

REPORT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development

*Third International
Conference on Small
Island Developing
States - National
Report*

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development is realised when there is an effective implementation of a visionary and proactive development agenda based on integrated development of the three pillars of development - economic, social and environmental. As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) Trinidad and Tobago has adopted this approach and is working towards attaining sustainable development that includes growth, inclusive and equitable development and the effective management of the environment.

As the global debate on the post 2015 development agenda and the SIDS Conference commences, Trinidad and Tobago broadly agrees that an integrated single development agenda that examines the outcomes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and incorporates the sustainable development goals (SDGs) must be a priority. The special needs of small island developments must also be reconciled keeping in view at all times that countries are at different stages of development and that global development initiatives must not be punitive but developmental.

Trinidad and Tobago's development has been based on an economy that relies heavily on the hydrocarbon sector. The exploitation of the non-renewal and finite resources of oil and gas has been the primary reason that Trinidad and Tobago has recorded high GDP growth and has been ranked as one of the High Developed countries in the Human Development Index. In the case of Tobago there has also been the heavy reliance on its tourism assets and ensuring the sustainability of these resources.

Overall the country is on target towards achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with challenges however in the efforts towards sustainability of the environment, health - infant and maternal mortality, HIV and AIDS and the management of non-communicable and life style diseases.

Notwithstanding the strong economic indicators Trinidad and Tobago as a middle income country has many structural challenges that reveal there are strong pockets of vulnerability. To address the burgeoning challenges associated with sustainability, the Government has undertaken a well-thought-out development path articulated through policy initiatives as follows:

- 'Innovation to Lasting Prosperity' the Medium Term Policy Framework (MTPF) 2011-2014
- Working for Sustainable Development in Trinidad and Tobago 2012
- Human Development Atlas 2012
- Annual Performance Report 2012
- National Performance Framework 2012- 2015

Development Indicators – Trinidad and Tobago

GDP – \$20,400USD (2012 est.)
(Mundi Index)

HDI – 67

- Public Sector Investment Programme 2013-2015
- Development of a National Spatial Development Strategy (in progress)

These documents provide the platform for sustainable development.

The **MTPF 2011-2014** which is the foundational document to these initiatives and is based on the five (5) priorities for action (1) Crime and Law and Order; (2) Agriculture and Food Security; (3) Health care Services and Hospitals; (4) Economic Growth, Job Creation, Competitiveness and Innovation; (5) Poverty Reduction and Human Capital Development and the four (4) main principles, geared towards achieving sustainable development which are:

1. Generate productivity-led growth on the basis of a more diversified production structure with emphasis on value and wealth creation. Seven primary areas have been identified for implementation in identified geographic growth poles in both Trinidad and Tobago;
2. Create the conditions for greater inclusiveness and equity in socio-economic development;
3. Build the knowledge and talent of our human resources including support to innovation and research and development; and
4. Socio-economic development in the context of prudent spatial management and environmental limits, conservation, regeneration and restoration as cornerstones of the management of these resources.

To give effect to this agenda is the Government’s strategy for sustainable development which was articulated through the - **“Working for Sustainable Development in Trinidad and Tobago”** document and which presented an assessment of this country’s development progress in its pursuit of sustainable development. Chart I below depicts the agenda



As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) it is equally imperative that there is a robust policy agenda that would deal with the constraints of size. A national consultative process is on-going to discuss the **National Spatial Development Strategy** to support the bottom up approach to development and the effective use of limited land resources thereby seeking alignment to the economic and social development initiatives.

The Human Development Atlas 2012 was the first attempt to analyse key indicators across regional boundaries in Trinidad and Tobago. As a planning tool the Atlas provides instructive data on human and physical conditions across regions highlighting both positive and critical areas for attention so as to address possible inequities in the fourteen (14) regional areas.

The National Performance Framework 2012-2015 has set the parameters to measure both effectiveness and efficiency in the utilisation of resources and the achievement of results. Targets and indicators have been established and will be measured over the period. The Annual Performance Report (APR) 2012 is the first instalment of this measurement process, which highlights both achievements and challenges to progress.

The **Public Sector Investment Programme 2013-2015** outlines the three year programming strategy that would ensure the achievement of these results by the allocation of resources and monitors the efficient utilisation of these resources for development impact.

This Report will take stock of Trinidad and Tobago's implementation of the Barbados Plan of Actions (BPOA), and the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation (MSI). Mention will be made of the actions that are needed by the Government and its partners for further implementation of the BPOA and the MSI. An analysis of the new and emerging challenges facing the country including the country's priorities for Sustainable Development will be articulated. The report will conclude with the key messages of recommendations from Trinidad and Tobago for the Pacific preparatory meeting, SIDS conference in 2014 and the Sustainable Development Goals/post 2015.

2.0 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The United Nations has been assisting and extending cooperation to SIDS in their sustainable development efforts through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States finalized at the Global Conference held in Barbados in 1994, known also as the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA). Specifically the **Barbados Plan of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS (BPOA)**, is a 14-point programme that identifies priority areas and specific actions necessary for addressing the special challenges faced by SIDS. The priority areas are: climate change and sea- level rise; natural and environmental disasters; management of wastes; coastal and marine resources; freshwater resources; land resources; energy resources; tourism resources; biodiversity resources; national institutions and administrative capacity; regional institutions and technical cooperation; transport and communication; science and technology; human resource development

This programme was reviewed and revamped at the five-year review held at the Twenty-second special session of the General Assembly in 1999, and the ten-year review held in Mauritius (10-14 January 2005). The latter outcome is known as the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (MSI). The “Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States”, **The Mauritius Strategy** is structured along five (5) different clusters: natural resources and environmental threats; economic issues; social issues; governance; and issues relating to implementation.

