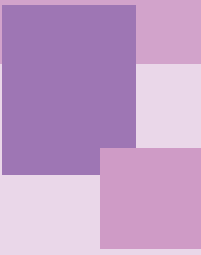


Vision 2020: Operational Plan 2007-2010

Nurturing a Caring Society



Section 2



Our Goals

- **GOAL 1**
The foundation of Trinidad and Tobago will be strong families and strong communities
- **GOAL 2**
Poverty will be significantly reduced
- **GOAL 3**
All citizens will have access to adequate and affordable housing
- **GOAL 4**
All citizens will be empowered to lead long, healthy lifestyles and have adequate access to an efficient health care delivery system
- **GOAL 5**
The HIV/AIDS Epidemic will be contained and care will be provided for those infected and affected
- **GOAL 6**
All citizens will have access to and participate in a sporting or recreational activity in keeping with our 'Sport for All' philosophy

Champions

- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Housing
- Office of the Prime Minister
- Tobago House of Assembly
- Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs
- Ministry of Social Development
- Ministry of Planning and Development
- Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs
- Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development

Nurturing a Caring Society



INTRODUCTION

A greater humanity and a higher standard of living are indispensable to the achievement of Vision 2020. Our society must become a caring society, that is, one in which all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable are loved and cared for and treated with dignity and respect. It must be a society in which all the basic needs of the people are met, and each individual is given an opportunity to contribute and to self-actualise.

In Trinidad and Tobago, our caring society will be one in which we recognise the family as the cornerstone of our communities; where we will be good neighbours, taking our personal and community responsibilities seriously, encouraging mutual respect, having zero tolerance for violence whilst ensuring that those who need help receive it. We will be proud to be citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, equally proud of our ethnic heritage and we will celebrate our diversity. Our public institutions such as hospitals, social services delivery centres, schools and police stations will deliver quality, efficient and reliable service and public officials will be courteous, helpful and fully committed to the provision of quality service. In this society, social inclusion will be the

norm and everyone will be provided with an opportunity to make a contribution to national development.

In such a caring society, families will thrive, supported by the community, business and Government. Children and the elderly will be protected, comforted and highly valued. New community networks will support families in raising their children and social service institutions and schools will work together with the family in building strong communities and relationships. Extended families will remain vital and creative housing options will be afforded to low income families.

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In this society, our well-being will be enhanced by a modern, efficient health care delivery system, accessible to all while at the same time promoting healthier lifestyles. With more jobs, less violence, stable families and quality schools, our communities will flourish.

In short, a caring society is therefore one in which everyone is valued and everyone is cared for. No one is left behind.

How close are we to becoming a caring society? Though this is difficult to measure with precision, given the number of qualitative factors involved, the Ministry of Planning and Development is currently working on the development of a Quality of Life Index which will be launched next year. In the meanwhile, the United Nations

Human Development Index (HDI) continues to be used to gauge changes in the quality of life.

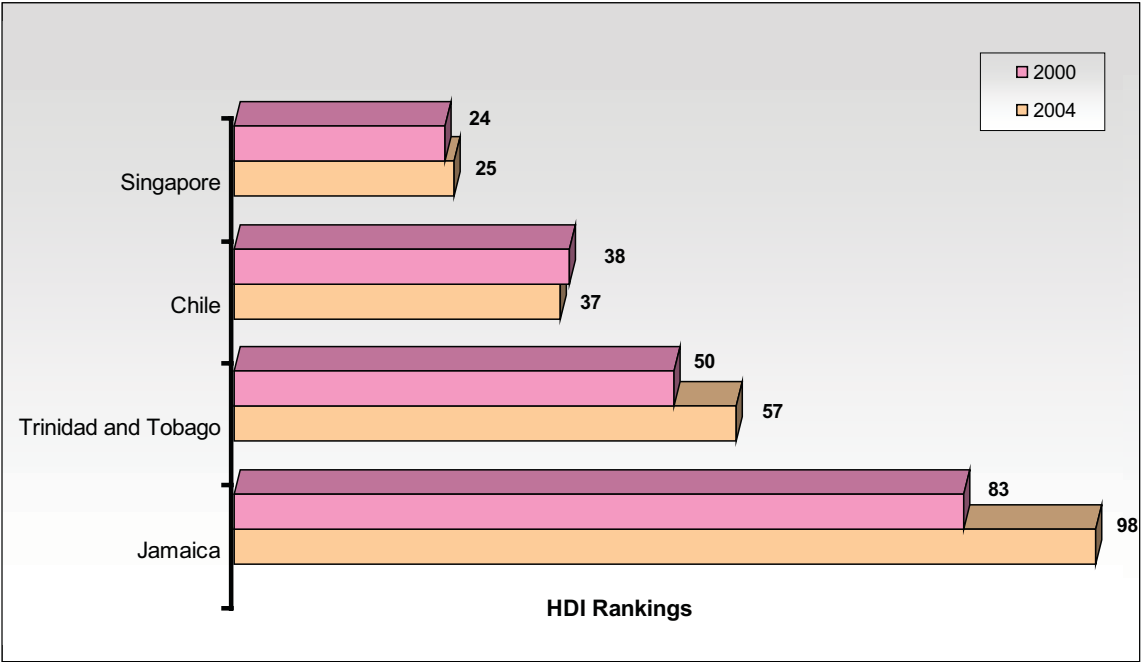
From the HDI ranking in Figure 2.1 and a quick scan of the social environment, it is clear that there are certain social ills in the society that must be addressed. These include the breakdown of the institution of the family; an increase in degenerative diseases caused by sedentary lifestyles and a retreat from Sport and physical activity; the prevalence of the HIV/AIDS epidemic which threatens to eliminate the working population if left unchecked; an unacceptable poverty level; an increase in violent crimes against children; the prevalence of socially displaced persons (vagrants and street children) and a deterioration in values and attitudes which is manifested in little respect for human dignity and life.

How do we bridge the gap? How do we create a caring society where all citizens are cared for and empowered to make a contribution to Trinidad and Tobago?

A prerequisite for the creation of a caring society is the removal of the barriers that prevent many of our people from realizing their full potential, barriers that impede social mobility and social justice and which consign people to poverty and disadvantage. We want to nurture a caring society.

Figure 2.1

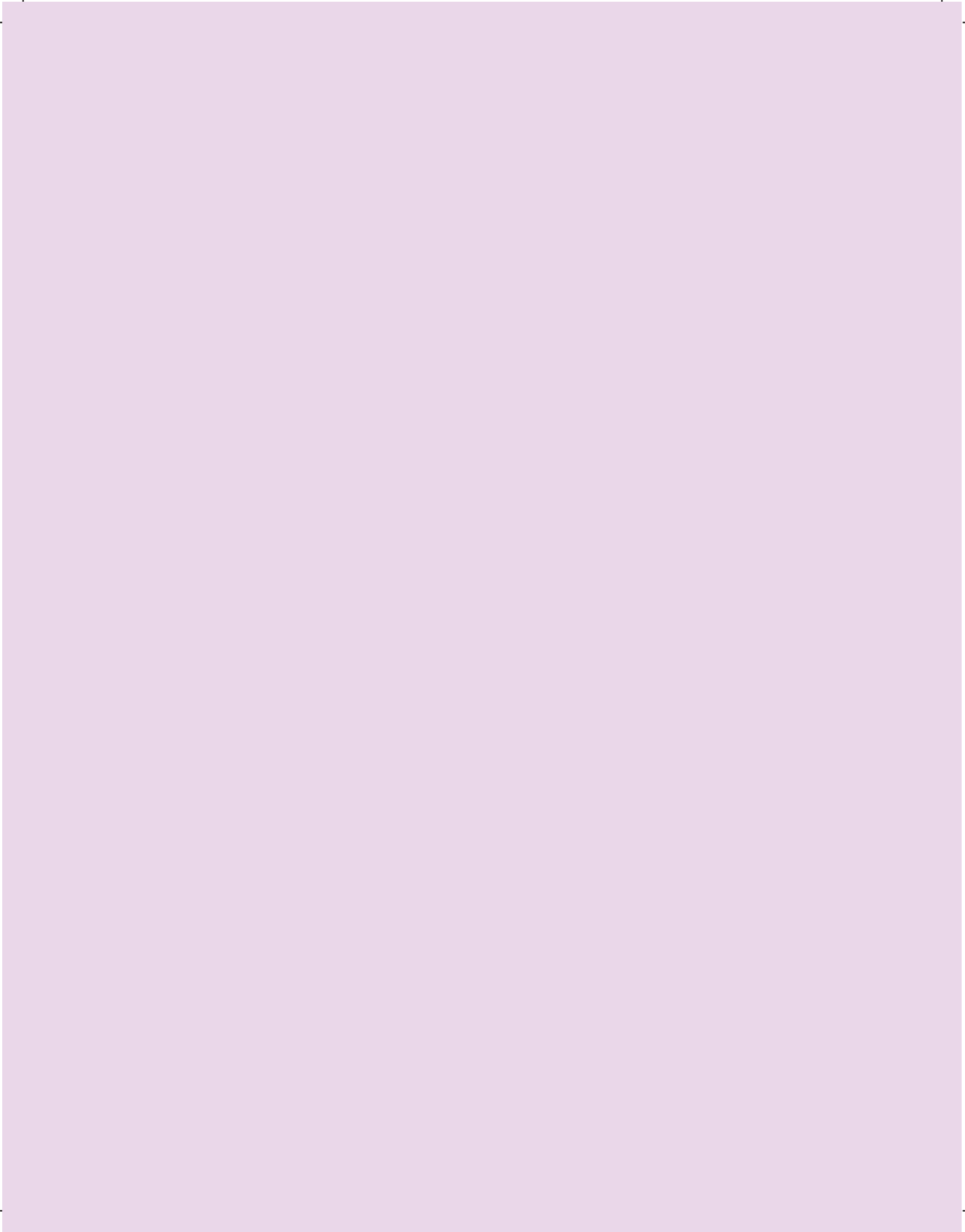
The Human Development Index, Selected Countries 2000 and 2004



Source: Human Development Reports 2002 and 2006

Box 2.1 The HDI

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development. These are a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. The lower the rank (closer to 1), the higher the human development.



Goal 1

THE FOUNDATION OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WILL BE STRONG FAMILIES AND STRONG COMMUNITIES

Policy Context

Building strong families and communities is key to nurturing a caring society, where vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children, youth and persons with disabilities, are cared for and protected. Strong families give security, comfort and meaning to life. They are the source of strength from which the young can aspire to achieve their full potential. They are the conduit through which our elderly pass on their values and lessons learnt in life. Strong families also ensure that children lead happy, confident lives and that our elderly enjoy respect and dignity. They are an irreplaceable source of care and support.

The most recent analysis of the institution of the family shows that in terms of family structure⁶, 40.3 per cent were unions based on marriage; followed by extended families (21.4 per cent); and single parent households (14.4 per cent). Of the single parent households, 11.9 per cent were headed by single mothers. Most households were male headed (68.9 per cent).

