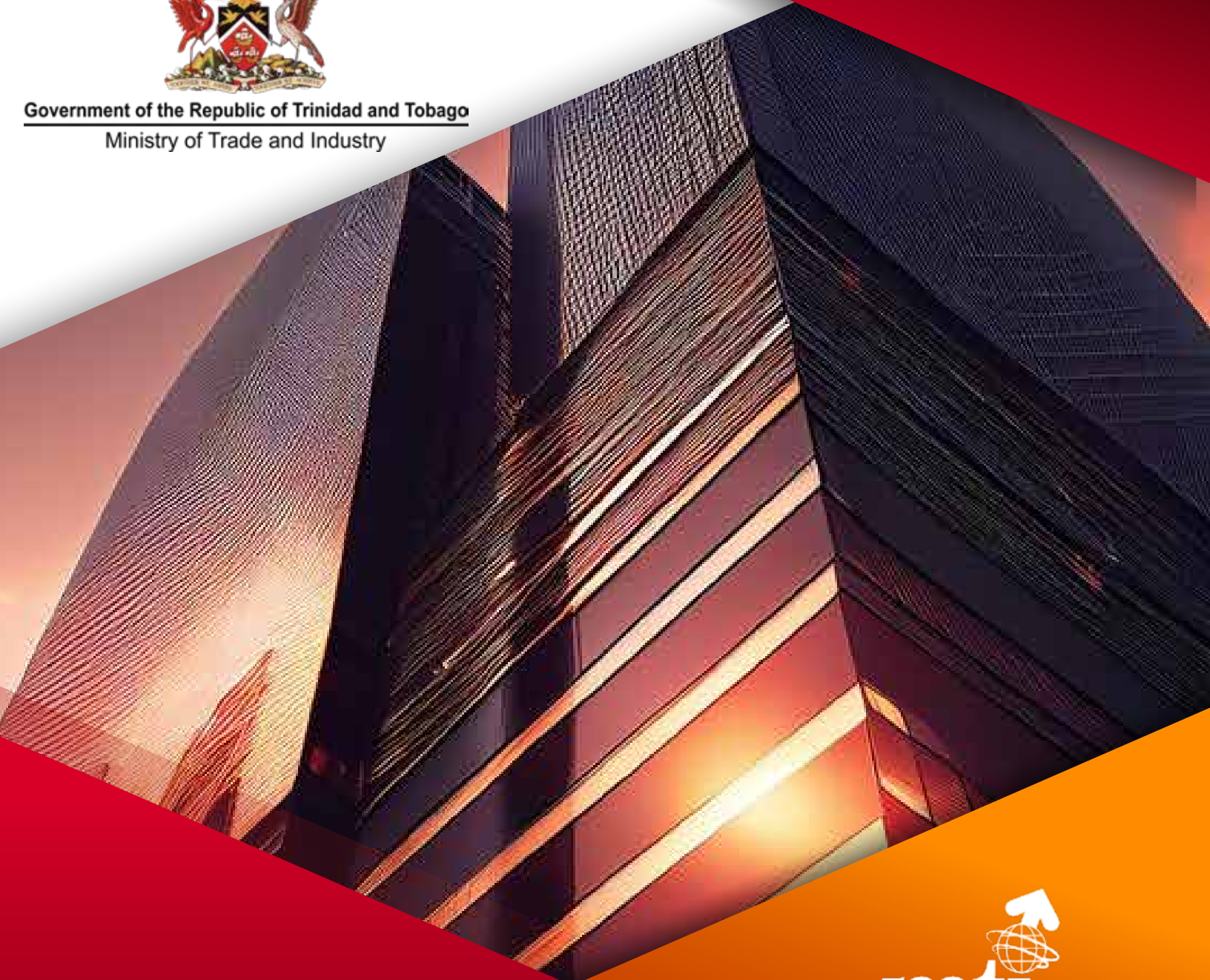




Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Trade and Industry



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Administrative Report

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1.0 Introduction

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) is responsible for leading and overseeing the implementation of Government's policy for business development, trade, investment and consumer empowerment towards the continued growth of the non-energy sector in Fiscal 2020.

To this end, the MTI developed its Annual Work Plan based on its Strategic Framework 2016-2020 to execute its portfolio through a number of initiatives to continue to create an enabling environment to support economic diversification and international competitiveness; support the growth of exports and investments, consumer empowerment; and to create an environment that facilitates fair competition and discourages unscrupulous trading practices.

During Fiscal 2020, despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, the MTI continued its operations and successfully executed a number of initiatives identified within its Annual Work Plan.

In Fiscal 2020, the non-energy export performance was TT\$11.0 billion, a decrease by 41.7% when compared to Fiscal 2019 of TT\$18.9 billion. More specifically, in Fiscal 2020, the total non-energy manufacturing exports of TT\$7.2 billion declined by 16.6% when compared to Fiscal 2019 (TT\$8.6 billion). This decline was mainly attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic which reduced the demand for goods in the North American and CARICOM markets which are Trinidad and Tobago's two (2) largest export destinations.

With respect to the investment performance, the MTI and investTT facilitated approximately TT\$13.7 million in foreign direct investments and TT\$331.1 million in local direct investments in sectors of construction, services manufacturing and agri-business. Foreign investment projects recorded for the period were in the services sector and provided over thirty (30) employment opportunities. With respect to local direct investment, over two hundred and ten (210) job opportunities were created across various sectors - construction, manufacturing and agri-business.

Initiatives pursued included reforms to improve the ease of doing business; accelerating economic diversification through, *inter alia*, strategic framework for the expansion of the non-energy sector, and the expansion of the landscape of the economic infrastructure for investment where investors can build factories and offices to create goods and services for local and international

consumption. Such expansion included the Moruga Agro-processing and Light Industrial Park, the Phoenix Park Industrial Estate and Alutech Research and Development Facility. Additionally, to improve the trade facilitation environment for non-energy products, MTI launched a new Trade Policy 2019-2023-*Towards Sustainable Economic Growth and Diversification*, implemented trade agreements and executed trade missions/fairs to aid access to traditional and non-traditional markets. Furthermore, to contribute to higher levels of productivity, competitiveness, consumer health and environmental protection, the MTI commenced the implementation of the National Quality Policy. The aim is overcoming the difficulty of local firms in demonstrating compliance with quality requirements and trade rules, thus benefiting from the globalized economy.

Other accomplishments of the MTI during Fiscal 2020 are outlined in this Annual Administrative Report 2020.

The MTI Annual Administrative Report for Fiscal 2020 covers the following areas:

1. MTI Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives;
2. Organizational Structure;
3. Policies and Development Initiatives;
4. Financial Operations;
5. Human Resource Development Plan;
6. Procurement;
7. Public and Community Relations;
8. The Way Forward; and
9. Conclusion.

2.0 MTI Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives

2.1 Vision of MTI

“A dynamic, client oriented organization delivering integrated, quality services for business growth, trade and investment expansion and consumer empowerment”

2.2 Mission of MTI

“To work as an innovative team, championing business growth, trade and investment for enhanced global competitiveness and promoting consumer interests for improved well-being”

2.3 Strategic Objectives

The MTI’s strategic objectives are guided by Trinidad and Tobago’s National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016-2030, Vision 2030.

The development theme under the NDS that is relevant to the MTI is:

“Theme IV: Building Globally Competitive Businesses.”

This Theme seeks to create a stable and predictable macroeconomic environment that contributes to long-term social and economic prosperity; entrepreneurship; investment and trade promotion; and, the production of high value goods and services that are competitive in traditional and new export markets.

In order to contribute to Theme IV of the NDS (2016–2030), the MTI developed a Strategic Plan for the period 2016–2020 to support the growth and expansion of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the country.

The MTI’s Strategic Plan is supported by its Annual Work Plan which prioritizes projects and the efficient and effective allocation of resources. Table 1 outlines the MTI’s Strategic Framework for the period and successful initiatives are outlined within this Report.

Table 1: MTI’s Strategic Framework

MTI Goal 1- Diversified and Competitive Business	
<i>Strategy</i>	1.1: Legislative, Regulatory and Administrative Frameworks revised or developed to create an Enabling Business Environment
	1.2: Government Services utilized by the business community improved to reduce inefficiencies
	1.3: Technical assistance and infrastructure support provided
MTI Goal 2- Increased Investment	
<i>Strategy</i>	2.1: Legislative, Regulatory and Administrative Frameworks revised or developed to attract investment
	2.2: Technical assistance and infrastructure provided to investors
MTI Goal 3- Expanded and Diversified Regional and International Trade	
<i>Strategy</i>	3.1: Legislative, Regulatory and Administrative Frameworks developed and implemented to grow exports
	3.2: Trade Agreements negotiated
	3.3: Trade support and facilitation programme executed
MTI Goal 4- Enhanced Protection and Empowerment of Consumers	
<i>Strategy</i>	4.1: Legislation, regulation and administrative frameworks developed to empower consumers and encourage ethical business practices
	4.2: Research and education programme executed to enhance consumer protection and empowerment
MTI Goal 5- Transformed Ministry Performance and Service Delivery	
<i>Strategy</i>	5.1: Performance management systems revised and implemented
	5.2: Internal and external communications programmes developed and implemented
	5.3: Research systems to gather and analyse data on the Non-Energy sector developed and implemented

3.0 Organisational Structure

3.1 Organisational Profile

The MTI is the public sector entity responsible for leading and overseeing implementation of Government's policy for trade and investment promotion, business development, and consumer empowerment. Its portfolio responsibilities are listed in the Trinidad and Tobago Gazette of September 9, 2020, are as follows:

Commerce

- Anti-Dumping
- Competition Policy

Consumer Affairs

- Consumer Empowerment
- Consumer Protection
- Consumer Research

e-Commerce

Export Processing Zones

Incubating Local Industries

Industrial Parks

Industry

Metrology

Product Information

Product Quality Development

Technology Park

Trade

- Trade Agreements
- Trade Policy

3.2 Corporate Structure

The MTI's structure is designed to allow for strategy delivery, efficient processes and the achievement of planned outcomes. The structure comprises:

1. Minister's Office
2. Office of the Permanent Secretary
3. Directorates
4. Support Units
5. State Agencies

Minister's Office

The Minister of Trade and Industry has responsibility for defining the overarching policy framework for guiding Trinidad and Tobago's non-energy business development, trade and investment promotion and consumer empowerment initiatives.

Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS)

The OPS is responsible for executive management of the MTI and its achievement of defined goals. The Office generally consists of the Permanent Secretary, Deputy Permanent Secretary, support staff and other senior managerial personnel. The Permanent Secretary is the accounting officer of the Ministry with overall responsibility for the routine activities of the MTI. A Deputy Permanent Secretary has also been assigned to the Ministry to provide technical support to the OPS.

Core Directorates/Divisions:

The main departments of the MTI are responsible for formulating policy, developing strategies and ensuring execution of the technical mandate of the MTI. These are as follows:

1. **Business Development Directorate (BDD)** – plans and executes the business development portfolio of the MTI in order to contribute to the country's macroeconomic business development performance measures.
2. **Consumer Affairs Division (CAD)** – plans and executes the consumer guidance, protection and empowerment initiatives of the MTI in order to contribute to a fair business environment.
3. **Fair Trading Unit (FTU)** – ensures that the business environment is fair and free from uncompetitive business practices which hinder growth and development.
4. **Investment Directorate (ID)** – formulates and implements the investment portfolio of the MTI in order to contribute to the country's macroeconomic investment performance measures.

5. **Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (M&EU)** – ensures evidence-based decision making across the MTI and its Agencies.
6. **Policy and Strategy Directorate (PSD)** – provides strategic planning, policy development and coordination services to the MTI. Through project management services, the PSD also ensures the efficient mobilisation of resources and execution of strategic projects such as the Single Electronic Window (SEW) for Trade and Business Facilitation (TTBizlink).
7. **Trade Directorate (TD)** - formulates and effects trade policy, legislative briefs, and strategies for the planning and execution of the MTI's trade portfolio in order to contribute to the country's macroeconomic trade performance measures.
8. **Trade Licence Unit (TLU)** - administers the import and export of goods in accordance with applicable laws and Government Policy.

