

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SERVICES

Response to the Recommendations of the Eleventh Report of the JSC on Social Services and Public Administration on a Follow-up Inquiry into the Effectiveness of the State's Interventions directed at Socially Displaced Persons

December 2019

- **Recommendation i**

Given that in the Street Dweller Implementation Plan provided to the Committee in July 2018 (see APPENDIX IV:), there are activities which were scheduled to be completed in 2018 and 2019, the MOSDFS is required to provide the Parliament with a status update on the deliverables/objectives outlined.

Response i : See attached Appendix

- **Recommendation ii.**

That the MOSDFS create and implement an updated timetable to address issues arising with respect to the socially displaced and recommend to include in this document timelines for other stakeholders, with respect to their roles and responsibilities in the socially displaced response;

Response ii : The implementation plan, which will include the activities and timelines of all stakeholders, will be developed and submitted to the Committee by the end of January 2020.

- **Recommendation iii**

Given the research activity and studies highlighted by the MOSDFS to be completed in fiscal 2018 and in 2019, the MOSDFS provide the status of these studies proposed in the Multi-year Research Agenda for Street Dwelling (See APPENDIX V:);

Response iii: The studies identified in 2018 were all completed with the exception of item (e). The Ministry will engage the Ministry of Health in the second quarter of Fiscal 2020 to finalize the research proposal for this project.

The studies identified in 2019 agenda were all completed with the exception of item(d).

This activity, Compliance with Standards of Care enforcement, is dependent on the proclamation of the Act and is expected to be completed at a later date.

- **Recommendation iv**

We recommend that MOSDFS provide the status of the re-structuring and recruitment exercise being undertaken throughout the Ministry. In addition, we recommend that the Ministry seek to capitalize on the human resource expertise available in the public service to assist with this exercise. In this regard, consideration should be given to collaborating with the Ministry of Public Administration and the Service Commission's Department.

Response iv: The research activities of the first phase of the restructuring exercise was completed in November 2019. The Ministry is expected to receive the report with recommendations by January 2020. The Ministry of Public Administration is executing the exercise. Recruitment of staff continues across the Ministry. In terms of the Social Displacement Unit, the position of Executive Director will be filled by the end of December 2019 and the position of Senior Social Work Specialist was advertised.

Recommendation v

That the MOSDFS incorporate the Public Private Partnership Model being considered in the Philippines and the reintegration models for Socially Displaced Persons from the Chapman Partnership Model of Miami and the Social Transformation and Empowerment Programme-Uplifting People (STEP-UP) Model in the development of a reintegration Model for the engagement of socially displaced persons for assessment and rehabilitation.

Response v: The Model currently utilized by the Ministry is the Continuum of Care approach. The Chapman Partnership operates within the same model in Miami. The SDCM has been engaged in extensive discussion on the involvement of the private sector in street dwelling reduction and the private sector is represented on the Committee. Recently the private sector (Bankers Association of Trinidad and Tobago) through the POS Corporation, contributed financially to a project aimed at improving and securing the environment around the CSDP. The Committee will explore the use of the STEP-UP as a model for the reintegration of street dwellers.

Recommendation vi

That the MOSDFS recruit additional personnel to adequately resource the SDU to improve the Unit's coordinating capacity and ensure that site visits can be readily conducted in its additional roles as the unit in charge of both policy and implementation.

Response vi: As mentioned at iv above, recruitment of staff for the SDU continues and the structure of the Unit is under review in the context of the review of the legislation. In the interim, the SDCM has been facilitating the coordination of the various agencies in the street dwelling reduction framework.

Recommendation vii

That the MOSDFS' response include a copy of the draft Social Housing policy.

Response vii: *Copy submitted along with this report.*

Recommendation viii

That the MOSDFS establish definitive annual targets as a means of incrementally increasing the number social displaced persons assessed annually from 20% to 40% over the next two to three years.

Response viii: The Ministry will utilise the baseline data collected in the National Street Count to establish annual targets as recommended.