Trinidad and Tobago is committed to playing its part as a responsible member of the global community, by continuing efforts geared towards pursuing policy and development of initiatives to increase the use of new and innovative technologies that have lower levels of emissions; encouraging the use of clean energy technology such as natural gas technology and clean production technology; encouraging the use of renewable energies that have zero emissions; and, adopting more energy-efficient technologies and practices. To this end, and consistent with the provisions of the National Environment Policy 2006, the Government is pursuing a policy framework towards the development of a programme of work to address greenhouse gas emissions and towards the development of a low-carbon economy and developmental path.

2.1 KEY AREAS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Some of the key initiatives undertaken to address climate change management issues since the ten (10) year assessment report on the SIDS POA include:

- The National Climate Change Policy (2011) which was developed and laid in Parliament;
- The approval of the Second National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change which was approved and forms the basis of this country’s assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions;
- Increasing the number of service stations retailing Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) throughout the country to promote less carbon intensive and environmentally friendly, cleaner and cheaper fuel;

- Elaboration of a Strategy for the Reduction of Carbon Emissions in the Power Generation, Transportation and Industrial Sectors which will result in a strengthening of the institutional framework for carbon reduction; an identification of clear strategic elements and policies for reducing carbon emissions from target sectors; and the development of a framework for strategy implementation. This project is now underway;
- Mainstreaming Climate Change into National Development and a Feasibility Study on Carbon Capture and Storage. The components of this strategy include:
 - Legislative and Policy Review
 - Feasibility of Carbon Capture and Storage
 - Institutional Strengthening
- Low Emission Capacity Building Project inform low emission development strategies for Trinidad and Tobago;
- To strengthen the institutional capacity for trading on the carbon market a project is under review in accordance with the Clean Development Mechanism Activities of the Kyoto Agreement;
- Development of a pilot project to make one of the main transportation thoroughfares the Priority Bus Route, a CNG route, through policy and legislation analysis and the development of fiscal incentives for conversion of traditional fuel use to the use of CNG;
- Utilizing solar power for the illumination of police surveillance bays along the nation's highways. It is intended that the new extension of the south bound highway to Point Fortin will be lit with solar lights;
- Applying to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for monies to facilitate work on the Third National Communication and the First Biennial Update Report in keeping with our obligations under the UNFCCC;
- The establishment of Multilateral Environmental Agreements Focal Point Network has been established. Currently 124 contacts in Ministries, CBOs and NGOs have been identified. Industry and fiduciary institutions would also be included in this initiative;
- Establishment of the Green Fund to provide financial assistance to community groups and organisations for activities related to reforestation, remediation, environmental education and public awareness of environmental issues and conservation of the environment;
- The Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and the United States have commenced discussions to establish a Regional Renewable Energy Centre in Trinidad and Tobago to foster green initiatives for the region.

2.2 CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES

While there has been some measured progress there remain key constraints and challenges to implementation which include:

- Uncertainties in the present assessment of climate change and sea level rise impacts in Trinidad and Tobago
- Inadequate or absence of data relevant to climate change, particularly historical data

- Institutional and technical capacity constraints in identifying possible impacts of climate change on human, biological and physical resources through the conduct of vulnerability assessments
- Lack of programmes and institutional capacity to support research, development and acquisition of renewable energy technology
- Need to mainstream climate change issues into government policies in order to increase adaptive capacity to climate change through the development of hazard maps, land use policies and building codes
- Establishment of incentives to promote the use of clean technologies, alternative fuels and recycling initiatives
- Lack of formal educational programmes to enhance public awareness on climate change. The Office of Disaster Preparedness has conducted a National Preparedness Survey, which is a comprehensive baseline assessment of the citizens' knowledge of hazards, knowledge of damage and losses, and awareness of preparedness measures to guide education and training in this area

3.0 GOVERNANCE – Political Commitments

The commitment of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to implement varying global initiatives for the sustainable development of SIDS is evident by the comprehensive approach to the achievement of these initiatives. The political framework of the Government is to ensure that there is greater accountability and effective dialogue with the stakeholders they represent. The following key approaches are being undertaken to demonstrate commitment at the national and sub-national levels:

Continuous Policy Development and Action Planning including policy coherence is being articulated through national and local government level institutions. Local area plans and financing are being undertaken to promote the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, ensuring that inter - linkages along and between institutions are made

Facilitating the participatory processes - Government through its actions has been facilitating full and effective participation through the conduct of national consultations. Key consultations undertaken include:

- National Consultation on Constitutional Reform
- National Consultation on Local Government Reform
- National Consultation on Post 2015 Development Agenda and SIDS Conference
- Establishment of Civil Society Board (CSB), to institutionalise the consultative process in national, social, economic and spatial development
- National Spatial Development Strategy (on going)

Strengthening Data Development – The strengthening of the Central Statistical Office as one of the core agencies for data collection and management to guide evidence based planning is being developed to improve the availability of reliable and timely production of data. Government is engaged with Statistics Sweden to undertake the full reorganisation of the Central Statistical Office, to address issues of data supply and demand, organisational restructuring, training and development and development of an IT Master Plan.

Budgeting for Development – linking the policy to effective budgeting, securing financing at the national, regional and global level is undertaken annually through the production of the annual public sector investment programme.

Facilitating Research and Development – Innovation and Creativity –Creating new areas for businesses, assisting innovation to commercialisation through a science-policy interface is being facilitated through financing, business advice, training and development

Capacity Development - Training and development is being actively pursued through the policies of increasing access to tertiary education and skills training programmes. This ensures that there is more effective response to environmental, economic and social changes

Governance - Institutional mechanisms are continuously being reviewed to improve the legislative, regulatory agencies

Monitoring and Evaluation result-oriented approach is being institutionalised through the national performance framework which gives due regard to all relevant cross-cutting issues ensuring efficiency and effectiveness interventions

3.1 ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Government frames policy and facilitates the effective implementation and monitoring of policy and programmes to ensure the achievement of results. Through this on-going cycle there is opportunity to measure and assess impact.

The management of effective institutions and regulatory bodies at the regional, national and sub-national level are critical. As a member of the Caribbean Community the mere fact that we are small requires that there is collaboration with regional institutions. It is therefore imperative that the regional institutions operate effectively.