Support Units

The Support Units provide essential services to the core directorates and the overall MTI through the development and management of corporate-wide activities. The Support Units are as follows:

1. **Accounting Unit (AU)** - oversees and coordinates all financial operations of the MTI. The Unit ensures that accurate financial information is reported in a timely manner.
2. **Corporate Communications and Events Management Unit (CC&EMU)** - provides information to key internal and external stakeholders on a timely basis. The Unit also enhances the MTI's corporate image and manages the MTI's relationship with key stakeholders.
3. **Corporate Services Unit (CSU)** – provides office management, procurement and facilities management services.
4. **Legal Unit (LU)** – provides legal advice and support to the MTI.

5. **Human Resource Unit (HRU)** – manages the recruitment and development of the human capital of the MTI.
6. **Information Management and Support Unit (IM&SU)** - provides technical and network support services to the MTI. The department is also responsible for transforming the MTI through information and communication technology.
7. **Internal Audit Unit (IAU)** - ensures conformity of the MTI with financial rules and regulations, instructions, policies and contract plans.

State Agencies

The implementation of the Ministry's policies is primarily facilitated through the work of its State Agencies. The roles, responsibilities and services provided by these State Agencies are outlined below:

1. Statutory Boards and Other Bodies:

- i. **Betting Levy Board (BLB)** develops and promotes horse racing, including the breeding of racehorses and dogs in the country. The BLB manages the remuneration and benefits for jockeys, stable lads and monitors compliance with any rules relating to the operation of pool betting offices and pool betting outlets, including their opening and closing hours. The Betting Levy Board is governed by the Betting Levy Board Act No. 35 of 1989 which came into force on November 15, 1989. It has since been amended by Act No. 31 of 1991, and the Finance Act No. 5 of 1995.
- ii. **Fair Trading Commission (FTC)** is an independent statutory body responsible for implementing the Fair Trading Act in Trinidad and Tobago. The main objectives are to promote and maintain effective competition throughout the economy, and to ensure that competition is not distorted, restricted or prevented, either by private business conduct or by public policy.
- iii. **Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS)** is a corporate body established on July 8th, 1974 and governed by the Standards Act No. 18 of 1997. The TTBS has a statutory responsibility to promote and encourage the

development and maintenance of standards for the improvement of goods produced or used in Trinidad and Tobago (except food, drugs and cosmetics).

- iv. **Trinidad and Tobago Racing Authority (TTRA)** regulates and controls racing and the operation of race courses in the country. As such, the Racing Authority plays a critical role in the administration of Horse Racing, in particular, in ensuring that the integrity of the sport is upheld.

2. Wholly-owned Enterprises:

- i. **Evolving TecKnologies and Enterprise Development Company Limited (eTeck)** manages and optimizes the use of its existing industrial parks on a commercial basis and develops and improves the infrastructure and operations of new modern economic zones through, *inter alia*, public private partnerships that can expand and diversify Trinidad and Tobago's economic base. The Company also manages the assets of the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre and the Magdalena Grand Beach and Golf Resort.
- ii. **Invest Trinidad and Tobago (invesTT)** acts as a "one-stop-shop" for investors ensuring that they are provided with all the knowledge, networks and contacts needed to facilitate new investment opportunities in Trinidad and Tobago.
- iii. **Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT)** stimulates and facilitates the business development and export activities of the creative Industries in Trinidad and Tobago in order to generate national wealth. The company is responsible for the strategic development of the three (3) niche sub-sectors under its purview, namely, Music, Film and Fashion.
- iv. **Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Company Limited (TTFZ)** is governed by The Trinidad and Tobago Free Zones Act Chapter 81:07 and is responsible for the operation of Free Zones in Trinidad and Tobago.

3. Majority Owned Enterprises:

exporTT Limited is the designated National Export Facilitation Organization of Trinidad and Tobago. Its mandate is to generate export growth and diversification of the goods and services sectors.

4. Indirectly Owned Enterprises:

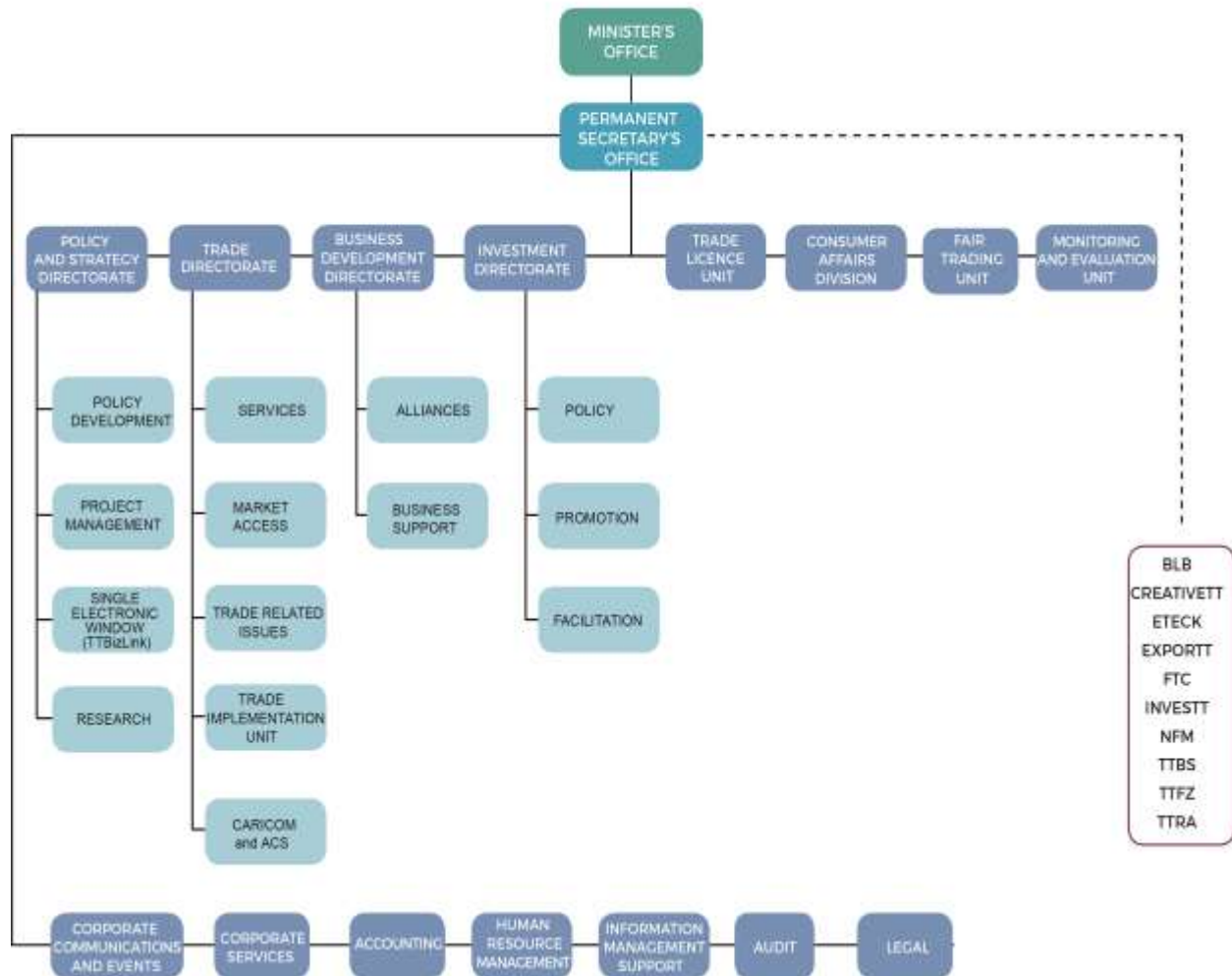
National Flour Mills Limited (NFM) is a local manufacturer in Trinidad and Tobago producing flour and feed products. The Company commenced trading activities in 1966 and has grown to provide services such as flour milling, rice milling, animal feed production, dry mix blending and packaging. NFM is a publicly traded Company and is partly owned by the GORTT.

5. Other Related Agencies

Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI) is a national umbrella body that brings together all services sector organizations and associations under its purview. It functions as a focal point to lobby, channel and address trade-related services issues and development issues which are critical for the Sector.

The following diagram outlines the current Organisational Structure of the MTI:

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



4.0 Policy and Development Initiatives

The initiatives pursued by the MTI in Fiscal 2020 were aligned to the NDS (2016 to 2030) thematic area, “**Theme IV - Building Globally Competitive Businesses**”.

- Theme IV of the NDS (2016 to 2030) targets macroeconomic stability; entrepreneurship; investment and trade; and the creation of high value products and services that can compete in export markets.

To contribute to the achievement of Theme IV, the MTI pursued various policy initiatives based on the following strategic goals -

Goal 1: Diversified and Competitive Businesses;

Goal 2: Increased Investment;

Goal 3: Expanded and Diversified Regional and International Trade; and

Goal 4: Enhanced Protection and Empowerment of Consumers.

Additionally, the MTI sought to strengthen its institutional operations through the execution of initiatives under “*Goal 5: Transformed Ministry Performance and Service Delivery*”.

The initiatives under the remit of MTI were organized under the respective goals as outlined hereunder.

4.1 Diversified and Competitive Businesses

To support the establishment, operation and/or expansion of businesses in targeted sectors in Fiscal 2020, the MTI implemented strategic initiatives that would impact the business environment and firms’ ability to sustainably produce goods and services at competitive prices and quality. Some of the initiatives undertaken by the MTI to provided direct support to established businesses to aid their growth include the following:

4.1.1 Enhanced Support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

i. Grant Fund Facility

To assist local firms in becoming globally competitive, encourage greater investment by existing companies and afford Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) access to much needed financing, the MTI established a Grant Fund Facility in 2017. This Facility which was extended in August 2019, provides funding of 50%, up to TT\$250,000.00, of the cost of new capital requirements/expenditure

(machinery, equipment, technology/software, tools), excluding working capital and land and building costs including leasing, to SMEs in the following sectors:

- Manufacturing;
- Agriculture and Agro-processing;
- Financial Services;
- Maritime Services;
- Aviation Services;
- Fish and Fish Processing;
- Software Design and Applications; and
- Creative Industries.

Since its implementation, fifteen (15) companies were approved to benefit from grants totalling TT\$2,907,511.56. In Fiscal 2020, nine (9) companies received grants totalling TT\$1,357,773.03. Disbursements under this Facility have facilitated the acquisition of new machinery, equipment and software by companies in the following sub-sectors in Fiscal 2020:

- Agro-processing and processing of frozen fruits;
- Food processing;
- Manufacture of garments;
- Manufacture of beauty and personal care products;
- Manufacture of detergents in Tobago;
- Software designs and applications.
- Manufacture of Lead-Acid Starter Batteries;
- Manufacture of frozen doughs; and
- Manufacture of chocolate and cocoa-based products.

The value of the grants issued, by company, is listed in **Table 2**:

Table 2: List of Disbursement of Funds under the Grant Fund Facility for Fiscal 2020

Company	Activity	Amount Granted (TT\$)
D' Market Movers Limited	Agro-processing and processing of frozen fruits	\$71,043.75
Caribbean Sea and Air Marketing Company Ltd	Processing of all natural Moruga Hill Rice	\$237,500.00
Cruz Garments Limited	Manufacture of garments	\$113,320.29
Intersol Limited	Manufacture of Personal Care Products	\$193,083.92
JMAC Industries Limited	Manufacture and Exporter of Detergents in Tobago	\$248,600.00
QURE Limited	Creation of software application	\$57,297.50
Trinibakes Limited	Manufacture of frozen doughs	\$176,351.49
LTL Manufacturing Limited	Manufacture of Lead-Acid Starter Batteries	\$203,660.00
Montanos Chocolate Company Limited	Manufacture of chocolate and cocoa-based products	\$250,000.00
TOTAL		TT\$1,357,773.03

These grants and the resulting investments made by the various firms have created approximately nineteen (19) employment opportunities which allowed for increased exports/production and creation of new product lines:

ii. Steelpan Manufacturing Grant Fund Facility

The Steelpan Manufacturing Grant Fund Facility (SMGFF) was established and launched in January 2020 for the acquisition of new machinery, equipment, software, tools, raw material and training by local steelpan manufacturers. Through this Facility, successful local applicants can access individual grants from the SMGFF up to a maximum of \$250,000 per tranche, not exceeding \$1,000,000.00 per qualifying applicants.

