

TRAINING WORKSHOP (WORKING DRAFT)

“Accelerating Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in Trinidad and Tobago: Sustainable and Green Recovery Opportunities Post- COVID-19”

Organizers:

**United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG)**

United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD)

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

in close coordination with:

**United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (UNRCO) and United Nations Country Team
(UNCT)**

in partnership with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago

CONCEPT NOTE

Background and Introduction

Between 1990 and 2019, Trinidad and Tobago’s Human Development Index (HDI) value increased from 0.668 to 0.796, an increase of 19.2 percent.¹ The HDI further increased to 0.81 on the 2021 showing an average annual rate of 0.59 per cent since 1990. The country is part of the very high human development category, positioned at 77 out of 189 countries and territories and only second to The Bahamas in the Caribbean². Trinidad and Tobago’s ranking on the HDI makes it above the average of 0.766 for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). The country has one of the highest Gross National Income (GNI) per capita in LAC of US\$15,410 in 2020³ and is rich in natural resources (oil and natural gas).

The 2005 National Survey of Living Conditions estimated the level of poverty as 16.7 per cent. The Survey indicated that there was a concentration of poverty in specific geographic areas and among specific sub-groups of the population. According to the HDI Report 2020⁴, in Trinidad and Tobago,

¹ http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/TTO.pdf

² <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/country-insights#/ranks>

³ [GNI per capita, Atlas method \(current US\\$\) - Trinidad and Tobago | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#), access on September 8, 2021

⁴ According to the Report, the most recent survey data that were publicly available for Trinidad and Tobago’s Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) estimation refer to 2011.

0.6 per cent of the population (9 thousand people) are multidimensionally poor while an additional 3.7 per cent can be classified as vulnerable to multidimensional poverty (51,000 people).

Trinidad and Tobago's economy is largely based on oil and natural gas production, which is well developed and internationally competitive. The petroleum and petrochemical industries account for about 37 per cent of GDP and ores and minerals drive over 70 per cent of export (2015 data).⁵ The energy sector accounts for 26 per cent of economic activity, 84 per cent of export and 34 per cent of fiscal revenues.⁶, making the economy highly sensitive to international oil and natural gas prices.

In 2019, Trinidad and Tobago recorded an economic contraction of 1.2 per cent. The decline reflected weak energy sector performance due largely to the closure of the Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago (Petrotrin) refinery in late 2018 as well as lower yields from mature oil fields. For 2020, GDP further declined by 7.4 per cent largely reflecting the impact of the measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 and declines in global demand and falling prices in the energy sector – two significant exogenous shocks. The combined effects of COVID-19 and energy production and price shocks took a heavy toll on the country's economy.

As a result of the measures implemented to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus, economic activity slowed significantly and in some cases was brought to a halt. The decline in economic activity and the knock-on effect of increases in unemployment, reduction in working hours, lower income generation and consumption demand posed serious socioeconomic challenges for the country. The economic fallout associated with the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the livelihoods of various groups disproportionately including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), the self-employed, persons working in the service industries such as hotels and restaurants, agricultural workers, tourism workers, particularly in Tobago, and several employed in the oil and gas sector among others. With respect to the labour force, a Joint Survey conducted by the Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Service Industries (TTCSI) and the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturing Association (TTMA) indicated that due to the implementation of the national COVID-19 mitigation measures, businesses within their membership terminated 36 to 55 per cent of full time and part time/contractual employees, respectively.

The Ministry of Finance estimates that real economic activity in Trinidad and Tobago will grow by 2.0 percent in 2022, following a contraction of 1.0 percent in 2021⁷. This growth has been reinforced by policy support, the recovery in oil and gas production. Inflation for 2022 was projected at about 2.8 per cent. The fiscal deficit is expected to decline to 7.5 per cent of GDP in FY2022, reflecting a combination of high revenue mobilization and modest spending cuts. Central government debt will peak at 68.8 per cent of GDP in FY2023 and gradually decline thereafter.

