



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

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT FISCAL 2022
OF THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) is the public sector entity responsible for leading and overseeing the implementation of Government's policy for business development, trade, investment and consumer empowerment to facilitate the continued growth of the non-energy sector in which its strategic direction is guided by the "*Trinidad and Tobago's National Development Strategy (NDS) 2016-2030, Vision 2030*". During Fiscal 2022, the MTI and its State Agencies successfully executed a number of initiatives which impacted positively in their performances.

A. Export and Investment Performances of MTI

i. Export Performance:

In Fiscal 2022, total non-energy exports was valued at TT\$17.3 billion, an increase by 10.3% when compared to TT\$15.7 billion in Fiscal 2021. More specifically, in Fiscal 2022, the total non-energy manufacturing exports of TT\$12.8 billion increased by 26.2% when compared to TT\$10.2 billion in Fiscal 2021. This increase was mainly attributed to a greater demand for goods in the food and beverage; basic chemicals and fertilisers; and paper and paper related sectors.

ii. Investment Performance:

The MTI and investTT facilitated approximately TT\$215 million in foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the services and manufacturing sectors and TT\$1.1 billion in local direct investments (LDIs) in the manufacturing, agri-processing construction, and services sectors. FDI projects provided approximately seven hundred and ten (710) job opportunities and LDI projects created one thousand eight hundred and sixteen (1816) job opportunities across various sectors.

B. Achievement of the MTI's State Agencies

The organisational structure of the MTI is designed to allow for strategic delivery, efficient processes and the achievement of planned outcomes. In this regard, the implementation of the Ministry's policies is primarily facilitated through the work of its State Agencies. The summary of achievements are as follows:

i. Fair Trading Commission (FTC)

The Trinidad and Tobago Fair Trading Commission (TTFTC) promoted the implementation of the Fair Trading Act in accordance with its mandate to maintain, promote and protect competition. TTFTC engaged in advocacy through webinars; addressed topical issues relating to anti-competitive business practices; and under the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Technical Cooperation: Strengthening of the Competition Policy Framework completed the Conceptual Guide to the Fair Trading Act.

ii. Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS)

- **Establishment of an Independent Body: Trinidad and Tobago Accreditation Services for Conformity Assessment (TTASCA):** The MTI and TTBS continued to work alongside the Office of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Legal Affairs (AGLA) to finalise the legislation which underpins the transition of Trinidad and Tobago Laboratory Accreditation Service (TTLAB) to an independent body. The Chief Parliamentary Counsel (CPC) drafted a Bill which has been reviewed by the MTI and TTBS and further amendments are being made by CPC.

National Programme for the Accreditation of all Public Laboratories: In March 2022 TTBS conducted assessments on the quality management systems of two (2) laboratories: Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA); and Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NP) to enable accreditation, which is consistent with the requirements of the international standard, ISO/IEC 17025 - *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*. This standard is useful for any organisation that performs testing, sampling or calibration and wants to demonstrate that it can produce consistent and trustworthy results. Both laboratories are

working on corrective measures for non-conformities based on TTBS' findings. A second call for new laboratories opened in February 2022 in which TTBS received applications from two testing laboratories and one medical laboratory.

- **Modernisation of the Standards Act and Metrology Act:** The MTI in collaboration with the TTBS procured the services of a consultant to draft the required amendments for the modernisation of the Standards Act and Metrology Act in aid of strengthening the National Quality Infrastructure. The Draft Legislative Brief was completed in September 2022 and is expected to be on the Parliamentary Agenda for Fiscal 2023.

iii. **Evolving TecKnologies and Enterprise Development Company Limited (eTeck)**

- **Moruga Agro-Processing and Light Industrial Park:** In Fiscal 2022, five (5) companies accepted letters of offers for three (3) factory shells and two (2) land lots with a total estimated investment of TT\$15.9 million. These investments are expected to create approximately one hundred and twenty-eight (128) employment opportunities.
- **Factory Road Industrial Estate** located in Chaguanas, spans sixty-seven (67) acres of land which consists of twelve (12) lots. In Fiscal 2022 three (3) companies signed contracts with eTeck for three (3) lots and the remaining nine (9) lots are reserved to be allocated. Investments are estimated at TT\$890 million and is expected to create approximately six hundred (600) new jobs.

On May 4, 2022, the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC) commissioned a 1.5 mmscfd (million standard cubic feet per day) supply of natural gas from NGC's existing 16" distribution pipeline to identified end points inside the fence line of the Factory Road Industrial Park. This would allow companies to access fuel for their operations.

iv. Invest Trinidad and Tobago (investTT):

- **Phoenix Park Industrial Estate (PPIE):** The PPIE is still being developed. During Fiscal 2022, investTT closed eleven (11) investments with a total value of over TT\$255 million creating approximately seven hundred and ninety-six (796) job opportunities. This included seven (7) local investors which will occupy twenty-five (25) land lots and four (4) foreign investors with two (2) factory shells.
- **Tamana In-Tech Park:** In Fiscal 2022, iQor expanded its Call Centre operations and added two hundred (200) new jobs. Additionally, investTT closed two (2) investments with a combined total of over TT\$10.5 million: Shaare Business Media, a Data Center and Business Offices operation; and Stages Consulting, an Engineering Consultancy.

v. Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT):

- **FashionTT:**
 - **Value Chain Investment Programme (VCIP):** FashionTT, through the VCIP, provided support and mentorship to eligible local designers aimed at improving the value chain and international competitiveness. The VCIP consists of four (4) tiers in which the top tier, the Global Value Chain (GVC), is designed to support export-oriented activities of local designers. On March 25, 2022, eleven (11) of Trinidad and Tobago's top export ready designers under the GVC participated in FashionTT's 1st Virtual Fashion Tradeshow and Exhibition held in Miami. As at September 2022, over one thousand (1000) persons visited this virtual platform from various countries. Arising out of this virtual fashion tradeshow, one GVC Designer, The Hideout Clothing, is now listed on Macy's website in which buyers can view and purchase products made in Trinidad and Tobago.

With the support provided to these designers under the VCIP, some designers were able to export to markets in the Caribbean as well as South Korea, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Samoa and the Philippines. Products exported included swimsuits, resort wear, ready-to-wear, couture dresses, leather sandals, hand bags, and jewelry.

- **The Fashion LookBook** is quarterly publication by FashionTT that showcases local fashion brands. The fourth, fifth and sixth editions were published in Fiscal 2022 and distributed globally to many embassies and consulates to showcase T&T's local designers' collections with a view of attracting customers locally, regionally and internationally.
- **MusicTT:**
 - **Spotlight - Artiste Portfolio Development Programme:** MusicTT identifies artists annually who are on the cusp of export-readiness and provides them with customised capacity development to advance their careers. In Fiscal 2022, six (6) artists of the fifth cohort completed globally competitive training in order to successfully penetrate the global music market. One artist from the fourth cohort was selected to perform at the Caribbean Rhythm showcase in Jamaica in September 2022.
 - **Live Music District:** MusicTT subsidised four hundred and fifty-nine (459) artists' performances at twenty-seven (27) events. These performers had the opportunity to hone their performance skills visible to live audiences, equipping them with the skills and experiences to progress and secure meaningful careers in the Music industry.
- **FilmTT**
 - **Trinidad and Tobago Locations: Unseen, Unexpected:** FilmTT hosted twelve (12) international productions which provided one hundred and five (105) employment opportunities and generated approximately TT\$2.7 million in revenue.

To facilitate the expansion of Trinidad and Tobago local film industry, FilmTT partnered with Africa Film Trinidad and Tobago and hosted an event entitled the Nigerian Producers Exchange on May 26, 2022. Arising out of this exchange, a co-production partnership was signed between Reeltime Film Festival (Nigeria) and Lanniup Consulting (Trinidad and Tobago) to produce a co-production film in both countries with effect from October 2022. In addition, Trinidad and Tobago filmmakers have been invited to visit Nigeria to learn and study their successful filmmaking format.

- **Script to Screen Programme:** FilmTT implemented an incubator programme for five (5) film screenwriters titled "On Set". This programme required the screenwriter to

create a five (5) episode television sitcom in collaboration with TTT. One screenwriter was selected for production and upon completion of the sitcom, it is expected to be aired on TTT and distributed to other platforms. Fifty (50) industry professionals received employment opportunities during the production of this series.

vi. exporTT Limited

- **Research and Development Facility (RDF):** The RDF disbursed funds to five (5) companies in the amount of TT\$348,070.00.

One of the companies, SMAKS, in receipt of RDF funds over the last two years, was able to (i) develop a rare cask aging technique to produce three (3) new and unique rum expressions: Rare Whiskey Cask; Rare Cognac XO Cask; and Rare Amontillado del Puerto Cask. This resulted in SMAKS being successfully on-boarded on the largest e-Commerce luxury retailing website in the USA with over US\$85,000 in sales from these new products from October 2021 to July 2022. SMAKS also gained a contract to supply the most luxurious cruise in the world – the Ritz-Carlton Luxury Yacht collection. SMAKS expanded from one (1) to four (4) SKUs (stock keeping units); and (ii) developed digital assets including photographs of products, digital advertising, QR codes linking print and digital to Chai rum purchasing platforms. This funding resulted in a 300% increase in sales from October 2021 to July 2022, when compared to September 2020 to September 2021 which totalled over US\$50,000.00.

- **Co-Financing Facility:** Disbursed funds to nineteen (19) companies in the amount of TT\$195,603.43.
- **International Certification Fund:** The ICF is designed to assist exporters in achieving international certification in food/beverage and other product compliance to meet the quality and safety standards of international markets and franchises. Twelve (12) companies were approved for funding valued at TT\$3,019,588.47 for export support and import substitution. Three (3) companies were able to penetrate Latin American and USA markets after receiving funding to acquire certification needed to export to these markets.

- **Tobago Capacity Building Programme: Tobago e-Pavilion Platform:** In Fiscal 2022, three (3) additional Tobagonian companies uploaded their stores on the platform which is now fully operational with ten (10) active companies. The platform attracted 2,363 visitors and generated US\$395.73 in sales from a total of twenty-one (21) orders.
- **Export Accelerator Programme** is designed to improve the export potential of local businesses. In Fiscal 2022, ten (10) companies were provided with assistance to expand exports, of which six (6) increased exports to Guyana, the United Kingdom and St. Lucia and one company entered two (2) new markets.
- **Trade Missions:** exporTT collaborated with Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) to execute seven (7) trade missions during the period October 2021 to July 2022. These missions facilitated three hundred and sixty-two (362) business-to-business (B2B) meetings and provided the opportunity for companies to interact with potential business partners. This resulted in the brokering of several deals, including local apparel company securing purchase orders and contracts to manufacture products for companies in the Guyana textile industry.
- **Trade Fairs/Trade Shows:** exporTT participated in three (3) trade shows: ExpoComer 2022 and LAC Flavours which were held in Panama in March and July 2022, respectively; and ExpoCaribe which was held in Cuba in June 2022.