Since its launch, six (6) applicants have applied for this Grant. In Fiscal 2020 three (3) applications were approved in the amount of TT\$1,675,179.85 as follows:

- Codrington Family Institute - \$83,199.85;
- Panland Trinidad and Tobago Limited - \$986,200.00; and
- Harrigin Instruments - \$ 605,780.00

The remaining three (3) applications are to be evaluated.

iii. National e-Commerce Strategy

The National e-Commerce Strategy, approved by Cabinet in November 2017, aims to reduce the time and cost of doing business, enhance convenience and reduce bureaucracy in undertaking business transactions. The MTI is therefore seeking to accelerate a digital economy by the continued implementation of this Strategy. The MTI has conducted a series of training sessions such as “How to go Online” and “How to Market your Good/Service Online”. One hundred and eighty (180) small businesses have benefitted from these training programmes.

iv. National SheTrades

SheTrades Hub is an initiative of the International Trade Center (ITC). The SheTrade Hub aims to connect over three (3) million female entrepreneurs worldwide by 2021 in order to increase economic activities and create job opportunities. Apart from the ongoing social media awareness campaigns, this initiative was officially launched in October 2020 by the MTI; and exporTT, the host institution, will implement Trinidad and Tobago’s work programme which will be designed by the ITC.

v. Revised Research and Development Facility

This Facility was revised in 2018 to support activities promoting experimental development, industrial research, and enhanced process and system improvements. In Fiscal 2020 funds were disbursed to four (4) companies in the amount of TT\$574,726; and four (4) applications were approved in the total amount of TT\$501,363.41 as follows:

- Cocoa Republic Limited: Development of Vegan Milk Substitute – TT\$155,000;
- Cube Root Hydroponics Farms Ltd: Development of systems and conduct

research trials for two (2) additional models of the Smart Auto Grow Systems–TT\$251,800;

- SMAKS Luxury Group Limited: Extension of its product line–Chai Rum – TT\$46,075.41; and
- Kings Specialty: Improvement in its specialty range of Eggless Cream Liqueurs–TT\$48,487.50.

vi. Co-Financing Facility

The initial Co-Financing Facility covers elements such as export planning, training, standards implementation, packaging and labeling, market intelligence and other facets of export development. In Fiscal 2019, this Facility was revised to incorporate the promotion and development of e-Commerce in Trinidad and Tobago. In Fiscal 2020, eighteen (18) companies were approved with an aggregate total of TT\$170,285.60 and funds disbursed to ten (10) companies in the amount of TT\$92,780.80 identified in **Table 3 and** a list of success stories identified in **Table 4**.

Table 3: Fiscal 2020 Co-Financing Fund Disbursements

Company Name	Co- Financing Disbursement
Caribbean Sheet & Tubular Industries Ltd	TT\$3,111.70
Smaks Luxury Group Limited	TT\$6,616.66
Del Mano Foods	TT\$34,200.00
Woodhouse (Trinidad) Limited	TT\$2,719.72
Claudia Pegus	TT\$4,406.55
FASHION.ART.MUSIC. LIMITED	TT\$2,034.00
Eve Anderson Recruitment Agency	TT\$13,560.00
B&B (Transformation Solutions) Limited	TT\$9,359.00
ADR Services Limited	TT\$10,688.75
Full Circle Animation	TT\$6,084.42
TOTAL	TT\$92,780.80

Table 4: Co-Financing – Success Stories

Name of Company	Success
Sacha Cosmetics Limited	Co-financing of in-store displays and company registration assisted them to enter the Panama Market and retail through major Chains.
Caribbean Cure Ltd	This company currently has a partnership with an Asian company and is exporting to Japan.
Cocoa Development Company	Co-financing of shipping of samples for cocoa farmers that they represent resulted in one of the companies (Grande Riviere Cocoa Estate) placing fourth overall in the World Cocoa Competition and was awarded by Salon Du Chocolat in Paris in November 2019.
Creamery Novelties	This company began exporting a brand new product line to new CARICOM markets with exporTT's assistance.
Full Circle Animation Limited	Secured a contract to animate series 3 the HBO animated series "Animals".
Indigi-sounds Ltd	Penetrated global markets with their Steelpan and Laventille Rhythm Section Software and Sound Databanks.
L&S Surveying Services Limited	Secured jobs in Guyana, being administered through their Guyanese Office.
Montserrat Cocoa Farmers' Cooperative Society Ltd	This company was successful in securing intellectual property for their cocoa through the awarding of Trinidad and Tobago's first Geographical Indicator (GI).
Smaks Luxury Group Ltd	This company was represented as a premium luxury product sponsor in 3 high profile boating shows in the US and Monaco. They appeared alongside peer sponsors such as Moet and Hennessy and Tag Heur.
SokaFit (Trinidad) Limited	This company expanded the SokaFit fitness product to Australia and South African fitness studios.

vii. Export Capacity Building Programme

The Export Capacity Building Programme aims to build export capacity and competitiveness for existing and potential exporters within Trinidad and Tobago. In Fiscal 2020, fifteen (15) export-related training programmes were conducted in which one hundred and seventy-six (176) companies benefitted in the areas of interest as follows:

- Export Basic;
- IP Clinic for Food and Beverage Manufacturers;
- Foreign Supplier Verification Programme;
- Making Signature Pepper Sauces;
- Good Manufacturing Practices;
- Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA) Preventive Controls in Human Food;
- Digital Marketing Blue Print: Effective Strategies for Construction, Architecture and Engineering Services Exporters;
- Foreign Supplier Verification;
- Incoterms Master Class;
- Managing Export Clients in a Global Crisis;
- Generating Online Content – Up Skilling Your Post-COVID19 Marketing;
- ePing: Keeping Track of Product Requirements in Foreign Markets; and
- Managing Agents & Distributors during a Pandemic and Beyond.

4.1.2 Improved Quality Infrastructure

i. National Quality Policy

Trinidad and Tobago was able secure funding from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to develop a National Quality Policy (NQP) in 2017. This NQP was approved by Cabinet in April 2018. It is an instrument to contribute to higher levels of productivity, innovation, competitiveness and consumer health and environmental protection, over the next twelve (12) years, while at the same time creating a quality culture that supports a diversified and competitive economy leading to sustainable economic development.

The NQP aims to overcome the difficulty of local firms in demonstrating compliance with quality requirements and trade rules. The MTI together with the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS), has been undertaking projects identified in the Implementation and Communication Plan of the NQP. The achievements recorded in Fiscal 2020 were as follows:

a) National Quality Council (NQC)

The Cabinet approved National Quality Council (NQC) was formally inaugurated on October 4, 2019. The key objective of the NQC is to champion the implementation of the NQP and monitor and evaluate its progress. The role of the NQC involves: the coordination of quality promotion activities; the prioritization of the areas for funding; the management of a multi-stakeholder approach for accomplishing the policy goals and the recommendation of appropriate changes in the national quality infrastructure.

Members were officially given their instruments of appointment and the Council was briefed on the Policy and the National Quality Infrastructure. The Council continues to hold quarterly meetings. Based on these meetings, the Council has become more familiar with the concepts related to the quality infrastructure and its application to national issues.

b) Establishment of the Trinidad and Tobago Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment

On December 20, 2018, Cabinet approved the establishment of the Trinidad and Tobago Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment, as an independent entity with its own Act of Parliament and Regulations for the accreditation of all conformity assessment bodies. TTASCA will assist in the achievement of international recognition of the organisations which perform quality assessment services of testing, calibration, certification and inspection for Trinidad and Tobago, in conformance with international and national standards.

Funding was sourced from Compete Caribbean for all the activities involved in the transition of the Trinidad and Tobago Laboratory Accreditation Service (TTLABS), which is a department under the TTBS, to TTASCA, including the development of a legislative brief for the transition from TTLABS to TTASCA and a Regulatory Impact Assessment.

A Consultant was engaged in April 2020 and meetings were held with various stakeholders to increase the understanding of the impact of the Accreditation.

c) National Programme for the Accreditation of all Public Laboratories

TTBS launched the National Programme for the Accreditation of all public laboratories in June 2019 and invited public laboratories to submit applications for assistance in becoming accredited for one scope of their testing operations.

After the initial assessment, the TTBS selected two (2) of the laboratories – the National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NPMC) and the Institute of Marine Affairs. A consultant was procured to work with the labs to build their quality management systems in preparation for accreditation. When these laboratories are equipped, they will apply for accreditation assessment. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic there were significant delays in essential processes such as calibration of equipment, participation in quality assurance programmes for example in proficiency testing.

d) Conducting a Participatory Sectoral Needs of the Priority Sectors

The CALIDENA methodology, which is being utilised for this project, assesses and diagnoses quality infrastructure issues at each level in the value chain, with the final objective of increasing competitiveness of the priority sector. Under this project, a Feasibility Study for Fashion Industry commenced in Fiscal 2020.

e) An Improved Enabling Quality Conscious Environment

TTBS conducted the following activities in November 2019 which was defined as “Quality Month”:

- Hosted the National Quality Forum at the Trinidad Hilton and Conference Centre;
- Launched the National Standardisation Strategy which is aimed at supporting export competitiveness;
- Held a series of media engagement sessions on the NQP with Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers’ Association (TTMA) and Trinidad and

Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce (TTCIC) and discussed how the NQP can enhance business competitiveness within the manufacturing and private sectors.

In February 2020, TTBS began promoting the NQP via social media campaigns.

4.1.3 Support for the Creative Industries

i. Fashion

a) Train the Trainers Ultra Bespoke Tailoring Programme

The Train the Trainers Programme (TTP) is an advanced programme arising from the concluded one-year certificate programme in Ultra Bespoke Tailoring Programme (UBTP). The TTP is geared toward increasing the number of master tailors who can train other students in Bespoke Tailoring; improve the export potential and increase capacity to generate foreign exchange earnings in the fashion sector. The TTP, a one-year programme, was launched on November 19, 2019 and comprised fifteen (15) tailors of which thirteen (13) were from the UBTP.

Data showed that students that graduated from the UBTP experienced increased in sales revenue by approximately ten percent (10%).

b) Fashion Value Chain Investment Programme

The Fashion Value Chain Investment Programme (FVCIP), established and launched in 2017, is a strategic mentoring and training programme which provides support to eligible designers and aims to improve the value chain and international competitiveness within the four (4) tiers of the Programme – The Global Value Chain; the Non-Global Value Chain; Business Advisory (FashionTT and The National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited (NEDCO) Partnership); and Strategic Training/Entrepreneurial Development Programme (FashionTT and NEDCO Partnership). With the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic, FashionTT mentored designers in transforming their businesses to adapt to the “*New Normal*” such as Mask Making; Transitioning to e-Commerce; Diversifying production lines to meet the

current needs of the customer; and Re-innovating marketing strategies to improve customer awareness and experience.

- The Global Value Chain (GVC): This is the top tier of FashionTT's value Chain Investment Programme (VCIP). FashionTT aims, through this Programme, to support the export-oriented activities of local designers. Through the GVC Programme FashionTT will be supporting export ready designers in penetrating regional and international markets via trade show participation, Business to Business Meetings and the orchestration of pop up events. In Fiscal 2020, FashionTT in collaboration with exportTT undertook the following events:
 - held stakeholder engagements with the eight (8) selected designers for the GVC; and
 - completed an export plan which includes trade missions with all eight (8) designers for a three (3) year period which is to commence in Fiscal 2021. These designers will be given the opportunity to gain market access in 7 territories.
- The Non-Global Value Chain (Non-GVC): This is a capacity building programme to support designers in becoming locally and internationally commercially viable.

In December 2019, a consultant contracted from the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), New York commenced work with ten (10) local designers from the 3rd Cohort to identify and close business and production gaps affecting global markets penetration. The consultancy will be concluded in December 2020.

- Business Advisory Programme (FashionTT and NEDCO Partnership):
The Business Advisory and Financing Programme provides business mentoring, training and financing to designers who require one-on-one business mentoring support in gaining a comprehensive understanding of their business value chains.

On November 23, 2019, training commenced for the 3rd Cohort of the Business Advisory Programme consisting of sixty-five (65) designers. Designer met with a NEDCO advisor and a FashionTT representative and discussed their business gaps and steps for the way forward. This training will be concluded in December 2020.