At the national level, interagency coordination and cooperation is essential to demonstrate coherence in policy direction as well as management of limited resources. In this regard a new framework is being proposed to improve the Centre of Government (CoG) mechanism in Trinidad and Tobago. The Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development is poised to serve as the central coordinating Ministry with responsibility for coordinating and directing the issues of sustainable development.

3.2 ROLE OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS – BUSINESS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Development is not only the remit of Government. The role of the social partners – the corporate sector and civil society in development has been articulated for decades. It is essential that the vision is shared and an opportunity is created for the exchange of ideas and recommendations for shared solutions. Both the Economic Development Board and the Council for Competitiveness and Innovation are key partners to assist in charting the economic development path, while the Civil Society Board will serve as representatives of civil society.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the management of the three pillars of development must be facilitated. In Trinidad and Tobago more deliberate initiatives are being encouraged. While there has been progress in the energy sector, through the South Energy Chamber of Industry, this approach to CSR is also being factored in the development of other new and

emerging sectors such as manufacturing, creative industries, services, ICT, tourism, and maritime development.

There is an opportunity to explore other modes of cooperation between the social partners through tripartite – multipartite dialogue and the creation of compacts for development. Shared responsibilities and shared vision for development has been a successful model especially when resources are limited and must be used and managed effectively. In 2012, the national consultation on the Social Dialogue process was conducted, the outcomes of which will form the framework for on-going mechanisms for social dialogue.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is currently working on a project to develop a CSR policy. It is hoped that this policy will address some of the above named issues.

4.0 NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Policy and legislative framework is a major challenge to environmental sustainability in this country. The main responsibility for environmental policy formation and review rests with Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, while the Environment Management Authority (EMA) serving as the regulatory agency. The co-ordination of the national sustainable development agenda is performed by the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development.

Major challenges to environmental sustainability are:

- **Modern Legislative framework.** The current existing laws and legislation are insufficient or out-dated, and in many cases are conflicting to deal effectively with the present realities. The National Climate Change Policy is an example of a recent policy which speaks to climate change adaptation as an issue of environmental sustainability.
- **Education and awareness.** Overall there is a gap in understanding the significance of environmental awareness and issues and more education and awareness programmes must be undertaken by the relevant agencies
- **Support Rehabilitation and conservation-** Support for Non-Governmental Organizations such as Fondes Amandes, and Natureseekers, which play an active role in rehabilitation and conservation has to date not been institutionalised. The effective use of the The Green Fund, and ProEcoserv, which act as financial enablers, natural resource valuation, as well as protection and incentives continues to be developed.
- **Climate Change adaptation** - Mitigating climate change and adapting to its anticipated impacts involve new and emerging issues, technologies and areas for international cooperation. Trinidad and Tobago supports the view that new global partnerships for transferring technologies are a necessary requirement for enhancing a global transition to a low carbon economy since as SIDS this is often necessary to be institutionalised through regional bodies
- **Water Sustainability** – is one of the most pressing issues globally, effective water resource management including recycling is of high priority. In the Agriculture sector over the last two (2) years there has been a shift from practices which relied on rain-fed supplies, to water conservation and water harvesting. The Irrigation and Water Management Flood Control Programme was developed and continues to be expanded. The energy sector and other emerging areas for diversification has been examining water management within the framework of greening business and alternative energy use

4.2 ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Economic sustainability is a high priority for the Government; the institutional measures which are already in place include the transformative policy agenda, collaborative institutional planning, strategic regional/global developments, research and technological supportive and enabling mechanisms, and new procurements methods which include green issues.

Challenges in this area include:

- **Heavy dependence on the hydro-carbon sector**- the deliberate attempt to diversify the economy is on-going, however there is still the heavy reliance on these finite energy resources. Measures have been undertaken to expand the energy services sector, inclusive of environmental services as a means to create green jobs and to leverage the support services to the main extractive arm of the sector to develop full-scale new areas of employment and growth. Overall a major challenge facing Trinidad and Tobago is the weak linkages between research efforts, commercial prospects and industry innovation.
- **Alternative energy** - It is anticipated that the transformation of the economy rests in the use of the energy sector as a catalyst for sustainable development. Environmental hazards, emission of carbon dioxide and greenhouse gasses that harm the environment have led to intensified efforts by the Government to diversify the economy. It must be noted that Trinidad and Tobago is assiduously pursuing efforts and key initiatives which would result in increasing the generation of electricity by natural gas - the cleanest form of fossil fuel energy currently available. Forms of alternative energy being explored are solar energy and wind energy.
- **Food security**- The global food crisis remains a major challenge and it was widely noted that hunger, malnutrition and lack of food security erode any strides toward sustainable development. In Trinidad and Tobago this issue is engaging the attention of Government as it is considered a high priority. Achievements were reflected in the reduction of the food inflation rate by 6.9% from 29.5% in 2010 to 22.6% as of July 2012. The target under the National Performance Framework is to reduce the Food Inflation rate to 25% and to increase the contribution of the sector to GDP by 3% by 2015. In that regard, efforts are being pursued towards making food available in sufficient quantities to the entire population with the supporting nutritional compliments. Our current food import bill is estimated at US\$634 million per year, and is targetted to be reduced to an estimate of US\$476 million by 2015. Food Sustainability is one of the seven (7) strategic business clusters of focus for the country's national diversification strategy and attracting and retaining young persons in agriculture is one of the major issues to be addressed if this sector is to be expanded.
- **Green Economy** - Developed countries such as the European Union (EU), Australia and New Zealand have emphasized that the green economy must be seen as a driver

of economic, social and environmental development. On the other hand, larger developing countries such as China, India, and Argentina as well as those countries which belong to the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas¹ (ALBA), emphasized that the green economy must not form the basis for the imposition of disguised trade restrictions and protectionist policies. The green economy concept as a pathway to sustainable development and should be broad, flexible and adaptable to the needs of countries at different levels of development, with differing national capabilities.