C. Other Achievements of the MTI

The MTI directly supported the establishment, operation and expansion of businesses in targeted sectors and executed strategic initiatives to improve business environment and the ability of local firms to sustainably produce goods and services at competitive prices and high quality. In this regard, some of the main achievements recorded were as follows:

- **Grant Fund Facility (GFF):** Five (5) small and medium enterprises (SMEs) benefitted from grant funding valued at TT\$1.0 million, which enabled the expansion of projects in various sub-sectors and penetration of new export markets. Due to the positive results of the GFF, the MTI extended the Facility to local producers of alternatives to wheat flour.

One (1) beneficiary was granted funding to assist with the acquisition of new machinery and equipment to produce gluten products and root-crop flour. This alternative wheat flour is produced utilising locally sourced root-crops, thereby creating linkages with farmers in the agriculture sector.

- **Steelpan Manufacturing Grant Fund Facility:** Facilitated five (5) applicants with grants valued at TT\$407,294 which enabled local steelpan manufacturers to increase the production and export of steelpans and contributed to employment. One recipient reported increased sales through the launch of a range of new steelpan products.
- **Grant Facility for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) in the Yachting Sector:** This initiative was launched in March 2022 for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) within the Yachting Sector in the amount of TT\$10 million, to finance eligible business costs. In Fiscal 2022, the MTI received seventy-one (71) applications for funding, of which fifty (50) were approved in the amount of approximately TT\$1.45 million.

Apprenticeship Programme for the Non-energy Manufacturing Sector in Trinidad and Tobago: The MTI in collaboration the MIC Institute of Technology (MIC-IT), the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) and the National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (NTA) developed a three-year Programme to build human resource capacity within the manufacturing sector and shortages of skilled labour. The Programme was approved in March 2022 by Cabinet and launched in May 2022 with a cohort of one hundred and thirty-five (135) trainees in the first year. On completion, the Programme will benefit over three hundred (300) persons.

- **Apprenticeship Programme for the Wood and Wood Related Products Manufacturing Sub-sector,** launched on August 16, 2022, was developed in collaboration with MIC-IT, the TTMA and the NTA to address skills gaps and fill existing vacancies within the wood and wood related products manufacturing sub sector. This two-year programme will commence in Fiscal 2023.
- **National SheTrades Hub:** This initiative aims to empower female-led businesses by connecting them with opportunities to grow and enhance their businesses. The Hub has

over seven hundred (700) registered local women-owned businesses, of which two hundred and twenty-six (226) were registered in Fiscal 2022. Several training and information sessions have been conducted with the aim of empowering women to connect with trade opportunities.

- **Establishment of the Trade and Investment Promotion Agency:** In an effort to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure a targeted approach to trade and investment promotion, the MTI commenced the establishment of a single Trade and Investment Promotion Agency. The MTI has begun to execute the necessary statutory requirements for the amalgamation of the operations of InvesTT, ExporTTT and CreativeTT into the new single Agency.
- **Establishment of Commercial Offices/Appointment of Commercial Attachés:** In August 2022, Cabinet approved the establishment of commercial offices in Panama, United States of America and the United Kingdom; and the appointment of Commercial Attachés in China, Guyana, Jamaica and South Africa. The main focus of the Attachés will be to boost exports, assist in diversifying export markets and promote inward investment. This will be done through identifying export opportunities, providing timely market intelligence and efficient logistical support as well as real-time information on challenges and opportunities in the respective markets.

It is envisaged that the establishment and operationalisation of these offices and Commercial Attachés will be completed in Fiscal 2023.

- **Trinidad and Tobago-Chile Partial Scope Trade Agreement:** Trinidad and Tobago and Chile signed a General Framework Agreement for the negotiation of a Partial Scope Trade Agreement (PSTA) on October 20, 2020 with the aim to increase trade between the two (2) countries by providing market access at reduced rates of duty, on a list of products. The Second Round of negotiations concluded during January 5-7, 2022.
- **Trinidad and Tobago-Curaçao Partial Scope Trade Agreement:** The fifth meeting of the Cabinet Approved Working Group engaged in exploratory discussions towards a Partial Scope Trade Agreement (PSTA) between Trinidad and Tobago and Curaçao on September 17, 2022. During this meeting, both parties agreed to the General Framework

Agreement for negotiation for a PSTA. The MTI is expected to participate in a trade mission to Curaçao in Fiscal 2023.

- **CARICOM-Colombia Trade Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement:** The First Round of Negotiations to expand the list of products under the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)-Colombia was held on June 1, 2022. CARICOM and Colombia exchanged offers on August 5, 2022 and the Second Round of Negotiations will be held in Fiscal 2023.
- **Gateway to Trade (G2T) Programme** is an Export Readiness Incubator Training Programme designed to strengthen trade promotion and improve exports of firms in the Services Sector exports. In Fiscal 2022, the Programme facilitated the development of export plans and company profiles of forty-three (43) firms.
- **Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED):** Trinidad and Tobago's participation at COTED ensures that national interests are reflected in the regional trade policy development, and necessary approvals are secured for national policy implementation. In Fiscal 2022 the following activities were achieved:
 - On January 1, 2022, a suspension of the CET was extended for twenty (20) basic food items including dried salted pollock fillets, other Cheese (Cheddar), other black tea (fermented), other partly fermented tea, canned corn beef, canned herrings, canned sardines, canned tuna, canned mackerel, active yeasts, all edible preparations for infant use, other (Soya Bean Oil), virgin olive oil, other: Sunflower-seed or safflower oil and fractions thereof, Canola Oil, frozen french fries, refined sugar, powdered milks: in powder, granules or other solid forms, of a fat content, by weight not exceeding 1.5%; and in powder, granules or other solid forms, of a fat content, by weight exceeding 1.5%, not containing added sugar or other sweetening matter, and other powdered milks.
 - Cabinet approved the suspension of the Common External Tariff (CET) on a list of over 3000 pharmaceutical items for treating ailments from communicable and non-communicable diseases.

- Suspensions of the CET have been granted to registered producers for inputs into the manufacturing industry on a case by case basis.
- **Trinidad and Tobago (TT) Agri-Investment Forum and Expo:** CARICOM, in 2022, established a target of reducing the Region's food import by twenty-five percent (25%) by the year 2025. This was in response to changing global economic and climatic conditions, the Region's rising food import bill and aims to stimulate investment in agriculture and food production.

To support this initiative, the first CARICOM Agri-Investment Forum and Expo was successfully launched in Guyana on May 19, 2022. Following Guyana's lead, Trinidad and Tobago hosted a second Agri-Investment Forum and Expo in August 2022. The MTI assisted in the coordination of this initiative, which featured two hundred and ninety-five (295) participants and facilitated fifty-two (52) business-to-business meetings.

- **Ease of Doing Business:**

- TTBizLink, which is accessed via www.ttbizlink.gov.tt, continued to simplify the processes and procedures when doing business in the country. In Fiscal 2022, TTBizlink facilitated a number of trade and business related e-services which further reduced the standard processing time.

One such key e-service was the launch of the Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Business Information Portal in May 2022. The Portal is an integral component of TTBizLink which provides access to multiple tools and resources under three (3) main categories: Trade, Business and Investment with detailed step-by-step guidance on how to import and export goods; regulatory requirements for starting a new business or expanding an existing business; and regulatory requirements when undertaking investments.

As at May 2022, eighty-seven percent (87%) of the applications received at the Trade License Unit are being processed within the service level standard of less than two (2) working days.

- **Scrap Metal Policy for Trinidad and Tobago 2022-2027:** The MTI finalised the Scrap Metal Policy for Trinidad and Tobago 2022-2027. The main goal of the policy is to modernise the regulatory framework governing the Scrap Metal Industry to transform the Industry into a leading contributor to economic activity in Trinidad and Tobago. The Policy will guide the preparation of the legislation and regulations.

- **National Services Exporters' Portal (NSEP):** In an effort to address the issues of accessing reliable data on the export of services, the MTI in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI) developed and launched the NSEP on September 13, 2022. It provides up-to-date disaggregated services data and serves as a digital space to facilitate interactions between local services providers and potential clients globally.

- **Combatting Illicit Trade in Consumer Goods in Trinidad and Tobago:** The Anti-Illicit Trade Task Force (AITTF), with responsibility for implementing the National Action Plan to combat illicit trade in consumer goods in Trinidad and Tobago, achieved the following activities in Fiscal 2022:
 - Adopted its Rules of Procedure and conducted a Mid-Term Review of the National Action Plan;
 - Convened meeting of the Working Groups on Alcohol, Cleaning Agents, Pharmaceuticals, Tobacco and Legislation to discuss private-sector specific recommendations to combat illicit trade;
 - Launched a Social Media Awareness Campaign on April 26, 2022 to improve the identification of illegal goods and build awareness of the impact of illicit trade on local business and consumers. The Campaign included infographics explaining illicit trade, its impact and measures to detect illicit trade; and
 - Launched print and radio campaigns which focused on four (4) key areas: alcohol, tobacco, cleaning agents and pharmaceuticals.

- **New Special Economic Zones (SEZ):** On January 31, 2022, the SEZ Bill was assented to and Parts 1, II, III, IV and V of the SEZ Act were partially proclaimed. These Parts will facilitate the establishment of the SEZ Authority, which is the first step in the

implementation of the SEZ Legislation. In addition, the Board of the SEZ Authority was appointed on July 22, 2022.

- **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. In Fiscal 2022 the following activities were achieved:
 - **Consumer Complaints and Resolutions:** The CAD addressed 3277 enquiries and resolved 657 consumers' cases where suppliers refused to offer appropriate redress for goods that failed to perform the functions for which they were designed. The resolution of redress between the consumers and sellers, entailed either exchange of goods, repairs, full refund, partial refund or credit notes.
 - **Adverse Trade Practice Order (ATPO):** Under the Consumer Protection and Safety Act Chapter 82:34, CAD conducted an ATPO exercise. The ATPO prohibits specific adverse trade practices such as publication and display of notices of invalid statements and makes it an offence for anyone in the course of a business to engage in such trade practices. CAD's officers visited 1,057 businesses in malls and areas of commerce to determine if businesses were operating in compliance with the ATPO. One hundred and ninety-six (196) businesses were in contravention of the ATPO and were issued letters.