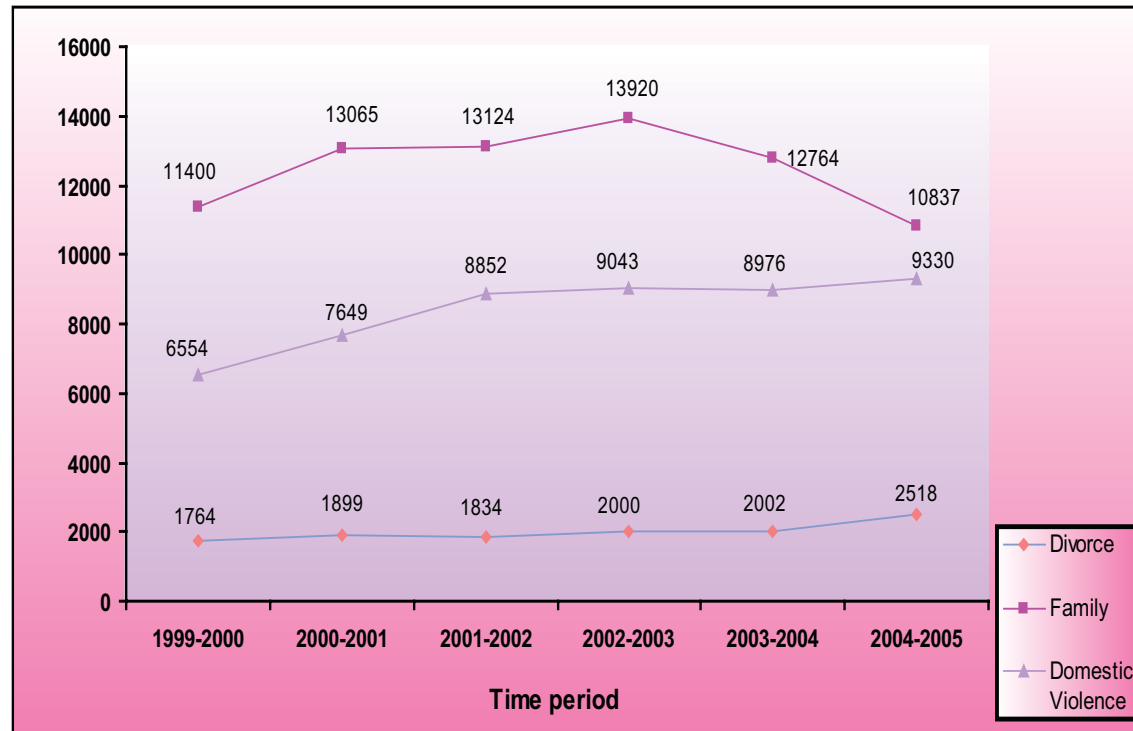
The available information in Figure 2.2 indicates that overall, there has been a steady increase in both the number of divorces and cases of domestic violence during the period 2000-2005. However, the number of family cases⁷ has been on the decline. Reducing the number of divorces and domestic violence cases therefore poses a challenge.

⁷ Applications under the Status of Children Act 1981, and Family Law (Guardianship of Minors, Domicile and Maintenance Act 1981)

⁶ Based on the 1997/1998 Household Budgetary Survey

Figure 2.2

New Cases Filed by Year and Type



Source: Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Annual Reports 2003-2004 and 2004-2005

Other challenges include influencing fathers to accept financial responsibility for their children, especially in cases where families are headed by single mothers. In 2005, there were 2,457 new child maintenance cases filed.⁸ This highlights the need to educate and socialise our men with regard to their role as fathers and their shared responsibility to provide for their children's financial, emotional and spiritual well being.

Another issue of concern is that of teenage pregnancy. Although there has been a declining trend in teenage pregnancy over the last three years⁹, the numbers remain relatively high, when compared to comparator countries like Malaysia (18 per 1,000) and Singapore (6 per 1,000).

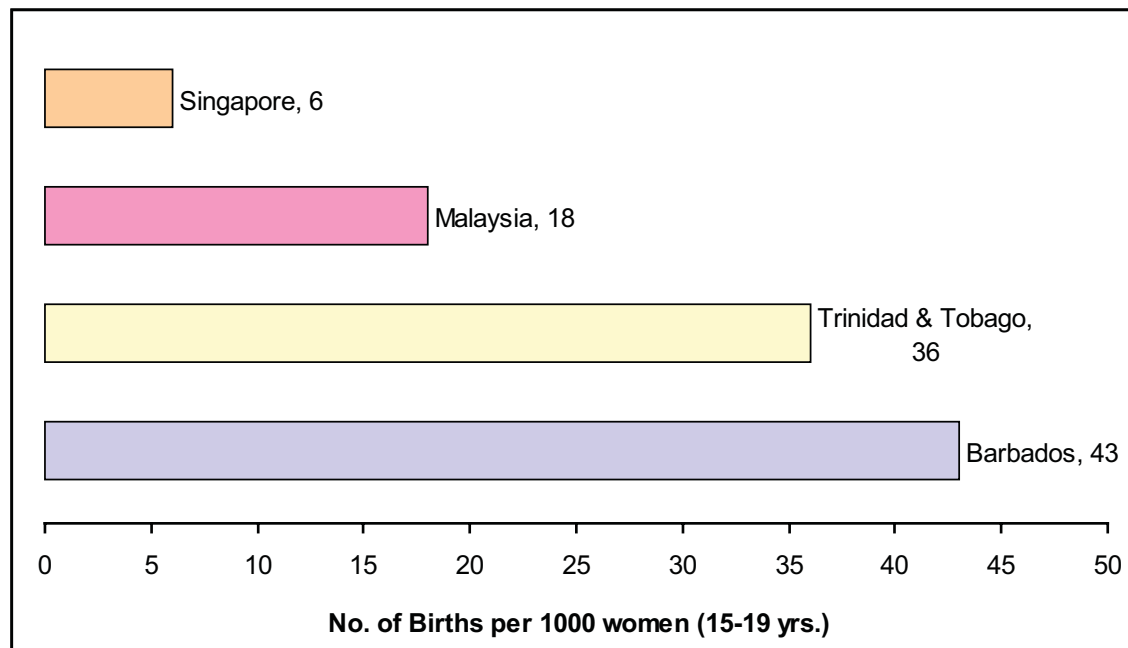
Another key element in nurturing a caring society is ensuring the rehabilitation and re-integration into society of persons who

⁸ Annual Report of the Judiciary of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago 2004-2005 (New Magistrates Court Cases filed)

⁹ Community Health Centres data only

Figure 2.3

Teenage Pregnancy in Selected Countries



Source: UNFPA, State of World Population 2003

served time in penal institutions. Latest statistics show that 63 per cent of prison inmates had children, and the number of children with parents in prison was estimated at 8,000.⁹ In addition, there is also a high level of repeat offenders.

Rehabilitating and reintegrating prisoners and ex-prisoners are therefore critical to ensuring that children whose parents are incarcerated are able to enjoy the benefits of both parents contributing to their development. Prisoners and ex-prisoners will therefore be provided with the opportunity to become productive citizens.

Another issue affecting children relates to child labour. A study conducted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 2000, indicated that overall, 4.1 per cent of children, that is, persons under 18 years of age, were estimated to be working. This amounts to approximately 17,655 children in that year. In 2002, the ILO Rapid Assessment Study further indicated that the occupational areas included scavenging, agriculture, commercial sexual activity and domestic work. These types of labour expose children to severe health risks including exposure to hazardous material and HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Preventative

¹⁰ Final Report of Vision 2020 Sub Committee on National Security and Public Safety, 2004

measures must therefore be implemented to curb this menace.

Strong communities will also be promoted in an attempt to build a caring society. These communities foster harmonious living, inculcate positive values and also provide assistance to families and the marginalised groups through programmes which deliver social services and provide socio economic and psychological support at a communal level. Strong communities also foster neighbourliness, build national unity as well as encourage patriotism. The foundation of our future is therefore strong families, the building blocks of strong communities.



Objectives to 2010

1.

Reduce the number of divorces

2.

Reduce the incidence of youth delinquency

3.

Reduce the number of cases of child maintenance

4.

Reduce the incidence of domestic violence

5.

Reduce the number of repeat offenders

6.

Reduce teenage pregnancy

7.

Increase access of population to community services

Strategies

Encourage Family Development

Given the importance of the family in nurturing a caring society, the role of the family as the basic socialising and stabilising agent will be promoted. In this connection, a family policy will be formulated and family development programmes will be developed to target different stages of the family life cycle. Given that extended and community support systems are quickly disintegrating, Government will partner with civil society to make several interventions to strengthen the family including parenting skills programmes and pre-marital and post marriage counselling. Closer collaboration between the Mediation Centres and the Family Court will be fostered in the interest of promoting harmonious community and family relationships. The mass media will be encouraged to place greater emphasis on promoting and disseminating positive values and information on family development.

Build Strong Communities

Communities can be shaped by choice or by chance. Government will create choices and incentives for sustainable community development – linking communities to housing, transportation, jobs, education and amenities that make communities desirable places in which to live. The building of social capital—the complex web of interrelationships

between people, organisations, and Government will be fostered. Each community will be encouraged to function well economically, to provide the social and cultural environment that people find attractive and nurture and develop a sense of community. In other words, communities must enhance the quality of life. Volunteerism will be also be promoted so that individuals with special talents, interests, skills, and experience will be willing to contribute their time to help those in need and solve problems within the community.

Government will implement a number of additional community development programmes with the objective of developing leadership skills, inculcating positive values and fostering neighbourliness and harmonious living within the various communities. At the same time Government will continue to construct community centres throughout the country and citizens will be encouraged to implement community development programmes and projects. In keeping with the tenets of the decentralisation policy under the current Local Government Reform initiative, Government will support the implementation of initiatives to empower and make communities more involved in the affairs and decision making processes of Local Government.

Implement Child Friendly Policies

Research will be conducted on the feasibility of implementing policies and programmes, which would facilitate working parents spending more time with their children. This will include flexible work arrangements, job sharing and having a work-at-home day per week for mothers. These have become possibilities with advances in technology and the emergence of the virtual office. The establishment of the homework centres and day care facilities in the workplace will also be explored.

Care for the Elderly

As life expectancy increases, there will be a concomitant increase in the proportion of elderly persons in the population. Government will introduce measures to assist the elderly to live healthy productive and useful lives. In addition, there will be a strengthening of the systems to provide assistance for elderly persons without family support and who are therefore unable to take care of themselves. This will involve developing standards of quality care for homes for the elderly and updating the legal framework aimed at protecting the rights of the elderly. There will also be a strengthening of the monitoring function to ensure compliance.

Protect Our Children

The institutional and legal frameworks for protecting children against abuse will be strengthened. In this regard, a Children's Authority will be established. Government will encourage the involvement of the community and child welfare committees will be appointed. Standards and legislation that govern the operations of children's homes will also be reviewed in order to eliminate the incident of abuse at these institutions. In the effort to curb child labour, the National Policy for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour will be finalised and implementation will be expedited.

Integrate Differently-Abled Persons

Systems will be introduced to integrate differently-abled persons into society, especially in terms of education, to enable them to lead a fulfilling life. To this end, the registration process of persons with disabilities will begin shortly to inform planning and policy. In respect of the permanently disabled, disability assistance grants will be provided as well as welfare assistance including access to housing and social services.