It should be noted that Trinidad and Tobago joined with CARICOM Member States and others in calling for flexibility in the definition and application of the “green economy”. Regional states such as Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, and Guyana have already begun re-positioning their development priorities to accommodate green economic policies, which it was stated would “*bring the poor into the centre of economic development*”. Trinidad and Tobago will be partnering with its regional neighbours on this initiative.

- **Innovative Financing²** - While developing countries emphasized that developed countries must put an end to unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and meet their commitments to dedicate 0.7% of their GDP to Official Development Assistance (“ODA”) to developing countries, most developed countries were adamant that ODA must be supplemented by “innovative sources of financing” through partnerships with the private sector as well as increased Government expenditure from developing countries in aid of their own development.

Arguably, more could be done by developing countries for developing countries through intensifying South-South cooperation. In this regard, developed countries, such as the USA and Canada, insisted that the application of traditional Rio principles³ such as common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (“CBDR-RC”), which place the onus on developed countries to take the lead in financing for development, were outdated and ought not to be applied to present day circumstances.

On the critical issue of securing financing for sustainable development, it is believed that in order to complement North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation international policy, frameworks must be designed in a manner that can attract and sustain the interest and participation of the private sector, particularly those businesses which are leaders in innovation and technology.

Trinidad and Tobago is considering more innovative means of financing that would closely match interested donor countries with the partners that are best suited to

¹ Members of ALBA: Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Nicaragua, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Venezuela. (St Lucia and Suriname are “special guest members”)

² Innovative financing is defined as a menu of stable and predictable financing flows based on globalized activities and multilateral management.

³ Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration agreed at the Earth Conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

provide the requested financial and other support and that are in-sync with the country's strategic national development objectives. It is noted that the support mechanisms to assist in implementation of projects or programmes for which financing is required is also being tied to the innovative financing framework. Already, for example, there is the Green Fund, administered by the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources and the Innovation Financing Facility, managed by the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development.

- **Human capital-** Another major challenge facing economic sustainability is the disharmony between the existing skills of the labour market and the skills demanded in the new economy, which can also be further related to low productivity levels. The country faces challenges and deficiencies in the quality and relevance of the education system and tertiary education participation which, though rising is still below the requirements for engineering a knowledge economy. While Trinidad and Tobago has achieved the MDG for universal primary and secondary education, quality of education and school performance remain critical. In 2010, 49 % of students at the secondary level attained 5 or more subjects (including Mathematics and English) at the Caribbean Examinations

The proactive policies toward increasing access to skills programmes and tertiary education continues as a priority. In 2010, 42% of the population accessed tertiary education. The issue of underemployment and the mismatch of skills to available employment opportunities are being addressed by new labour market studies and surveys on job placement being undertaken by the Ministries of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development and Tertiary Education and Skills Training, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization.

- **Managed Migration -** International migration has been identified as an emerging issue which limits the development of scientific and technological capabilities in developing countries. For Trinidad and Tobago, migration is deemed as cross cutting, impacting many sectors including, labour, health, education, cultural and many others. The most vulnerable migrants were identified as: victims of human trafficking, refugees, returning national/deported nationals and voluntary returns. The issue of children being left behind is an emerging problem which requires particular attention. The absence of a migration policy and the legislative framework to support it poses a challenge for Trinidad and Tobago.

To effectively manage migration what is needed is a proper system of Data collection and dissemination to inform cross cutting policies. Monitoring and evaluation is also needed to ensure that knowledge transfer actually takes place.

4.3 SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Creating sustainability within the society is a major challenge. Key issues to be considered include poverty, healthcare, crime and issues of unemployment. The major institutional measures include: grants and subsidies towards poverty reduction, land settlement, housing support and community development (Land for the Landless Policy, Squatter regularisation Policy, Community Development Policy, and Green Community Spaces Strategy), judicial system, and collaborative decision making processes. The major challenges include:

- **Health-** Access to healthcare, as well as the high levels of morbidity and mortality caused by non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes. Non-communicable diseases are closely followed by violence and injuries. In 2009 22.3% of the population were at risk for non-communicable diseases, and through the development initiatives this is targetted to be reduced in the case of heart disease per 100,000 persons to 20% by 2015 and mortality rates from cerebrovascular disease per 100,000 persons by 20% by 2015.

Inefficiencies in the health care systems make it challenging for the vulnerable and marginalised who cannot afford private health care. Strong and effective health care management systems must be a priority. A Healthcare system that is designed around people's needs and expectations, ensuring standard services, and reducing the incidence of possible exclusion due to socio-economic disparities must be priority.

The management of infant and maternal mortality to achieve the MDGs 4 and 5 is an area for priority; Maternal Mortality was reduced from 55.3 in 2008 to 46 in 2010 per 100,000 live births. Increased antenatal care and funding towards maternal health has contributed to this reduction. On the other hand, Under Five Mortality rate has increased from 16.0 per 1000 live births in 2008 to 27 per 1000 live births in 2010. This signals the need for increased immunization coverage, which has been steady at 90% for the past few years. Education and awareness can lead to a reduction in children's deaths in this age group

- **Human Security – Citizen Security and Gender-Based Violence** - Several of our countries continue to struggle to address issues pertaining to citizen security and social protection, due to high levels of crime and violence which in turn negatively impacts on overall human development and poses serious challenges in the area of sustainable development. Initiatives including social, community and mentoring programmes together with the reforms of the police and judicial system have been introduced as part of a comprehensive agenda to address crime and violence, especially among the youths.

Poverty- Despite the state's interventions and provision of welfare, there is a new emerging concern in the size of the working poor. Such persons do not qualify for state welfare, yet they exist in a state of relative poverty where their children suffer from economic and material deprivation. In 2009 18.9% of the population were living in Poverty. It is targetted that this rate would be reduced by 2% per year by 2015.