- The Entrepreneurial Development Programme (EDP) was conducted through a partnership with NEDCO to provide training in areas such as Business Plan Development, Costing and Pricing, Record Keeping and Cash Flow Management, Business Taxation, Marketing Strategy, targeting designers who are not ready for the higher tiers.

Cohorts 1 and 2 of the EDP were launched in January 2019 and January 2020, respectively. Cohort 2 commenced with fifty-one (51) designers in Trinidad and twenty (20) designers in Tobago and completed five (5) months of training which ended on May 25, 2020 in core business fundamentals.

Over the period Fiscal 2017 to 2020, FashionTT created employment opportunities for one hundred and ninety-eight (198) persons inclusive of twenty (20) in Fiscal 2020. These jobs were created in the areas of Workshop Facilitators, Caterers, Ground Transportation for Foreign Consultants. In relation to the VCIP jobs were created in the following areas: Project Associate Support, Graphic Artists, Photography, Videography, Event Manager, Events Creative Director, Models, Music, Audio Visual support, Décor Outfitting and Stylists.

ii. Music

a) Live Music District

The Live Music District (LMD) is an entertainment hub created in Port of Spain and environs which offers local musicians access to performance spaces, as well as opportunities to secure performances throughout the year. This Programme serves as an added attraction for visitors to Trinidad and Tobago. Since its launch in March 2018, the LMD provided employment opportunities

for 264 local artistes inclusive of 109 in Fiscal 2020 who showcased their talents through seven hundred and nineteen (719) performances spanning thirty-five (35) participating venues throughout Port of Spain and environs.

In Fiscal 2020, Phase 5 of the LMD was launched with several virtual events being hosted. These include:

- A virtual show entitled '*Online Quarantine Concert*' (OQC) hosted via Facebook Live, featured five (5) LMD acts and grossed approximately 49,300 viewers;
- Second edition of OQC via Facebook featured five (5) LMD acts and garnered approximately 97,300 viewers;
- Third edition of OQC via Facebook featured five (5) LMD act and garnered approximately 53,200 viewers.
- An LMD event entitled '*We Inside*' featured two (2) LMD artistes every Tuesday and Friday. This event generated approximately 2,000 viewers collectively on Instagram Live; and
- MusicTT continued its partnership with the Ministry of Community Development Culture and the Arts to host a show entitled '*Live at Lunch*'.

b) Artiste Portfolio Development Programme ('Spotlight')

The Artiste Portfolio Development Programme (APDP) now renamed Spotlight, a capacity building programme, was launched in 2017 by MusicTT with the aim of refining a portfolio of ten (10) musical artistes annually whose talent can be exported on the global marketplace.

On December 12, 2019, training was completed for the second cohort of nine (9) artistes. MusicTT engaged in discussions with Audio Mack and SoStereo, two (2) renowned music distribution companies based in the United States of America (USA) seeking export opportunities for artistes within the second cohort of Spotlight.

The third cohort of the programme was labelled a Virtual L.E.D. (Limited Edition Digital) Spotlight due to the impact of COVID-19 social distancing measures. Eight (8) persons were selected to be a part of this cohort by a panel of expert judges. Training commenced on June 18, 2020 and is scheduled to conclude on January 20, 2021 and will comprise online and physical components.

c) Export Academy

The Music Export Academy, launched in Fiscal 2019 by Music TT, is geared towards music business education and capacity building, through workshops, webinars and conferences so as to develop the local Music industry and create viable international linkages for local artistes to export. In Fiscal 2020, the following activities were conducted:

- twelve (12) webinars on relevant topics were hosted between October 2019 and June 2020 as identified in **Table 5** below.

Table 5: Webinars Conducted during the Period October 2019 to June 2020

Title	Views
How to Make a Music Production	101
Tag Your Next Hit (Metadata)	86
The Artist Registry	132
Live Music Productions	49
Modern Day Beat Building	182
Make a Music Video on Your Phone	153
Making the Demo	87
International Networking	75
Creative Entrepreneurship	44
Music Intellectual Property	107
Music IP Rights 2: Rights of the Songwriter	145
Music IP Rights 3: Rights of the Performer and Producer	170

- Between October 2019 and November 2019, five (5) Stakeholder engagements were executed throughout Trinidad and Tobago to gather feedback on how to strengthen relationships and build awareness about MusicTT projects.

d) Music Tech Platform

The Music Tech Platform also referred to as AMPT was launched in September 2019. It is a Broadcast Monitoring and Identification System and Local Music Database. AMPT, which includes an App and Booking Website, is used to collate data on the amount of local music being played on the air waves and subsequently disseminate this data to artistes with real time statistics of their radio plays. The Booking Website allows venues to book artistes while the App allows persons to search and evaluate artistes and venues registered. This platform fully automates various aspects of the LMD and provides background information on selected artistes and participating venues.

In November 2019, MusicTT launched the Barcelona Music and Audio Technologies (BMAT) system which is used to gain recognition for artistes by tracking their music played.

iii. Film

a) Trinidad and Tobago Locations: Unseen, Unexpected

Unseen, Unexpected is an advertising campaign by FilmTT to promote Trinidad and Tobago as a premier location for international films. During December 1-6, 2019, FilmTT conducted a promotional mission to the FOCUS trade show in London which is described as the premier meeting place for the creative screen industries.

Under this initiative, several publications/digital advertising packages were developed and used to market Trinidad and Tobago: World of Locations; KFTV International Production Guide and Screen International.

In Fiscal 2020, TT\$2,345,433 (US\$346,445) represented money spent by foreign film crews in Trinidad and Tobago and provided employment opportunities to one hundred and thirty-four (134) locals for the production of thirteen (13) international films.

b) T&T Film Friendly

The Film Friendly Network is made up of all ministries, agencies, and associations that have significant roles to play in increasing the film friendliness of Trinidad and Tobago for both local and international producers.

These agencies will take the necessary action or provide the necessary advice for local and incoming productions particularly as it relates to government requirements to make the film production process much easier.

FilmTT contacted and obtained support from the following public and private sector organisations which will form part of the Film Friendly Network:

- Customs and Excise Division;
- Immigration Division;
- Tourism Trinidad Limited;
- Tobago Tourism Agency Limited;
- Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago;
- Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre Hotel;
- Hyatt Regency Trinidad;
- Ministry of National Security;
- Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago / POSINCO/
Cruise Ship Complex;
- InvesTT;
- exporTT; and
- Trinidad and Tobago Civil Aviation Authority.

4.1.4 Maritime and Leisure Marine Sectors

i. National Maritime Policy

In Fiscal 2020 a company was selected and the contract is being drafted by the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs. A key objective of the National Maritime Policy would be to maximize the sustainable use of oceans and seas, increase the competitiveness of the Shipping industry and facilitate expansion of the Maritime sector.

ii. **Leisure Marine Sub-Sector (Yachting)**

Implementation of the Cabinet approved Yachting Policy (2017-2021) continued in Fiscal 2020 in order to optimize the economic contribution of the Yachting industry towards the sustainable development of Trinidad and Tobago. To this end, initiatives executed in Fiscal 2020 were as follows:

- The “Sail. Service. Stay” advertising campaign with monthly advertisements in two (2) recognized Yachting Magazines, namely, Caribbean Compass and the Caribbean All at Sea;
- The contract was awarded to Arun Buch & Associates Limited for the development of Conceptual Designs for the Tobago Marina. The National Infrastructure Development Company (NIDCO) has been appointed as the Project Manager and executing agency for the development of a Marina Facility at Friendship Bay, Tobago.
- In Fiscal 2020 the Customs Amendments to effect the Single Harmonized Form (SHF) for the entry and departure of pleasure craft was passed in Parliament in July 2020; and the Miscellaneous Amendment (No. 2) Bill 2020 was partially proclaimed by the President. The new SHF will provide a more efficient and customer-oriented experience for persons entering the country by pleasure craft.

4.1.5 Business Environment Reforms

The viability of the Non-Energy sector is dependent on the ability of businesses to competitively produce and sell a diverse set goods and services. In order to improve the domestic business climate in the country, the MTI implemented business reforms that addressed several areas relevant to business operations as follows:

i. Ease of Doing Business

The Government through the MTI implemented a Single Electronic Window (SEW), branded TTBizLink, to simplify the processes and procedures when doing business in the country. TTBizLink, which is accessed via www.ttbizlink.gov.tt, continued to facilitate collaboration and interconnectivity across eight (8) Ministries

together with the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce (TTCIC). Currently over forty-two (42) trade and business related e-services are available to the business community. **Table 6** below outlines the reduction in the Standard Processing Times for a myriad services undertaken by TTBizLink:

Table 6: Enhancing Processing Time

Module	Standard Processing Time (Before)	Standard Processing Time (After)
e-Certificate of Origin	1 day	30 minutes
e-Company/Partnership BIR and VAT Registration (Companies and Partnerships)	30 days	1 day and 2 days
e-Company Registration	7 days	3 days
e-Goods Declaration	1 day	.5 or (1/2) day
e-Fiscal Incentives	6 weeks	11 days
e-Import Duty Concessions	6 weeks	10 days
e-Import/Export Permits and Licences	4 weeks	1 day
e-National Insurance Board Registration (New Limited Liability Companies)	30 days	1 day
e-Maritime	2 days	2 days (Benefit: Persons do not have to visit the office to obtain an approval and paperwork is significantly reduced.)
e-Work Permit	6 weeks	15 days

a) Enhancing Processing Efficiency

- **Implementation of an Electronic Document Management System**

In December 2019, the Trade Licence Unit (TLU) implemented an Electronic Document Management System related to all Dealers and Duty Relief Files. This was accomplished through:

- The digitisation of all registered Dealers and Duty Free Concessionaire Records – historical and current data to an electronic database.
- The compilation of an indexing system and meta data files paths;
- Provision of required hardware and software; and
- Provision of required training to staff to ensure the efficient and effective use of the system. The Electronic Document Management

System not only facilitated the documentation and security of legacy information required for decision making, and increased productivity, but it allowed for remote access to the files by approving officers and agencies.

- **Implementation of E-Signatures**

During Fiscal 2020, four (4) approving agencies implemented e-signatures on approved e-Permits, e-Licences and e-Certificates, to facilitate the electronic delivery of these documents directly to the applicant. This eliminated the need for clients to visit the relevant approving agencies and is a fundamental element of business continuity.

Such agencies included the Trade Licence Unit (TLU), MTI which implemented the e-signatures feature on April 10, 2020; the Plant Quarantine Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries which commenced using the e-signatures on May 16, 2020; the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate and the Food and Drug Inspectorate, both under the Ministry of Health, implemented e-signatures on May 18, 2020 and June 12, 2020, respectively.

The use of e-signatures has positively impacted efficiency at the various agencies, all of which are now being processed in under two (2) working days.

Further, in the case of the TLU, copies of all relevant approved documents are sent electronically to the Office of the Transport Commissioner and the Customs and Excise Division, thereby eliminating the need to print copies.

As a result of the above initiatives, agency processing has steadily improved, such that, the average processing efficiency in the e-Permits and Licences Module in August 2020 for the Trade Licence Unit was 0.57 days; and for Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate was 0.91 days.

The Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce also implemented an e-signature feature for approved e-Certificates of Origin on April 8, 2020.

- **Auto Approvals for Goods Declarations**

On December 9, 2020, TLU implemented auto approvals for low risk items on the e-Goods Declaration Module. This further enhanced the end-to-end work flow processing which resulted in the Agency significantly improving its efficiency of processing Goods Declarations, moving from five (5) days to under six (6) hours.

A similar feature is being explored for the Plant Quarantine Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

b) Automation of Construction Permitting System

DevelopTT, an online platform, officially launched a Pilot on March 4, 2020. The DevelopTT platform facilitates online submission and approval of land and building development approvals from the Town and Country Planning Division (TCPD) and other development control agencies. The pilot targeted North Regional Office of the TCPD which included the City of Port of Spain, Diego Martin and parts of San Juan/Laventille. The pilot was expanded on June 7, 2020 to the Planning T5 regions which comprised the remaining parts of San Juan/Laventille, Chaguanas Borough, Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo and Tunapuna/Piarco).

This initiative is expected to reduce the overall time taken in the construction permitting process from an average of two hundred and fifty-three (253) days to below one hundred and seventy days (170) days in the first instance for simple applications.