Empower Our Youth

Government will implement the National Youth Policy. In addition, legislation to protect the youth, especially youth at risk, will

be introduced, as necessary. Attention will also be paid to reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS infection among the youth population through the conduct of two projects namely, the Youth Health Caravan and the establishment of Adolescent Youth Friendly Health Centres – ‘the Liming Spot’. Programmes aimed at reducing youth unemployment through skills training will also be implemented. Consistent with the goal of youth empowerment, programmes aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills among young people will also be introduced in fiscal 2007.

Rehabilitate our Prisoners

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There will be an expansion of programmes aimed at rehabilitating our prisoners and ex-prisoners to facilitate their reintegration into society, enable their participation in the lives of their families and help them to become productive citizens. In this context, prison reform will continue and programmes will be developed to assist them in leading normal, productive lives, upon release.



Major Projects

Establishment of the Children's Authority

The Authority will be responsible for, *inter alia*, monitoring and conducting periodic reviews of community residences (Children's Homes, Rehabilitation Centres), foster homes and nurseries; investigating and treating with complaints of staff, children and parents/guardians and also reports of mistreatment of children in their homes; and issuing and revoking licenses of community residences and nurseries. The Authority will also act as an advocate for the rights of all children. It will comprise primarily four units namely, the Coordinating, Administrative, Technical and Research Units.

Family Life Management Programme

The Programme aims to empower participants by equipping them with the skills to improve the healthy functioning of the individual, interpersonal and family level. The Programme will offer training in three key areas namely, Parenting and the Family, Violence and the Family and Life Skills Development. Each of these areas consists of six modules and the cycles are expected to be quarterly.

Trinidad and Tobago National Parenting Programme

This Programme aims to provide support to parents in the execution of their duties. It also seeks to provide parenting education to prospective parents, so that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to make responsible and informed decisions.

Establishment of Senior Citizens Centres

Senior centres are multi service organisations that aim to support personal growth and independence of the elderly and encourage their involvement in the community. They target well/active elderly and retired persons generally and serve as community focal points and activity centres where older adults come together for programmes and services that maintain and improve health, quality of life, support independence and encourage participation in community life. The activities at the Centres include fitness and exercise, guidance on health and nutrition, education such as computer literacy, recreational activities, social and cultural activities, creative arts and crafts, leadership development and volunteer activities. This Project is the first phase (1-3 years) in a long-term programme to provide a continuum of services for the elderly.

Meals on Wheels Programme

This Programme will be conducted on a phased basis and will target needy persons who are aged 60 years and over, who are unable to prepare his/her own meals, are living alone or without family support and whose yearly incomes do not exceed \$15,000. Meals on Wheels will be home delivered (via NGOs/CBOs and FBOs) on a daily basis in various communities in Trinidad. The meals will provide the essential nutrients best suited to the dietary needs of the targeted beneficiaries.

An Expanded and Integrated Counselling and Other Intervention Programme for Trinidad and Tobago

This Programme seeks to provide counselling and other interventions (workshops, training programmes) for children and adolescents, adults and families affected by a wide range of psychosocial problems including abuses, juvenile deviance, parenting, spousal relationships, violence and crime and HIV/AIDS. Professional guidance, support and other intervention services will be made available to equip adults, children and families with skills to cope with social and emotional stress.

Operation of the Facility for Older Socially Displaced Persons at Hernandez Place, Arima

This is a project of residential care service provided to older, socially displaced persons. The facility targets persons over age 55 years, whose negative social behaviour makes it difficult to place them in existing homes for the elderly.

Public Awareness Campaign on National Policy on Persons with Disabilities

This Project will comprise of a series of media initiatives, including, in the first instance, column and full page advertisements in the daily newspapers as well as radio advertisements. The Policy and the Action Plan will be circulated and will also be made available in Braille, large printed and electronically. Increasing public awareness about the Policy is aimed at educating and encouraging the national population to support the Policy. A review of existing legislation will be undertaken in order to ensure the protection of the rights of the disabled.

Sex Offenders Registry

This Registry will assist with law enforcement, crime prevention, and public safety. Sex offenders, especially child sex offenders will be required to register with the police indicating place of residence, date of release from prison and date of conviction for crime. The purpose

of registration is to encourage the protection of society by increasing the awareness of the community about sex recidivism risk.

Institutional Strengthening of Trinidad and Tobago's Youth Councils

This Project is intended to build capacity within the Youth Councils through a series of participation, advocacy and leadership workshops. These workshops will pivot on the merging of the concepts of active participation, informed advocacy and effective leadership and will also assist in the establishment of the National Youth Council of Trinidad and Tobago.

Continuation of District Youth Services

This Programme targets young people in the 15-25 age group. Services are delivered by Youth Officers who interface with youth groups at the district/community level and include the organisation and management of youth groups, social and community intervention projects (based on conducted needs assessment), leadership development training, referral services (through networks created with other service providers), and conduct of programmes to help young people take responsibility and control of their lives.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Programme

Under this Programme, compensation to victims of violent crimes under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act will be provided. A Board is currently being established to make recommendations on compensation and to determine the types of crimes under the Act in respect of which victims will qualify.

Children in Need of Special Protection Monitoring System

This Programme aims to establish a computerised, relational database to serve as a central registry for data on abused and neglected children, children with disabilities as well as children in conflict with the law.

Continuation of Family Life Radio Programme

This Programme aims at educating the national community on a wide range of issues affecting the family.

Establishment of a Home for Young Female Offenders

This Project aims to provide a home for young female offenders (18 years and under) that will enable their development and/or rehabilitation. The home is expected to accommodate 50 young female offenders.

Community Centres Construction Programme

One hundred community centres will be constructed throughout Trinidad and Tobago. The Project will be divided into four phases, each containing the construction of 25 centres. Districts in which community centres will be constructed in 2007 include Cumuto, Cocorite, Tunapuna, Chase Village, New Harmony Hall, Borde Narve, Strange Village, Charuma and Vessigny. The centres will cater for small and large group meetings, formal and informal functions as well as serve as emergency centres in the case of disasters.

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Youth Facilities Programme

The Ministry conducts training and development programmes for youth at its three residential and six non-residential youth facilities. Vocational and other skills training programmes are offered at these facilities and trainees graduate with certificates accredited by the National Examination Council – Ministry of Education, after the two-year training programme in their respective skills. These facilities provide a support system and safety net for the many young people who are unable to cope with the school system, are unskilled and too young to be employed. In fiscal 2007, access will be expanded by making these facilities available on weekends for conduct of programmes as well as recreational use by young persons.



Targeted Outcomes

- The divorce rate is reduced by 25 per cent
- Juvenile delinquency is reduced by 25 per cent
- The number of child maintenance cases is reduced by 25 per cent
- The number of cases of domestic violence is reduced by 25 per cent
- The number of repeat offenders declines by 30 per cent
- Teenage pregnancy is reduced by 20 per cent
- 100 community centres are constructed across Trinidad and Tobago



Goal 2

POVERTY WILL BE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED

Policy Context

On the basis of the 1992 Survey of Living Conditions, it was estimated that 35.9 per cent of the population was living in poverty.¹ Since then this situation has significantly improved given the steady growth of the economy and the downward trend in the rate of unemployment over the last decade. Preliminary estimates based on the 2005 Survey of Living Conditions, indicate that the number of persons living below the poverty line fell to 17.1 per cent.²

Nonetheless, these statistics only tell part of the story. They do not fully reflect the impact on the individual, the family and the community. Too often persons are trapped within the cycle of poverty with little or no hope of upward social mobility. As a result, many families have suffered from the inter-generational cycle of poverty. Moreover, many communities have become breeding grounds for crime, drugs, despair and low aspirations. It is necessary to engage the poor by providing opportunities for them to break out of the cycle of poverty. The assumption that people do not want to work must be challenged and those who can and wish to make a contribution must be provided with the opportunity to do so.

Although Government has taken a number of initiatives relating to poverty alleviation, poverty remains a major social challenge. The effectiveness of these interventions has been impeded by several factors including inadequate human resources, particularly social workers.

It will therefore be necessary to strengthen our institutions and promote informed decision-making by enhancing efforts at data collection and by developing poverty profiles. It will also be necessary to strengthen our monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Given our extensive education and skills programmes, education will be promoted as

¹ The foundation of the poverty line is the indigence line for an adult, which establishes what was the minimum expenditure necessary to achieve 2400 calories, in T&T in 1997/1998 (\$228.30 per month).

² The poverty line was calculated to be TT\$665 per month for every adult for a typical household.

an effective route out of poverty. Government will also show that entering the world of work brings about multiple advantages that go beyond the real increases in income – dignity, self- confidence and hope.

Government will help the poor and the vulnerable escape poverty through their own efforts. Where this is not possible, the social services delivery system will provide relief and protection. This approach points to helping people create possibilities and ensuring that no citizen will be allowed to live in poverty or in conditions incompatible with those of a developed country. It also speaks to self-actualisation and the empowerment of all persons, to ensure individual, household and community sustainability. Additionally it is also recognised that there are different types of poverty such as the ‘working poor’ and the ‘chronic poor’ and each must be addressed differently. However, greater emphasis must be placed on the chronic poor because they are the most vulnerable.

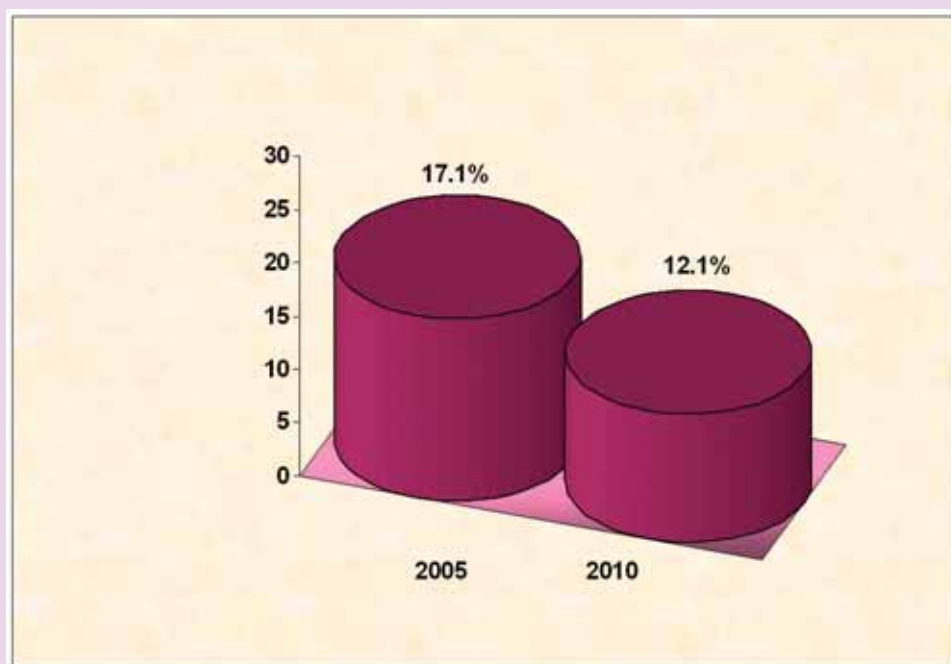
But Government can only do so much, our people must also aspire to a better life, to improve their condition and to build a better future for themselves and their children.

