trinidad and Tobago. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

support of the change required. In other words, there should be one set of rules for everyone to follow

- Focused and well-prioritised implementation—with the few resources available, the implementation team should ***focus on the highest impact actions first,*** before moving to others. Highest impact actions also "unlock" the performance of later actions, and provide important quick wins to demonstrate success and further generate buy-in. ***It is imperative that no cherry-picking of recommendations be done***
- Monitoring and Evaluation of Outputs – measuring progress is critical to achieving success

5.2.2 The Task Force

The Task Force should have no more than 6-10 persons—bound with contracts that are renewable over the period of implementation (18-24 months) according to performance. The following are other key characteristics:

- The Task Force should be chaired by the Chief Secretary, and should have a Deputy Chair with a proven record of executing major change
- The Office of the Chief Secretary must determine the Task Force's terms of reference, which must survive political change
- Task Force Membership must be the main driver of implementation, but work to develop champions across the THA who help drive implementation within specific divisions and agencies
- Membership should include persons with multi-sectoral experience in change management, and those with sector-specific skills, including non-public sector expertise; the team should be nimble and effective
- Task Force should liaise with experts and staff of the THA and the private sector who have special skills to support implementation
- Consistent membership and action – changing membership too often weakens implementation; there must be compounding of effort to avoid loss of momentum
- Task Force to be supported with administrative staff in the Office of the Chief Secretary

5.2.3 The Task Force Objectives

The explicit objectives should be to:

Structure and Focus:

- Take approved policy, integrate it with other approved policy and Divisional strategy and plans, and work to turn it into specific actions for specific Divisions, Units and agencies, in collaboration with these entities
- Prioritise the implementation of the various projects from this and other policy documents via strict science-based tools, and expand them into actionable projects

Communication:

- Improve civic engagement and public buy-in (also with the business community) through open transparency of planned changes, incorporation of public feedback, and regular progress updates
- Promote buy-in across all levels of the THA (Administrators, middle managers and technical and other staff)
- Identify and nurture champions across the public service
- Promote real-time and consistent information sharing across all implementing bodies, including using new communication and project management technologies

Facilitation:

- Coordinate with sector-specific implementation bodies such as the Creative Industry Foundation, TTAL[26], THTI[27], Office of Digital Transformation, the TIIS Plan implementation body[28] and others recommended to lead change in their sectors, as well as leadership in all THA Divisions; this process may require adaptation of the plan according to real world issues
- Work alongside the Planning Department to ensure alignment of policy
- Facilitate solutions to implementation problems when they arise, including by escalating them to top leadership
- Co-opt resources (local, national, and international) to help with implementation where needed

[26] Tobago Tourism Agency Limited
[27] Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute
[28] Tobago Infrastructure Investment Strategy

Training:

- Facilitate increased staff competencies and practical know-how through facilitating training and capacity building via the normal channels (in collaboration with the Divisions) and the new recommended ones like the Public Service Academy
- Increase productivity by facilitating the introduction of the recommended Tobago Productivity Council and the Performance Management System

Monitoring of Performance:

- Monitor progress on implementation (key performance metrics)
- Define key performance metrics (targets) and collect data to track them alongside existing (e.g. EMRU, PRDI) and new data collection institutions (e.g. the Tobago Data Agency)

5.3 The Importance of an *Independent, Well-Funded, Well-Staffed* Task Force

There is good evidence worldwide that using a separate implementation ***Delivery Unit*** or ***Task Force*** to guide major change in government policy is very effective at achieving success in implementation of policy in the developing world. A Delivery Unit/ Task Force is a unit formed with government leadership with a mandate to use the authority of the chief executive to[29]:

- Improve citizen outcomes in a limited number of areas
- Unblock obstacles to implementation when they arise and
- Build capacity and understanding for implementation in the existing institutions and agencies

There exist successful examples of using the Delivery Unit/ Task Force approach, the most studied and celebrated deployed in Malaysia. The Malaysian Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) was developed within the Office of the Prime Minister, was led by a former Private Sector Executive and was provided with adequate funding. It is renowned for its success in reforms of the Malaysian economy over 2009-2015[29]. Many countries have adopted similar units and methods with positive results. The World Bank has studied the success of PEMANDU and identified lessons for other countries, and this can serve as guidance in this Tobago recovery effort:

[29] World Bank Group. (2017). Driving Performance from the Center: Malaysia's Experience with PEMANDU.