D. Financial Performance

The Development Programme expenditure as at September 30, 2022 by the MTI and its State Agencies totaled \$149,442,605: Consolidated Fund - \$50,988,531; and Infrastructural Development Fund (IDF) - \$98,454,074. The unspent balance totaled \$7,033,563.00: Consolidated Fund - \$6,840,434.00; and IDF - \$193,129. The Recurrent expenditure of the Overseas Market Promotion and Development - Local Manufacturers (Export Booster Initiative Programme) of the MTI through ExporTT as at September 30, 2022 totaled \$5,331,819.19. The unspent (Uncommitted) balance totaled \$15,460,170.81.

E. Public and Community Relations

Senator the Honourable Minister of Trade and Industry engaged in numerous public and community relations activities to bring/increase awareness and understanding on key initiatives of the MTI.

F. The Way Forward

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

Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)
Annual Administrative Report for Fiscal 2022

Contents

1.0	Introduction	17
2.0	MTI Vision, Mission and Strategic Objectives	18
3.0	Organisational Structure	19
4.0	Policy and Development Initiatives	26
4.1	<i>Support for Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises</i>	26
4.2	<i>Deepening and Expansion of Trinidad and Tobago’s Trading Relationship</i>	33
4.3	<i>Implementation of the National Quality Infrastructure</i>	37
4.4	<i>Support for the Creative Industries</i>	39
4.5	<i>Maritime and Leisure Marine Sectors</i>	43
4.6	<i>Implementation of Business Environment Reforms</i>	44
4.7	<i>Implementation of the Fair Trading Act through the Fair Trading Commission</i>	47
4.8	<i>Building Economic Infrastructure and Securing Investments</i>	47
4.9	<i>Protection and Empowerment of Consumers</i>	51
4.10	<i>Transformed Ministry Performance and Service Delivery</i>	53
5.0	Financial Operations	55
6.0	Human Resource Capital	60
7.0	Public and Community Relations	61
8.0	The Way Forward	69
9.0	Conclusion	71

1.0 Introduction

The Annual Administrative Report outlines the performance of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) during Fiscal 2021/2022 as articulated in its Annual Work Plan for Fiscal 2022 which is aligned to the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) Roadmap to Recovery Framework.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) is responsible for leading and overseeing the implementation of Government's policy for business development, trade promotion, investment facilitation and consumer empowerment in Trinidad and Tobago.

In this regard, the MTI was able to successfully achieve results in the implementation of its initiatives amidst adverse global economic circumstances. Results such as improvements to the ease of doing business and legislative framework for investment and trade; the growth of the manufacturing sector through the implementation of incentives such as the extension of the Grant Fund Facility to include wheat flour; secured investments through the development and expansion of economic infrastructure; and implemented measures to combat illicit trade in consumer goods in Trinidad and Tobago.

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 Pillar 1: Diversifying and Transforming the Economy under the Phase 2 Report of the Roadmap for Trinidad and Tobago: Transforming to a New Economy and a New Society, together with its Annual Work Plan for Fiscal 2021/2022.

3.0 Organisational Structure

3.1 Organisational Profile

The MTI is the official public sector entity responsible for leading and overseeing implementation of Government's policy for trade facilitation, investment promotion, business development and consumer empowerment. The responsibilities as 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 Organisational Structure

The MTI's broad organizational structure is organised as follows:

1. Minister's Office;
2. Office of the Permanent Secretary;
3. Core Directorates;
4. Support Units; and
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 facilitation, investment promotion and consumer empowerment initiatives in line with the overall policy framework of the Government.

Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS)

The OPS is responsible for the executive management of the MTI and its achievement of defined goals and objectives. The Office generally consists of the Permanent Secretary, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Senior Managerial Personnel and support staff. 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:

The MTI has five (5) directorates. The Directorates are core portfolio areas of the MTI with main responsibility for formulating policy, developing strategies and ensuring execution of the mandate of the MTI. They are as follows:

- i. **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.
- ii. **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.
- iii. **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.
- iv. **Investment Directorate (ID)** – formulates and implements the investment portfolio of the MTI in order to contribute to the country's macroeconomic investment performance measures.

- v. **Policy and Strategy Directorate (PSD)** – provides strategic planning, policy development, coordination functions for the Ministry and the monitoring and evaluation of projects to ensure evidence-based decision making across the Ministry and its Agencies. 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).

Support Units

The Support Units provide essential services to the core directorates and the overall MTI. The Support Units are as follows:

- i. **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.
- ii. **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.
- iii. **Corporate Services Unit (CSU)** – provides office management, procurement and facilities management services.
- iv. **Legal Unit (LU)** – provides legal advice and support to the MTI.
- v. **Fair Trading Unit (FTU)** – ensures that the business environment is fair and free from uncompetitive business practices which hinder growth and development.
- vi. **Human Resource Unit (HRU)** – manages the recruitment and development of the human capital of the MTI.
- vii. **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.

- viii. **Internal Audit Unit (IAU)** - ensures conformity of the MTI with financial rules and regulations, instructions, policies and contract plans.
- ix. **Trade Licence Unit (TLU)** - administers the import and export of goods in accordance with applicable laws and Government Policy.

State Agencies

The implementation of the Ministry's policies is primarily facilitated through the work of its state agencies. The various state agencies under the remit of the MTI and their roles, responsibilities and services provided are outlined below:

- i. **Statutory Boards and Other Bodies:**
- vii. **Betting Levy Board (BLB)** develops and promotes horse and dog 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.
- viii. **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.
- ix. **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).

- x. **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.

- ii. **Wholly-owned Enterprises:**
 - a. **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.

 - b. **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.

 - c. **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 three (3) niche sub-sectors under its purview, namely, Music, Film and Fashion.

 - d. **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.

- iii. **Majority Owned Enterprises:**

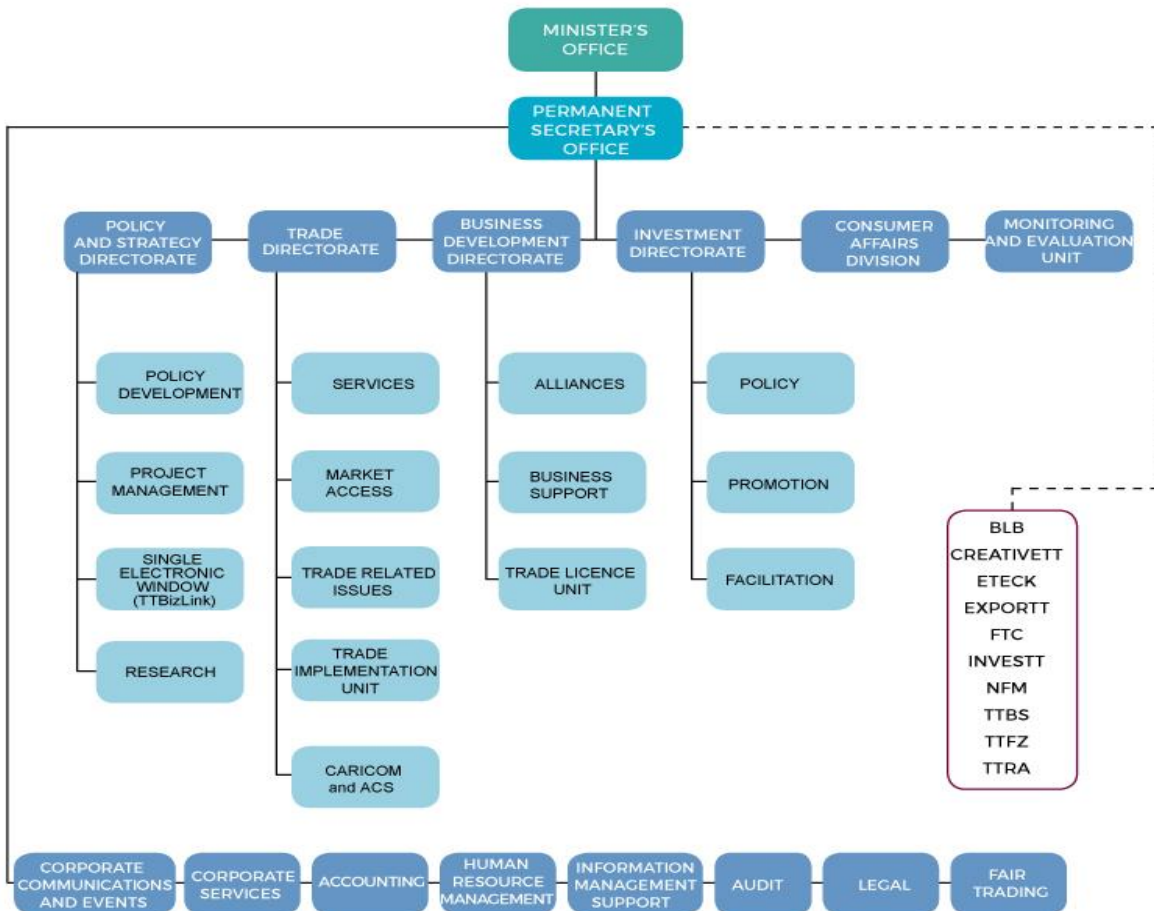
The National Export Facilitation Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (exporTT). Its mandate is to generate export growth and diversification in the goods and services sectors.

iv. **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.

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

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



4.0 Policy and Development Initiatives

In an effort to continue the diversification and transformation of the non-energy sector, the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) remained steadfast during Fiscal 2022 in pursuing its short to medium term measures articulated in its Annual Work Plan for the realisation of the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) policy agenda and to ensure the overall success of MTI together with its State Agencies' sectors' strategies. The results of each measure are highlighted hereunder.

4.1 Support for Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

To support the establishment, operation and expansion of businesses in certain sectors, the MTI during Fiscal 2022, implemented targeted strategic initiatives that would impact the business environment and the ability of firms to sustainably produce goods and services at competitive prices and also of quality, as identified below:

4.1.1 Grant Fund Facility

The Grant Fund Facility (GFF), launched in 2017, provides funding of 50%, up to TT\$250,000.00 per applicant for the acquisition of new machinery and equipment, technology/software and tools. Firms operating in the Manufacturing, Agriculture and Agro-processing, Financial Services, Maritime Services, Aviation Services, Fish and Fish Processing, Software Design and Application; and Creative Industries are eligible for funding under the GFF. Areas excluded for this funding are working capital and land and building costs including leasing.