Objectives to 2010

Reduce the number of persons living below the poverty line by 1 per cent per year.

Figure 2.4

Percentage of the Population Living Below the Poverty Line



Source: Survey of Living Conditions, 2005
Ministry of Social Development

Strategies

Develop a Coordinated, Integrated Approach to Address the Poverty Challenge

Poverty alleviation is a priority of Government and will be given increased focus. Consequently, a specialised institution will be established with the mandate to eliminate poverty by 2020. This institution will be fully resourced and will co-ordinate all the poverty programmes and projects in the country. It will work very closely with the communities and ensure that there is an integrated and focused approach to addressing the poverty challenge. It will also develop a modern delivery system, and partner with the private sector, other public sector agencies and civil society agencies to reduce poverty. Programmes will also be developed to motivate and encourage the poor to take advantage of the increased access to education and training programmes, attain basic literacy and numeracy skills, where necessary, and continue to upgrade their education and skills level.

Strengthen the Information System on Poverty and Poverty Reduction

Government is committed to ensuring that poverty reduction strategies are informed by the latest data and that appropriate targeting can be achieved. This will be resolved by the

implementation of annual poverty surveys and the establishment of a comprehensive national poverty database. Preliminary estimates of the 2005 Survey of Living Conditions have been derived and the analysis is expected to be completed by the end of 2006.

The annual survey will also be used to track progress over the planning period. This survey will be complemented by the introduction of a Quality of Life Index that will measure changes in the quality of life of citizens and will be disaggregated at the regional level to identify regional disparities in the quality of life and to devise ways to reduce these differences.

Bring Social Services Closer to the People

Social services will be brought closer to the people, particularly in remote areas by establishing new social services centres across the country; partnering with Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Faith Based Organisations (FBOs); strengthening the Regional Social and Human Development Councils' project implementation units and regional civil society networks; and introducing social sector community outreach caravans.

Promote Work as the Best Route out of Poverty

The experiences of many countries have shown that welfare programmes that simply give cash transfers to the poor have not been very successful. Those individuals who are able and willing to work will be encouraged to do so. This means that the able-bodied poor will no longer receive handouts but will be required to work to upgrade their skills to enhance their employability. Direct support will be provided to those groups among the poor that are incapacitated, sick or unable to work such as the elderly, the differently-abled and the destitute. This support would be targeted and based on the development of poverty profiles of the poor, generated from data derived from social surveys.

Increase Access to Education and Training Opportunities

The strong growth anticipated over the medium-term will generate increased employment opportunities particularly in the more productive and lucrative sectors of the economy including the knowledge-based sectors. Participating in these sectors means having the right skills and as such, steps will therefore be taken to ensure that the universal entitlement to free basic skills training and free tuition towards at least a craft level qualification is made a reality for all adults, providing them with the opportunity to become functionally literate and numerate. Government will expand the number of training programmes, centres

and institutions to upskill the population. Indeed, it is critical that the skills base of the country be expanded in order to increase overall productivity and thus promote sustained economic growth while facilitating upward social mobility and social justice.

Address the Feminisation of Poverty

Given that the typical poor are uneducated, unskilled, unemployed and are also characterised mainly by single female parent households, programmes will be tailored to help these women remove themselves from the vicious cycle of poverty. Further initiatives will be taken to address inter-generational poverty including the creation of employment opportunities for women, whilst proper facilities are provided for the care and safety of their children.

Support the Indigent, Incapacitated and the Sick

Among the poor are those who cannot work or look after themselves. They are among the most vulnerable members of our society. These are the poor that must be cared for and whose dignity must be maintained. These are the chronic poor. Measures to address vagrancy and the socially displaced will be expanded and strengthened. Centres will be established to ascertain the best support for this group and guide them with care to the appropriate social institutions.

Accelerate the Development of Infrastructure

Efforts will be made to improve the quality of life in all communities by upgrading the quality of and increasing access to basic services such as potable water, electricity, housing, health, recreation and educational facilities. In order to better provide these services and amenities to the poor, close collaboration among institutions responsible for infrastructural development will be promoted.

Establish Strategic Linkages Between the Poor and Small Business Development Entities

Strategic linkages will be developed between the lower income segment of the population and relevant financial and business development institutions with a view to increasing access of lower income individuals to finance other services for small business development.

Introduce National Financial Literacy Programmes

Poverty results, not only from limited income, but as well from the inability to effectively manage available incomes. Moreover, with continuous expansion of the economy over the last decade and declines in unemployment, incomes have been rising. In this context, there is a perceived need for income earners to be assisted in the management of income. To this end, financial literacy programmes

will be introduced targeting lower and middle income earners.

Make the Poorest of the Poor Priority Clients for Social Services

Families that are living in extreme poverty will be identified and made priority clients for social services. These families will be given preferential access to social services including psychosocial support, grants, low-cost housing, health services, and education and training opportunities.

Improve the Labour Inspection Function

The enforcement function particularly as it relates to the enforcement of the minimum wage and prescribed working conditions will be strengthened. This will assist in alleviating poverty and improve the quality of life amongst both the chronic and the working poor.



Major Projects

Establishment of an Agency to Focus on Poverty Reduction

Poverty alleviation needs focus and dedication. Countries that have been most successful at significantly reducing poverty have set up specialised institutions to deal with this social problem. Chile has been a pioneer in developing innovative social reforms that have been replicated throughout the world, including the developed world. Government is currently reviewing a model based on the Chilean Solidario System. This System addresses poverty in a holistic manner and is tailored to the needs of individual families. It also facilitates families exiting poverty by focussing on education, health, housing, employment and family dynamics. The Agency will be responsible for co-ordinating all poverty alleviation efforts and will be adequately resourced to address the poverty challenge.

Development of a Quality of Life Index

This is a composite index that is a continuous measure of the quality of life experienced by citizens. It is critical in determining the impact of policies, programmes and institutions on the lives of citizens.

The Quality of Life Index will be based on socio-economic data and will provide information to guide development planning. Sub-indices include, average price of low-medium cost houses, percentage of housing units with basic amenities, number of divorces, juvenile crimes, number of persons per doctor and number of hospital beds per 1,000 population.

Expansion of the Food Support Programme/Debit Card

This Programme has replaced the S.H.A.R.E. Programme as a mechanism geared for poverty eradication by offsetting the effects of high food prices among the poorest households. The target group is the chronic poor and vulnerable citizens whose household incomes are inadequate for the provision of basic nutritional requirements.

Establishment of Social Displacement Centres

These Centres will provide transitional housing for periods of up to one year for the homeless and will offer services such as needs assessment with relevant referrals, skills training and medical health screening. The Centres will house 200 socially displaced persons and will be located in Arima and Port of Spain.

Rental Subsidy Programme

One of the more difficult challenges for the socially displaced person is meeting the cost of housing needs following rehabilitation. Under the Rental Subsidy Programme a subsidy of \$600 per month is provided and paid for a maximum period of six months. The Programme targets graduates of the Social Displacement Unit's Empowerment Series and Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Programmes as well as individuals who have been recommended by Officers of the Social Displacement Unit. Deportees may also access the Programme for no more than three months.

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Construction of Social Services Centres in Rio Claro and Point Fortin

Each Centre will serve as a one stop shop for the delivery of social services. Services to be provided at each Centre will include probation services, family services, mediation, legal aid, disability assistance and Internet access.

Continuation of Poverty Reduction Programme

The objective of the Programme is to improve the delivery of poverty reduction services through the decentralisation of the poverty interventions. Initiatives include micro credit and micro project support; strengthening the information system on poverty and poverty

reduction programmes through the conduct of poverty studies; establishment of Regional Human and Social Development Councils; and the conduct of poverty audits on Government expenditure on poverty alleviation.

Micro Enterprise Training and Development Grant

This Grant Programme seeks to assist needy citizens who are capable and willing to undertake a small business venture or engage in skills training. Beneficiaries include poor persons who may be victims of domestic violence, probationers, welfare recipients and other persons 18 years and over in receipt of benefits from the Ministry of Social Development.

Micro-Enterprise Loan (MEL) Facility

This Programme is a community empowerment and poverty reduction initiative, which equips Community Based Organisations (CBOs) to actively engage in promoting sustainable livelihoods among the poor through the provision of loans to support micro enterprise. MEL provides borrowers with (i) community-based business loans; (ii) business training for all interested persons and (iii) after-loan services and business support. Entrepreneurs, CBOs, recipients of Public Assistance, individuals, and unemployed persons are among the targeted beneficiaries.

Enhancement of the Labour Inspection Function

This Project aims to strengthen the capacity of the Labour Inspectorates among five Caribbean countries who are members of the Organisation of American States, including Trinidad and Tobago. It involves two phases. Phase I, which is almost complete includes: (i) evaluation of the Labour Inspectorate Systems (ii) presentation of an Evaluation Report and Draft Plan of Action for Labour Inspection Systems in each of the five countries (iii) presentation of Final Plan of Action detailing specific measures and areas of responsibility to be developed and (iv) conduct of Train the Trainers Workshop for all participating countries. Phase II will facilitate implementation of the Plan of Action.



Targeted Outcomes

- Poverty levels decline by 5 per cent, moving at least 60,000 persons out of poverty
- Trinidad and Tobago is a more equitable society
- The quality of life of all citizens is improved

Goal 3

ALL CITIZENS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO ADEQUATE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Policy Context

Housing is a basic human need and as such, its provision is fundamental to the achievement of the objectives of Vision 2020. There are two dimensions of the housing problem – insufficient supply of adequate housing and affordability. Government will address both these issues in the drive to nurture a caring society.

The definition of adequate housing is subjective since people have different views of what constitutes adequate housing. The Vision 2020 Sub Committee on Housing defined adequate housing as not merely the provision of housing units but the creation of quality communities, which are well planned, socially and economically balanced, properly provided with all facilities and utilities, and have access to employment opportunities.

The model for housing will therefore be one based on the development of sustainable communities, which includes the provision of public amenities such as playgrounds, community centres, schools, open spaces, clinics, multipurpose centres and places of worship. This will foster neighbourliness and harmonious living among community members, facilitate family relationships, encourage greater participation in sport as well as promote health and wellness. This model will allow for the infusion of positive values

and attitudes in our communities and promote self-development, community development and national development.

A review of the housing sector indicates that the demand for adequate housing far exceeds supply. The demand over the next decade has been estimated in several studies and includes the following:²

- 10,000 units per annum for all income groups (PADCO, 1993)
- 9,800 units per annum for all income groups (Halcrow, 2000)
- 6,000 units per annum for all income groups (Angel, 2000)

Using CSO 2000 Population and Housing Census data as the base, housing needs were estimated by the Vision 2020 Housing Sub-Committee taking the following factors into consideration:

- existing population
- existing housing stock
- projected population growth rates
- size of household or family units
- condition of housing stock needing replacement

The Sub-Committee estimated the demand at 90,000 units to the year 2020. In order to reduce the gap between demand and supply, Government will accelerate construction of housing units over the period 2007-2010, targeting 8,000 new units per year. It is estimated that the private sector and individuals will construct some 2,000 additional units per annum.