On September 1, 2020 TCPD became fully electronic with respect to the acceptance of Planning Permissions applications for the T1 and T5 planning regions which comprised the following boundaries:

- The Port of Spain City Corporation;
- The Diego Martin Regional Corporation;
- The San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation;
- The Chaguanas Borough Corporation;
- The Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation; and
- A portion of Tunapuna/ Piarco Regional Corporation.

During the period March 4, 2020 to September 4, 2020, the TCPD received one hundred and fifty-two (152) applications via the online platform for processing. Thirty-eight (38) applications were processed with an average processing rate of twenty-eight (28) days for Outline Applications and thirty-nine (39) days for Planning Permission applications. Of the thirty-eight (38) processed applications, one (1) application was submitted to the Environmental Management Authority, three (3) to the Fire Prevention Administration, and eight (8) to the relevant municipal corporation for further processing.

The following additional agencies have received training in the DevelopTT online platform:

- TCPD South Regional Office;
- TCPD State Planners;
- Corporations in the T5 region;
- Chief Medical Officer of Health Offices (CMOH) in the T5 region; and
- Fire Prevention Administration.

In addition to the above, TTBizLink met with the following agencies to refine their work flows:

- Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago;
- Construction Division, Ministry of Works and Transport;
- Department of Settlements, Urban Renewal and Public Utilities, Tobago House of Assembly;
- Government Electrical Inspectorate;
- Land Management Division, Tobago House of Assembly;

- Trinidad and Tobago Civil Aviation Authority; and
- Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission.

c) E-Payments

e-Payment was completed in December 2019 for the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS). This has significantly reduced the time taken by importers to comply with documentary requirements, due to the reduction of face-to-face interactions.

Under the broad ambit of e-Payments, the Electronic Funds Transfer Policy was completed on March 22, 2019. This Policy guided the development of Ministerial Instructions for online payments to be made to any Government agency which is a receiver of monies that goes to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's Consolidated Fund. With regard to Ministerial instructions from the Treasury Division the MTI has worked with the Treasury Division to define the requirements for the implementation of an electronic payment system on both TTBizLink and DevelopTT.

d) Implementation of a Port Community System

In January 2020, Cabinet agreed to the implementation of a Port Community System (PCS) in Trinidad and Tobago. The Project will be executed through joint collaboration among various ministries including MTI, Ministry of Works and Transport (MOWT) and the Customs and Excise Division (CED) of the Ministry of Finance (MOF). The PCS will facilitate interconnectivity with the national Single Electronic Window (SEW), ASYCUDA system of the CED and the NAVIS terminal operating system used by the Port of Port of Spain (PPOS) and the Port of Point Lisas (PLIPDECO).

Expressions of Interest (EOIs) have been evaluated by the Evaluation Committee. This initial evaluation process will produce a list of shortlisted firms which will be invited to submit proposals, technical and financial, to develop and implement the PCS.

e) Digitisation of the Town and Country Records Project

The scope of services for this project to undertake digitisation services of paper-based records of the TCPD of the Ministry of Finance was completed on August 2, 2020. The contract is currently in a three-month defect liability period whereby the service provider is expected to work closely with the Town and Country Planning Division to finalise all outstanding work. The Project was executed under the SEW Programme and focusses on the scanning, digitization, geo-referencing and cataloguing of paper-based records and the creation of an electronic, searchable database of the North and South Regional Offices records. These records covered 95,829 application file records, 1,524 plotting maps and 2,935 subdivision layouts.

The digitisation project allowed for more efficient processing of Construction Permits by the TCPD through the following measures:

- Immediate retrieval of digitised records with powerful search functionality;
- Simultaneous access to files by multiple approvers;
- Direct interface with the Automated Construction Permitting System, branded DevelopTT, to allow seamless referencing of information during processing; and
- Safeguards against the loss of information due to misplacement, defacement and deterioration traditionally associated with paper-based records.

f) Development of a Legal Framework for Secured Transactions

With respect to the Secured Transaction Policy that was developed and approved in Fiscal 2018, a consultant was contracted in May 2020 to prepare a Legislative Brief. The Bill was completed in June 2020. Consultations to obtain feedback on the draft Bill were held with the Steering Committee for the implementation of the Secured Transaction legislation which seeks to allow movable property to be used as collateral and help address the current credit gap in Trinidad and Tobago. A Report on the consultations and a finalised legislative Brief and Bill were produced by the consultant. The consultancy was completed on September 10, 2020. The MTI is working with other stakeholders to finalise all the non-legal and administrative measures to move

this process forward. The MTI is also preparing a Cabinet Note to seek approval to submit the draft Bill to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel for preparation of the legislation

g) Advisory Services to amend the Data Protection legislation for Trinidad and Tobago

This initiative seeks to modernize the Trinidad and Tobago Data Protection Act in alignment with international best practices. On September 16, 2020, the Ministry of Communications approved the implementation of the consultancy which commenced on October 15, 2020 and will be completed in Fiscal 2021.

4.1.6 Fair Trading Commission

On February 10, 2020, the remaining parts of the Fair Trading Act were proclaimed by the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Her Excellency Paula Mae Weekes. This reinforced effort to embrace and promote the principles of a free market economy with a more competitive business environment in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Act created an institutional framework for the enforcement of Competition Policy in Trinidad and Tobago which seeks to address major issues such as:

- The abuse of monopoly power;
- Anti-competitive mergers;
- Anti-competitive agreements; and
- The enforcement of the relevant clauses or enforcement measures.

Apart from the Act being fully proclaimed, other achievements recorded by the Fair Trading Commission (FTC) during Fiscal 2020 were as follows:

- Hosted the inaugural CARICOM Competition Commission/United States Federal Trade Commission/Trinidad and Tobago Fair Trading Commission Regional Mergers Workshop which was the first workshop of its kind in the CARICOM Region. It brought together representatives from each of the Competition agencies in the region;

- Hosted a Business Breakfast Seminar for members of the Business Community with respect to the full proclamation of the Fair Trading Act and addressed concerns expressed by the members;
- Hosted a session for the media on the work of the Commission and what can be expected with the legislation being proclaimed;
- Facilitated training sessions on the Fair Trading Act for members of the American Chamber of Commerce, the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association and staff of major conglomerates respectively (over 100 stakeholders were trained); and
- Published Public Notices in the newspaper dealing with, *inter alia*, Abuse of Dominance, the Proclamation of the Fair Trading Act and the non-tolerance of Anti-competitive practices during the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.2 Enabled Investment

In Fiscal 2020, the MTI focused on delivering policies and projects that sought to improve the investment climate and increase investments in Trinidad and Tobago. Initiatives undertaken were as follows:

4.2.1 Expanded Economic Infrastructure for Investment

i. Moruga Agro-Processing and Light Industrial Park

The Moruga Agro-Processing and Light Industrial Park was officially opened on July 14, 2020. It is the country's first state-of-the-art facility which occupies over eighteen (18) acres of State Land and will initially house five (5) custom-built factory shells for the manufacturing and processing of agricultural products with high export potential and six (6) lots of developed land are available for leasing. The following activities are being implemented:

- The marketing and tenanting of the Park are being led by invesTT in collaboration with eTeck, the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries and the National Agricultural Marketing Development Company (NAMDEVCO). Support has also been provided by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) and Caribbean Industrial Research Institute (CARIRI);

- InvesTT's marketing team is pursuing nine (9) investment leads, with which InvesTT and eTeck are working to close. The areas of interested operations are as follows:
 - Processing of cassava;
 - Hydroponics;
 - Pepper, root crop and fruit drying;
 - Processing of hot peppers;
 - Processing of Moruga Hill Rice; and
 - Processing of vegetables.

ii. Alutech Research and Development Facility

The construction of Alutech Facility at Tamana InTech Park continued in Fiscal 2020. It is the first of its kind in the Caribbean which focuses on the production of wheel rims, coils, billets and other downstream aluminium products, mainly for foreign markets.

The Facility is 97.8% completed and is expected to be commissioned by the end of October 2020. Once completed, the economic benefits of this Project will include the creation of approximately one hundred (100) and more than five hundred (500) direct and indirect jobs, respectively and has the potential to generate US\$1.2 billion in export earnings over the next twenty (20) years.

iii. Phoenix Park Industrial Estate

The Phoenix Park Industrial Estate located in Couva spans approximately one hundred and thirty-three (133) acres and will target high value and light manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, and emerging industries such as electronic technology and biotechnology. The Estate is 16% completed. Activities completed were as follows:

- The Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) and the People's Republic of China was signed on November 13, 2019;

- A Loan Agreement between the GORTT and China EXIM Bank was signed on December 6, 2019;
- On December 16, 2019, a Concessional Loan facility between the GORTT and the Export-Import Bank of China was executed.
- On December 25, 2019, the first disbursement, that is, advance payment was made by the China Export-Import Bank to BCEG.
- Completed the Lotification Plan;
- Grubbing and clearing of the site;
- Excavation and filling works of the site;
- Designed works for:
 - Road network and bridge;
 - Water reticulation, wastewater collection system and wastewater treatment plant.

The following designs are being finalised:

- Drainage system;
- Electrical infrastructure and street lighting;
- Telecommunications and Electronic Surveillance Network;
- High security fencing; and
- Factory Shells.

The use of local labour was key to the ongoing success of this Project. BCEG engaged three (3) large local civil works contractors and four (4) local design consultants, which totaled approximately two hundred (200) local labourers. BCEG also sourced several high-skilled personnel - an electrical engineer, a mechanical engineer, a land surveyor, a quality assurance/quality control manager, a public relations officer, and a health, safety and environment (HSE) officer.

iv. Factory Road – Natural Gas Infrastructure

The National Gas Company (NGC) is expected to install natural gas lines as part of the site's development. NGC has completed the prefeasibility/site investigation on the route of the natural gas to line to the site. Designs are being developed. NGC has already submitted a draft proposal which eTeCK reviewed and provided

comments. NGC commenced their tendering process (e-auction) which is expected to be completed in October 2020. Once the tendering is completed and approved, NGC will submit the final proposal and contract agreement.

4.2.2 Upgrade of Industrial Parks

In Fiscal 2020, eTeck upgraded the following five (5) industrial parks throughout Trinidad and Tobago:

- Frederick Settlement Industrial Park;
- Plaisance Industrial Park;
- O'Meara Industrial Estate;
- Diamond Vale Industrial Estate; and
- East Dry River.

4.2.3 New Special Economic Zones (SEZ)

In June 2020, a draft SEZ Bill was developed through collaborative efforts amongst the MTI; the Chief Parliamentary Counsel of the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs; and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to ensure that all aspects of the new regime are attractive to investors, beneficial to the State, and in line with international best practices. It is envisaged that the SEZ Bill will be included in the new Agenda of the Legislative Review Committee (LRC) and is expected to be partially proclaimed in Fiscal 2020/2021 to replace the Free Zones Act.

Key aspects of the incentive framework will include the following:

- Reduced corporate income tax;
- Allowances and credits that seek to encourage increased private sector participation and investment in research and development; and
- Procedures to enable faster operationalization through, *inter alia*, TTBizLink.

The SEZ regime comprised the following zone types:

- Free Port - A duty free area, located at a port of entry where imported goods may be unloaded for warehousing, repackaging or processing of imported goods for value-adding activities and logistics services;

- Free Trade Zone - A duty free area that accommodates specific activities targeted for international trade;
- Industrial Park - A purpose built industrial estate that leverages domestic and foreign fixed direct investment in value-added and export-oriented manufacturing industries;
- Specialised Development Zone - a place designated for specialized activities including (i) manufacturing; (ii) maritime services; (iii) aviation services; (iv) fishing and fish processing; (v) agriculture and agro-processing; and (vi) software design and applications; (vii) creative industries; (viii) financial services; and (ix) medical tourism services; and
- Development Zone – an area where activities focused on the development of a specific geographic region with emphasis on factors such as employment, skills training, entrepreneurship and rural development and overall social and economic development of the area.

4.2.4 Framework for Increased Facilitation of Foreign and Domestic Investments

In April 2017, Cabinet approved a new Framework for the Approval and Facilitation of Investments in the non-energy Sector to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness in accelerating targeted investments. The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) for Approval and Facilitation of Investments in the non-energy sector remains an essential mechanism through which Government can enhance the investment climate in Trinidad and Tobago, as it not only serves to facilitate investments in an efficient manner, but it also aims to create an enabling environment for businesses and investors alike. Through the IMC, the MTI facilitated approximately TT\$13.7 million in foreign direct investments and TT\$331.1 million in local direct investments in sectors of construction, services manufacturing and agri-business. as shown in the **Table 7**.