- **Infrastructure and Housing-** There is the challenge of proper infrastructure as well as meeting the demand for affordable and adequate housing for the national population. Strategies such as creating land for the landless, squatter regularisation and development of tier system for home ownership are imperative to addressing this issue.
- **Inclusive Governance-** The major challenges to governance are constitutional reform, transparency and integrity in public life with regards to political party funding and procurement reform, local government and decentralization, and human rights as it relates to domestic violence and access to justice. To help achieve good governance, it was proposed that a monitoring mechanism perhaps by a third eye (NGO's and civil society) could be established. To this end the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is in the process of establishing a Civil Society Board (CSB), which will institutionalise the consultative process by which the public is involved in the decision-making process in national, social, economic and spatial development. Unique in terms of governance of the CSB is that the various NGO and CBO organisations will be responsible for electing the fourteen (14) members and fourteen (14) alternates on the Board. This is all part of the participatory governance model. Additionally, developing clear objectives, setting benchmarks and standards, developing a reporting schedule, reintroducing civics into the school curriculum, focusing on vulnerable groups and developing a better form of communication will provide an enabling environment.
- **Financing of development** is at the centre of any successful development initiative. The issue of innovative financing and how the national development agenda will be financed over the long term is a critical question. The global measure of using GDP as a determination to access global financing creates a barrier for middle income countries such as Trinidad and Tobago to access assistance that would be critical to deal with structural vulnerabilities.

One of the responses to this challenge has been the establishment and implementation of a Heritage and Stabilisation Fund (HSF) which purpose is to ensure economic stability in the future, especially in times of global economic crisis and to financially support heritage initiatives of Trinidad and Tobago particularly aimed to future generations. As at September 2012 the HSF had a total value of US\$4.7 billion with projections to September 2013 of US\$5 billion. The fund is largely financed by surpluses from petroleum revenues derived from the production business.

This model is particularly useful for all developing countries, notably SIDS, as a mechanism for supplementing public funds with market-based solutions for mobilizing financing for development. As a region we should give some consideration to this directional change. Some examples are Diaspora Funds and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). Trinidad and Tobago is actively pursuing the PPP model to finance critical development projects.

4.3.1 Focus on Tobago

As part of the inclusiveness focus of the GORTT in the development of the national sustainability agenda, there is recognition that, as an Archipelagic State, not only are there SIDS concerns that exist for Trinidad and Tobago within the Latin American and wider global context, but there are also issues and nuances that exist *between* the islands of Trinidad and Tobago. These issues can be viewed in the context of emerging challenges in the Post -MDG's 2015 era and must be identified and addressed in a manner that secures mutually acceptable compromise and ensures stability in the relationship between the two islands. While there is close collaboration between the two islands, there are specific issues to the island of Tobago and the strategic response will include the following four areas:

- *Greater Equity* - particularly in social and economic development;
- *Participation* - in policy creation and implementation involving people at all levels;
- *Self-motivation* - to manage Tobago's development and
- *Accountability and Transparency* - where information and communication are vital.

The sustainable development agenda therefore, should find creative and effective means of articulating the development needs of both islands making allowances *for* and granting validity *to* the different cultural and historical undercurrents that create the uniqueness of each entity in an archipelagic state.

5.0 PRIORITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Single Development Agenda

A significant amount of further work and analysis is still required on the myriad possibilities for the design of the Post 2015 development Agenda. Trinidad and Tobago broadly agrees that an integrated single development agenda is what is required moving forward and indeed, what we agreed to at Rio+20. It is critically important that in moving forward with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adequate provision is made for the integration of the outcomes of the MDG review and to this end an intergovernmental process to design the single development agenda is indeed critical. Any post 2015 development agenda must be coordinated and effective. Successful implementation of any SDGs will depend to a large degree on the extent to which the implementation of MDGs and SDGs can be coherently reconciled.

The Post 2015 development agenda including the SDGs must reflect and take into account the unique needs and vulnerabilities of small island developing states, as well as the special situation of middle income countries. Vulnerability must be addressed as a cross cutting issue both in the context of economic development as well as ecological fragility in order for development gains to be sustained and irreversible.

There is a need to reassess some assumptions on which the global development agenda is based one of which is the reliance on Official Development Assistance (ODA). Developing countries must consider supplementing public funds to design market-based solutions for mobilising financing for development. Regarding the Caribbean Region some consideration should be given to this directional change.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have long been recognised as a special case for environment and development as a result of their inherent vulnerability including their small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, and exposure to global environmental challenges and external economic shocks. This uniqueness requires attention and resilience to vulnerabilities must be taken into account when addressing how we measure and assess progress in development.

SIDS issues must be incorporated into the overall Post 2015 development agenda in a deliberate manner and not as an afterthought. The third Global Conference on the sustainable development of SIDS as well as the designation of 2014 as the International Year of SIDS provides an opportunity to highlight the needs and challenges and mobilise the international community to assist SIDS in our efforts to achieve sustainable development.

Sustainable Development Goals

At the United Nations Rio+20 summit in Brazil in 2012, Member States agreed to launch a process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will build upon the Millennium Development Goals and converge with the post 2015 development agenda. It was

decided to establish an "inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process open to all stakeholders, with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the United Nations General Assembly".

The outcome document, *The Future We Want* specifically states that the process leading to the SDGs needs to be coordinated and coherent with the processes considering the post-2015 development agenda.

The member States agreed that SDGs must:

- Be based on Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
- Fully respect all the Rio Principles
- Be consistent with international law
- Build upon commitments already made
- Contribute to the full implementation of the outcomes of all major summits in the economic, social and environmental fields
- Focus on priority areas for the achievement of sustainable development, being guided by the outcome document
- Address and incorporate in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and their inter-linkages
- Be coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015
- Not divert focus or effort from the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals
- Include active involvement of all relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, in the process.

It was further agreed that SDGs must be:

- Action-oriented
- Concise
- Easy to communicate
- Limited in number
- Aspirational
- Global in nature
- Universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.