The other major issue is affordability. Affordability is the ability of families and individuals to own homes and is reflected by the home-ownership rate. An analysis of the demand for housing shows that there is a preference for single-family detached homes, one third of which are requested by female heads of households who earn less than \$3,000 per month and have at least two dependants. The analysis of income level shows that 57 per cent of the demand for housing occurs within the low-income group. The average cost of construction of homes for low income earners under Government's housing programmes currently ranges

between \$200,000 and \$250,000. The qualifying income for a loan for a house of this value is \$3,400 - \$4,200 at 95 per cent financing or \$3,600 to \$4,500 at 100 per cent financing. This suggests that persons in the minimum wage bracket earning a monthly income of \$1,440 for a single wage-earner or \$2,880 for a joint income household will not qualify for a mortgage.

To address the issue of affordability, Government will review its mortgage policy as it relates to low income households and establish a financing regime that will enable affordable housing to be fully accessible to all citizens.

These new initiatives will enable all persons to access adequate, affordable housing thus new squatting communities should not emerge. Squatting will be contained and communities which qualify under the Squatter Regularisation Act No. 25 1998, will continue to be regularised. The aim is to transform these existing squatting communities into more planned and sustainable communities.

² For a detailed discussion on the calculation of the demand for housing and studies estimating demand, please refer to the Vision 2020 Housing Sub Committee's Report.



Objectives to 2010

1.

Construct 8,000 housing units annually (under Government's housing programme)

2.

Construct 2,000 housing units annually (private sector)

3.

Increase the number of households to benefit from Home Improvement Grants to 1,500 annually

4.

Increase the number of Home Improvement Subsidies³ to 650 annually

5.

Increase the number of New Home Subsidies to 1,000 annually

³ Under the Home Improvement Subsidy Programme up to a maximum of \$15000 must be matched by the beneficiary.





Strategies

Continue the Accelerated Construction and Distribution of Housing Units

Government's accelerated housing programme will be the main mechanism for addressing the housing needs of the low income segment of the population. The objective is to construct 8,000 housing units annually. This will involve the construction of two and three bedroom housing units at 30 sites throughout the country. Government will participate directly in construction or partner with contractors to build houses for sale directly to the beneficiaries. Mechanisms will also be instituted in the selection system to ensure distribution of housing units to the targeted groups, single female heads of household, poor families, persons with disabilities and families with many dependants. A centralised database will be set up to ensure that families who are in need of housing are not denied the opportunity to purchase these units.

Improve the Existing Housing Stock

Given the state of disrepair and the deterioration of the existing housing stock particularly in the low income communities, the Home Improvement Grant Facility will continue as well as remedial infrastructure works at housing estates throughout the

country. Additionally, the rental housing stock will benefit from an enhanced housing maintenance programme.

Make Access to Affordable Housing Easier

A financing regime aimed at improving access to housing will be established. This includes 100 per cent financing on properties valued up to \$450,000 and a subsidised tiered interest rate. Other innovative ways to assist low-income owners will be introduced including outfitting low-income households with appliances and furniture up to a value of \$15,000; and, the Rent to Own Programme for low-income individuals who are financially unable to service a mortgage.

Strengthen Coordination and Harmonisation Among Agencies Involved in the Housing Sector

At the present time, several government agencies are involved in housing, providing such services as mortgage financing, land use planning and management, property management and the provision of development financing. There are also the regulatory agencies involved in the delivery of housing that do not work in tandem with one another. There is clearly a need for coordination among these agencies to enhance the effectiveness of housing delivery, in particular, in expediting the approval process.

Address Urban Renewal and Redevelopment

Government will continue its programme of urban renewal and redevelopment to address the deterioration of urban centres. The redevelopment of targeted areas will not only assist in rejuvenating certain neighbourhoods but will also address the need to provide much needed social and recreational facilities designed to improve the quality of life in some older neighbourhoods.

Build New Sustainable Communities

Using the sustainable community development model, new communities will be developed at strategic locations throughout the country. This will facilitate the emergence of new growth centres and this will have the effects of a reduction in the population density in urban areas resulting in a lower demand for social services, less traffic congestion on the roads, and more balanced regional development.

Contain Squatting

In recognising the social and economic challenges associated with squatter regularisation and the need to protect the rights of citizens to property, Government will continue to employ a series of measures to address the squatting problem. These include improving the living conditions in regularised settlements through a programme

of aided self-help; facilitating and completing construction works and land-use planning; and undertaking land surveying and engineering designs in several sites across the country. A more streamlined programme of providing deeds of lease on public lands will also be implemented to ensure the legal status of squatters, which will improve their ability to finance improvements to their properties. In addition, partnerships between community groups and NGOs would be forged to assist in the social upliftment of squatter settlements. In terms of the containment of squatting, occupiers who entered lands after January 1st, 1998, are eligible to apply for a housing unit under Government's housing programme. All Ministries/Agencies which control State Lands will be required to actively patrol and monitor their lands and take effective action against new squatters. A Land Information and Management System relating to squatting is also being developed.



Major Projects

Financing a New Subsidy Regime

A new financing mechanism will be developed to address the issue of affordability. Persons earning between \$1,440 per month and \$8,000 per month will continue to be eligible for the houses for which they originally qualified without an increase in monthly payments. These persons will continue to receive a 100 per cent mortgage for 25 years at 2 per cent with a cap at \$450,000. In addition, an individual or individuals with an income or joint income of \$4,000 would be eligible, under prevailing mortgage interest rates, for a loan of \$200,000. However, under the new regime, that individual or individuals would now be eligible for a loan as high as \$315,000. The increase in the cost will be met by a higher government subsidy. It is estimated that the increase in the subsidy will amount to \$450 million. The Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance Limited (TTMF) will administer this portfolio.

Rent-to-Own Programme

The Rent-to-Own Programme will be continued. The Programme targets low and middle income individuals who are financially unable to service a mortgage. Persons who do not meet the financial requirements to secure mortgage financing are given consideration for rental accommodation

based on their income levels. Individuals will be allowed to take up occupation on the basis of a licence to occupy for a period of five years with the option to purchase. If the tenant is still unable to qualify for a mortgage, after five years the option will be extended for a further three years for qualifying tenants of the first five years. Two thirds of the rental payment is applied as a deposit towards the purchase of the property; and the rental tenancy will be converted into a mortgage. This Programme is being currently implemented at Almond Court, Morvant and Oropune Gardens, Piarco.

Community Facilities on Housing Estates

In order to enhance the development of small businesses in existing and new housing developments, and to promote the development of entrepreneurial skills, the Ministry of Housing, through its agency - the Trinidad and Tobago Housing Development Corporation (HDC) will continue to construct commercial complexes on several of its housing estates, including Maloney, Pleasantville, Bon Air, La Horquetta, Edinburgh and Couva. Further, the construction of these centres will minimise and correct a proliferation of unplanned structures built by residents on the estates for conducting small business activities.

Accelerated High Density Housing Programme

The Accelerated Housing Programme will continue to provide affordable and adequate housing to the low and middle income segments of the population. The objective of this Programme is the construction of approximately 100,000 housing units over a ten (10) year period. Programmes include the Infill Programme, the Urban Renewal programmes and the establishment of New Towns. Descriptions of these programmes are as follows:

Infill Programme

This Programme was implemented to facilitate the construction of housing units on unoccupied lots by beneficiaries who had made down payments under the First National Settlements Programme.

Urban Renewal

This programme targets infrastructure and social services in the urban centres of Port of Spain, San Fernando and Chaguanas. The programme specifically addresses the social, physical and economic needs of the communities and seeks to regenerate community life and promote greater environmental amenities in these centres. The Programme which has commenced at all locations involves, *inter alia*, the acquisition of land where necessary and the refurbishment and/or reconstruction of the rented housing units.

Establishment of New Towns

This Project involves the development of new towns on green field sites. A new town will be developed at Wallerfield in fiscal 2007. This Town will include the new Technology Park and the University of Trinidad and Tobago. Other towns are to be developed at La Brea, Princes Town and Couva.

Second National Settlements Programme

The Second National Settlements Programme is an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) funded Programme intended to provide basic services, communal facilities and formal land tenure documents to some 5,400 families on designated sites across the country. Sub projects under this Programme include:

Regularisation and Regeneration of Communities - Greater Port of Spain Region

The Report of the Regularisation of Squatters in Port of Spain 2006, concluded that there was substantial informal housing on private lands for which the existing legislation does not address. The major elements of the regularisation strategy proposed in the Report include: upgrading, limited relocation, conservation, and redevelopment. The Greater Port-of-Spain Study has recommended four areas for Phase I of the regularisation/regeneration implementation process namely: Fondes Amandes, East Upper Gonzales/Sogren Trace, Dundonald

Hill/Belle Vue, Beetham Phase IV/V. It is expected that this Project will facilitate the provision of basic services, upgrade the infrastructure and provide legal land tenure to families and generally address issues of poverty and social development.

Provision of Housing Subsidies

Three (3) types of subsidies are provided to eligible applicants as follows:

- Subsidies for new housing to persons who wish to purchase a new house and satisfy the eligibility criteria
- Subsidies to individuals in possession of land who wish to construct a home and satisfy the criteria. Under this option persons who own residential land but are unable to construct homes due to their inability to access mortgages because of limited financial means will be given upfront subsidies to reduce the size of the loan required, thereby enabling them to qualify for mortgages
- Subsidies to persons who need to effect repairs to their homes

Squatter Regularisation

The Squatter Regularisation Programme seeks to regularise the security of tenure of families living in squatter settlements as well as to provide these communities with basic services and communal facilities. All upgraded sites will have access to basic services such as water, electricity, roads, wastewater disposal systems to septic drainage and public lighting.

Housing Grants

Grants up to a maximum of \$15,000 are made to persons who reside in dilapidated houses and whose annual household income is less than \$36,000. These grants are to be used for the repairs or improvements to their houses. Grants are provided only to persons who can show a legal right to occupation of the house in need of repair.

Emergency Shelter Relief Fund

This Fund provides emergency financial assistance to needy persons whose homes have been severely affected by natural disasters such as flooding, landslides, hurricanes or earthquakes. This assistance is recommended for undertaking repairs to affected homes.