Recommendation ix

That the MOSDFS confirm the status of the implementation of the Integrated Social Enterprise Management System (ISEMS) as at September 2019;

Response ix: Evaluation of tenders has been completed. A provider is expected to be selected by January 2020.

Recommendation x

That the MOSDFS develop an employment support programme in collaboration with NGOs and the business Community to assist socially displaced persons who have been rehabilitated in sourcing employment opportunities. In general, the Ministry should ensure that all its programmes, where practicable, include a life skills and self-sufficiency component as a means of empowering persons to be less dependent on social welfare.

Response x: This matter has been subject to some review by the SDCM. The initial discussion involved possible assistance from the business community. The Ministry will also engage the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development with a view to securing employment for this population. The NGO service providers at the shelters and at the rehabilitation facilities continue to utilise informal /ad hoc networks to assist the clients in accessing employment opportunities. With the implementation of the STEP-UP model mentioned at v. above, all the Ministry's programmes will include a life skills and self sufficiency component.

Recommendation xi

That the MOSDFS provide the status of the meeting with the officials of the MAGLA in April 2018 to discuss the partial proclamation of the Socially Displaced Persons Act, 2000 and the specific factors which has been preventing progress in the proclamation of the Act.

Response xi: Discussions are ongoing. The work of the amendments to Act 59 of 2000 is progressing and it is expected that the Revised Policy Document will be before Cabinet in January 2020. Given the extent of the amendments, it was determined that partial proclamation was not feasible.

Recommendation xii:

That the MOSDFS provide a status update on the following:

- *the implementation of the recommendation of the Street Dwellers Working Committee (SDWC) to commission research in collaboration with UWI and CSO to ensure currency of data, establish baseline statistics, and conduct comprehensive needs assessment;*

Response: The Ministry is in the early stages of preparation for the conduct of research on the population of street dwellers. Discussions are being held internally between the Social Investigations Division and the SDU. UWI and CSO will be engaged in the second quarter of fiscal 2020. UWI has been involved with street count data collection.

- **the Street Dwellers Coordinating and Monitoring Committee which was expected to be established in May 2018;**

Response: SDCM committee commissioned in July 2018. The Committee has been meeting monthly to date.

- **the recruitment and retention of the required competencies to adequately staff the SDU;**

Response: See information at (iv) and (vi)

- *discussions with the MAGLA concerning the potential pursuit of a partial proclamation of the Act which was scheduled in April 2018;*

Response: See information at (xi)

- *the implementation of gender-specific spaces & programmes to be incorporated within the Street Dwellers Assessment Centre/s; and*

Response: The street dwellers assessment centre has not been established to date despite the MSDFS identification of five (5) potential locations over the last two (2) years. The efforts continue and at present a site in POS is being actively pursued with the assistance of NIPDEC for project management and construction work. This recommendation will be considered in the implementation of the project.

- *The skill sets of the persons identified by the assessment of skills included in the rehabilitation programmes.*

Response: In the contracting of NGOs to operate the assessment centre, the inclusion of former street dwellers will be incorporated as part of the Terms of Reference. At present service providers are usually willing to include persons whose skills set are relevant to and practicable in the project and programmes.