The outcome document further specifies that the development of SDGs should:

- Be useful for pursuing focused and coherent action on sustainable development
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development
- Serve as a driver for implementation and mainstreaming of sustainable development in the UN system as a whole
- Address and be focused on priority areas for the achievement of sustainable development

Post 2015 - Priorities for Sustainable Development for Trinidad and Tobago

Using the Outcome document of Rio+ the Government of Trinidad and Tobago partnered with the resident United Nations System to organise a stakeholder's consultation to discuss initially, seven priority areas for Trinidad and Tobago which were identified and later modified to nine priorities areas:

- Poverty Eradication and Gender Equality
- Managed Migration
- Climate Change - Alternative Energy Disaster Risk Reduction, Waste Water Management & Waste Water systems
- Food Security
- Human Security – Citizen Security & Gender Based Violence
- Health & Wellbeing
- Youth & Ageing
- Diversification, Growth & Employment and
- Governance

One of the most notable outcomes of this process was the realisation of the interrelatedness of the issues and the need for interagency coordination, collaboration and coherence in approach.

Poverty Eradication & Gender Equality

As part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger the Government of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to the eradication of poverty at the rate of 2% per year. This rate translates into approximately eradicating poverty by six thousand persons per year. At present there exists a wide range of social programmes across several ministries which comprise the social safety net. These interventionist and preventative programmes targets the vulnerable in society namely children and single mothers, senior citizens and households in need.

Viewed from another perspective the emphasis is on promoting economic inclusion and participation by assisting citizens out of poverty and social displacement through training, education, skills building and development of labour intensive sectors and community driven sectors.

The preliminary consultative process has emphasized sustainable jobs, education, male participation in the education system, multifocal families, and healthcare as the basis for social inclusion and poverty reduction and eradication.

Climate Change Adaptation

As a SIDS, Trinidad and Tobago is particularly vulnerable to severe consequences of climate change. This can manifest itself in sea level rise, loss of coastal habitats, increased flooding and increased frequency and intensity of hurricanes and hillside erosion.

With regard to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals substantial gains have been made in providing a sustainable supply of safe drinking water as well as adequate sanitation. However urban/rural imbalances are still to be addressed. Greenhouse gas inventories conducted in Trinidad and Tobago indicate that the energy sector, transportation and industrial sectors account for the majority of carbon dioxide emissions. Although the country accounts for less than 1% of absolute global greenhouse gas emissions, it is the second largest producer of carbon dioxide emission on a per capita basis in the world.

One of the interventionist strategies which Trinidad and Tobago is seeking to implement to reduce carbon dioxide emissions is the development of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) as an alternative fuel for vehicles. It is estimated that the use of CNG can reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by as much as fifteen to twenty per cent. There have also been initiatives to use renewable energy sources such as solar, wind and wave to complement existing sources and the adoption of Energy Efficiency (EE) measures and practices.

As part of the public consultations participants expressed concerns about the lack of awareness of the youth on climate change issues and emphasized the need for development of synergies as part of the waste management system.

Youth & Ageing

The Medium Term Policy Framework (2011-2014) highlighted the role of the youth of Trinidad and Tobago as pivotal to the implementation and sustainability of the knowledge driven economy. As such they were highlighted in the priority areas of agriculture and food security, economic growth, job creation, competitiveness and innovation and crime and law and order.

At the preliminary consultations it was acknowledged that the main issues challenging our youth are unemployment, quality education, opportunities for young people with disabilities, positive modelling by parents and caregivers, support from the community, inappropriate use of social media, drugs, sexuality, teenage pregnancy, services for children with HIV, youth crime, out of school youth and inadequate coordination and implementation of youth policies and programmes. They concluded that there was a need for the development of coherent government policies, recognizing the youth as active actors in development.

The elderly highlighted the desire to have access to health services, be provided information on goods and services that benefit the elderly, an increased public awareness to ageism and an end to abuse of the elderly. They noted the need for development and implementation of a national plan of action on ageing; building age friendly communities; legislation and the development and expansion of the Division of Ageing would help to fill the current existing gaps.

Health & Wellbeing

Quality of public health care services and the management of hospitals is a national development priority. Government has recognized the need for delivering first class health care to citizens by improving the delivery of health care services in accordance with global standards. The major challenges to citizens in the area of health and wellbeing are the incidence and deaths associated with Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases, HIV infections and Child mortality.

The strategic approach to address these challenges would include a comprehensive plan to promote healthy lifestyles, addressing the human resource challenge, improving and creating accessible infrastructure as well as introducing a patient-centred approach to health care.

The approach will seek to improve management of the health sector and strengthen policy and legislative framework; provide safe, quality health services that are patient-centred; provide an integrated primary, secondary and tertiary health care system; inculcate a lifelong commitment to health; develop an effective response to current and emerging health issues; develop a strengthened response to mental health issues; modernize physical infrastructure for public health care facilities; develop professional and quality human resources; develop an information and communication technology driven health service delivery management; strengthen health emergency preparedness; improve health sector financing and develop niche areas of health care that can strengthen Trinidad and Tobago's international reputation in health care.

The Consultation emphasised the need for effective health policies; increase information services; application of universal coverage of health services to reduce the barriers to health care that are created by high cost services that prevent poor and marginalized groups from accessing these services; education and awareness of health issues including stigmatization and discrimination.

Diversification, Growth and Employment

Economic growth in Trinidad and Tobago is limited given its current structure which is driven by the energy sector coupled with the low levels of productivity and competitiveness of many sectors. It is understood that the global economic system is based on, and rewards, knowledge, enterprise, creativity and adaptability. The growth, competitiveness and innovation strategy for the medium term will centre on government's efforts to drive innovation and entrepreneurship, support new strategic sectors with the potential for becoming internationally competitive. This will involve maintaining macroeconomic stability, diversification to restructure the productive base and promoting new strategic sectors with the potential for contributing to growth, job creation and innovation.

Creating dialogue with communities, ensuring that there is a greater focus on meeting international standards to facilitate market penetration – develop a culture of high standards in product and services, decent work and worker rights and protection were some of issues addressed at the national consultation.