Targeted Outcomes

- 30,000 families have new homes
- 4,500 households have repaired and enhanced their homes using the Home Improvement Grants
- 1,900 households have benefited from Home Improvement Subsidies
- New housing subsidies granted to 3000 families

Goal 4

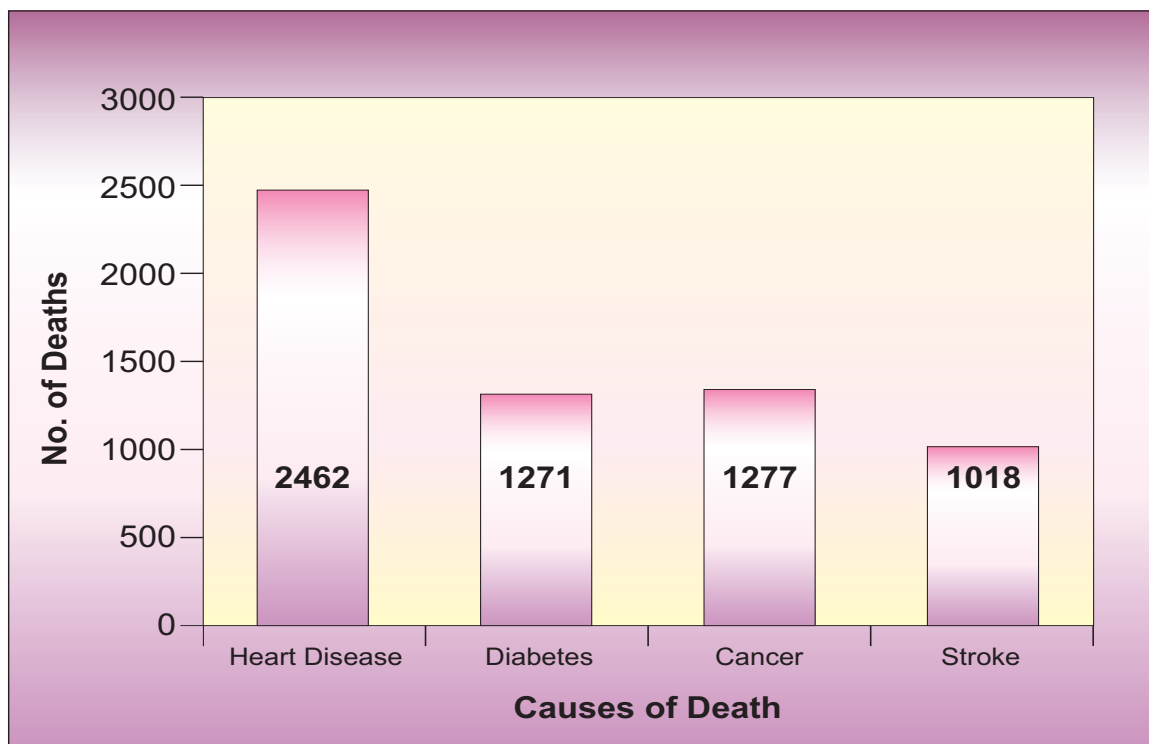
ALL CITIZENS WILL BE EMPOWERED TO LEAD, LONG, HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND HAVE ACCESS TO GOOD QUALITY HEALTH CARE

Policy Context

The health status of the population has improved over the years. The incidence of infectious and communicable diseases has declined significantly and this country now has a national epidemiologic profile comparable to that of the more developed countries. Nevertheless, the country still faces significant health challenges in terms of effectively dealing with the degenerative diseases as illustrated in Figure 2.5 This situation is likely to place additional burdens on the health care system.

Figure 2.5

Main Causes of Death, 2002



Source: Central Statistical Office

There are also other challenges such as the need to create a health care system that is very responsive to the changing health needs of the population and is more accessible and affordable to all segments of the population. In addition, healthcare workers must display a more caring attitude. They must see themselves not merely as providers of medical services, but they must demonstrate a greater sense of caring for their clients. There will also be a need for greater communication between healthcare professionals and their clients. The sector must also be proactive, knowledge driven and technologically up-to-date. At the same time the use of alternative/complementary medicinal practices in the treatment of diseases will be guided by regulation and evidence-based validation.

Training and retaining human resources also continue to be a major challenge, particularly in light of the exodus of doctors and nurses from this country. This situation has made it necessary to bring doctors and nurses from abroad to serve in the country's health institutions as an interim measure. Appropriate programmes have also been introduced for the training of additional nurses and the scholarship programme in the medical field has been expanded.

Sustainability, undeniably, plays a critical and central role towards good health which in turn is important to the social and economic development of a country. Sustainability aims to provide an environment in which humans

can be healthy. It requires that people not only live longer, but that they live with improved function and are able to contribute to society for longer periods of time. In this context, it will therefore be necessary to enhance primary healthcare by promoting healthy lifestyles. The use of exercise, importance of culture lifestyles and healthy eating choices will be promoted.

In addition, focus will be placed on providing modern, reliable treatment alternatives to enable patients to overcome their diseases quickly, with minimum suffering and pain.



Objectives to 2010

1. Life Expectancy Rates

Life expectancy is a an indicator of the health of our nation. Life expectancy rates are influenced by many factors, including health education, nutrition, lifestyle, standards of available health care services and technological advances in medical care.

These targets indicated in Table 2.1 below are extrapolations based on projections done by the Vision 2020 Population and Development Sub Committee.

Table 2.1

Life Expectancy

INDICATOR	BASELINE 1990	TARGET 2010
Life Expectancy Rates (years)		
Male	68.4	68.6
Female	73.2	74.4

Source: Vision 2020 Population and Development Sub Committee

2. Infant Mortality Rate

Infant mortality is defined as the number of children who die within the first year of life per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate is a widely accepted and understood measure of community health.

Table 2.2

Infant Mortality Rate

INDICATOR	BASELINE 2002	TARGET 2010
Infant Mortality (Rates per 1000 births)	24.2	15.1

Source: Vision 2020 Population and Development Sub Committee

3. Deaths by Lifestyle Diseases

Given the rise in non-communicable, lifestyle diseases, which confirms that citizens are leading less than healthy lifestyles, the targets are to reduce deaths from heart disease, diabetes and malignant neoplasm as indicated in the Table 2.3.

Table 2.3

Lifestyle Diseases

INDICATOR	BASELINE 2002	TARGET 2010
Mortality Rate from heart diseases (per 100,000 population)	193.0	145
Mortality Rate from diabetes (per 100,000 population)	99.6	75
Mortality Rate from Malignant Neoplasm (per 100,000 population)	100.1	75

Source: Vision 2020 Population and Development Sub Committee

4. Medical Professionals per 10,000 Persons of the Population

Many people in rural areas must travel long distances for health-care services. The number of medical professionals per 10,000 persons is a direct measure of the availability of basic medical services. Increasing the number of medical professionals available to citizens leads to improved access to health care. The targets set are shown in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4

Medical Professionals (per 10,000 population)

INDICATOR	BASELINE 2004	TARGET 2010
Human Resource per 10,000 population:		
Nursing professionals	18	20.0
Physicians	10.0	12.0

Source: Ministry of Planning and Development



Strategies

Promote Primary Healthcare

Primary health care or the preventative health care approach will be emphasised. This involves empowering the population with knowledge to make choices that are more informed. The health centre will remain the cornerstone for the delivery of public primary health care service.

Improve the General Health Status of the Population and Promote Healthy Lifestyles

Citizens need to be healthy in order to be productive and to enjoy a higher quality of life. Greater emphasis will be placed on the promotion and maintenance of healthy lifestyles. Based on the statistics that confirm that non-communicable diseases are the leading causes of death, efforts will be intensified to prevent or postpone occurrence of these diseases by modifying individual risk behaviour. Regular screening and early risk factor identification and detection will be emphasized. The Ministry of Health's healthy lifestyles campaign will continue to target individuals, families and communities. At the school level, healthy lifestyles will be promoted through diagnostic screening services for children; dental hygiene; promotion of physical education and sport; interventions in the School Nutrition Programme to ensure the adequate nutritional content of food, and sexual and reproductive health sessions. In the

work environment, employers will be encouraged to develop wellness programmes for their employees.

Prevent and Control Communicable Diseases

Measures for the prevention and control of communicable diseases particularly new ones like the Avian Influenza will be strengthened. The Ministries of Health and Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources have developed an action plan in accordance with the World Health Organisation's International Health Regulations (2005) to manage the threat of Avian Influenza. The National Surveillance Unit will be restructured to ensure that it can respond promptly and provide the laboratory support required for early diagnosis and detection of new and emerging diseases. Over the medium-term, public laboratory services will be rationalised and centralised under a new National Laboratory Complex. In addition, Government will partner with communities to assist in the control of insect vector borne diseases.

Strengthen Mental Health Care

Mental health care will be strengthened through the revision of the legal and policy frameworks. In this connection, comprehensive and integrated mental health services will be provided to two target groups – adolescents and the elderly. Prevention and management of mental health problems will

be enhanced through early screening of problems such as stress, anxiety, depression or abuse. Over the medium-term, health care workers will be provided with specialist treatment for the recognition and treatment of persons with mental disorders.

Improve the Performance of the Health Care Delivery System

Government will move towards developing a health sector that promotes preventative and community/family-based approaches. Where it is necessary to improve access to services by smaller communities, regular services will be provided at outreach sites using some of the existing health centres in the remote areas as well as through designated community outreach mobile clinics. Maternal health and prenatal health, diagnostic services in pathology and imaging services, intensive care facilities, rehabilitative care and geriatric care will also be upgraded. Additionally, Government will undertake initiatives to establish centres of excellence in specialized fields such as cardiac surgery, oncology and urology services.

Create a Client-Centred Health Care Environment

Given the need to change staff attitudes in public health institutions as one aspect of creating a more caring society, quality management systems in the health sector will be institutionalised. The aim is to achieve efficiency and effectiveness using client satisfaction as the key indicator. To this end,

a number of initiatives will continue to improve the public's confidence in the health sector including the reduction of the existing surgical waiting list for cataract, orthopaedics, urology and gynaecology cases and also the expansion of categories of surgical procedures offered through the Surgical Waiting List Management Programme. Other initiatives include the development of a communications plan to provide regular reports to the public on the health system's performance, and the continuation of an Adult Cardiac Surgery Programme, as well as organ transplant services.

Institutionalise Quality

In order to improve the quality of the healthcare services, a National Quality Improvement Strategy will be implemented. This Strategy will accelerate the development and implementation of quality systems for all areas across the sector as well as upgrade and expand infrastructure for the provision of quality health care. Measures will be introduced to strengthen customer relations, patient information and consumer protection programmes by institutionalising systems for consumer satisfaction, education, advocacy and protection. Therefore, Government will update the legal framework and institutionalise evidenced-based decision making to improve effectiveness, efficiency and quality. Comprehensive training of healthcare professionals will also be undertaken to enable them to deliver quality health care. In this regard, scholarship programmes for health care professionals will be expanded.



Major Projects

Special Programmes for Chronic Diseases

These Programmes address several chronic diseases that are the main causes of death among the population. They include:

- a Special Programme for Treatment of Adult Cardiac Disease, the aim of which is to improve access to cardiac surgery for persons who are unable to afford the cost of care, through the provision of subsidised cardiac surgery at the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex.
- construction of two treatment centres with a view to increasing the accessibility of renal dialysis services to the general population
- the Chronic Disease Assistance Programme (CDAP), which provides persons affected with chronic diseases with a reliable, cost effective drug supply to assist in managing the disease.

Community Outreach Family Medicine Programme

The Programme is intended to provide improved access to services by smaller communities at outreach sites. It will augment health care delivery to the population, especially remote communities, through a network of fully equipped and staffed mobile clinics.

The objective will be to ensure ‘out of hours’ service, such as on evenings, Saturdays and Sundays. Some remote existing health centre buildings as well as designated community outreach mobile clinics will be utilised. Groups such as the aged, disabled and the young, will be targeted. The Programme will include home healthcare services as well as a community component and will be principally preventative.