- Capturing backing from the leadership (the Executive Council)
- Focusing on a limited number of well-defined priorities
- Capturing and integrating bottom-up feedback in policies and plans (that is from across THA staff)
- Creating an institutional interface with the implementers (in Divisions) through regular problem-solving meetings
- Balancing private- and public-sector expertise in the Delivery Unit/Task Force
- Developing performance indicators carefully in collaboration with Divisions
- Performing impact evaluations where the societal impact of implemented policies is measured

5.4 Innovative Implementation Strategies

There are several other ways to implement projects, with more configurations being developed continuously around the world. Below we list some alternatives decisionmakers can consider for specific policies that have successfully created impact around the world. These are provided here as seeds for innovation to help bridge our implementation deficit:

- **Inducement Prize Contests** – Competitions designed to foster progress toward or achievement of a specific objective by offering a named prize or award—for instance, the US-based XPRIZE Foundation's offer of US$10 million to spawn commercial space flight. Smaller prizes, on a scale that can be funded locally, can spawn robust creative private sector innovation for Tobago
- **Skunk Works** – An autonomous team of diverse high performers focusing solely on a single high impact goal—for instance the UK Government recently established a Skunk Works team to spark a data and quantitative revolution in the UK Public Service
- **P3 or Public-Private Partnerships** – Delivery of some services using private sector expertise and resources. This is already a topic being examined in the THA, with the P3 Unit of the Divisions of Finance in operation for multiple years

5.5 Prioritisation of Activity/ Adaptability

Although this report focuses on short and medium-term actions for Tobago's recovery, sector recommendations should still be prioritised according to urgency, and importance in the

overall transformation of Tobago. This approach proposes that some projects require immediate action, and are so labelled, and some be identified as "critical catalysts" for implementation prior to others since they can catalyse Tobago's society and enable other recommendations. Actionable plans that are neither of immediate need nor "critical catalysts" should commence only after these two groups of high priority projects, and ***discipline is required in strategically implementing this approach***. This method of prioritisation and implementation should be employed across the THA in seeking to maximise limited resources and to increase productivity during this recovery. One recommendation in the Finance and the Economy section of this document is for a Multi-year Strategic Planning and Budgeting Framework to be used in on-going prioritisation of the THA's activities and spending. This is crucial for implementation of future initiatives by the THA.

5.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

"People *may* deliver what you expect. People *will* deliver what you inspect."

– Chief Executive Officer, PEMANDU[29].

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) should take place across the THA's Divisions. The M&E authority should be based within the Office of the Chief Secretary (OCS) and should be overseen by the THA-assigned Task Force referred to in the Critical Implementation Needs section. The Task Force must work directly with implementers at various levels within the THA and hold regular (e.g., bi-weekly) meetings to evaluate and plan for the next stages. These ongoing consultations aim to address preceding implementation challenges and facilitate progress.

6 RESOURCES FOR RECOVERY

6.1 Financial Resources

To achieve implementation of this action plan, several key inputs are needed. Certainly, the financial inputs are significant. Not all projects/programmes could be priced, but the full cost of implementation will exceed several million TT dollars. However, not all projects would be implemented at the same time, and not all initiatives have a financial cost, making the actual disbursement dependent on strategic prioritisation of the proposals. One approach to funding is to ***strategically*** use the scarce funding already in existence for Tobago or that is accessible from Tobago to implement projects such as:

1. Facilitating implementation **completely by the private sector** in exchange for other incentives
2. Facilitating implementation by **state agencies or ministries** that are already working in the same sector and already have resources that can be leveraged for Tobago impact
3. Facilitating **public-private partnerships (PPP)** through the PPP Unit in the Division of Finance
4. Seeking **multilateral agency grants** (e.g., from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)) in collaboration with NGOs and CBOs
5. Applying to the Trinidad and Tobago **Green Fund**, a billion-dollar business tax-fed national fund that can be used for environmental conservation-related projects
6. **Assets Sale** of selected THA holdings
7. Issuing **Diaspora Bonds**[30]—debt products aimed specifically at Tobago's global diaspora to fund specific Tobago projects
8. **Careful use of THA's recurrent or development budgets**
9. Accessing the **TT$300 million loan facility** that is being developed to allow THA borrowing

Clearly each of these options has limits, risks, advantages and disadvantages that should be strategically weighed when choosing sources for each initiative.

[30] Wenner (2015) Can Diaspora Bonds be Used in the Caribbean?, IDB Technical Note No. IDB-TN-875, https://publications.iadb.org/en/publication/12329/can-diaspora-bonds-be-used-caribbean, Accessed 8 November, 2020.

6.2 Non-Financial Resources

Besides financial resources, the human resources needed are significant, and include personnel from across several sectors who have knowledge and skills in training, data collection, institution building, project management, change management and technical know-how. The importance of obtaining and retaining these types of skills for Tobago's recovery and development should not be discounted. It may require some creativity and innovation, including ***accessing Tobago's extensive diaspora community*** living in Trinidad and across the Caribbean, North America and Europe. Several recommendations throughout this report indicate that the diaspora can be very valuable: in the Finance and the Economy section, the Tourism section and others. Data on migrants indicate that the United States, the destination of two-thirds of all migrants from Trinidad and Tobago, has around 276,000 migrants from Trinidad and Tobago[31]. Tobago's population is around 4% of the national population. Assuming that this ratio also holds for the migrants, we can estimate the number of US migrants from Tobago to be around 11,000. With an additional 4,000 in Canada and the UK combined, the total Tobago migrant population is approximately 23% of Tobago's resident population.

6.3 Collaboration

Finally, this plan calls for far more collaboration and data sharing than has been done in the past. Work on this and other projects of the THA has indicated that deep silos of information and action exist in the THA. Whether through MOUs or methods to generate public buy-in, the need for collaborative implementation in this time of scarce resources has never been greater. Collaboration enables pooling of collective knowledge and capabilities and increases the chances of success, but it does require giving up some elements of control and having greater trust across institutions. The work of the Tobago Roadmap to Recovery Working Group—which included membership that spanned the public, private, and civil society sectors, as well as several skills and backgrounds and a broad range of ages and experience—illustrates that this degree of collaboration is possible in Tobago once everyone agrees on the

[31] https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/immigrant-and-emigrant-populations-country-origin-and-destination

need for change and on the general end goal. ***This new collaborative way of working will be critical to the successful future of Tobago.***

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Contributors

The Roadmap Working Group consisted of the following members and sector teams:

Productivity, Governance, and Human Resource Development

- Dr Stephen Sheppard (Chairman)
- Dr Verlene Bobb-Lewis
- Mr Godwyn Richardson

Sustainability and Innovation

- Dr Ryan Allard (Deputy Chairman)
- Mr Hassel Bacchus
- Ms Melanie Trim

Finance and the Economy

- Ms Knafesa George
- Dr Selvon Hazel

Tourism

- Mrs Shirley Cooke
- Mrs Korice Nancis

Agriculture and Food Production

- Mr Ricardo Alfred
- Mr Dedan Daniel
- Mrs Pathleen Titus
- Dr Nyoni Winchester

Creative Industry

- Mr Khalen Alexander
- Mr John Arnold

Social Development

- Dr Crystal Benjamin
- Dr Alina Williams

Additional Writing Support for document preparation was provided by:

- Dr Se-Anne Chance
- Mr Kern De Freitas