

CONCEPT NOTE

Project Title	Capacity Development in Data Collection and Analysis (Trinidad and Tobago)
Background	<p><i>“..... there are clear needs for both improved data collection and analysis as well as for improved governmental capacity, and these two cross-cutting themes underpin the areas for future UN work recommended here. Preparation of this CCA [Common Country Assessment] has illustrated the fairly consistent paucity, unreliability, unavailability, under-reporting, or inconsistency of information. Since evidence-based analysis is critical to development planning a comprehensive and concerted effort by all agencies to improve data gathering and reporting is one important way in which the UN can assist the Government’s development process.” (United Nations Country Team, 2006, pg. 39).</i></p> <p>The data ecosystem of Trinidad and Tobago has not changed significantly since this observation was made in 2006 by the United Nations Country Team. The country’s capacity to provide the data needed to implement and monitor the Sustainable Development Goals requires improvement in its existing infrastructure capacity, processes, policies and legislation.</p> <p>The Sustainable Development Goals Agenda was brought as a motion for debate in the Senate of Trinidad and Tobago on November 24, 2015 (Hansard, 2015). During the debate that spanned three sittings of the Senate (Hansard 2016), most members expressed support for the SDGs with a commitment from government members to ensure that these goals are incorporated into government plans for implementation. The Honourable Ms. Robinson-Regis (2016) has committed to ensuring that several initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Planning and Development will be completed in support of the SDGs. These include: reconfiguring the Central Statistical Office into an independent National Statistical Institute; preparation of the National Development Plan (Vision 2030); review of the National Spatial Development Strategy (NSDS); implementation of the National Monitoring and Evaluation System; re-focusing of the National Public Sector Investment Program; review of the National Environmental Policy and other sub-sector policies such as those on Forest, Wildlife Protected trees and Climate Change; and the establishment of the National Population Council (<i>Robinson-Regis, 2016</i>).</p>

There are more than sixty-five government organizations in Trinidad and Tobago that are involved in different ways in the collection of data. A few of these organizations collect data based on their enabling legislation. Key amongst these organizations are the Central Statistical Office (Statistics Act 1952) and the Surveying and Mapping Division (Land Surveyor's Act 1996). Interestingly, the Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Service and the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management, also mandated to collect data, were not established by legislation but by Cabinet decision. Other organizations have incorporated into their operations data units to collect data that are useful both for their own use and for the preparation of the national statistics. The Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, the Customs and Excise Division, the Registrar General's Division, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Education, the various Divisions of the Ministry of National Security, the Ministry of Tourism, and the Tobago House of Assembly are all examples of organizations that fall into this category. A third group of data producers may be identified as those that collect data as part of their operations to fulfill their mandates. For example, the Town and Country Planning Division records all applications for planning approval for development. While this was not intended as a means of generating statistical data and may be deemed outside the formal statistical system, the data may be used to monitor the extent and type of physical development in Trinidad and Tobago and therefore may be used to control the pace at which development happens. Similarly, the Land Settlement Agency maps the locations of all squatters for regularization purposes. The data gathered can be used to inform the Government of Trinidad and Tobago on citizens in need of homes and therefore inform the need to allocate resources to address these specific needs. It is noted here that all of these issues fall under the Sustainable Development Goals and are therefore geospatial data issues are also relevant to this discussion (Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2015). The UN Global Geographic Information Management (UNGGIM) committee of experts have also articulated this as an important component of the work of the committee (UNGGIM, 2015).

In addition to the initiatives mentioned above that will address the major national challenges in the provision of national statistics through the creation of the National Statistical Institute and the mainstreaming of the SDGs through the National Spatial Development Strategy and the Vision 2030 development document, the government of Trinidad and Tobago has demonstrated some interest in engaging in the Data Revolution and to the Post 2015 Agenda both at the regional and international levels. These include co-sponsorship of the Independent Research Forum 2015

	<p>(IRF 2015) to discuss strategies for a transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda, participation in PARIS21 meetings and was one of seven countries that participated in an in-depth study on informing the data revolution to provide better insight on the need for statistical data (PARIS21, 2015). Trinidad and Tobago is a member of CARICOM and is party to regional bodies that are responsible for activities related to the SDGs at the Caribbean level.</p> <p>The organizations with listed statistical capacity include the Central Statistical Office (CSO, 2016), Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago (CBTT, 2016), Ministry of Trade and Industry –Customs and Excise Division, Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Health (MoH, 2016), Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago (Judiciary, 2016), Ministry of Planning and Development, National Institute for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST, the Ministry of Social Development, and the Financial Intelligence Unit. The number of persons who provide statistical support is limited with varying levels of education, training and experience (Dourmashkin, 2015, O’Brian, 2016). Additional capacity exist at the academic institutions and from the private sector. However, this is also limited. An evaluation of the statistical capacity of Trinidad and Tobago done by the World Bank suggests that over the last 10 years this has fluctuated but remains low. This is further supported by the findings of the survey. More than 70 percent of the organizations surveyed had three or less statisticians and data management professionals in their organizations.</p> <p>While much data is collected and is available, the ability to conduct in-depth analysis is limited in the public sector. There are few analyst that support the types of analyses envisaged in a functional data ecosystem. Very limited capacity is available at the Central Statistical Office to undertake data analysis (Joseph, 2015). The Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago reports having adequate analytical capacity to support the work that they are required to do and has extended some support to the CSO (Sookram, 2016). Other organizations have reported very limited capabilities in this area.</p>
<p>Objectives</p>	<p>Aim of Project</p> <p>This project aims to address data gaps in Trinidad and Tobago by providing support to the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) to build capacity in the areas of data collection and analysis with both the primary data producers and other organizations that produce data as a part of their operations. This is timely as the country is preparing to present its VNR in 2020.</p>

	<p>As such the objectives of the project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify gaps and make recommendations to enhance the data eco-system in Trinidad and Tobago; • To enhance expertise in data collection and analysis in Government agencies; and • To strengthen capacity in developing appropriate indicators to monitor SDG implementation progress (utilising available data sources). 		
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive review of the of the data eco-system; • Capacity building in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data collection; and ○ Data Analysis 		
Implementing Agencies	<p>The United Nations Development Programme The Ministry of Planning and Development.</p>		
Estimated Budget	Area	Budget (USD)	
	Comprehensive review of data eco-system	10,000.00	
	Capacity building in data collection and analysis (across the 20 data producing government organizations, primary and secondary, through collaboration with the Ministry of Planning and Development)	50,444.00	
	Evaluation	4,000.00	
	Audit	5,000.00	
	Subtotal	69,444.00	
	GMS 8%	5,556.00	
	Total:	75,000.00	