Health Sector Reform Programme

Upgrading and refurbishment works at hospitals, health facilities and health centres nationwide will continue over the planning horizon. Major elements of the Programme include the refurbishment of wards, medical library and central block at the Port of Spain General Hospital; completion of designs and commencement of construction of a new wing at the San Fernando General Hospital; and replacement of the roof of the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex. Other projects include the completion of designs and commencement of construction of hospitals at Point Fortin and Sangre Grande; construction of the Roy Joseph Enhanced Health Facility; completion of construction works at selected health centres; institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Health; continuation of training for medical staff, and development of information systems.

Launch of Community Care Programme

The Community Care Programme is an initiative of the Health Sector Reform Programme. This Programme aims to provide opportunities for care in the community for vulnerable groups whose options are limited, such as the elderly and children with disabilities, who are often abandoned in public medical institutions. This initiative will be a partnership involving Government, NGOs, CBOs and the private sector.

Trinidad and Tobago Health Science Initiative

Upgrading of the Health Sector and strengthening of the health institutions continues to be one of the priorities of Government. To facilitate this process, Government has entered into a six year agreement with the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) and the John Hopkins Medicine International (JHMI) for the provision of advisory services for the establishment of Centres of Excellence in research and patient care as well as in academic programmes. JHMI will also provide advisory services aimed at enhancing health services delivery to the national community. The priority projects identified for implementation by 2010 are: a replacement Hospital in Port of Spain; a new hospital in Couva; and a Management Services Assessment of the San Fernando General Hospital. Government is also considering three additional components namely: the provision of management services by JHMI and the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, and the provision

of advisory services in health, finance and national health insurance as well as in public health information dissemination.

Establishment of a Psychiatric Unit at POS General Hospital

The Unit, which will be housed in a new building on the site of the former Psychiatric Ward of the Port of Spain General Hospital, will facilitate the commissioning of a model psychiatric service consistent with modern mental health care. The establishment of this facility will form the basis for the re-orientation of mental health care in the primary care context and create the appropriate framework for the decanting and de-institutionalisation of the St. Ann's Hospital. Services include in-patient services, observation/short stays, complex cases, out-patient services, consultation services, adolescent assessment, as well as, education and research.

Tissue Transplant Unit

Regulations to effect the Tissue Transplant Act, which legalises harvesting, storage and transplanting of tissue from cadavers and live donors, have been completed.

A Tissue Transplant Unit is now in operation and tissue transplants, using live donors, have commenced. The establishment of this unit at Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex is another milestone in health care in Trinidad and Tobago. The Programme will address, initially, the growing demand for both kidney and corneal Transplantation.



Targeted Outcomes

- Life Expectancy increases to 69 years for males and 74 years for females
- Infant mortality is reduced by 38 per cent
- The number of deaths by lifestyle diseases reduces by 25 per cent
- New health centres constructed in San Juan, Barataria, Carenage, Ste Madeline, Debe and La Romaine, Morvant, Upper Laventille and Petit Valley
- District health facilities constructed at St James, Diego Martin, Siparia and Roxborough
- New Psychiatric Unit in operation at Port of Spain General Hospital
- New Wing opened at San Fernando General Hospital
- New hospitals built in Couva, Point Fortin and Sangre Grande, Tobago

Goal 5

THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC WILL BE CONTAINED AND CARE WILL BE PROVIDED TO THOSE INFECTED OR AFFECTED

Policy Context

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is a global crisis. Since the first case of AIDS diagnosis in 1981, AIDS has claimed some 20 million lives worldwide. In Trinidad and Tobago, where the first cases were diagnosed in 1983, the number of reported HIV infections rose from 2,246 in the first decade to 9,095 in the second decade – a fourfold increase. As is the situation all over the world, the overwhelming majority of people living with HIV/AIDS are in the age group, 15-49 years as illustrated in Figure 2.6. This poses a serious threat to this country's small population of 1.3 million.

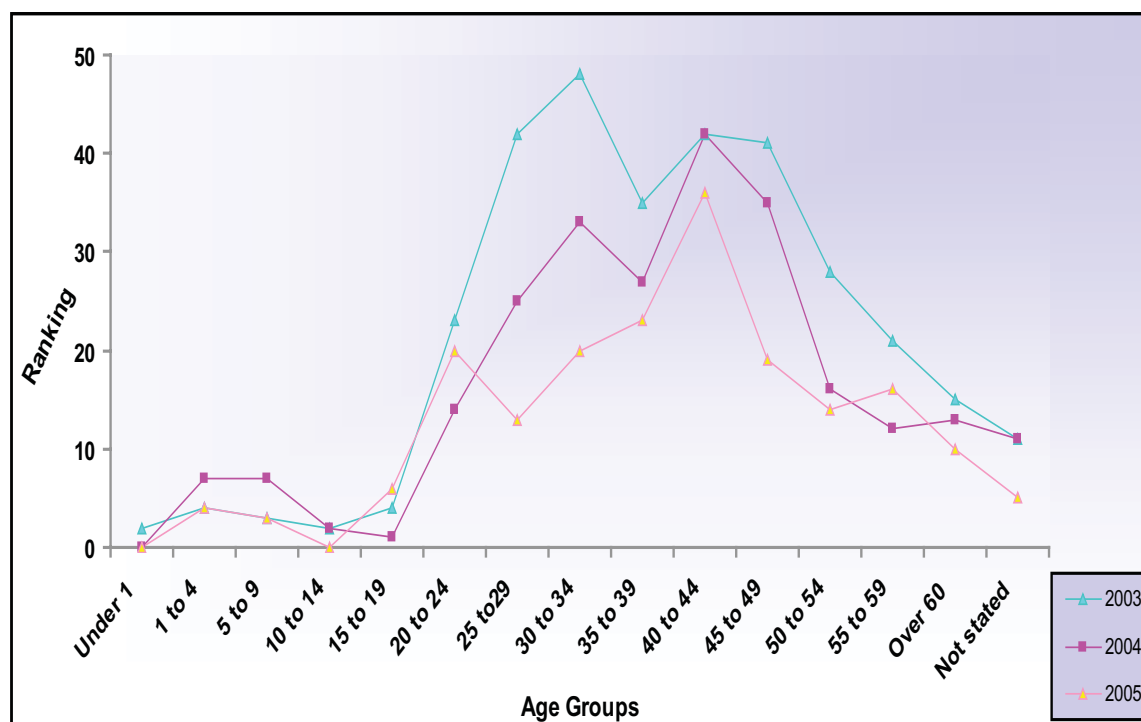
HIV/AIDS must be viewed as an intergenerational concern, for if left unchecked it can have deleterious impacts for generations to come. Within families, the future of both the elderly and the children is adversely affected. For society, HIV/AIDS erodes gains in life expectancy, skills and savings from past and present generations and substantially reduces the country's capacity to advance. These threaten the realization of Vision 2020.

The scale of the epidemic today far exceeds the predictions of the early 1990's. Trinidad and Tobago must therefore contain the epidemic. The slower the response, the higher the loss of lives and resources; and the more catastrophic the results.

Between 1983 and the end of 2005 there were 15,940 persons diagnosed with HIV infection, in the country. The incidence of HIV infections is one of the highest in the Caribbean and the epidemic is growing fastest among females between the age of 15 and 24 years. In fact, forty five per cent (45 per cent) of new infections occur in females and 70 per cent of these new infections among 15-24 year olds occur in females. The Caribbean Epidemiological Centre (CAREC) estimates that 40 per cent of the AIDS mortality is underreported and that AIDS has claimed between 4,500 and 5,000 lives between 1983 and 2002.

Figure 2.6

AIDS Reported Cases by Age Group 2003-2005



Source: UNGASS 2006 HIV/AIDS Country Report

There are many constraints to managing the spread of the virus. These include: the fact that the HIV disease can be asymptomatic for years; stigma, discrimination and fear of disclosure create barriers to testing and treatment; and, HIV and AIDS are reported by different entities which hinders comparative analysis. The latter poses a challenge to standardized reports and the problem is further compounded by the fact that separate entities have responsibility to report on HIV infection, AIDS as well as deaths. There is also incomplete reporting from the private sector and lack of cooperation from some medical personnel.

Given the serious threat of HIV/AIDS to this country, Government has established the National AIDS Co-ordinating Committee (NACC) to implement its strategic plan to contain the epidemic. The objectives, targets, strategies and projects are all drawn from the Vision 2020 HIV/AIDS Sub Committee Report, the National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan and the UNGASS 2006 HIV/AIDS Country Report.



Objectives to 2010

1.

Reduce the rate of HIV infection

2.

Reduce the number of deaths from AIDS

3.

Reduce the number of infected infants born to HIV infected mothers

4.

Increase the number of HIV positive pregnant women receiving a complete course of anti retroviral drugs to reduce the risk of mother to child infection

5.

Increase the number of school teachers who are trained in life-skills based HIV education

6.

Increase the number of PLWHA and affected persons receiving economic and social support

7.

Reduce discrimination against HIV infected persons and increase percentage of population with full, correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS



Strategies

Prevent the Spread of HIV/AIDS

Government will reinforce its strategy to reduce the susceptibility of the population to HIV infection. This will include intensification of HIV/AIDS education and awareness programmes using all communication channels to convey messages to different target audiences. In particular, interventions will promote the postponement of sexual activity, abstinence and encouraging the sexually active population to adopt healthy sexual attitudes and practices. These initiatives will draw on the experience and expertise of those working in the area inclusive of persons living with HIV/AIDS, faith-based organisations, educators, health professionals and NGOs in the design and implementation of the strategy.

Enhance Treatment, Care and Support

Government will continue to implement a national system for the clinical management of HIV/AIDS and improve access to medication as well as treatment and care for persons with opportunistic infections⁴. Funding will be provided for the rehabilitation of health services, purchase of

equipment for selected hospitals and clinics for HIV laboratory screening and testing, training for medical and health personnel, purchase of anti-retroviral drugs, procurement of medical supplies and testing kits. Government will also develop and disseminate clinical protocols for HIV/AIDS treatment and care.

Promote Advocacy and Human Rights

This strategy focuses on the human rights issues as they relate to persons infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Initiatives will include promoting openness and acceptance of persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the workplace and in the wider community by developing a national workplace policy based on the International Labour Organisation Code of Practice and on conducting workplace seminars. Other initiatives will include ensuring the human rights of PLWHA and monitoring abuses of these persons; enactment of anti-discriminatory legislation; and a media campaign against stigma and discrimination.

Improve Surveillance and Research

In order to obtain accurate epidemiological data on HIV/AIDS Government will

⁴ Infections caused by germs (bacteria, viruses and other pathogens) on an individual whose immune system is weakened or compromised by the HIV/AIDS virus or other illnesses such as leukemia.

continue to improve the existing surveillance system and the national laboratory system by, *inter alia* reconstructing the Trinidad Public Health laboratory. The surveillance system is an essential element of the success of treatment and care strategy. An information platform will be established and will consist of encrypted technology to ensure confidentiality of medical records.