Table 7: Investments for Fiscal 2020 (Oct 2019–September 2020)

Sector	Foreign Direct Investment	Local Direct Investment
Construction	N/A	61,200,000
Services	13,667,003	N/A
Manufacturing	N/A	259,632,621
Agri-Business	N/A	338,277
TOTAL	13,667,003	321,170,898

In addition to the above, NiQuan Energy Trinidad Limited completed the construction, commissioning, and operationalization of Gas-to-Liquid Plant at Petrotrin Refinery in Point-a-Pierre in August 2020. This investment is estimated at TT\$1,045,172,165.

4.2.5 Hotel Assets

The COVID-19 Pandemic negatively impacted the tourism and hotel industries internationally and locally due to border closures, stay-at-home orders, quarantines measures and generally more cautious consumers including tourists.

i. The Trinidad Hilton and Conference Centre

a) Property Improvement Programme (PIP) and Funding of the PIP

As part of the continued efforts to upgrade the property to ensure its competitive standing, the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre (HTCC) developed a Property Improvement Plan (PIP) which was reviewed by a Quantity Surveyor procured by eTeck. Implementation of the PIP is estimated at US\$61,308,741, and once approved by the Cabinet is expected to include the following:

- *Improved marketability* – the HTCC will be better positioned to compete, retain customers and convert potential prospects, market itself for small meetings, group business, long stay projects and contract airline crews. It

is expected that the renovation will bring the hotel closer to a 4-star first class hotel product as per mutually signed lease;

- *Increased operational efficiency* – a newly renovated hotel will not only benefit the customers, but also improve worker productivity, team morale and operational efficiencies;
- *Increased asset value* – the HTCC will be of greater economic value to the GORTT, in terms of rental income and as a capital asset;
- *Enhanced customer satisfaction/international competitiveness* – the renovation of the hotel will enhance customer satisfaction, allowing the HTCC to better compete with other hotels, retain customers and convert potential prospects; and
- *Reduced risk and liabilities* – reduced occupational safety and health risks and liabilities.

It is envisaged that investing in the hotel asset through the PIP is essential to deliver future enhanced financial results and keep the infrastructure up to international standards. This is particularly important as eTeck's financial performance is substantially attributed to the successful operation of Hilton and any declines in income from Hilton would negatively impact eTeck's operational revenue.

ii. Magdalena Grand Beach and Golf Resort

During Fiscal 2020, the Hotel would have put in place measures to protect guests and staff against COVID-19 based on best practices. Ongoing maintenance of the Hotel, as well as upkeep of the golf course was done during this period. The Hotel is taking steps to increase its business levels through "stay-cations". In order to protect the country's population against the COVID-19 Virus, travel to Tobago has been restricted and therefore there have been

a number of cancellations to the Hotel and occupancy levels for September 2020; and October 2020 are expected to be below 10%.

a) Capital Works

- Fire Alarm System: The fire alarm system at the hotel requires upgrading. Phases 1 and 2 of three (3) phases have been completed. Phase 3 works commenced at the beginning of September 2020;
- Water Heater: The initial water heater was returned to the manufacturer due to defects. A new water heater was shipped and installed in June 2020. A valve is required to be installed before the water heater can be commissioned. The valve arrived in Trinidad and was installed;
- HVAC: The HVAC system of the Hotel is an area that requires upgrades. Sixteen (16) rooms restored with the installation of blowers.
- Breakwater: The breakwater works were completed in March 2020 which was managed by NIDCO. Consideration is being given by the hotel to purchase beach chairs and umbrellas to enhance this area for the enjoyment of hotel guests;
- South Side Erosion: Accelerated erosion on the South Side of the Hotel resulted in the collapse of south side walkway on August 23, 2020. eTeck has been in contact with the Coastal Protection Unit of the Ministry of Works and Transport in Trinidad and the Division of Infrastructure, Quarries and the Environment in Tobago. All entities are working to find (i) an immediate short-term solution in order to arrest further erosion and (ii) a long-term solution for the area;
- Tourism Accommodation Relief Grant for Hotel Upgrades: A grant of \$50Mn was made available by the GORTT for different types of tourism accommodation facilities including bed and breakfast, self-catering facilities, apartments, villas, guesthouses and hotel. Given the size of the Magdalena, it would be eligible to apply for up to \$600,000 in projects. It is expected that the chosen projects will enhance the experience of hotel guests. Finalization of project scopes was completed and the application submitted on September 11, 2020;

- **Golf Course Upgrades:** An independent assessment by the St. Andrews Golf Course highlighted the need for the restoration of the Tobago Plantations Golf Course. In May 2020, Cabinet agreed to the restoration at an estimated cost of \$8,675,875.00, which will consist of:
 - Golf Course maintenance;
 - Renovation to the irrigation system; and
 - Purchase of essential maintenance equipment.

eTeck met with a team from the St. Andrews Golf Course (SAGC) in June 2020 in order to chart a way forward for the improvement of the golf course. A site visit was conducted on July 7 and 8, 2020 by the SAGC team in order to get an updated status of the golf course. Works were completed on Holes #5 and #9 with available resources.

4.3 Expanded and Diversified Regional and International Trade

Given the role exports play in driving macroeconomic development, the MTI strengthened its efforts to support businesses that export Trinidad and Tobago's goods and services. In this regard, the MTI pursued trade agreements, developed export capacity and provided loan financing to exporters. In Fiscal 2020 the following initiatives were executed:

4.3.1 Trinidad and Tobago Trade Policy 2019-2023

In August 2019, the Trinidad and Tobago Trade Policy (TTPS) 2019-2023, "*Towards Sustainable Economic Growth and Diversification*" was approved by Cabinet and officially launched on September 25, 2019 and November 1, 2019, in Trinidad and in Tobago, respectively and submitted to Parliament in November 2019. The TTPS articulates government's trade-related policies aimed at enhancing and diversifying the country's economy and exports, thus, increasing potential earnings of foreign exchange. All Ministries, Agencies and other relevant Institutions were asked to include the activities contained in the Policy's Action Plan within their own work programme.

4.3.2 National Aid for Trade Strategy

Trinidad and Tobago's Aid for Trade Strategy 2016-2019 was approved by Cabinet on December 22, 2016. This Strategy consists of several proposed key donor-funded projects to enhance trade development.

i. Establishment of the Trinidad and Tobago Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment (TTASCA).

In December 2019, the Compete Caribbean Partnership Facility and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) approved funding for the execution of the Project: Establishment of TTASCA. The objective of the project is to strengthen the institutional capacity of the TTASCA by the development of the legal and regulatory framework for its establishment. On January 2, 2020, a project Kick off Mission was held with several stakeholders to build awareness and engage stakeholders in the process. In addition, in April 2020, Compete Caribbean engaged a consultant to execute Component 1 of the Project which involves the Conduct of a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and Preparation of a Legislative Briefing Document for the Establishment of TTASCA that will be submitted as inputs for drafting of new legislation and regulations by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

ii. Projects funded under EPA and CSME Standby Facilities

The EPA and CSME Standby Facilities for Capacity Building funded by the Eleventh (11th) European Development Fund (EDF) was launched by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) on February 14, 2020. On March 31, 2020, the Concept Notes for the following projects were submitted to the CDB for consideration of funding under the standby facilities:

a) *Building a Quality Culture in Trinidad and Tobago – Implementation of the Communications Plan of the National Quality Policy:* This Project is expected to execute a marketing campaign to build the awareness of quality in Trinidad and Tobago and enable a shift in the Quality Culture of Trinidad and Tobago;

b) *Establishment of a Trade Facilitation Enquiry Point:* This Project seeks to implement article 1.3 Enquiry Point of the WTO Trade Facilitation

Agreement. The Facility will assist in building capacity which promotes the availability of information on legislation, procedures and fees and charges, as far as possible through electronic means and the need for timely and regular dialogue with economic operators on customs and trade procedures. The Project is focused on the development of the documentation and criteria to establish the National Enquiry Point;

- c) *Developing Export Readiness of Trinidad and Tobago's Companies to the EU (Fit 4 Europe II)*: This Project is aimed at executing a second phase entitled "*Fit 4 Europe II*". The objectives are to build market intelligence on accessing EU Markets; to improve the export readiness of the enterprises; to capitalize on export opportunities available under the EPA and further develop the capacity of exporTT's staff.

The Caribbean Development Bank assigned consultants to commence the appraisal process for each of the aforementioned projects. The appraisal process commenced in June 2020 and is expected to be completed by the end of October 2020.

iii. Aid for Trade Monitoring Committee

The Second Meeting of the Aid for Trade Monitoring Committee was held on May 26, 2020. The meeting included over thirty (30) participants (donors, ministries and agencies and private sector). Presentations included National Quality Policy, Establishment of TTASCA, EPA and CSME Standby Facility Projects and Trade Facilitation Projects. The next Aid for Trade Monitoring Committee is scheduled for November 2020.

4.3.3 Trade Agreements

i. **CARIFORUM-UK Economic Partnership Agreement**

In April 2019, Trinidad and Tobago, as part of the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM¹) signed the CARIFORUM-United Kingdom Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). This is a roll-over Agreement and is aimed at preserving the Region's preferential trading relationship with the UK since UK is no longer part of the European Union.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry, in collaboration with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel is working towards the implementation of a CARIFORUM-UK EPA Bill to give effect to the Agreement.

ii. **CARIFORUM – European Union Economic Partnership Agreement**

The CARIFORUM-European Union (EU) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) Trade and Development Committee was held in November 2019 to discuss matters related to the obligations under the CARIFORUM-EU EPA. Furthermore, the Second Five (5)-Year Review of the EPA is expected to be held in November 2020. As such, work is being undertaken by both Sides and Meetings of Senior Officials on the 2020 Review of the EPA are being held in preparation for that Meeting.

iii. **World Trade Organisation (WTO) – Agreement on Trade Facilitation**

Trinidad and Tobago, through its National Trade Facilitation Committee (NTFC) has been working towards the implementation of the WTO Agreement on Trade and Facilitation (TFA). The benefits of implementing the TFA include greater transparency in importation and exportation procedures, reduced bureaucratic processes and procedures at the nation's ports, thereby contributing to greater efficiency and improved export competitiveness. Following notification of Trinidad and Tobago's definitive timeframes for implementation of its Categories B and C commitments on September 24, 2018, the NTFC focused its efforts on developing

¹ CARIFORUM comprises the 15 CARICOM members and the Dominican Republic

project proposals and seeking out donor support for the implementation of Category C commitments.

Trinidad and Tobago is also part of the regional coordinated effort towards the implementation of the TFA via a CARICOM Regional Committee on Trade Facilitation.

iv. Trinidad and Tobago – Chile Partial Scope Trade Agreement

Trinidad and Tobago and Chile are working towards the negotiation of a Partial Scope Trade Agreement. The Parties have agreed on the Terms of Reference for the negotiations, which is in the form of a General Framework Agreement. This Agreement is expected to be signed in October 2020 and will set the framework for the commencement of negotiations.

v. Trinidad and Tobago – Panama Partial Scope Trade Agreement

The Partial Scope Trade Agreement (PSTA) was incorporated into Trinidad and Tobago law by Act No. 5 of 2015. The PSTA was ratified and entered into force in 2016. This Agreement sets out to *inter alia*, establish the Agreement Coordinators to serve as contact points for communication, establish Joint Administration Commission to oversee all matters covered by the Agreement, implement tariff reductions and conduct stakeholder awareness sessions on opportunities and requirements under the Agreement. In Fiscal 2018, Cabinet approved a five (5)-year Trinidad and Tobago - Panama PSTA Implementation Plan for the period October 2018-September 2022. The Plan outlines the key obligations and activities to be undertaken to comply with the provisions of the Agreement. It further identifies the agency responsible for the execution of the tasks and the external stakeholders to be consulted.