Since the launch of the GFF, twenty-five (25) small and medium enterprises (SMEs) benefitted from grant funding valued at TT\$5.3 million. In Fiscal 2022, five (5) SMEs benefitted from grant funding valued at TT\$1.0 million which facilitated their expansion in the areas of printing and publishing, cocoa processing including the manufacture of chocolate; food and agro-processing; manufacturing of packaging materials; fish processing; textile and garments manufacturing; manufacturing of beauty and personal care products; manufacturing of chemical products including cleaning items; software designs and applications; and financial services in business process outsourcing sub

sectors. Permanent and temporary job opportunities were created for over sixty (60) persons.

This funding facility enabled them to penetrate new export markets, including CARICOM countries, Canada, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Due to the positive result of the GFF, the MTI extended the GFF specifically for local producers of alternatives to wheat flour. Funding covers up to seventy-five percent (75%) of the cost of new machinery and equipment being acquired to manufacture alternatives to wheat flour, with a ceiling of TT\$340,000.00 per beneficiary. One beneficiary accessed funding to assist with the acquisition of new machinery and equipment to produce gluten products and root-crop flour. The alternative wheat flour is produced utilising locally sourced root-crops, thereby creating linkages with farmers in the agriculture sector.

4.1.2 Steelpan Manufacturing Grant Fund Facility

The Steelpan Manufacturing Grant Fund Facility (SMGFF), launched on January 14, 2020, provides financial support of TT\$5.0 million to steelpan manufacturers for the acquisition of machinery, equipment, software, tools, raw material and training. The funding is made available in tranches of up to TT\$250,000, not exceeding TT\$1 million per entity. This grant is to assist steelpan manufacturers with new product development and innovation and to improve process and cost efficiency, thereby increasing companies' export competitiveness.

Since the launch of the SMGFF, the MTI approved nine (9) applications valued at approximately TT\$2.3 million with a total disbursement of approximately TT\$1.7 million. In Fiscal 2022, MTI facilitated five (5) applicants with grants valued at TT\$407,294, which enabled local steelpan manufacturers to increase production and export activity while contributing to increased employment. Panland reported increased sales through the launch of a range of new steelpan products and through the expansion of its production created seven (7) new jobs within company. In addition, Panland exported one thousand, two hundred (1200) Miniature Pans; two hundred and fifty (250) Conventional Steelpan; and six hundred (600) Steelpan Accessories to the United States of America; Canada; St. Thomas, USVI; Jamaica; Barbados; United Kingdom; St. John, USVI; and Japan. Similarly, Pan Crafters increased its production capacity to fulfil the international demand

for its products and reported one hundred and one (101) Conventional Steelpans were exported to the United States of America.

4.1.3 Grant Fund Facility for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) in the Yachting Sector

On February 24, 2022, Cabinet approved the establishment of a Grant Facility for Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) within the Yachting Sector in the amount of TT\$10-million to finance eligible business costs. This includes MSEs involved in ship building, repair and maintenance, servicing of vessel, including yachts such as fiberglass work, welding, woodwork, upholstery, sail making, electronics and electrical work, painting and rigging, hospitality services, travel agency services and yacht brokerage subsectors. Micro businesses classified as companies with less than or equal to TT\$250,000 in annual turnover are eligible for a cash grant of up to TT\$20,000 to cover 100% of business costs; and small businesses classified as businesses with more than TT\$250,000 but less than or equal to TT\$8.0 million in annual turnover are eligible for cash grant of up to TT\$50,000 to cover 75% to 100% of particular business costs.

The Facility was launched on March 2, 2022 and as at September 30, 2022 the MTI received seventy-one (71) applications for funding. Fifty (50) applications were approved valued at approximately TT\$1.45-million.

4.1.4 Research and Development Facility

The Research and Development Facility (RDF) was established to promote increased business and trade, and engender innovation and competition, especially among SMEs across all non-energy sectors. Eligible projects and activities under the RDF included applications that will:

- facilitate/result in a significant improvement in process and product/service designs as a result of technological innovations;
- diversify a product/service by way of an innovative offering through the employment of new technologies;
- help companies to meet export market requirements especially in the area of innovative or higher value added products/services;
- involve automation technologies and lean manufacturing processes.

The RDF was revised in 2018 to fund projects under three (3) phases as follows:

- *Phase I:* To establish the technical merit, feasibility and commercial potential of the proposed Research and Development (R&D) project - funding covers applicant's technical and empirical market research, among other things, and result in a technical and commercial feasibility report. The report would be used as evidence in the evaluation of any application for funding under Phase II of the project. Funding during this phase shall not exceed 70% of the total cost of the project up to a maximum of \$100,000 over a six (6) month period.
- *Phase II:* To continue the R&D efforts initiated in Phase 1, and more specifically meeting relevant costs related to product/service development - funding covers applicant's prototype development and proof-of-concept, which cover both manufacturing and services. Funding in this Phase shall not exceed 50% of the total cost of the project up to a maximum of \$750,000 within a maximum two-year period. Applications to Phase II are not exclusive to Phase I awardees.
- *Phase III:* To pursue commercialization objectives based on the results from Phases I and/or II - funding is strictly based on the commercial potential of the product/service, particularly in export markets and would cover such approved costs related to launching the product or process in the market place. This can include marketing, publicity, advertising, publication of sales literature, trade fairs and product certification. The funding in this phase is limited to \$150,000, and applications to Phase III shall be exclusive to Phase II awardees.

In Fiscal 2022, exporTT disbursed funds to the following five (5) companies valued at TT\$348,070.00:

- Phase I: Nio Digital Limited - Market Research into a Feasible Study in Central and Eastern Europe for Apps that offer Software/Business Solutions to SMEs;
- Phase I: Siel Environmental Services Limited - Market Research into a Feasibly Study on the state of food and organic waste in Trinidad & Tobago. The overall goal is to find sustainable ways to reduce food and organic waste in Trinidad and Tobago through either recycling or reusing;
- Phase II: Teleios Systems Limited - To develop a new Low-Code Functionality version of their QuickWorks Product to make it a user - customizable enterprise management software product;

- Phase II: EIKM Holdings Limited - To make updates to online medical prescription platform. This platform will allow doctors to prescribe medication of patients digitally as well as allow for delivery to the patient; and
- Phase III: Steven Edwards Production - Film production and animations.

One of the companies, SMAKS, in receipt of RDF funds over the last two years, was able to (i) develop a rare cask aging technique to produce three (3) new and unique rum expressions: Rare Whiskey Cask; Rare Cognac XO Cask; and Rare Amontillado del Puerto Cask. This resulted in SMAKS being successfully on-boarded on the largest e-Commerce luxury retailing website in the USA with over US\$85,000 in sales from these new products from October 2021 to July 2022. SMAKS also gained a contract to supply the most luxurious cruise in the world – the Ritz-Carlton Luxury Yacht collection. SMAKS expanded from one (1) to four (4) SKUs (stock keeping units); and (ii) developed digital assets including photographs of products, digital advertising, QR codes linking print and digital to Chai rum purchasing platforms. This funding resulted in a 300% increase in sales from October 2021 to July 2022, when compared to September 2020 to September 2021 which totalled over US\$50,000.00.

4.1.5 Co-Financing Facility

The initial Co-Financing Facility provided financing for export planning, training, standards implementation, packaging and labeling, market intelligence and other facets of export development. It was revised in Fiscal 2019 and incorporated the promotion and development of e-Commerce in Trinidad and Tobago. In Fiscal 2022, TT\$195,603.43 was disbursed to the following eighteen (18) companies:

- 1) Vemco Limited;
- 2) YBMS BIOTEC Ltd;
- 3) Ambrosia Foods;
- 4) Story Play Media Limited;
- 5) Kais Manufacturing Limited
- 6) Kennedys Agro Processing Limited;
- 7) Caribbean Specialty Foods Co. Limited;
- 8) Fashion.Art.Music (F.A.M.) Limited;
- 9) L.C.J. Delights;

- 10) L&S Surveying Services;
- 11) Twigs Naturals;
- 12) Imagine Media International Limited;
- 13) Smart Foods Caribbean Limited;
- 14) Udazzle Fashion Ltd
- 15) Diagon Consulting Limited;
- 16) Innovation Activators Limited;
- 17) Coded Arts Limited; and
- 18) Full Circle Animation Limited.

4.1.6 Apprenticeship Programme for the Non-energy Manufacturing Sector in Trinidad and Tobago

The MTI in collaboration with the MIC Institute of Technology (MIC-IT), the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) and the National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (NTA) developed a three-year Programme to build human resource capacity within the manufacturing sector and address shortages of skilled labour. The Programme was approved in March 2022 by Cabinet and launched in May 2022 with a cohort of one hundred and thirty-five (135) trainees in the first year. On completion, the Programme will benefit over three hundred (300) persons.

4.1.7 Apprenticeship Programme for the Wood and Wood Products Manufacturing Sub-sector

This programme, launched on August 16, 2022, was developed in collaboration with MIC-IT, the TTMA and the NTA to address skills gaps and fill existing vacancies within the wood and wood related products manufacturing sub sector. This two-year programme will commence in Fiscal 2023.

4.1.8 Export Capacity Building Programme

- a) *International Certification Fund* is designed to assist exporters in achieving international certification in food/beverage and other product compliance to meet the quality and safety standards of international markets and franchises. Twelve (12) companies (Kamri Investments Limited, Slimdown 360, Montanos Chocolates, Gingerbread Investments Limited, RHS Marketing Limited, Smart Foods Limited, Caribbean Specialty Foods, Rockland, SCL, Stuart Brothers Limited, Habanero

Pepper Sauce Company and Pascal's Bakery Limited) were approved for funding valued at TT\$3,019,588.47 for export support and import substitutions. The following three (3) companies were able to penetrate Latin American and USA markets after receiving funding to acquire certification required to export to these markets.

- Kamri Investment Limited, a locally owned company manufactures wholesale and retail tempered glass and glass products, increased its competitiveness for regional contracts and expanded into the Latin American market.
- Slimdown 360 shipped its first container to the US. This was made possible from the purchase of eleven (11) tonnes of local cassava and sweet potatoes valued at US\$15,000. The US buyer expressed interest in ordering an additional shipment valued at US\$15,000. A Canadian distributor also expressed interest in Slimdown 360's products.
- Montanos' Chocolate Company Limited (MCCL) is in negotiations with several companies from Toronto; Canada; and Brooklyn, USA for the supply of its products.

b) *Tobago Capacity Building Programme*: In Fiscal 2022, exporTT enrolled and trained ten (10) companies on the Tobago e-Pavilion platform under the Tobago Indigenous Sweets project. The Platform is now fully operational with ten (10) active companies: Crown and Lux, Kennedys Agro Processing, LCJ Delights, Luvalways, TeaBago, Tom Tom's Confectionery, Joefield's Enterprises, Joy's Business Enterprises, J's Tradition Sweets, Jules Delights, and Pam's Tasty Delights. The platform attracted 2,363 visitors and generated US\$395.73 in sales from twenty-one (21) orders.