Food Security

As part of the five pillars in the Medium Term Policy Framework, agriculture and food security has been highlighted by the government as a major goal. The objective is to develop a highly productive agricultural sector that is modernized and internationally competitive and generates sustainable income level for producers comparable to other sectors in the economy. In assessing the nexus between food security and sustainable development it can be concluded that agriculture is linked to the health of Trinidad and Tobago through the reduction of malnutrition and chronic diseases; poverty eradication; research and development; sustainable economic development; environmental conservation and the trade balance.

Presently, the food import bill has increased to US\$634 million and is attributed to a number of issues which has challenged the sector. The strategic approach to revitalizing the sector is enshrined in a number of interventions which include: partnerships with the public sector; strengthening institutional marketing and providing incentives to the banking sector to provide a window for agricultural investment;

There is a declining interest amongst youth in the sector and when juxtaposed against an ageing farming population the urgency with which the issue should be addressed is amplified. Government has agreed upon continuing the Youth Apprenticeship in Agriculture (YAPA) and the commencement of a Youth Internship Programme to bring together agricultural graduates and experienced agribusiness entrepreneurs to facilitate knowledge transfer. This programme would encourage the transfer of knowledge from the older and experienced agriculturalists to the youths in the sector.

The preliminary consultative process addressed the issue of an inadequate supply of entrepreneurs who are gainfully employed in the agricultural sector. This directly impacts on the attractiveness of the sector. Additionally, an ageing population and lack of mechanization, technology and innovation threatens the sector's growth and longevity.

Alternative Energy

In conjunction with measures geared towards reducing the country's carbon footprint Trinidad and Tobago recognizes the need to transition to a low carbon society. The Government is committed to the development of a new growth dynamic that transforms the existing consumption-based economic growth into an environmentally-friendly one. Given the natural and geographic advantages of the country, the promotion of solar, wave and wind energy industries can potentially provide a new growth dynamic that will move the economy to a lower dependence on hydrocarbons.

At the national consultation participants emphasised the need to boost certain crop production under conditions created through climate change, the need to create new economic opportunities to manage carbon credits, the application of technology to improve work processes and efficiencies, and to create a cultural shift in attitude towards a greener living society.

Governance

The MTPF 2011-2014 notes that the transformation efforts would be guided by the tenets of good governance whereby Government will ensure that the voice of the population is heard and taken into consideration as an active participant. Soliciting comments from the individual, family and the community will effectively ensure direct citizen participation. This will be realized via participation by labour and civil society. The Economic Development Board and the Civil Society Board (CSB) will be the main instruments for the involvement of the population on key decisions related to the national sustainable development agenda.

Preliminary consultations with the public noted that due to the perception of corruption currently permeating the public the realization of good governance can be threatened. The consultation concluded that to help achieve good governance a monitoring mechanism can be established.

Harnessing Creativity and Imagination

This critical interconnecting priority focuses on achieving sustained socio-economic growth by adapting the use of innovation to solve the issues and challenges that affects national development. Trinidad and Tobago is quite cognisant of global experiences, which shows that in many instances, countries with abundant natural resources are not necessarily those that have achieved sustainable economic progress. Further, it is quite apparent more than ever, that the rate of technological progress determines the ability of a country's industry to penetrate new markets, develop new products and services that command high prices in domestic and international markets.

In terms of the domestic economy, this country is experiencing declining oil and gas reserves, lower levels of productivity and competitiveness in many of the key sectors (manufacturing and agriculture), increasing food prices (especially imported staples), and rising cost of services, in particular health and infrastructure. Simultaneously, there is the urgent need to develop new and more effective and efficient solutions to pressing social problems. In addition, the high cost of labour and shortages of technical skills in key areas place additional pressures on businesses to automate processes, introduce higher quality products, deliver superior services and penetrate new markets.

Given the inevitable decline in non-renewable energy revenues, Trinidad and Tobago's continued economic survival depends on its ability to diversify its production structure and become a knowledge-fuelled innovative economy. In this regard, the country's future prosperity depends on its ability to generate new ideas, processes and solutions, and use innovation to convert knowledge into social good and economic wealth, and provide answers to the most significant societal challenges. Therefore, it is essential that innovation becomes endemic and permeate all sectors of this country's eco-system including culture, enterprise, government, citizens, labour, finance, research and academia.

Trinidad and Tobago is making a concerted effort to design focused strategies for driving innovation and has embarked on the process of innovation as the critical factor for achieving global competitiveness and economic sustainability. In this context, the Ministry of Planning and

Sustainable Development (MPLSD) has been given the responsibility for developing a National Innovation Policy and establishing an effective/formal National Innovation System. The aim of the National Innovation Policy (NIP) is to create the policy framework and environment that will position Trinidad and Tobago among the world's leading knowledge- and skills-based countries. Also, it is envisioned that the NIP will provide strategic direction to the relevant stakeholders, and will catalyse the development and operations of the National Innovation System (NIS).

Participants ranked the top four priorities for consideration in the global agenda to be (1) Poverty Reduction & Gender Equality (2) Food Security (3) Health & Well Being (4) Governance.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 KEY MESSAGES – PACIFIC PREPARATORY MEETING/ KEY MESSAGES SIDS CONFERENCE – 2014/ SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS/ POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

The interconnections between the SIDS and the global response to development post 2015 require the single minded response to all development interventions. The messages are the same; the objectives are the same, **the difference lies in the approach and the different stages of development**. One solution will not fit all and that was the main challenge to the impact of the MDGs. Countries must share the vision but set their own development path in accordance with their circumstances. However, it must not be left up to chance, but be subjected to strong governance machinery that would monitor and measure progress based on agreed upon targets within a specified time frame.