In Fiscal 2019, both Trinidad and Tobago and Panama identified their Agreement Coordinators; and on October 1, 2019, held their First Technical Coordination meeting to plan for the First Meeting of the Joint Administration Commission under the Agreement.

vi. Trinidad and Tobago – Curaçao Partial Scope Trade Agreement

Trinidad and Tobago and Curacao are engaged in Exploratory Discussions towards a Partial Scope Trade Agreement between the two (2) countries. These discussions are being conducted via a Working Group.

vii. CARICOM – Colombia Trade Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement

Trinidad and Tobago submitted its feedback to the CARICOM Secretariat regarding stakeholder challenges and products for additional preferential access in January 2020. A CARICOM Technical Working Group in preparation for the Seventh Meeting of the Joint Council established under the Agreement on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation between CARICOM and Colombia was held on July 9, 2020. In preparation for this, National Stakeholder Consultations were held in July 2020 to agree on Trinidad and Tobago's initial positions and to discuss products for additional preferential access under the Agreement. Trinidad and Tobago submitted to the CARICOM Secretariat an updated list of products for additional preferential access into Colombia on August 17, 2020. Trinidad and Tobago is still in the process of finalising its positions on the CARICOM Request List of Products for additional preferential access into Colombia.

viii. CARICOM – Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement

A CARICOM Technical Meeting in preparation for engagement with the Dominican Republic (DR) in the Extraordinary Meeting of the Joint Council was held on February 3, 2020. The Meeting finalised CARICOM's position to be advanced at the Meeting with the DR for the following matters: Products for Additional Preferential Access, DR's Law 173, and Temporary Entry of Business Persons. Some of the other areas are to be discussed at the Meeting for which positions are still to be finalised.

ix. African Caribbean Pacific – EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement

The Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the European Union (EU) sought to have a new partnership agreement prior to the expiration of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) on February 29, 2020. The initial deadline for negotiators to conclude a new Agreement was July 2020.

However, the Parties to the Agreement have agreed that the present Cotonou Agreement will remain in effect up to December 31, 2020 in order to facilitate the conclusion of negotiations.

4.3.4 Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA)

Trinidad and Tobago has been a beneficiary member under the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA) from its inception in January 01, 1984 and is the leading exporter to the USA under this arrangement since 2005. CBERA was joined by the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act of 2000 (CBTPA) which expanded the coverage of goods to include an additional 257 products for duty-free entry into the USA. However, these preferences were set to expire on September 30, 2020.

MTI assisted with coordination of Trinidad and Tobago's lobbying efforts towards renewal of the CBERA and CBTPA, both at the regional level including at the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), the CARICOM Caucus of Ambassadors in Washington D.C., and bilaterally, with the resident United States Ambassador in Trinidad and Tobago. Subsequently, in October 2020, the US President signed into law which extended such preferential duty treatment until September 30, 2030.

4.3.5 CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED)

Trinidad and Tobago participated at the 49th and 50th Meetings of the CARICOM's Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) in November 2019, and May/June 2020 respectively. Trinidad and Tobago's participation at Meetings of COTED ensures that national interests are reflected in the regional trade policy development, and necessary approvals are secured for national policy implementation where required. This includes, but is not limited to, adjustment of customs duties in the form of Common External Tariff (CET) suspensions in pursuit of policy objectives.

i. Common External Tariff (CET)

In Fiscal 2020, Trinidad and Tobago's requests for suspension of the CET was approved at the level of CARICOM and implemented at the national level for a list of basic food items and additional products; pharmaceuticals products; other hydraulic cement; and a list of petroleum products.

The continuation of the suspension of the CET is necessary to provide support to the policy initiatives of the Government, minimize the cost of raw material imports for the private sector, and to maintain pricing of the items at an affordable rate for consumers to stabilize the cost of living given the current economic conditions.

4.3.8 International Market Development - Trade Missions/Trade Fairs

In Fiscal 2020, the MTI, through exporTT, embarked on the following trade mission and trade fairs with the aim of domestic exporters penetrating international markets:

i. Trade Mission

Completed one (1) virtual trade mission with Chile on June 23, 2020 with the participation of eight (8) exporters. A consultant was contracted to conduct a virtual mission with Panama.

ii. Trade Fair/Symposium

- **FIHAV, Cuba**

In November 2019, exporTT along with a delegation of eight (8) companies attended the annual International Fair of Havana (FIHAV) in Havana, Cuba. Approximately thirty-five (35) business-to-business meetings were held with suppliers alongside key discussions with trade-related Government agencies and representatives from Cuba;

- **XIII China LAC Business Summit – December 9 - 13, 2019**

In December 2019, Trinidad and Tobago attended the XIII China LAC Business Summit held in Panama City, Panama. Approximately twelve (12) business-to-

business meetings were held with seven (7) distributors and supermarkets in Panama with a view to building secure relationships for a possible trade mission.

4.4 Enhanced Protection and Empowerment of Consumers

Consumer protection and empowerment is critical to ensuring a business environment that is ethical and conducive to local trade and commerce. In Fiscal 2020, the following activities were executed:

4.4.1 National Consumer Policy 2018-2023

The National Consumer Policy 2018-2023, approved by Cabinet in March 2018, is being implemented. The Policy is expected to provide better protection of consumers' interests and rights; single harmonised and effective consumer protection legislation; more informed and empowered consumers; and enhanced and effective regulatory infrastructure to address consumer issues.

4.4.2 Consumer Complaints and Resolutions

The Consumer Affairs Division (CAD) addresses enquires/complaints and resolves cases from consumers when suppliers refused to offer appropriate redress for goods that fail to perform the functions for which they are designed to perform. **Table 8** provides the breakdown of enquiries received, number of complaints received and cases resolved and the value of resolution by the CAD for Fiscal 2020.

Table 8: Breakdown of enquiries received, number of complaints received and resolved and the value of resolution by the CAD - October 2019- August 2020

Number of Enquiries			
Telephone Enquiries	Walk in Enquiries	Facebook Enquiries	Total Enquiries
1,614	322	305	2,241
Number of complaints received and resolved			
Received	Resolved	Percentage	
524	377	72%	
Monetary Value of Resolutions			
\$2,510,436.50			

4.4.3 Consumer Awareness Programme

The CAD engaged in lectures and outreach programmes extended to various socio-economic and demographic groups such as community groups, businesses, public and private sector organizations, religious bodies, educational institutions, universities, and the protective services. Further, appearances were made on various television and radio programmes which were intended to reach all consumers, in order to, *inter alia*, increase consumer ability to make wiser and more informed purchasing decisions. It must be noted that, in keeping with public health regulations regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic, face-to-face outreach initiatives were curtailed and lectures were limited to virtual sessions only. **Table 9** provides a breakdown of lectures; and **Table 10** identifies outreach sessions conducted in Fiscal 2020:

Table 9: Consumer Lecturers for the Period October 2019–August 2020

Number of Persons Attended/Logged In	Institution/Group
64	MUST, Daisy Road, St Madeline
25	Diego Martin Regional Life Centre
50	Libertyville Community Centre (CCC Trainees)
150	St. Croix Community Centre
100	North CCC, Mausica
175	North West CCC
150	North East CCC
120	Central CCC – Chaguanas Indoor Sport Arena
26	Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries (Virtual)
10	Mastermind Leaders (Virtual)

Table 10: Consumer Outreach for the period October 2019 – June 2020

5 th Street Barataria – Legion of Royal Commonwealth Ex Services League Office.
Pinto Community Centre – Social Development Caravan
Maloney Regional Complex – Social Development Caravan
St. Augustine South Community Centre – Social Development Caravan
Plaisance Park Regional Complex – Social Development Caravan
South Oropuche Community Centre – Social Development Caravan
Aripo Community Facility – Social Development Caravan

Moruga Community Facility – Social Development Caravan
Maracas Community Centre – Social Development Caravan
Longdenville Community Centre – Social Development Caravan

4.4.4 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tobago

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed on November 1, 2019 between the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. This MOU outlines arrangements for strengthening the Consumer Affairs Unit (CAU) at the THA. Activities will result in collaborations between both islands to ensure resolution of consumer complaints, greater enforcement of existing consumer protection legislation in Tobago with the appointment of a designated officer; the provision of technical support in research and general capacity building; and increased information sharing among consumer protection entities on both islands.

4.4.5 Adverse Trade Practice Order Exercise

Under the Consumer Protection and Safety Act Chapter 82:34, CAD conducted an Adverse Trade Practice Order (ATPO) exercise. The ATPO is a piece of legislation that makes it an offence for anyone in the course of a business to engage in certain trade practices, which adversely affect the economic interests of consumers within Trinidad and Tobago.

CAD's officers visited 323 businesses along the east-west corridor in March 2020 to determine if businesses operate in compliance with the ATPO. 28.17% of the businesses visited were in contravention of the ATPO and were given verbal warnings. Officers of the CAD are expected to further monitor these businesses. This exercise was significant as it brought awareness to businesses about their responsibilities and the rights of the consumer.

4.4.6 Consumer Legislation

In March 2020, a consultant was procured to draft a new consumer protection and empowerment legislation. This will lead to the eventual repeal of the existing Consumer Protection and Safety Act, Chapter, 82:34 and replaced with a harmonised and effective consumer protection legislation. It is intended that this legislative reform will engender enhanced consumer protection; foster more

informed and empowered consumers; and improve the overall regulatory structure for addressing consumer issues.

4.4.7 Basket of Goods Survey

As part of CAD's mandate to ensure fair pricing in the marketplace, CAD monitors and publishes the prices of one hundred and eighteen (118) selected food items across thirty-nine (39) supermarkets in Trinidad. The Consumer Affairs Unit of the Tobago House of Assembly currently monitors prices of the same items at seven (7) supermarkets in Tobago. To adequately meet consumer shopping needs, every five (5) years, the CAD conducts a survey to determine the relevance of the existing list and adjust, if necessary, the basic food items on the list deemed to be "must have purchases" by consumers across the country.

Data was collected over a three (3) month period ending in October 2019 via face-to-face interviews using a structured questionnaire and an online survey that was posted to the Division's social media platform. Results garnered from the survey revealed that there were no necessary changes to be made to the existing list of supermarket items and this was communicated to the public in January 2020.

4.4.8 Metrology Regime

Metrology is the science of measurement and is an integral part in the framework of the National Quality Infrastructure, which guides the production of local goods and services in alignment with international benchmarks.

Given the importance of Metrology in the country's economic and social development, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago proclaimed the Metrology Act 2015 Chapter 82:06, Act 18 of 2004 on May 1, 2015. The Act provides the framework for the development of the National Measurement System in Trinidad and Tobago, and gives the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) the responsibility for its implementation and enforcement.

Section 22 (1) of the Metrology Act requires the establishment and functioning of an Advisory Committee on Metrology (ACM). The Committee was established in 2017 and it continues to meet quarterly. The Committee provides guidance on matters with respect to the administration and enforcement of the Metrology Act.

The Metrology Act also mandates that all prescribed measuring devices used for trade must be verified. In this regard, the TTBS conducts verification exercises to certify that the measuring devices utilised by various sectors are operating accurately and that consumers can rely on the measurements provided by merchants in these sectors. This ensures that consumers receive value for their money.

i. Weighing Device Verification

This verification exercise ensures that all weighing devices used in trade for different sectors are operating accurately. From October 2019 to September 2020, a total of 769 devices were verified.

ii. Market Scales Verification Exercise

The verification of market scales in the following Municipal Markets commenced in October 7, 2019 in Sangre Grande, Chaguanas, Arima, Couva, Penal, Tunapuna, Rio Claro, Mayaro, Point Fortin and San Fernando. For the period October 2019 to September 2020, a total of 946 market scales were verified.

iii. Fuel Dispenser Verification

Liquid fuel dispenser nozzles in Trinidad and Tobago are verified for accuracy every six (6) months, to ensure that the nozzles deliver the stated metered quantities of petrol. For the period October 2019 to September 2020, a total of 1,685 nozzles were verified at the National Petroleum Marketing Company (NPMC) and 573 nozzles were verified at the United Independent Petroleum Marketing Company (UNIPET) Service Stations. Due to the covid-19 pandemic, fuel verifications in Tobago were postponed to Fiscal 2021.