Training sessions were completed for Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), Product and Process Standardisation, Labelling Regulations, and HACCP. In January 2022, training commenced for packaging and product upgrades for indigenous sweets with the ten (10) companies.

c) *Export Accelerator Programme* is designed to improve export potential local businesses. In Fiscal 2022, exporTT provided assistance to ten (10) companies in the areas of business and export coaching and the development of support plans and digital brochures in cycle one. Of the ten (10) companies, six (6) companies increased

exports to Guyana, the United Kingdom and St. Lucia; and one company (Ice Connections) entered two (2) new markets - St. Vincent and Venezuela.

- d) *Labelling and Product Testing Fund*: The Fund provides assistance to exporters for the modification to a product's labelling, packaging, appearance, or functionality in order to meet the destination market's requirements, consumer preferences, and culture. This initiative was launched on March 1, 2022 and exporTT facilitated financial assistance to three (3) companies for product testing services to meet export market preferences and requirements.

4.1.9 National SheTrades Hub

The National SheTrades Hub (Hub), conceptualised by the International Trade Centre (ITC) is aimed at empowering female-led businesses with opportunities to grow and enhance their businesses. The Hub was launched by MTI through exporTT on October 28, 2020 and has over seven hundred (700) registered local women-owned businesses on the platform, of which two hundred and twenty-six (226) registered in Fiscal 2022. Several training and information sessions such as “*How to go Online*”, “*How to Market your Goods and Services Online*”, “*Export Plan Development*”, “*Costing and Pricing*”, “*Identifying and Assessing Export Markets*” were conducted with the aim of empowering women to connect with trade opportunities.

4.2 Deepening and Expansion of Trinidad and Tobago's Trading Relationship

4.2.1 Export Promotion

- a) *Market Intelligence Support*: In September 2022, exporTT conducted six (6) market surveys in Curaçao, Miami, British Virgin Islands, the United Kingdom (Part 1), Panama and Colombia. The market intelligence obtained from five (5) market surveys, excluding Colombia, were disseminated to five hundred and thirty-five (535) exporting companies to aid in the development of their market entry strategies and export plans. Colombia's market intelligence report is being compiled and will be distributed to exporting companies in Fiscal 2023.

- b) *Trade Missions/Trade Shows:* During the period October 2021 and July 2022 exportTT collaborated with Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) to execute seven (7) trade missions to Curaçao, Antigua and Barbuda, the Dominican Republic, Dubai, Suriname, and Guyana (2); and participated in three (3) trade shows: ExpoComer 2022 and LAC Flavours held in Panama in March 2022 and July 2022, respectively; and ExpoCaribe in Cuba in June 2022. Approximately one hundred (100) SMEs benefited from these missions, with three hundred and sixty-two (362) business-to-business (B2B) meetings conducted during these missions, companies were able to interact with potential business partners resulting in the brokering of several agreements. Guyana entered into an agreement for the purchase and sale of products such as extrusions, rice, sugar, and oil items; one local real estate company secured an agreement for the use of 10 acres of land for the construction of factory space in Guyana; a local apparel company secured purchase orders and contract to manufacture products for companies in the Guyana textile industry.
- c) *Establishment of Commercial Offices/Appointment of Commercial Attachés:* Cabinet in August 2022 approved the establishment of commercial offices in Panama, United States of America and the United Kingdom; and the appointment of Commercial Attachés in China, Guyana, Jamaica and South Africa. The main focus of the Attachés will be to boost exports, assist in diversifying export markets and promote inward investment. In particular, they will identify export opportunities for goods and services, providing timely market intelligence and efficient logistical support to develop trade and investment, real-time information to exporters on challenges and opportunities in the respective markets and in navigating through the regulatory and legal frameworks.
- d) *Translation and Interpretation Services* was approved by MTI on June 15, 2022 aimed at addressing the language barrier experienced by Trinidad and Tobago's exporters during post missions' activities with non-English speaking countries; and the translation of export-related documents. This initiative will commence in Fiscal 2023.

4.2.2 Trade and Investment Promotion Agency

In an effort to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure a targeted approach to trade and investment promotion, the MTI sought to strengthen and modernize the National Trade and Investment infrastructure through the establishment of a single Trade and Investment Promotion Agency. The MTI has begun to execute the necessary statutory requirements for the amalgamation of the operations of InvestTT, ExportTT and CreativeTT into the new single Agency.

4.2.3 Market Access for Trinidad and Tobago's Exporters

a) Trinidad and Tobago – Chile Partial Scope Trade Agreement

On October 20, 2020, Trinidad and Tobago signed a General Framework Agreement with Chile for the negotiation of a Partial Scope Trade Agreement (PSTA) aimed at increasing trade between the two (2) countries by providing market access at reduced rates of duty, on a list of products. The Second Round of negotiations concluded during January 5-7, 2022. The Third Round of negotiations is carded for December 2022. During this Round, market access offers would be discussed, following consultations with Ministries and the private sector. Local exporters are expected to benefit from preferential access to a market of approximately eighteen (18) million persons.

b) Trinidad and Tobago – Curaçao Partial Scope Trade Agreement

On September 17, 2022 Trinidad and Tobago and Curaçao agreed to the General Framework Agreement for negotiation for a Partial Scope Trade Agreement. The MTI is expected to participate in a trade mission to Curaçao in Fiscal 2023.

c) CARICOM – Colombia Trade Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement

The First Round of Negotiations to expand the list of products under the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)-Colombia was held on June 1, 2022. CARICOM and Colombia exchanged offers on August 5, 2022 in preparation for the Second Round of negotiations to be held in Colombia. The Second Round of negotiations was postponed at Colombia's request due to the country's national elections and subsequent change of Government. The Parties are exploring the possibility of convening the Second Round of Negotiations in Fiscal 2023.

d) Gateway to Trade (G2T) Programme is an Export Readiness Incubator Training Programme designed to strengthen trade promotion and foster growth in Services Sector exports. In Fiscal 2022, the Programme facilitated the development of export plans and company profiles of forty-three (43) firms which will strengthen and promote their export performance.

4.2.4 Promotion of Economic Integration

Trinidad and Tobago's participation at Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) ensures that national interests are reflected in the regional trade policy development, and necessary approvals are secured for national policy implementation.

On January 1, 2022, the suspension of the CET was extended for twenty (20) basic food items including dried salted pollock fillets, other Cheese (Cheddar), other black tea (fermented), other partly fermented tea, canned corn beef, canned herrings, canned sardines, canned tuna, canned mackerel, active yeasts, all edible preparations for infant use, other (Soya Bean Oil), virgin olive oil, other: Sunflower-seed or safflower oil and fractions thereof, Canola Oil, frozen french fries, refined sugar, powdered milks: in powder, granules or other solid forms, of a fat content, by weight not exceeding 1.5%; and in powder, granules or other solid forms, of a fat content, by weight exceeding 1.5%, not containing added sugar or other sweetening matter, other powdered milks. The suspension of CET was also extended to non-alloy steel, sulphonic acid and audio compact discs, selected personal protective equipment, road paving materials and petroleum products such as motor spirits and hydraulic brakes fluid.

Moreover, in March 2022, Cabinet approved the suspension of the CET on a list of over 3000 pharmaceutical items for treating ailments of communicable and non-communicable diseases including pains, cold and flu, cancers, chronic disease and neurological disorders.

Suspensions of the CET for inputs into the manufacturing industry have been granted to registered producers on a case-by-case basis.

4.3 Implementation of the National Quality Infrastructure

The MTI in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) continued to implement projects identified within the National Quality Policy during Fiscal 2022 as listed hereunder:

4.3.1 Establishment of an independent Body: Trinidad and Tobago Accreditation Services for Conformity Assessment

The MTI and TTBS continued to work alongside the Office of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Legal Affairs (AGLA) to finalise legislation which underpins the transition of Trinidad and Tobago Laboratory Accreditation Service (TTLAB), the existing local accreditation body, to Trinidad and Tobago Accreditation Services for Conformity Assessment (TTASCA) to an independent body to ensure compliance with the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC). The Chief Parliamentary Counsel drafted a Bill which has been reviewed by the MTI and TTBS and further amendments are being made by CPC.

4.3.2 National Programme for the Accreditation of all Public Laboratories

TTBS continued to implement the Quality Infrastructure Enhancement Programme aimed at establishing an enabling environment for the production of goods and services that meet quality standards.

In March 2022, TTBS conducted assessments on the quality management systems of two (2) laboratories from the first call: Institute of Marine Affairs (IMA); and Trinidad and Tobago National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NP). This enabled accreditation, consistent with the requirements of the international standard, ISO/IEC 17025 - *General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories*. This standard (ISO/IEC 17025) examines the competency of testing and calibration laboratories to conduct specific tests. It is useful for any organisation that performs testing, sampling or calibration and wants to demonstrate that it can produce consistent and trustworthy results. Accreditation bodies use this standard to assess the overall confidence in and competence of the personnel, resources and management system to provide a valid test result. The process of Accreditation generally involves auditing of the laboratory by assessment teams including experts in organisational aspects such as

management systems and technical activities (*inclusive of: personnel, facilities and environmental conditions, equipment, metrological traceability (calibration of test equipment), externally provided products & services, review of requests and contracts, selection and validation of methods, sampling, handling of test items as well as technical records, that is, test reports*) of the laboratory.

Both laboratories are working on corrective measures for non-conformities based on TTBS' findings.

A second call for new projects opened in February 2022 in which TTBS received applications from two testing laboratories and one medical laboratory.

4.3.3 Modernisation of the Standards Act and Metrology Act

The TTBS is currently governed by the Standards and Metrology Acts which are dated. As a result, the MTI in collaboration with the TTBS procured the services of a consultant to draft the required amendments for the modernisation of the Standards Act and Metrology Act in aid of strengthening the National Quality Infrastructure. The Draft Legislative Brief was completed in September 2022 and it is envisaged that this will be on the Parliamentary Agenda for Fiscal 2023.

TTBS procured twenty-two (22) pieces of equipment to enhance its calibration capabilities, upgrade the physical infrastructure of its laboratories, and assess and develop quality management systems. Additionally, the TTBS trained twenty-four (24) officers in metrology-related resources and activities including pressure calibrations; metrology systems: digital calibration certificates and laboratory automation; ISO/IEC17025: General requirements for the competence for testing and calibration laboratories; and internal auditing for ISO/IEC 17025. This standard examines the competency of testing and calibration laboratories to conduct specific tests. It is useful for any organisation that performs testing, sampling or calibration and wants to demonstrate that it can produce consistent and trustworthy results. Accreditation bodies use this standard to assess the overall confidence in and competence of the personnel, resources and management system to provide a valid test result.