⁵ [Trinidad and Tobago Overview: Development news, research, data | World Bank](#)

⁶ https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/publication/files/46714/S2000888_en.pdf

⁷ Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. 2022. Review of the Economy 2022: Tenacity and Stability in the Face of Global Challenges

In summary, the economic impacts of COVID-19 on the economy of Trinidad and Tobago included, inter alia: a decline in government revenues due to emergency health expenditures as well as additional social and economic expenditures and lower inflows from the oil and gas sector, which also had a negative impact on the balance of payments and fiscal deficits.

The geography of the country renders the islands susceptible to several natural hazards such as earthquakes, tropical cyclones, thunderstorms, wildfires, landslides, and flooding. In Trinidad and Tobago, development processes such as land-use practices, the rapid expansion of economic sectors, and housing developments, as well as environmental degradation continue to contribute to the country's hazard risk and vulnerability by augmenting existing hazards and creating new ones.⁸ These development processes have expanded the country's risk profile to include many man-made hazards such as oil spills, industrial accidents, and transportation hazards among others. While some hazards are well recognized and therefore planned for, other equally important hazards such as health-related or biological hazards and some technological hazards are often not planned for prior to them occurring. Over the period 1990 – 2018, about 150,000 persons have been affected by disasters such as floods, earthquakes, landslides, tropical cyclones, and coastal flooding⁹, resulting in US\$29.8 million in damages. The islands lie within an active seismic zone on the southern border of the Caribbean and experiences several earthquakes a year. Intense/excess rainfall is the most prevalent natural hazard affecting the country and often leads to flooding – a secondary natural hazard.

Trinidad and Tobago, like other small island developing and coastal states is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Climate change models and predictions forecast an increase in extreme weather events such as tropical cyclones, storm surges, floods, and droughts. These extreme weather events could potentially cause population displacement given that about 70 per cent of the population of Trinidad lives on the coast and 50 per cent of the population in Tobago lives within 1.5 Km of the coastline which significantly contributes to the island's vulnerability. Also, approximately 80 per cent of the country's socioeconomic activities are located along the coastline¹⁰.

The outlook for several countries post-COVID for both developed and developing – and within the UN categories of high human development to low development - shows troubling signs, including derailing the advancement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs), which for many countries including Trinidad and Tobago is being operationalized through national development plans (in Trinidad and Tobago's case - Vision 2030). In addition to the health impact of COVID-19, there are several other long-term impacts and indirect consequences of the pandemic that countries are facing. For example, issues related to food insecurity, lack of focus on other health issues faced by the population during the pandemic such as non-communicable diseases and mental health

⁸ ODPM 2020, Comprehensive Disaster Management in Trinidad and Tobago, A Policy Directions Paper. Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management.

⁹ Pacific Disaster Centre. 2020, Trinidad and Tobago: National Disaster Preparedness Baseline Assessment

¹⁰ IMA. 2016. State of the Marine Environment.

disorders, loss of income and livelihoods, a reduction in savings and investments, a looming debt crisis, and a looming global economic depression among others.

Positive and negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have emerged for all economies and within economies, and among different sectors. It is important to identify the positive insights that emerged out of the pandemic as well as the negative as countries seek to focus on recovery planning and establishing frameworks to support long-term sustainable development and achieve the SDGs. Several studies undertaken by think tanks around the world conclude that many impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are an acceleration of the preexisting economic, social, and environmental trends that existed prior to the pandemic.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has signalled its intent to undertake comprehensive structural reforms to promote the non-energy sector, towards reducing the dependence on energy and boosting potential economic growth. This is envisaged as key to supporting medium-term inclusive and sustainable growth and enhancing resilience. In addition to the pandemic, Trinidad and Tobago was impacted by unstable oil prices over the period as well as the impacts of several excess rainfall events. Much of this new thrust is highlighted in the country's *Road Map for Trinidad and Tobago: Transforming into a New Economy and Society*.

The move to develop non-energy related sectors will also require reforms, for example to improve the ease of doing business and stimulate entrepreneurship. Efforts to build a climate-resilient economy also are being considered, including upgrading to climate-resilient infrastructure, and developing the regulatory framework for green financing and renewable energy deployment.