4.5 Transformed Ministry Performance and Service Delivery

4.5.1 MTI Monitoring and Evaluation

During Fiscal 2020, the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Unit recorded the following achievements:

- i. Completed MTI's Budget Measures for the Ministry of Finance;
- ii. Established performance indicators for the MTI for the National Performance Framework Report 2020 (Vision 2030);
- iii. Continued the development and monitoring of annual M&E Frameworks of the MTI and its State Agencies;

4.5.2 Improving Service Delivery at MTI

The MTI filled the following vacancies at the Technical and Administrative level to ensure that the human capital is available to achieve its goal of transforming the Ministry and improving its service delivery:

- Established: Administrative Officer V (1)
Administrative Officer II (1)
Human Resource Officer I (2)
Auditor II (1)
Auditing Assistant (2)
Clerk IV (1)
Maid I (1)
- Contract Chief Technical and Operations Advisor

The MTI will continue to liaise closely with the Service Commissions Department to ensure that all senior positions in the Ministry are filled in Fiscal 2021.

5.0 Financial Operations

Statement of Capital Expenditure Extract as at September 30, 2020						
Project No	Item/Sub-item/Group/Project	2020 Revised Allocation	Funds Disbursed by the MoF to MTI	Expenditure as at September 30 by Agency/MTI	Unspent Balance	Percentage of Disbursed Funds Utilised
F304	Development of a Business Development Programme	\$1,500,000	\$41,987.00	1,091,355.39	\$0	100%
R001	Investment Promotion Initiatives and Development	\$1,000,000	\$152,215	\$471,094	n/a	100%
R007	Establishment of Research and Development Facility	\$1,000,000	\$0.00	\$574,726.00	\$0	100%
R014	Business Development of the Creative Industries	\$500,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A	N/A
R016	Enhancement of the Single Electronic Window (IDB Loan)	\$20,000,000	\$19,978,293	\$18,930,660.12	\$1,047,632.88 Voting pending	94.8%
R019	Development of the Music Industry	\$1,000,000	\$481,103	\$528,036.74	\$0	100%

R021	Development of the Film Industry	\$1,000,000	\$696,707	\$481,841.36	\$214,865.64	69.2%
R023	Development of the Fashion Industry	\$5,000,000	\$1,941,390	\$1,932,220.11	\$9,169.89	99.5%%
R024	National SheTrades Chapter	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A
B220	TTBS-Enhancing the Quality Infrastructure for Trinidad and Tobago	\$1,000,000	\$805,528.00	\$703,678.86	\$0	100%
A003	Upgrading of Information Technology and Information Systems at the Ministry of Trade and Industry	\$1,000,000	\$570,422	\$570,422	0	100%
A008	Inward Investment - Non Petroleum Initiatives	\$1,000,000	\$65,880	\$53,849.92	\$12,030.08	81.7%
A018	Feasibility Study of the Export Financing Mechanism for Service Providers and Pilot Programmes (Now, Services Exporters Registry)	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$0	100%
A020	Implementation of the National e-Commerce Strategy	\$500,000	\$68,694	\$49,494	\$19,200	72%

A022	Consumer Profile Study	\$275,000	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A
	Total Consolidated Fund (CF) Projects	\$35,675,000	\$25,202,219	\$25,787,379	\$1,302,898	
Q293	Wallerfield Industrial and Technological Park	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$0	100%
Q303	Single Electronic Window for Trade & Business	\$8,400,000	\$7,480,000	\$7,438,970	\$41,030	99.5%
Q305	Construction of Moruga Agro-Processing and Light Industrial Park	\$16,000,000	\$15,999,964	\$15,999,964	\$0	100%
Q306	New Economic Zones Development (e Teck)	\$5,000,000.	\$0	\$0	N/A	N/A
	Total IDF Projects	\$30,900,000	\$24,979,964	\$24,938,934	\$41,030	
	Total Development Programme Projects	\$66,575,000	\$50,182,183	\$50,726,313	\$1,343,928	

6.0 Human Resource Capital

The Human Resources Unit (HRU) is charged with managing the selection and development of the human capital of the MTI. To do this, the HRU facilitates the recruitment and development of staff to ensure that a competent talent pool is available to support the execution of the MTI mandate.

To ensure the continued development of staff during Fiscal 2020, the HRU conducted training and facilitated the adoption of the performance appraisal process. Additionally, the HRU reviewed and implemented a new Orientation and Onboarding Programme and the Employee Assistance Programme. With regard to the complement of staff, **Table 11** provides a summary of permanent and contract staff at the MTI.

Table 11: Organisational Permanent and Contract Establishments in MTI	
Total Number of Non-Contract positions	268
Actual Number of Persons employed in Established Permanent positions	95
Number of Vacant Established Permanent positions	173
Total Number of Contract Positions	93
Actual Number of Contract Employees currently employed	52
Number of Vacant Contract Positions	41

7.0 Procurement Procedures

In preparation for the impending implementation of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Property Act 2016 (Amended) by the GORTT, the MTI undertook the initiative to establish an interim procurement team to prepare for the adoption of the new procurement legislation.

In this regard, the MTI has undertaken the following:

- i. Drafted an Internal Control Framework for Procurement, Retention and Disposal of public property to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of operations of the Public Body;
- ii. Established an organizational structure and delegation of authority for the management, and execution of procurement, retention and disposal of public property;
- iii. Established functional responsibilities and reporting relationships within the Public Body and Procurement and Disposal Units;
- iv. Established Procurement and Disposal Function and Inform the OPR of the 'Named' Procurement Officer; and
- v. Drafted the Annual Procurement Plan and Annual Schedule of Planned Procurement Activities.

8.0 Public and Community Relations

1. Launch of the New Trade Policy for Trinidad and Tobago



Trinidad and Tobago's new trade policy was introduced to stakeholders at a high level session hosted by the Ministry of Trade and Industry on September 25, 2019. In presenting the government's approach to sustainable economic growth and diversification the Minister stated that "The policy identifies the government's specific trade-related policies geared towards enhancing competitiveness; accelerating economic and export

diversification, and increasing the country's foreign exchange earning potential. It is a clear, realistic, predictable, and transparent roadmap." The policy, will seek to adopt measures to help upgrade the competitiveness of business services infrastructure, improve the capacity for e-Commerce, and develop human capital with the aim of attracting foreign investment and making business services more competitive and viable as an export sector.

2. Trade Minister celebrates with Pennywise Cosmetics

Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry joined the executives of Pennywise Cosmetics at its 25th Thanksgiving Service on Sunday 3rd November, 2019. The Trade Minister lauded the leadership of Pennywise Cosmetics Limited, from inception to the present, as well as the management and staff for successfully growing the Pennywise brand and continuing to contribute meaningfully to the country's socio-economic development. She added that it



was gratifying to see the ongoing substantial investments in the country by the business community. The million dollar investment by a major retail company was indicative of numerous private sector projects taking place throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

3. Government funds local garment manufacturing firm

Trade and Industry Minister, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon applauded Cruz Garments Limited, the most recent recipient of TT\$113,529 in funding for their successful business model. The firm, which accessed the Ministry of Trade and Industry’s Grant Fund Facility (GFF), was presented with a ceremonial cheque by the Minister on Monday 27 January, 2020. According to the Minister Gopee-Scoon, “The Facility continues to assist locally-based firms to become globally competitive, and encourage greater investment by existing private sector companies. It supports the Government’s diversification endeavours as it targets producers in priority sectors and fosters technological advancement and innovation.”



4. Government supports the development of horse racing in T&T

Stakeholders of the racing industry were assured by the Trade and Industry Minister that the Ministry of Trade and Industry stands ready to support the industry’s efforts for the development of racing in Trinidad and Tobago. Speaking at the Jetsam Awards Ceremony 2020 on Friday 28 February, 2020, Minister Gopee-Scoon acknowledged the meaningful contribution that the horse racing industry provides to the national economy, directly and indirectly. She added however that “the current state of racing in T&T requires visionary leadership, commitment and a collaborative effort by all industry stakeholders to address the challenges which may negatively impact the long term sustainability of the sport”.



5. Trade Minister tours manufacturing facility



Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry toured the factory facility of Nestle Trinidad and Tobago Limited and gained insight into its operations and its use of innovation and technology in new product development on Wednesday 27 November, 2019. Nestle continues to indicate its commitment to providing quality, unique,

healthy and environmentally product offering to consumers through its on-going investment in research, development and innovation.

6. Manufacturing sector continues to grow in T&T

Local distributor and manufacturer of pipelines, New Wave Marketing Limited (NWM) was congratulated by the Trade and Industry Minister, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon for their contribution and investment in the manufacturing sector during a tour of their facility on Tuesday 4 February, 2020. Minister Gopee-Scoon commended New Wave Manufacturing for supporting the transformation of the economy as evident by the significant investments made over the years into their business operations/expansion, which not only benefits the company, but also the wider manufacturing sector and the national economy. Noting that the company was fit for the export market and poised for growth, Minister Gopee-Scoon encouraged them to develop partnerships with the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers Association and the EXIM Bank to utilize the facilities available.



7. T&T’s first agro-processing plant opened in Moruga

Trade and Industry Minister, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon along with Prime Minister, Dr. the Honourable Keith Rowley opened the country’s first Agro-Processing Park in Saunders Trace, Moruga on Tuesday 15 July, 2020. Speaking on the TT\$90-



Million-dollar investment in the Moruga Agro-Processing and Light Industrial Park, Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry said, “This new facility is not simply a government project—it is an investment by the Government, for the people of Moruga and the wider agricultural counties of Victoria, Nariva/Mayaro and St. Patrick East and West”. The Park created close to 100 jobs during construction and even more jobs are expected to be created when fully occupied while affording countless opportunities for business.

9.0 The Way Forward

In Fiscal 2021, the MTI will continue to develop and execute those policy initiatives approved by Cabinet. It will also seek to execute initiatives designed to support the achievement of its mandate for business, trade, investment and consumer empowerment.

These will include:

- The implementation of the Trinidad and Tobago Trade Policy aimed at growing exports.
- The launch and implementation of the National SheTrades for female entrepreneurs.
- Continue the development of the new Phoenix Industrial Park in Couva.
- Continue negotiations of Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement with key strategic partners.
- Commence work for the establishment of Trade Facilitation Offices in selected markets.
- Modernise the Trade Licence Unit.
- Develop and implement plans to combat illicit trade in goods.
- Continue the implementation of the following initiatives:
 - Facilitation of donors through the Aid for Trade Strategy.
 - National Quality Policy through promotions and other development initiatives such as the establishment of a Trinidad and Tobago Accreditation Services for Conformity Assessment (TTASCA).
 - Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Policy.
 - National e-Commerce Strategy.

- Framework for the development of the Maritime Sector (Commercial and Leisure).
- Reforms under the Investment Facilitation Committee.
- Grant Fund Facility to support small and medium businesses in the manufacturing and agro-processing sectors.
- Research and Development Facility to assist manufacturing and service companies develop innovative products, processes, systems and services.
- Various projects in the music industry aimed at creating new opportunities for artistes in the music industry and address concerns of local stakeholders.
- Various projects in the fashion industry aimed at building capacity in different areas in the Fashion Sector.
- Export capacity programmes aimed at building export capacity and competitiveness for existing and potential exporters within Trinidad and Tobago.
- DevelopTT Online Platform for online submission and approval of land and building development approvals from Town and Country Planning Division (TCPD) and other development control agencies.
- The strengthening and expanding the Single Electronic Window (TTBizLink); and
- Tenanting of Industrial Parks.

10.0 Conclusion

Over the five (5)-year period ending in Fiscal 2020, the MTI embarked on key initiatives designed to lead and oversee the implementation of the GORTT's policies for trade, business development, investment and consumer empowerment.

The MTI successfully executed a number of programmes, policies and projects which resulted in the following:

- i. Improvements in the ease of doing business;
- ii. Improvements in the national quality infrastructure;
- iii. Facilitation of investments through the expansion economic infrastructure;
- iv. strengthening of export capacity through:
 - a. grant funding,
 - b. training programmes;
 - c. engaging in trade missions and trade fairs;
- v. acceleration of economic diversification in targeted sectors such as
 - a. creative;
 - b. maritime (marine and leisure); and
 - c. manufacturing.

Notwithstanding the disruption in the global economy due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has altered the trajectory of the economy, the MTI was dedicated to improving and sustaining the non-energy sector. It will continue to monitor and pursue initiatives that will contribute to the creation of a stable macro-economic environment to allow improvement of entrepreneurship; attraction of investment; expansion of trade; the production of high value products and services that can compete in international markets; and ensure better protection of consumers' interests and rights in a business environment.