The process of Accreditation involves auditing of the laboratory by assessment teams including experts in organisational aspects such as management systems and technical activities (*inclusive of: personnel, facilities and environmental conditions, equipment, metrological traceability (calibration of test equipment), externally provided products and services, review of requests and contracts, selection and validation of methods, sampling, handling of test items as well as technical records that is, test reports*) of the laboratory.

4.4 Support for the Creative Industries

4.4.1 FashionTT

a) Fashion Value Chain Investment Programme

In Fiscal 2022, FashionTT, through the Value Chain Investment Programme (VCIP), provided support and mentorship to one hundred and seventy (170) local designers. The VCIP consists of four (4) tiers which are specifically designed to meet the development needs of designers as follows:

- i. *Global Value Chain (GVC)* is designed to support export-oriented activities of local designers. Eleven (11) of Trinidad and Tobago's top export ready designers benefited from training under this tier. On March 25, 2022, these designers participated in FashionTT's 1st Virtual Fashion Tradeshow and Exhibition held in Miami. As at September 2022, approximately one thousand and fifty-six (1056) persons visited this virtual platform from various countries including South Africa, United Kingdom, Canada, China, India, Malaysia, Japan, Philippines, Hawaii, Nigeria, Gabon, Australia, Jamaica, Barbados, Grenada and Guyana. Arising out of the virtual fashion tradeshow, one GVC Designer, The Hideout Clothing is now listed on Macy's website in which buyers can view and purchase products made in Trinidad and Tobago.
- ii. *Non-Global Value Chain* is designed to improve designers' export readiness to enable them to compete in the global market. In July 2022, ten (10) designers commenced training which will be concluded within one year.
- iii. *Business Advisory Programme* is designed to provide business mentoring, training and financing to designers who require one-on-one business support

in gaining a comprehensive understanding of their business value chains. Seventy-four (74) designers commenced training in July 2022 which will be concluded within one year.

- iv. *Entrepreneurial Development Programme (EDP)* is designed to provide monthly training in areas such as Business Plan Development, Costing and Pricing, Record Keeping and Cash Flow Management, Business Taxation and marketing Strategy. Seventy-five (75) new and emerging designers commenced training in July 2022.

With the support provided to these designers under the VCIP, some of them were able to export to markets in the Caribbean as well as South Korea, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Samoa and the Philippines. Products exported included swimsuits, resort wear, ready-to-wear, couture dresses, leather sandals, hand bags, jewelry.

b) Fashion LookBook

The Fashion LookBook is a quarterly publication by FashionTT that showcases local fashion brands. Three (3) editions were published in Fiscal 2022; the fourth and fifth editions featured twenty-three (23) designers and the sixth featured twenty (20) designers. These LookBooks were distributed globally to embassies and consulates to showcase T&T's local designers' collections with a view of attracting customers locally, regionally and internationally.

c) Local Production Facility MADE868

The Local Production Facility, established in January 2022, is a collaborative effort between the University of Trinidad and Tobago and FashionTT aimed at bolstering garment production and providing a range of specialist services for designers including digital fabric printing, laser cutting, 3-D printing, traditional cutting and sewing of garments. Since the launch, it has generated approximately TT\$116,858 in revenue.

4.4.2 MusicTT

a) Spotlight: Artiste Portfolio Development Programme

MusicTT identifies cohorts of artists annually in the Spotlight programme who are on the cusp of export-readiness, and provides them with customised capacity development in areas needed to advance their careers. In Fiscal 2022, six (6) artists of the fifth cohort completed globally competitive training provided by TOVA Group in areas of intellectual property, social media management, vocal training, song writing, branding, music album planning and music business foundations, stage performance, developing marketing plan, music licensing and contract negotiation. These artists are now equipped with the knowledge required to successfully penetrate the global music market. One (1) artist from the fourth cohort was selected to perform at the Caribbean Rhythm showcase in Jamaica in September 2022.

b) Live Music District (LMD)

The Live Music District (LMD) is an entertainment hub created by MusicTT which offers local musicians access to performance spaces to showcase their talent at events throughout Port of Spain and environs, as well as the opportunity to secure performances throughout the year. In Fiscal 2022, MusicTT issued an Open Call inviting producers and promoters to submit events planned for the current Fiscal which will facilitate performances by artists under the LMD. Accordingly, MusicTT subsidised four hundred and fifty-nine (459) artists' performances at twenty-seven (27) events. These performers had the opportunity to hone their performance skills visible to live audiences, equipping them with the skills and experiences to progress and secure meaningful careers in the Music industry.

c) Music Export Academy

The Music Export Academy is an initiative geared towards music business education and capacity building through workshops, webinars and conferences in order to foster business development of the local music industry and create viable international linkages for exporting. It incorporates an educational campaign aimed at encouraging local artists to register their music using the TT-ISRC codes. These codes allow performers to be paid for digital music sales and ensure their royalties are tracked. As

at September 2022, three hundred and twenty-five (325) artists have registered for these codes.

MusicTT hosted the 2nd Annual RVRB Experience Music Conference in July 2022 which featured forty-seven (47) speakers. Over three thousand (3000) persons participated virtually at this Conference from across seventeen (17) countries ranging from the Caribbean, North America and Europe. This Conference provided networking opportunities for local music entrepreneurs.

4.4.3 FilmTT

a) T&T Locations: Unseen, Unexpected

T&T Locations: Unseen, Unexpected advertising campaign uses the production of promotional videos and placement of international film magazines such as “Location Guide” to promote and market Trinidad and Tobago as a globally attractive Caribbean production location. It aims to assist with securing a consistent increase in the number of inward productions from specific markets. In Fiscal 2022, Trinidad and Tobago hosted twelve (12) international productions which created one hundred and five (105) employment opportunities and generated approximately TT\$2.7 million in revenue; and two (2) major local films which created one hundred (100) employment opportunities and generated approximately TT\$4.2 million in revenue.

b) Nigerian Producers Exchange

To facilitate the expansion of the Trinidad and Tobago local film industry, FilmTT partnered with the Africa Film Trinidad and Tobago on May 26, 2022 and hosted an event referred to as the Nigerian Producers Exchange. Arising out of this Exchange, a co-production partnership was signed between Reeltime Film Festival (Nigeria) and Lanniup Consulting (Trinidad and Tobago) to produce a co-production film in Nigeria and Trinidad and Tobago with effect from October 2022. The script was completed by Asha King of Trinidad and Tobago. The co-production contract will allow content produced in Trinidad and Tobago to have access to the Nigerian film market (Nollywood). In addition, Trinidad and Tobago filmmakers have been invited to Nigeria to learn and study their filmmaking format.

c) Film Content Creation and Marketing

In Fiscal 2022, FilmTT provided:

- i. training and financial support to three (3) line producers to produce the three (3) short local films as follows:
 - Skglow (Teen SciFi) screened online and at The Caribbean Tales International Film Festival on September 23, 2022 in Toronto, Canada;
 - I Dream of Calypso (Family) premiered on August 29, 2022 on WESN network (Greendot -7, Amplia - 118, Airlink - 17, Bmobile - 107, Digicel - 21, Flow - 110, ICNTT - 105);
 - Jacques Pot (Family) screened on September 24, 2022; and
- ii. financial support to four (4) local films as follows:
 - The Inner View (short film) premiered at the Trinidad and Tobago Film Festival in September 2022;
 - Stories for a Lifetime (short film) premiered online;
 - La Diabliesse (feature film) in pre-production to premiere in 2023; and
 - Claudia (feature film) in early stage of development.

d) Script to Screen Programme

FilmTT implemented an incubator programme for five (5) film screenwriters titled “*On Set*”. This programme requires the screenwriter to create a five (5) episode television sitcom in collaboration with TTT. One of the five (5) screenwriters was selected for production by a panel of judges. Upon completion of the sitcom, it is expected to be aired in November 2022 on TTT and distributed to other platforms. Fifty (50) industry professionals would have received employment opportunities on the production of this series.

4.5 Maritime and Leisure Marine Sectors

Sail Service Stay - Marketing and Promotion

In Fiscal 2022, the International Awareness Campaign - ‘Sail Service Stay’ was marketed and promoted in four (4) yachting magazines, namely Caribbean Compass; All At Sea; Yachts and Yachting; and SAIL. The marketing efforts are being expanded to include articles, promotional videos and updated flyers on the Yachting sector.

4.6 Implementation of Business Environment Reforms

4.6.1 Ease of Doing Business

TTBizlink continued to simplify the processes and procedures when doing business in the country, thereby reducing the standard processing time. In Fiscal 2022, the following activities were achieved:

- a) *Group Work Permits processed on TTBizLink*: On October 1, 2021 the Work Permit Secretariat, Ministry of National Security commenced the processing of Group Work Permits on TTBizLink. This will eliminate the inefficiencies associated with the manual process;
- b) *Applicants provided with the ability to print their Approved Documents from Chemistry Food and Drug Division, Ministry of Health*: On December 1, 2021 Clients of the Food and Drug Inspectorate (FDI) and the Pesticides and Toxic Chemical Inspectorate (PTCI), Chemistry Food and Drug Division (CFDD), Ministry of Health commenced downloading and printing their approved documents. This refinement process offers the client an added layer of security and confidence as they can now directly print the document at their convenience. It eliminates any error that can occur with emailing the document, enhances overall efficiency and is an important business continuity feature;
- c) *View Only Role Implemented for Fisheries Division on the e-Maritime Module*: System was configured on January 6, 2022;
- d) *Auto Approvals for Food and Drug Inspectorate (FDI) and the Pesticides and Toxic Chemical Inspectorate (PTCI), CFDD, Ministry of Health*: On January 19, 2022 the FDI and the PTCI, Chemistry Food and Drug Division (CFDD), Ministry of Health, commenced Auto Approvals with the first approved tranche of Codes configured into the system. This will improve the overall efficiency of processing and use of its human resources;
- e) *Border Management System integration with Ministry of National Security for the e-Work Permit Module* was completed on February 15, 2022;

- f) *Second tranche of Auto Approvals* was implemented on June 20, 2022 for Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards, that is, auto-approval/automatic release to premises for inspection;
- g) *Automated Construction Permitting System (ACPS) – DevelopTT*: TTBizlink in partnership with the Ministry of Planning and Development rolled out the Automated Construction Permitting System (ACPS) – DevelopTT – at Town and Country Planning Division’s (TCPD’s) offices as follows:
- October 1, 2021: Launched the online application for Planning Permission at TCPD’s South Regional Office. This application is made to request approval for a particular use or development on a parcel of land;
 - December 1, 2021: Launched the online applications for Status of Land and Stamp Duty Exemption at TCPD Tobago and East Regional Offices. The former is a request to TCPD for information on a parcel of land. The latter is a correspondence required when applying to the Inland Revenue Division for exemption of stamp duty fees;
 - April 11, 2022: Launched the online application for Planning Permission at the TCPD East Regional Office;
 - August 15, 2022: (i) Water and Sewerage Authority approved its System Design Specification (SDS) document for processing applications for Building Development Approvals and Plumbing Approvals; and (ii) Government Electrical Inspectorate approved its SDS with respect to the processing of applications for Electrical Inspections;
 - September 12, 2022: Launched the online applications for Liquor Licence Correspondence and Customs Bonded Correspondence. The former is required by persons or businesses wishing to sell alcohol, wines or spirits of any kind on any land or in any building which can be consumed on or off of the premises and the latter is a non-objection request to create a customs bond area within a warehouse as storage for large quantities of alcohol;

- h) System Design Specification documents were approved on August 11, 2022 for the implementation of New Application Software for the Single Electronic Window for Trade and Business Facilitation for the forty (40) existing e-services and twelve (12) new e-services.
- i) As at May 2022, eighty-seven percent (87%) of the applications received at the Trade License Unit are being processed within the service level standard of less than two (2) working days.

