



Trinidad and Tobago's first Voluntary National Review (VNR)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda or the Agenda) provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the most comprehensive blueprint to date for eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequality, and protecting the planet. The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs go beyond rhetoric and lay down a concrete call to action for people, planet, and prosperity. They encourage us (government, civil society, the private sector and individuals) to take bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path.

Core Principles Underpinning the Agenda

- *Universality* - The 2030 Agenda is universal in scope and commits all countries, irrespective of income levels and development status, to contribute towards a comprehensive effort towards sustainable development.
- *Leaving no one behind* - The 2030 Agenda seeks to benefit all people and commits to leaving no one behind by reaching out to all people in need and deprivation, wherever they are, in a manner which targets their specific challenges and vulnerabilities. The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, identifies the following vulnerable and marginalized groups in Trinidad and Tobago: women, children, persons with disabilities, elderly, the poor/indigent, socially displaced, ex-prisoners, deportees, persons living with HIV/AIDS.
- *Interconnectedness and Indivisibility* - The 2030 Agenda rests on the interconnected and indivisible nature of its 17 SDGs. It is crucial that all entities responsible for the implementation of SDGs treat them in their entirety instead of approaching them as a menu list of individual goals from which they pick and choose.
- *Inclusiveness* - The 2030 Agenda calls for the participation of all segments of society—irrespective of their race, gender, ethnicity, and identity—to contribute to its implementation.
- *Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships* - The 2030 Agenda calls for establishing multi-stakeholder partnerships for mobilizing and sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources.

Voluntary National Reviews

The United Nations encourages member States to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven. These reviews are voluntary to emphasize ownership and commitment by each country to implement the SDGs. Conducted annually, the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process aims to facilitate the identification of successes, challenges, development needs and lessons learned, with a view to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago will present its first VNR at the UN's High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in New York in July 2020. VNRs seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs and by extension, our national development strategy - Vision 2030. As such, consultation with key stakeholders such as your organization will greatly enhance the VNR and subsequent development efforts.



SDGs Being Reported On in the VNR

Seventeen SDGs to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice and tackle climate change by 2030 were identified by the UN. The SDGs that will form part of Trinidad and Tobago's first VNR are the following:



Focus Group Discussion Guidelines and Questions

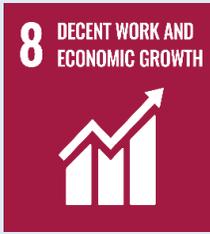
Each focus group will be aligned to one of the United Nations' five themes to sustainable development – People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships (which the final two themes combined into one focus group). Participants will come from both the Government and Civil Society to ensure actionable discussions. All are encouraged to come with a collaborative, problem-solving mindset to discuss the following questions in relation to the SDGs:

- What are your most significant national concerns?
 - How are these aligned to the SDGs?
 - What data do you have to illustrate the scale of the problem?
- What are your organization's greatest achievements (over the period 2015 – 2019)?
 - What data do you have on the outcomes or impacts of these achievements?
- How does your organization support those members of society at risk of being left behind?¹
- What are the biggest barriers to your organization's progress/success (including its ability to support those at risk of being left behind)?
 - How can your organizations collaborate to overcome these barriers in the short and medium-term?
- What gives you hope for Trinidad and Tobago's future?

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United Nations five Themes to Sustainable Development

Themes to Sustainable Development		SDGs in Alignment
PEOPLE	Ending Poverty and Hunger in all its forms and dimensions and ensure dignity and equity	  
PLANET	Protect natural resources and climate of our planet for future generations	
PROSPERITY	Ensuring prosperous and fulfilling life in harmony with nature	 
PEACE	Promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies	 
PARTNERSHIPS	Implementing the agenda through strong Global Alliance for Sustainable Development	

Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2030 Themes

Theme	Description	SDGs
1. Putting People First: Nurturing Our Greatest Asset	This theme acknowledges that our citizens are central to our development and are our greatest assets. We must create a society in which all the basic needs are met and each individual is valued and given the opportunity to contribute and to self-actualise.	       



<p>2. Delivering Good Governance and Service Excellence</p>	<p>Good governance and service excellence are crucial to the achievement of a high quality of life for all citizens and to business expansion. Our Governance structures determine how we live; it affects our healthcare, jobs, and determines whether we are safe, drive or use public transport. As such, this Development Theme is centered on building the public's trust in Government structures.</p>	
<p>3. Improving Productivity through Quality Infrastructure and Transport</p>	<p>A key feature of a developed country is high quality infrastructure and transportation services. High quality infrastructure unlocks economic potential, ensures an equitable distribution of growth and opportunities throughout the country and creates networks that bind us together. It also boosts productivity and competitiveness, allowing businesses to grow and prosper, create employment and attract investment.</p>	
<p>4. Building Globally Competitive Businesses</p>	<p>When our economy grows, all our people have opportunities to prosper. Competitive businesses are integral to this thrust as they innovate, create employment and generate revenue and foreign exchange earnings. To be able to deliver goods and services, our economy must continue to grow and to be stable.</p>	
<p>5. Placing the Environment at the Centre of Social and Economic Development</p>	<p>The environment supports all other sectors which contribute to social and economic development. The risk of its mismanagement can severely affect our society, threatening food and energy security, our livelihoods, human health, among other impacts. It is, therefore, critical that a healthy environment is maintained with clean air, clean water and green spaces.</p>	