The Government appointed two committees (Roadmap to Recovery (R2R) and Community Recovery (CR) to examine and propose strategic priorities that would stabilise the economy and communities and increase economic growth to minimize the long-term adverse effects of the pandemic and consequential impacts on economic and social structures. The Committees were guided by Vision 2030 which provided the broad framework and vision for transforming Trinidad and Tobago into a developed country.

Based on this preceding context, the Government has identified the need to build capacity in green recovery planning of key national stakeholders in the public and private sectors, academia and civil society organizations stakeholders who are involved in the recovery post-COVID-19 and who are key to advancing the country's developmental prospects in line with the country's national development strategy, Vision 2030 as well as the The Roadmap to Recovery Phase I and Phase II Reports. To this end, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago has made a request to the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) that a related Training Programme be designed and delivered to close any gaps in sustainable and green recovery planning. This training program presented in this Concept Note is the intervention that has been developed to do this.

By building the capacity of these key stakeholders in green and sustainable recovery planning, Trinidad and Tobago will be able to scale-up approaches to strengthening policy coherence and advancing the achievement of the SDGs. Training and capacity building will be key to supporting Trinidad and Tobago to choose, design and implement sustainable and green recovery plans in keeping with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The training will take into account the complexity associated with sustainable development and its multi-dimensional and dynamic nature. The SDGs as designed, with its 17 goals and 169 targets, creates the enabling environment to allow technocrats and other stakeholders to better understand the linkages and interactions between the goals and targets, and the impacts that changes (either positive or negative) in one goal can have on other goals and targets, as a result of systemic interactions and resultant synergies or trade-offs¹¹.

The Training Workshop represents Phase III of the UNDESA and ECLAC cooperation with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago that aims to strengthen the integrated recovery planning and decision-making capacities of the national stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago that are involved in building back better towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. Specifically, the program encompasses the offering of national training on site in Trinidad (see separate document on Training Plan and Curriculum). The initiative is a cooperation undertaking by ECLAC, UNDESA and United Nations Office for Sustainable Development (UNOSD) in partnership with the Government.

Expected Outcomes of the Training Workshop

The main outcomes of the training programme will include among others:

- Defining the key building blocks of an integrated recovery planning and policy coherence exercise towards transformational change that can lead to the achievement of the SDGs, with particular emphasis on building back better in the wake of shocks such as the Covid-19 pandemic.
- How to map, analyze and engage effectively with key stakeholders using participatory processes in the national priority-setting process.
- How to apply elements of systems thinking to assess and map intersectoral interactions and identify nationally relevant "leverage points" (or "accelerators") and determining what the accelerators are. In other words, what are the issues and challenges we face as a country, what is the overall consensus on those, how are we currently addressing the issues and what are the implications for these issues and our actions. This type of mapping helps with the creation of coherent policies and strategies that take into account both horizontal and vertical alignments.
- Apply backcasting and scenario planning approaches to identify strategic policy options for achieving recovery objectives and for identifying robust policies and adaptive actions to ensure resilience to shocks.

¹¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959378022000826>

Accordingly, while it is clear that participants will have enhanced knowledge in the various areas that the training will address, the following highlights some of the performance objectives that are expected to be met. Thus, at the end of the training, participants will:

- Be able to develop integrated/interaction maps or loop maps aligning national issues with the SDGs and defining interlinkages and relationships.
- Examine development challenges and opportunities from a range of levels and perspectives and be able to showcase the interlinkages etc.
- Know how to use and apply the tools of green recovery planning.
- Identify leverage points and accelerators.
- Be able to identify policy pathways that are:
 - Transformative: that is, they address the leverage points/accelerators for development.
 - Coherent and strategic: makes sense when combined, with minimum trade-offs but with maximum positive linkages and benefits to other sectors.
 - Robust and adaptive: can perform across a range of plausible scenarios.
- Experiment with a number of tools to support green recovery planning within the Trinidad and Tobago development context.
- Know how to undertake a foresighting and backcasting exercise.
- Be able to apply green budget, budget tagging etc. within the national context.