Major Projects

Education and Awareness Campaign

To promote healthy sexual behaviour, emphasis being placed on intensifying HIV/AIDS education and awareness programmes. Multiple communication channels are being utilised to target messages to different audiences. Projects will include equipping Trinidad and Tobago HIV/AIDS Alliance and relevant NGOs and CBOs with the necessary tools to conduct prevention and counselling interventions and to implement relevant programmes during the hosting of national and cultural HIV/AIDS sensitive events.

Behaviour Change Intervention

Behaviour change among the most vulnerable groups is critical to containing the spread of the HIV virus. This Programme targets these high-risk vulnerable groups by funding approved NGO proposals aimed at behavioural change intervention.

Voluntary Counselling and Testing Programme (VCT)

A mass communication campaign, 'Know Your Status Campaign' was launched to educate the nation about the availability and importance of VCT testing. The Programme involves training of health care workers in

voluntary counselling and testing management.

National System for the Clinical Management and Treatment of HIV/AIDS

The aim of this Project is to improve access to medication, treatment and care for persons with opportunistic infections. It provides financing for:

- the rehabilitation of health facilities including the National Blood Transfusion Service, the Public Health Laboratory and the Queen's Park Counselling Clinic and Centre
- the purchase of equipment for selected hospitals and clinics
- HIV laboratory screening and testing
- training for health medical personnel
- purchase and distribution of anti-retroviral drugs
- the procurement of medical supplies and testing kits

Media Campaign

A media campaign has been launched in order to reduce the level of stigma and discrimination facing the People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) community and to promote a strategy for increasing openness and acceptance of PLWHA.

Surveillance System for HIV/ AIDS

An information technology platform will be designed and established. It will consist of encrypted technology to ensure the confidentiality of medical records.

Research

Research will be conducted in several areas relating to HIV/AIDS and youth 11-18 years; commercial sex workers, HIV/AIDS related stigma, discrimination, and the quality of life of PLWHA.

National Monitoring and Evaluation Programme

This initiative focuses on building the capacity of key stakeholders such as the NGO/FBO/CBO communities to better monitor and evaluate their work programmes.



Targeted Outcomes

- The HIV/AIDS epidemic is contained as the rate of infection declines by 30 per cent
- Life is prolonged for HIV/AIDS victims as mortality due to AIDS is reduced by 30 per cent
- There is a significant decline in the number of HIV infected infants at birth
- Widespread sensitization is achieved as a result of the successful media and education campaigns
- Persons affected with HIV/AIDS are treated with dignity and receive economic and social support

Goal 6

ALL CITIZENS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATE IN A SPORTING OR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY IN KEEPING WITH THE 'SPORT FOR ALL' PHILOSOPHY

Policy Context

Trinidad and Tobago will build on the momentum of the unprecedented interest in sport generated by the sterling efforts of the Soca Warriors – the National Football Team making its debut at the FIFA World Cup Finals in Germany in 2006 by encouraging and promoting 'Sport for All'. Sport will be one of the key strategies for promoting healthy lifestyles. Attention will also be focused on addressing the needs of high performance athletes with a view to assisting them in making the necessary breakthrough in the international arena.

The recently established Sport Company of Trinidad and Tobago has been mandated to focus on the development of ten major sport, namely swimming, volleyball, football, cricket, basketball, netball, track and field,

cycling, boxing and hockey: whilst the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs places emphasis on the development of other sporting areas



Objectives to 2010

1.

Increase the proportion of the population involved in sporting and recreational activities

2.

Motivate more females to participate in sporting or recreational activities

3.

Facilitate the preparation of high performance athletes to compete in international sporting events

4.

Implement a Health and Physical Education Curriculum in all schools at all levels

5.

Promote Trinidad and Tobago as the hub of the Caribbean sport activities and position the country as the preferred destination for international sporting events among Caribbean countries

6.

Establish and implement a structured programme for high performance sport



Strategies

Promote ‘Sport for All’

In attempting to develop the sporting sector to its fullest potential, Government will make sport accessible to all. Consequently, a ‘Sport for All’ strategy will be formulated, the main thrust of which will be to inculcate a physical education culture among the population with a view to getting more people involved in sport. For maximum effectiveness, it will be necessary to identify target groups so that recommended initiatives can be customised to meet different needs. In this respect, particular attention will be paid to the inclusion of children, the youth, the elderly and especially, the differently-abled. This will ensure that all segments of the population are included in ‘Sport for All’ initiative.

Increase Sport Involvement in Educational Institutions

The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs will collaborate with the Ministry of Education to provide a co-ordinated approach to promote greater involvement of the school population in sporting and recreational activities. Initiatives will be pursued with joint interests in communities to create sustainable linkages between sport, recreation, education, culture and health. Areas include developing and introducing innovative, enjoyable, sport and recreational programmes; developing participation rates data for the various age cohorts; improving the linkages between the

school, club and community; increasing the number of coaches at the school and community level and ensuring that all schools have a minimum number of hours allotted to sport, physical education and recreational activities per week. In addition, steps will be taken to encourage healthier foods into schools and communities, inclusive of the work place; introduce a Physical Education (PE) Programme for all educational levels; and improve the quality of teaching, learning and coaching in PE and school sport.

Foster Greater Diversity and Improve the Quality of Community Programmes

A substantial segment of current sport and recreational activities occur at the grassroots level in very informal settings, such as roadways and open spaces. Government, in partnership with NGOs and CBOs, will give priority to promoting greater participation of young people in organised sport at the community level. In this regard, community sporting bodies will be encouraged to increase the range of sporting programmes and recreational activities. As part of this strategy, Government has an ongoing programme for the provision of sporting facilities in communities, such as the provision of football fields, basketball courts and swimming pools.

Increase Participation Opportunities for Under-represented Groups

Priority will be given to activities aimed at increasing participation of targeted groups, such as girls and young women, the differently-abled, youth-at-risk, and the indigent, with a view to ensuring the widest possible involvement in sport. In support of this strategy physical activity guides will be developed for children, youth, women, girls, the elderly and the differently-abled.

Improve the Available Information on Sport Involvement

Government, in recognition of the dearth of appropriate data on sport involvement, will collaborate with joint interests to measure the benefits, impacts and demographics of participation. The objectives are to create an evidence-based understanding of performance, obstacles faced, and the socio-cultural aspects of participation, and ensure timely dissemination of information to citizens. Activities in support of this strategy will include: conducting a National Sport and Recreation Census; and implementation of an information, media and public relations strategy, including conferencing, publication of documents (research journals and newsletters), information bulletins, and extensive use of electronic media. It also includes measuring the economic, productivity, investment and health impact of sport and recreation activities.

Promote Performance Excellence

Policies will be put in place to ensure that the country generates a continuous stream of world-class performers in the area of sport. Emphasis will be placed on developing an effective athlete development support system, which provides for the complete development of the athlete. Activities in support of this goal will include the provision of financial assistance to high performance athletes to assist in their preparation for international competition.

Develop Sport Infrastructure

The strategy is to develop sport infrastructure nationwide in support of the 'Sport for All' philosophy. In addition athletes will be provided with new modern, state-of-the-art facilities through the expansion of the sporting infrastructure base. Frameworks for improving the management of sport at all levels will be developed.

Develop/Attract Human Resources for the Sport Sector

In order to produce high calibre athletes who are able to consistently compete internationally, emphasis must be placed on ensuring that they are trained by experienced, qualified professionals. To this end, education and training programmes will be introduced with the aim of enhancing the skills base of trainers and coaches as well as Sport Administrators and Sport Scientists.

Major Projects

Cricket World Cup 2007

To successfully host matches/events of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket World Cup (CWC) a Local Organising Committee (LOC) was established with responsibility for the operational, contractual and corporate matters including the development and upgrade of venues/stadia in keeping with ICC requirements for the 2007 event; marketing and promotion of the event; ticketing and security.

Construction of Swimming Facilities

The George Bovell III Swimming Complex will comprise a 50 metre olympic-sized swimming pool, a diving pool, a 50 metre warm-up pool, gymnasium, change rooms and bleachers. In fiscal 2007, design works will be completed and construction will commence on the 50-metre swimming pool. In addition, 25-metre Swimming Pools will be constructed at Point Fortin, Pleasantville, Toco and Tunapuna.

Construction and Upgrading of Cricket Training Facilities

This Project entails the provision of all-weather practice facilities at particular locations. Works at each location will entail building construction, laying of turf pitches,

installation of practices tents, top soil and grassing of practice areas as well as lighting. In fiscal 2007, construction will continue at the Penal site.

Development of a Multi-Purpose Sporting Complex at Tarouba

The Multi-Purpose Sporting Complex will include sporting facilities for cricket, swimming, basketball, netball, volleyball, tennis and hockey. During fiscal 2007 construction works will continue on the Cricket facility which will be named after Brian Lara.

Development of Regional and Sub Regional Recreation Grounds

This Project aims to develop recreation grounds that serve large catchment areas. Some of the areas targeted include, Lange Park, Chaguanas, Irwin Park Siparia, Tacarigua and Toco.

Upgrade of Dwight Yorke Stadium and Other Multi-Purpose Stadia

Improvement works have already been started on these facilities in keeping with Government's strategic thrust of providing modern, safe and well equipped facilities for the sporting and recreational activities of the population.

Community Sport Education

This Programme will improve club structure administration and management at the community level by providing guidance and assistance on funds, conduct of meetings, the techniques of fund raising, the organisation of competitions, sport and family days and on club development.

Construction of Sport/ Youth Facilities

This Project involves the construction of Sport/Youth Facilities at designated locations throughout Trinidad. These facilities serve a dual purpose for the development of sport within the community as well as the creation of spaces for youth expression. They are designed to empower the youth clientele through the fusion of sporting, physical recreation and social education programmes. In fiscal 2007, Sport/ Youth facilities are proposed for construction at Sangre Grande, Diego Martin and Arima while construction will commence on the youth arm of the facility in Mayaro.

Development of Sport and Youth Facilities

The provision of first class facilities for sport and youth is critical to the development of young people. Refurbishment works will continue on upgrading and modernising sport and youth facilities.

In fiscal 2007, the programme of refurbishing Hard Surface Courts will continue as well as reconstruction of the St. James Youth Facility. Upgrade works on the residential and non-residential facilities continue in order to provide a youth friendly environment conducive to learning

Sport Education

This Programme provides a basic body of knowledge in a variety of sub-disciplines in Physical Education and Sport including Introduction to Physical Education, Elementary Anatomy, Functional Anatomy, Elementary Physiology, Elementary Exercise Physiology, Introduction to Psychosocial Behaviour in Sport, and Elementary Sociology of Sport. This spectrum of courses will provide the instructional and managerial tools for community coaches.



Targeted Outcomes

- More than one half of the population participate in sporting and recreational activities
- More than half of the female population consider sport important and find time to actively engage in sporting and recreational activities
- Trinidad and Tobago participates in all major international sporting events
- A health and physical education curriculum is implemented at all levels in all schools
- Trinidad and Tobago is the preferred destination for hosting international sport among Caribbean countries
- A structured programme for high performance sport is implemented
- Trinidad and Tobago qualifies for the FIFA 2010 World Cup Finals in South Africa

