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MEDIA RELEASE

T&T Builds United Front Against DV and Child Abuse

“Domestic violence and child abuse remain a ‘we issue’ and we must cross political divides to protect the most vulnerable in society. We have to continue empowering our stakeholders through information, as we build a united front in these issues in Trinidad and Tobago.”

This was the affirmation of the Honourable Ayanna Webster-Roy, Minister in the Office of the Prime, with responsibility of Gender and Child Affairs and Central Administrative Services Tobago, at the *Sensitisation of Tobago House of Assembly (THA) Administrators*, held on April 29th 2024, at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) Central Administrative Services Tobago’s (CAST) Offices.

The THA officials were briefed on three major projects developed to address domestic violence and child abuse at both the national and community levels with the intention for implementation by Tobago governmental agencies, civil society organisations and communities.

The first project discussed was the **‘In the Know On the Go’ Series on Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention**. Mrs Sharla Dass-Hassanali, Project Support Officer, OPM Gender and Child Affairs (GCA), iterated the benefits of capacity building for staff, communities, families and children for roll out of the Series in electoral districts across Tobago.

Ms. Shelley-Ann Hart, Director Gender Affairs, OPM GCA reported on the **National Strategic Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Violence in Trinidad and Tobago** and presented the Matrix of Activities expected of the THA in implementing the Plan. Attendees were encouraged by Ms. Thalia Vidale, Project Support Officer, to amplify public awareness of the recently launched **Survivors Transformation and Empowerment Programme (STEP)**, to increase Tobago residents’ access to the three STEP grants.

The attendees further engaged in candid dialogue on the implementation of the projects to ensure that the most vulnerable in society are proficiently protected and resources are adequately leveraged. The Government urges all sectors and citizens to strengthen collaborative efforts, as we all answer the call to **Stand United Against Domestic Violence and all Forms of Child Abuse**.

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