Proposed Participants

This training will be conducted over a 3-day period. To allow for maximum learning, feedback and interaction, the sessions will consist of between 30 and 35 participants. The trainer will incorporate the use of interactive tools such as Mentimeter to help with facilitating discussions and interactions among participants. Breakout groups will also be incorporated to facilitate some of the table-top discussions.

Total training hours – 20 hours

The training is expected to be undertaken over 24 hours over 4-days as follows:

- Day 1 – Covering Modules 1, 2, 3 and 4 (April 4, 2023) – these are introductory modules
- Day 2 – Covering Modules 5, 6 and 7 (April 5, 2023)
- Day 3 – Covering Module 8 and 9 (April 6, 2023)

Training will begin at 9:00 each day with sessions as follows:

- Session 1: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm
- Lunch Break – 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm
- Session 2: 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Participants to be considered include:

- Senior and mid-level technical officers/technocrats in the public sector involved in development planning, economic planning, social development, environmental management, climate change adaptation, infrastructure planning and industry.
- Technocrats that are involved in project design and implementation that is related to recovery post-COVID 19.

Consideration could also be given to:

- Civil society organizations that are engaged in recovery planning post-COVID.
- Private sector professionals who are involved in supporting the government in recovery efforts around social development projects or who are engaged in climate change adaptation projects.
- Faculty of tertiary level institutions that deliver training around sustainable development, development planning, and the SDGs.

A breakdown of proposed participant organizations is presented below:

Public Sector	Civil Society (Optional)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Finance • Ministry of Planning and Development • Ministry of Community Development, Culture, and the Arts • Ministry of National Security (Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM)) • Ministry of Education • Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs) • Ministry of Labour • Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government (MRDLG) • Ministry of Health • Tobago House of Assembly • Ministry of Social Development and Family Services • Ministry of Works and Transport • Local Authorities and specifically their committees with responsibility for social welfare and disaster relief • Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries • Tobago Regional Health Authority • Trinidad and Tobago Invest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women • Institute for Gender and Development Studies UWI • National Centre for Persons with Disabilities • Caribbean Natural Resources Institute • The Copper Foundation • Habitat for Humanity • Trinidad Red Cross • Living Water Community • Youth Organizations

Private Sector (Optional)	Academia (Academia)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chambers of Commerce • Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University of the West Indies: Department of Economics; Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social & Economic Studies; Institute for Gender and Development Studies; Department of Agriculture, Economics and Extension; Department of Food Production • University of Trinidad and Tobago

Training Agenda

Course Title: “Accelerating Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in Trinidad and Tobago: Sustainable and Green Recovery Opportunities Post-COVID-19”

Date and Time	Proposed Topics to be Covered	Time and Duration
Day 1: Morning Tuesday 4 th April, 2023	<p>Opening Session:</p> <p>Government of Trinidad and Tobago; UNRC, ECLAC and UNDESA</p> <p>Introductions and Participant Expectations</p> <p>Rationale, Purpose and Orientation of Training Workshop-by UNDESA and ECLAC Representatives</p>	9:30 am – 10:00 am
Day 1: Morning Tuesday 4 th April, 2023	<p>Module 1: Overview of Sustainable Development Planning in Trinidad and Tobago</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing sustainability and resilience. • The role of Vision 2030 in post-COVID Recovery • The Road Map to Recovery • Introduction to sustainable and green recovery planning. • Key objectives of the Government that can be an entry point for sustainable and green recovery planning to accelerate the SDGs implementation. • Tabletop Discussion: Addressing the interdependence or relatedness of economic, social, and environmental issues that Trinidad and Tobago face and problems of causality – An exercise on seeing the whole and not the just the parts. 	10:00 am – 11:00 am (2 hours 45 minutes)
Day 1: Morning Tuesday 4 th April, 2023	Module 2: Long term Impacts of Covid-19 and Emerging Opportunities	11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Date and Time	Proposed Topics to be Covered	Time and Duration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tabletop discussions on the long-term positive and negative long-term impacts of COVID-19 and implications for Trinidad and Tobago. • Discussion on policy prescriptions – Group Exercise to include polling • Interconnected Global Risks and the implications for Trinidad and Tobago. What risks are we exposed to? Group Discussion and Exercise 	
<p>Day 1: Afternoon Tuesday 4th April, 2023</p>	<p>Module 3: System Analysis (interlinkages and tradeoffs of key strategies and programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing the inter-dependence or relatedness of economic, social, and environmental issues that Trinidad and Tobago face and problems of causality – An exercise on seeing the whole and not the just the parts. • Developing systems analysis maps based on the assessment of the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on Trinidad and Tobago. Presentation and Practical Exercise • Identification of leverage/ lifting policies for transformative change – Tabletop discussions 	<p>1:30 pm – 3:00 pm</p>
<p>Day 1: Afternoon Tuesday 4th April, 2023</p>	<p>Module 4: Green Growth Opportunities to Achieve Sustainability and Resilience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the importance of a green recovery approach • Outcomes of a green recovery • Creation of scenarios related to green growth opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago • Key blocks of Sustainable and Green Recovery Planning and Policy Coherence 	<p>3:00 pm – 4:30 pm</p>
<p>Day 2: Morning Wednesday 5th April, 2023</p>	<p>Module 5: Stakeholder Mobilization and Consensus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of multi-stakeholder engagement and processes in green recovery planning. 	<p>9:30 am – 12:30 pm</p>