4.6.2 Scrap Metal Policy for Trinidad and Tobago 2022-2027

The MTI finalised the Scrap Metal Policy for Trinidad and Tobago 2022-2027. The main goal of the policy is to modernise the regulatory framework governing the Scrap Metal Industry to transform the Industry into a leading contributor to economic activity in Trinidad and Tobago. The Policy will guide the preparation of the new legislation and regulations.

4.6.3 National Services Exporters' Portal (NSEP)

In an effort to address the issues of accessing reliable service data, the MTI in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries (TTCSI) developed and launched the NSEP on September 13, 2022. It provides up-to-date disaggregated services data and serves as a digital space to facilitate interactions between local services providers and potential clients globally.

4.6.4 Combatting Illicit Trade in Consumer Goods in Trinidad and Tobago

The Anti-Illicit Trade Task Force (AITTF), with responsibility for implementing the objectives of the National Action Plan to combat illicit trade in consumer goods in Trinidad and Tobago, achieved the following activities in Fiscal 2022:

- Adopted its Rules of Procedure and conducted a Mid-Term Review of the National Action Plan;
- Convened meeting of the Working Groups on Alcohol, Cleaning Agents, Pharmaceuticals, Tobacco and Legislation to discuss private-sector specific recommendations to combat illicit trade;
- Launched a Social Media Awareness Campaign on April 26, 2022 to improve the identification of illegal goods and build awareness of the impact of illicit trade on

local business and consumers. The Campaign included infographics explaining illicit trade, its impact and measures to detect illicit trade; and

- Launched print and radio campaigns which focused on four (4) key areas: alcohol, tobacco, cleaning agents and pharmaceuticals.

4.7 Implementation of the Fair Trading Act through the Fair Trading Commission

The Trinidad and Tobago Fair Trading Commission (TTFTC) promoted the implementation of the Fair Trading Act in accordance with its mandate to maintain, promote and protect competition. TTFTC engaged in advocacy through webinars; addressed topical issues relating to anti-competitive business practices; and under the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Technical Cooperation: Strengthening of the Competition Policy Framework completed the Conceptual Guide to the Fair Trading Act.

4.8 Building Economic Infrastructure and Securing Investments

In Fiscal 2022, the MTI through eTeck and invesTT focused on delivering policies and projects that sought to enhance the investment climate and increase investments in Trinidad and Tobago. These included the following:

4.8.1 Development of Economic Spaces for Investments

a) Moruga Agro-Processing and Light Industrial Park

The Moruga Agro-Processing and Light Industrial Park, commissioned on July 14, 2020, comprised five (5) factory shells inclusive of a purpose-built factory shell and six (6) land lots. The land lots offer leasable space for the growth and expansion of operations in the processing of primarily agro products, and light manufacturing. In Fiscal 2022, five (5) companies accepted letters of offers for three (3) factory shells and two (2) land lots with a total estimated investment of TT\$15.9 million. These investments will create approximately one hundred and twenty-eight (128) new employment opportunities.

b) Tamana In-Tech Park

In Fiscal 2022, iQor expanded its Call Centre operations and added two hundred (200) new jobs. Additionally, investTT closed two (2) investments valued over TT\$10.5 million: Shaare Business Media, a Data Center and Business Offices operation; and Stages Consulting, an Engineering Consultancy.

c) Phoenix Park Industrial Estate

The Phoenix Park Industrial Estate (PPIE) located in Couva spans approximately one hundred and forty-four (144) acres of developed land. It is divided into seventy-eight (78) leasable lots with the required infrastructure and services inclusive of five (5) modern factory shells to be leased to investors. This Park targets businesses operating in high-value and light manufacturing logistics, distribution and warehousing. It is expected to be completed in Fiscal 2023.

While the PPIE is undergoing development, investTT closed eleven (11) investments during Fiscal 2022 with a total value of over TT\$255 million creating approximately seven hundred and ninety-six (796) jobs opportunities. This included seven (7) local investors which will occupy twenty-five (25) land lots and four (4) foreign investors with two (2) factory shells.

d) Factory Road Industrial Estate

The Factory Road Industrial Estate, located in Chaguanas, spans sixty-seven (67) acres of land which consists of twelve (12) lots, and targets business activities in the areas of: Fish Processing; Food Processing; Manufacturing, Packaging and Distribution of Food Items; Light Manufacturing; Training; and Warehousing and Distribution.

In Fiscal 2022 three (3) companies signed contracts with eTeck for three (3) lots and the remaining nine (9) lots are reserved to be allocated. Investments are estimated at TT\$890 million and is expected to create approximately six hundred (600) new jobs.

On May 4, 2022, the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC) commissioned a 1.5 mmscfd (million standard cubic feet per day) supply of natural gas from NGC's existing 16" distribution pipeline to identified end points inside the fence line

of the Factory Road Industrial Park. This would allow companies to be fueled for their operations.

4.8.2 Modernisation of the Investment Framework

a) New Special Economic Zones (SEZ)

The SEZ Bill was developed through collaborative efforts of the MTI, the Chief Parliamentary Council of the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Legal Affairs and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It aims to ensure that all aspects of the new regime are attractive to investors, beneficial to the State, and in line with international best practices.

On January 31, 2022, the SEZ Bill was assented to and Parts 1, II, III, IV and V of the SEZ Act were proclaimed. These Parts will facilitate the establishment of the SEZ Authority which is the first step in the implementation of the SEZ Legislation. The remaining Parts will treat with the licensing aspects of the regime. The Board of the SEZ Authority was appointed on July 22, 2022.

4.8.3 Facilitation of Investments

a) Operational Investments:

The MTI and invesTT facilitated approximately TT\$215 million in foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the services and manufacturing sectors and TT\$1.1 billion in local direct investments (LDIs) in the manufacturing, agri-processing construction, and services sectors. FDI projects provided approximately seven hundred and ten (710) job opportunities and LDI projects created one thousand eight hundred and sixteen (1816) job opportunities across various sectors.

b) Closed and Committed Investments:

In Fiscal 2022, MTI and invesTT closed approximately TT\$646 million in local and foreign direct investments. When these projects become operational, it is envisaged that approximately one thousand, seven hundred and seventy (1770) jobs will be created in the manufacturing, ICT, food and beverage, agro-processing, hospitality, and logistics and distribution. Additionally, investments in the area of a home compostable

packaging project is being undertaken by a major regional retail chain and is estimated at TT\$22 million. It is envisaged when operational, will reduce the amount of plastics that pollute the Trinidad and Tobago's environment.

c) Trinidad and Tobago (TT) Agri-Investment Forum and Expo:

CARICOM, in 2022, established a target of reducing the Region's food import by twenty-five percent (25%) by the year 2025. This was in response to changing global economic and climatic conditions, the Region's rising food import bill and aims to stimulate investment in agriculture and food production.

To support this initiative, the first CARICOM Agri-Investment Forum and Expo was successfully launched in Guyana on May 19, 2022. Following Guyana's lead, Trinidad and Tobago hosted a second Agri-Investment Forum and Expo in August 2022. The MTI assisted in the coordination of this initiative, which featured two hundred and ninety-five (295) participants and facilitated fifty-two (52) business-to-business meetings.

The main objectives were as follows:

- highlight the importance of food and nutrition security and having a resilient and sustainable agriculture system;
- showcase agriculture stakeholders and the advancements made across the sector over the decades;
- encourage discussions among key stakeholders in the agriculture sector, both locally and regionally;
- highlight opportunities for trade and investment for local or regional producers/entities across the agriculture value chain;
- improve local agricultural production, productivity, and value chains in the agriculture sector through shared knowledge and experiences;
- encourage the exchange of technology and/or promote investment in innovative technologies to achieve increased availability of food locally and regionally;
- enhance Regional Trade Investments in agriculture and food production and the ecosystem which supports these investments; and
- reduce the dependency on imported food items by promoting local or regional alternatives.

4.9 Protection and Empowerment of Consumers

In Fiscal 2022, Consumer Affairs Division (CAD) continued their drive in the execution of the following activities:

4.9.1 Consumer Complaints and Resolutions

The CAD addresses enquires/complaints and resolves cases from consumers when suppliers refuse to offer appropriate redress for goods that failed to perform the functions for which they were designed. Seven hundred and fifty-two (752) cases were reported of which CAD resolved six hundred and fifty-seven (657) and responded to three thousand, two hundred and seventy-seven (3277) enquiries. The resolution of redress between the consumers and sellers entailed either exchange of goods, repairs, full refund, partial refund and credit notes as identified in the table below.

Number of Enquiries Responded to as at September 30, 2022				
Telephone Enquiry	Walk in Enquiry	Facebook Enquiry	E-mail Enquiry	Total Enquiry
2,415	43	326	493	3277
Number of complaints received and resolved as at September 2022				
Received	Resolved		Percentage	
752	657		87.37%	
Monetary Value of Resolutions				
\$2,063,710.48				

4.9.2 Consumer Awareness Programme

The CAD, in Fiscal 2022, maintained an active Facebook platform as part of its consumer awareness and education function. This platform gained a total of three thousand, one hundred and seventy-one (3,171) new subscribers/followers and maintained an overall reach of two hundred and eighty-eight thousand and nine hundred and seven (288,907) persons.