NO	ACTIVITY	START DATE	TARGET FINISH DATE	Revised Timeline	LEAD UNIT / DEPT. PERSON	STATUS/ COMMENTS
1.0	RESEARCH: Understanding the phenomenon and the needs					
1.1	Develop Multi Yr. research agenda				SDU	Completed
1.2	Conduct National Street Count	Sep-17	Nov-17		SDU	Completed
1.3	Client Demographic Baseline	Jun-18	Dec-18		SDU & SID	Completed
1.4	Inventory of Services and Programmes	May-18	Aug-18		SDU & PPPDD	Completed
1.5	Client Needs Assessment	Aug-18	Nov-19	Mar-2020	SDU & SID	Data collection Instrument being revised.
2.0	ENGAGEMENT: Voluntary or Involuntary					
2.1	Review Act and make amendments to Act 59 of 2000	Feb-18	Dec-18	March-2020	PPPDD & SDU	Policy Document is at an advanced stage and is to be submitted to Cabinet in January 2020.
2.2	Conduct sensitisation and Training of TT and Municipal Police	May-18	Apr-19	Ongoing	SDU & Corp Comm	Training commenced. Ministry of Health conducted training with new recruits of the Municipal Police in 2018. Ministry of Health developed a Module to allow for ongoing training with TTPS and Municipal Police.
2.3	Public Education Campaign	Sep-18	Dec-18	Feb-2020	SDU & Corp Comm	Content to be finalized
3.0	TEMPORARY CARE: Stabilisation, Assessment, Counselling, Care Plan					
3.1	Establish Street Dwellers Assessment Centre	Jan-18	Dec-18	2021 Interim in Mar 2020	PIU	Design Briefs completed. Site identified. NIPDEC engaged for project management Interim Alternative: Use of retrofitted buses
3.2	Cease Operations of CSDP at current location	Jan-18	Dec-18	2021	SDU & PIU	
3.3	Identify Standards of Care			Mar 2020	SDU	Draft completed
3.4	Enforce Standards Of Care				SDU & Legal Unit	<i>To be ratified in Regulations for Act 59 of 2000</i>
3.4	Support NGOs: Capacity Building	Oct-18	Sep-19	Mar 2020	NGO Unit and SDU	To be included on the 2020 work plan to be executed on a quarterly basis.

NO	ACTIVITY	START DATE	TARGET FINISH DATE	Revised Timeline	LEAD UNIT / DEPT. PERSON	STATUS/ COMMENTS
4.0	PRIMARY CARE: Specialized treatment and rehabilitation					
4.1	Engage NGOs in service provision throughout the Continuum of Care			Ongoing	SDU & NGO Unit	Work with current NGO providers continue. The Ministry currently provides services in partnership with seven (7) NGOs.
4.3	Maximize the use of the Piparo Empowerment Centre (PEC)	Jan-18	Jan-19	Ongoing	SDU/PEC	System to be strengthened by Mar-2020
4.4	New Horizons transition to Min of Health				SDU	Completed. New Horizons is now operated by the Ministry of Health, South West Regional Health Authority
4.5	Creation of Employment Opportunities for SD population.	Jan-19	Mar-19	Mar-2020.	SDU & PPPDD	Initial meeting with Ministry of Labour was held. Will reconvene in 2020.
4.6	Development of Training and Education programmes in relevant areas re SD Intervention	Mar-18	May-19	June 2020	HR& SDU	Areas of training and development identified. Programmes to be developed.
5.0	ADVANCE CARE: Supported long term / Permanent Care					
5.1	Transitional Housing /Hostel	Mar-18	Mar-18	June 2020	PS,DPS, SID, NFS, SDU & PIU	Recent discussions convened with stakeholders such as OPM (Gender Affairs), Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries (re use of abandoned structures in Centeno), Ministry of Public Administration (Property and Real Estate Services Division), Ministry of Housing and Urban Development and the HDC. It is expected that synergies among agency resources and technical expertise will expedite the realisation of facilities in a shorter timeframe and facilitate a coordinated response. A Transitional Housing Working Committee comprising the Ministies and Agencies above will advance the discussion in 2020.
5.1.1	Determine extent of need using data collected at Client Needs Assessment (see 1.5) above	Nov-19		Mar-2020	SDU & SID	Not Started. New Completion date March 2020

NO	ACTIVITY	START DATE	TARGET FINISH DATE	Revised Timeline	LEAD UNIT / DEPT. PERSON	STATUS/ COMMENTS
5.2	Expand Community Care Programme					Completed
5.3	Develop and Implement Social Housing Policy: Review Existing Draft Social Housing Policy Draft	Aug-18	Sep-18	April 2020	PPPDD	Review of draft Policy to be undertaken in the 2 nd quarter (Jan-March 2020).
6.0	MONITORING AND EVALUATION:					
6.1	Establishment of Street Dwellers Coordinating and Monitoring Committee	May-18	Aug-18		Office of the PS	Completed