In May 2013, Trinidad and Tobago in collaboration with the United Nations Resident Coordinator held a national consultation with over 200 participants on the theme '*The Future We Want*'. Nine (9) thematic areas were addressed as follows (1) Poverty Eradication and Gender Equality (2) Managed Migration (3) Climate Change - Alternative Energy Disaster Risk Reduction, Waste Water Management & Waste Water Systems; (4) Food Security, (5) Human Security – Citizen Security & Gender Based Violence; (6) Health & Wellbeing; (7) Youth & Ageing (8) Diversification Growth & Employment and (9) Governance

The discussions were in alignment with the sustainable development goals which encompass the issues of food security, water, energy, green jobs, decent work, social inclusion, sustainable consumption and production patterns, sustainable cities and climate change. More critically the special characteristics of Trinidad and Tobago, social, economic and environmental conditions permeated the discussions.

The consultation process was particularly instructive on the value of the **‘bottom up’ approach to development, giving value to the words ‘inclusive development’**. Any debate on development must therefore be open to effective dialogue and consensus on issues of priority.

The discussions yielded common positions throughout the consultation, and these should permeate any regional, hemispheric or global debate on development, specifically:

Equal attention to the three pillars of development: The three pillars of development must be given equal attention if growth and development are to be sustained and enjoyed by all citizens – Economic, Social, Environmental development must be attended to equally, and all initiatives must be overlaid with good governance practices, creativity and the human imagination (Innovation). The importance of effective spatial planning especially as a SIDS is even more urgent.

Policy Coherence: There must be policy coherence to ensure that there is consistency and constancy in what is to be achieved. This is closely associated with inter-agency coordination and collaboration. Poor governance is manifested when agencies and departments operate in silos.

Equity, Equality and Rights: All initiatives must be examined to ensure that equity, equality and rights are not violated. The application of strong social policy to ensure that no one is excluded must be the norm. The importance of an inclusive development agenda cannot be underscored sufficiently.

Inclusive Participation: Bottom Up approach: The model of top down development is demonstrating failure in developed countries to the North. One of the positive features of the development of the south has been the creation of an environment of participatory governance and government. This must be sustained and enhanced so that there is an opportunity for community based responses, bringing decision making closer to the community, participatory governance and greater ownership of plans and interventions. Building strong communities is a key pillar to this approach to development – local government bodies, community groups must be supported and encouraged.

Good governance: legislation, policies, integrated governance and monitoring and evaluation. The participants agreed that there should be shared goals and targets for development. Further that the MDGs established a common platform for development and in the review process an assessment be undertaken there must be consideration of this systems to close the gaps and create new goals to enhance the common platform agenda.

Data management - overall the challenge is how to adequately and accurately measure the outcomes of sustainable development strategies. The proposed model for integrating the MDG agenda into the context of post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is heavily dependent on the availability, on a sustained basis, of reliable and comprehensive data. In the Trinidad and Tobago experience, data collection on this scale has proven to be a key challenge in monitoring the implementation of the MDGs, the same holds true for many SIDS. It seems that

any new development framework must also find a way to address such fundamental issues and assist countries that experience these challenges.

Strengthening awareness of/ strengthening education, Effective communication – It was the view that rights, services and the use of varying media to meet the communities where they are through social media, community based initiatives, and the bottom up approach are critical in any development agenda

Creativity and Innovation - adapting the use of innovation to solve the issues and challenges that affects national development in particular using unique experiences to drive solutions than letting solutions be externally driven

Trinidad and Tobago is committed to promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth through a process of diversification of the economy and innovation, creating greater opportunities for all through employment and building of a knowledge based economy and continuous learning, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living; fostering equitable social development and inclusion; and promoting integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that support economic, social and human development through efforts of conservation, regeneration and restoration.

6.3.1 DECENT WORK AS A SUSTAINABLE GOAL

The global call to action by the International Labour Organisation to set full and productive employment and decent work as a key development goal is supported by Trinidad and Tobago. Employment is viewed as the most viable means to improving the quality of lives of vulnerable individuals and groups.

Trinidad and Tobago's diversification agenda is rooted in creating employment that will be not only highly productive and growth oriented but will be based on creativity and innovation. The quality of jobs created requires a strong cadre of highly skilled and flexible persons. The diversification strategy is complemented by investment in human capital development at the level of skills development and access to tertiary education. Full and productive employment must be supported by investment in economic and social development to ensure inclusive participation in the labour market.

Social protection within the framework of full and productive employment and decent work must be afforded to all so as to reduce the barriers to inclusive development in particular to the disabled and migrant workers. These issues will be addressed comprehensively as the debate continues.

6.3.2 INSTITUTIONALISING DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

Effective and efficient public policy rooted in the principle of integrated approach to development that links, policy, programming and results. Trinidad and Tobago recently institutionalised this process, and is using three main frameworks to achieve this integration, the Medium Term Policy Framework 2011-2014, the Public Sector Investment Programme 2012-

2013/ the Public Sector Investment Programme 2013-2015 and the National Performance Framework 2012-2015 as the main instruments to measure efficiency and effectiveness in the utilisation of resources. The role of evidence based planning is underscored in this process of achieving development results.

Trinidad and Tobago supports the development of more robust systems for development evaluation. 2015 is being designated the International Year of Evaluation (EvalYear) and this is an important aspect to the promotion of evaluation and evidence-based policy at international, regional, national and local levels. The conversations that are being presently undertaken at the international, regional, national, and sub-national level on the future we want is inextricably linked to the role of monitoring and evaluation in good governance for equitable and sustainable human development. It is now opportune that efforts be made to mainstream monitoring and evaluation into development initiatives.

6.2 PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development is the business of several partners who must work together to ensure policy coherence, institutional readiness, financing, research and development including innovation and capacity building. Specifically:

- Hemispheric and Regional Integration - to facilitate shared resources, be they institutional, human and/or financial
- National and Sub-national stakeholders – local government authorities – to ensure policy coherence and remove inequities across regional divide
- Civil Society – to actively participate in ensuring the voice of the community
- Corporate partners – as partners in development and for corporate social responsibility
- Research and Development – Academic and technology partners - to create and sustain the link between financing, technology, capacity building and national needs for sustainable development policies
- International Organizations – to support government efforts with technical skills in achieving the country's development priorities.