Date and Time	Proposed Topics to be Covered	Time and Duration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Discussion: Identifying and mapping stakeholders for recovery, resilience, and transformation ● Group Discussion: Identifying and analyzing stakeholder interests 	
Day 2: Afternoon Wednesday 5 th April, 2023	Module 6: Transformative Policy Pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Imaging a post-COVID World – Visioning Exercise ● Developing a shared vision for a sustainable future – Participatory Session ● Option 1: Business as Usual (BAU) Post COVID. ● Option 2: Green Economic Recovery for Smart, Sustainable, and Inclusive Growth. ● Option 3: Economic Diversification and Restructuring of the Economy for Absorbing Shocks and Building Forward Stronger. ● Choosing options and strategies for advancing green and sustainable recovery planning in Trinidad and Tobago applying the tools of green recovery planning. – Group and tabletop discussions ● 	1:30 pm – 3:00pm
Day 2: Afternoon Wednesday 5 th April, 2023	Module 7: Creating the Enabling Environment to Support Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in MSMEs in Trinidad and Tobago <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The role of MSMEs in supporting economic recovery. (Presentation) ● The role of MSMEs in economic diversification. ● Ideas for advancing the triple bottom line among MSMEs. – Facilitated Discussion ● How to support MSMEs with green recovery planning. Facilitated and tabletop discussions 	3:00 pm – 4:40 pm
Day 3: Morning Thursday 6 th April, 2023	Module 8: Greening Government System and Operations – The Enabling Environment to Support Green Recovery Planning	9:30am – 12:30 pm

Date and Time	Proposed Topics to be Covered	Time and Duration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Green fiscal policy and designing green fiscal policy frameworks. ● Green spending vs brown spending. ● Introduction to green budgeting. ● Introduction to green budget tagging as a tracking tool for green budgeting (expenditure and revenue that are helpful or harmful to green objectives). ● Introduction to tax policy tools for advancing green recovery. ● Financing green and sustainable recovery. ● Introduction to Green Procurement. 	
<p>Day 3: Afternoon Thursday 6th April, 2023</p>	<p>Module 9: General Approaches and Examples to Drive a Green and Sustainable Recovery – Including Examples from the South</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tools and Approaches related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fiscal and monetary policy ○ Central banks/development banks ○ National development planning ○ Employment ○ Social protection and social policy ○ Nature based solutions (NbS) and ecosystems-based adaptation (EbA) ○ Urban and rural development ○ Financing for development and for green recovery – new and innovative financial instruments ● Assessing how these tools and approaches can be applied, adopted, adapted, or scaled to Trinidad and Tobago (including consideration of approaches already being undertaken). 	<p>1:30 pm – 4:30 pm</p>
<p>Day 3: Afternoon Thursday 6th April, 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Closing 	<p>4:30 pm – 5:00 pm</p>