In January 2022, the CAD launched a Facebook Live Talk Series. This is a monthly talk show on the Facebook platform in which CAD addresses consumer issues and answers questions in real time. This live talk series aided an increase in the reach of consumers.

4.9.3 World Consumer Rights Day

On March 15, 2022, the CAD joined the rest of the world to commemorate World Consumer Rights Day, themed “*Fair Digital Finance*”. Given the nature of the topic, the CAD hosted a webinar with thirteen (13) Government Ministries and Departments; and two NGO’s: Trinidad and Tobago Association of Retired Persons (TTARP) and Master Mind Leaders. This webinar was hosted in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago International Financial Centre (TTIFC), the Office of the Financial Services Ombudsman (OFSO) and the Bankers Association of Trinidad and Tobago (BATT). Discussions focused on topical issues such as *The need for online financial services to be inclusive and not marginalized by the banking sector; private and sustainable; digital and traditional financial literacy; its benefits; risks; dangers and tips for consumers to protect themselves*. Though 350 persons registered for the webinar, 170 participated on to the platform.

4.9.4 Adverse Trade Practice Order 2000

Under the Consumer Protection and Safety Act Chapter 82:34, CAD conducted an ATPO exercise. The ATPO prohibits specific adverse trade practices such as publication, and display of notices of invalid statements and makes it an offence for anyone in the course of a business to engage in such trade practices. CAD’s officers visited 1,057 businesses in malls and areas of commerce to determine if businesses are operating in compliance with the ATPO. One hundred and ninety-six (196) businesses were in contravention of the ATPO and were issued letters.

4.9.5 Monitoring the Consumer Environment

The Consumer Protection and Safety Act Chapter 82:34 of 1985 allows for the monitoring of goods and it states that the CAD is responsible for keeping under review “*the carrying on of commercial activities in Trinidad and Tobago which relate to goods supplied to consumers in Trinidad and Tobago or produced with a view to their being so supplied*”. Through this legislative authority, the CAD conducts on a monthly and quarterly price monitoring exercises in various sectors; namely, supermarket, hardware, and poultry from live and processed markets.

In Fiscal 2022, CAD conducted twelve (12) Supermarket Retail Price Surveys and produced twelve (12) Monthly Bulletins which can be accessed on MTI's website <http://tradeind.gov.tt>.

With respect to Hardware Price Surveys, CAD collaborated with the Consumer Affairs Unit of the Tobago House of Assembly and conducted four (4) quarterly Hardware Retail Price Surveys on selected structural, electrical, plumbing and decorative items. Regarding the Poultry Price Surveys, monthly retail prices were collected from thirty-five (35) poultry shops in six (6) counties across Trinidad from live and processed poultry markets. These reports can also be accessed on MTI's website.

4.10 Transformed Ministry Performance and Service Delivery

4.10.1 MTI's Monitoring and Evaluation

In Fiscal 2022, the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Unit monitored Departments' Annual Work Plans of the MTI on a monthly basis; provided advice and assisted the development of M&E Frameworks on policies and projects; as well as developed and provided Reports to internal and external stakeholders.

4.10.2 Improving Service Delivery at MTI

In Fiscal 2022, the MTI filled the following vacancies at the Technical and Administrative levels to ensure that the human capital is available to achieve its goal of transforming the Ministry and improving its service delivery:

- Established: 1 Director of Consumer Guidance and Protection
 1 Consumer Advocate II
 2 Consumer Advocate I
 1 Systems Analyst I
 2 Statistician I
 1 Accountant II
 2 Accountant I
 1 Auditor I

- 1 Auditor II
- 6 Clerk III
- 7 Clerk I
- Contract:
 - 1 Director, Legal Services
 - 1 Legal Officer II
 - 1 Senior Trade Specialist
 - 1 Policy Officer
 - 1 Director, Industry
 - 1 Industry Analyst
 - 1 Director, Strategy, Business Facilitation and Programme Management
 - 2 Business Reform Specialist
 - 1 Policy Development Specialist
 - 1 Research Strategist
 - 1 Operations Manager, SEW
 - 3 Single Electronic Window (SEW) Specialist
 - 1 IT Infrastructure Specialist
 - 1 ICT Technical Officer
 - 2 ICT Technical Support Officer
 - 1 Senior Corporate Communications Officer

5.0 Financial Operations

The following tables provide a summary on the capital expenditure of projects under the **Development Programme**; and **Recurrent Expenditure** of the Overseas Market Promotion and Development - Local Manufacturers (Export Booster Initiative Programme) of the MTI and its State Agencies.

At the end of Fiscal 2021/2022 **Development Programme Expenditure** totaled \$149,442,605 (96%): Consolidated Fund - \$50,988,531 (88.2%); and Infrastructural Development Fund (IDF) - \$98,454,074 (99.8%). The unspent balance totaled \$7,033,563.00: Consolidated Fund - \$6,840,434.00 (12%); and IDF - \$193,129 (0.2%). At the end of Fiscal 2021/2022 **Recurrent Expenditure** totaled \$5,331,819.19 (%). The unspent (Uncommitted) balance totaled \$15,460,170.81.

Statement of Capital Expenditure Extract as at September 30, 2022						
Project No.	Item/Sub - item/Group/Project	2022 Revised Allocation	Funds Released by the MoF to MTI	Expenditure as at September 30th	Unspent Balance	Percentage of Released Funds Utilised
F304	Development of a Business Development Programme	\$2,000,000	\$2,108,063	\$2,108,063	\$0.00	100%
R001	Investment Promotion Initiatives and Development	\$2,000,000	\$1,992,505	\$1,992,505	\$0.00	100%
R007	Establishment of Research and Development Facility	\$1,100,000	\$1,062,502	\$1,062,502	\$0.00	100%
R016	Enhancement of the Single Electronic Window (IDB Loan)	\$30,000,000	\$30,000,000	\$23,209,364	\$6,790,636 (voting pending)	77%
R019	Development of the Music Industry	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$0.00	100%

R021	Development of the Film Industry	\$700,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	N/A	N/A
R023	Development of the Fashion Industry	\$1,200,000	\$918,875.00	\$918,875.00	\$0.00	100%
R024	National SheTrades Chapter	\$75,081	\$64,015	\$62,115	\$1,900	97%
R026	Gateway to Trade	\$341,730	\$336,416	\$336,416	\$0.00	100%
R028	Establishment of the Trade and Investment Promotion Agency	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A	N/A
R030	Development of the Eco-friendly Business Sector (Scrap Iron)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A	N/A
R032	Development of the Steel Pan Manufacturing Sector	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A	N/A
R034	Conduct of National Service Exporters Survey	\$395,000	\$390,042	\$390,042	\$0.00	100 %
R036	Capacity Building for the T&T Fair Trade Commission	\$325,000	\$378,531	\$378,531	\$0.00	100%
R038	Implementation of a National Apprenticeship Programme (Non-Energy Manufacturing Sector)	\$2,652,000	\$2,473,575	\$2,473,573	\$2.00	100%
R042	Implementation of the N.A.P. to Combat Illicit Trade	\$500,000	\$297,325	\$296,042	\$0.00	100%
R044	Conduct of Technical Studies on International Trade	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A
R046	Implementation of ScaleUp TT Business Accelerator Programme	\$2,126,629	\$2,126,629	\$2,126,629	\$0.00	100%

R048	Implementation of a National Apprenticeship Programme (Wood and Wood Products)	\$0.00	\$2,479,944.00	\$2,479,944	\$0.00	100%
B222	National Quality Infrastructure Enhancement Programme	\$8,000,000	\$8,073,830	\$8,073,830	\$0.00	100%
A003	Upgrading of Information Technology and Information Systems at the Ministry of Trade and Industry	\$715,000	\$714,799	\$714,792	\$7.00	100%
A008	Inward Investment - Non Petroleum Initiatives	\$1,465,081	\$1,654,927	\$1,607,038	\$47,889	97%
A018	Feasibility Study of the Export Financing Mechanism for Service Providers and Pilot Programmes (Now, Services Exporters Registry)	\$258,270	\$258,270	\$258,270	\$0.00	100%
A020	Implementation of the National e-Commerce Strategy	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	N/A	N/A
Total Consolidated Fund (CF) Projects		\$55,353,791	\$57,830,248.00	\$50,988,531	\$6,840,434.00	
Q293	Wallerfield Industrial and Technological Park (e Teck)	\$1,414,119	\$1,414,119	\$1,414,119	\$0	100%
Q303	Single Electronic Window for Trade and Business Facilitation	\$5,950,000	\$5,950,000	\$5,756,880	\$193,120	96.75%

Q308	Upgrade of Drainage and Fire Hydrants at Industrial Estates (<i>e Teck</i>)	\$2,025,349	\$2,025,349	\$2,025,343	\$6.00	100%
Q310	Construction of Tamana Intech Park Transit Hub	\$120,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	n/a
Q312	Upgrade to Factory Road Industrial Park Infrastructure	\$2,559,117	\$2,305,603	\$2,305,602	\$1.00	100%
Q314	Renovation of Magdalena Grand Beach and Golf Resort	\$4,535,881	\$2,306,786	\$2,306,785	\$1.00	100%
Q316	Construction of the Phoenix Park Industrial Estate	\$88,068,204	\$84,645,346	\$84,645,345	\$1.00	100%
Total Infrastructure Development Fund (IDF) Projects		\$104,672,670	\$98,647,203	\$98,454,074	\$193,129	
Total Development Programme (DP) Projects		\$160,026,461	\$156,477,451	\$149,442,605	\$7,033,563.00	

Statement of Recurrent Expenditure Extract as at September 30, 2022

Project No.	Sub-Head/Item	Revised Provision \$	Release \$	Balance of Provision \$	Expenditure and Commitment \$	Uncommitted Balance \$
04/009/30	Overseas Market Promotion and Development - Local Manufacturers (Export Booster Initiative through ExporTT)	20,791,990.00	5,331,822.00	15,460,168.00	5,331,819.19	15,460,170.81

6.0 Human Resource Capital

The Human Resources Unit (HRU) is responsible for managing the selection and development of the human capital of the MTI. Therefore, 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's mandate. The table below provides a summary of total non-contract and contract positions as well as staff employed at the MTI as at September 30, 2022.

Fiscal 2022: Organisational Permanent and Contract Establishments in MTI	
Total Number of Non-Contract positions	268
Actual Number of Persons employed in Established Permanent positions	109
Number of Vacant Established Permanent positions	159
Total Number of Contract Positions	93
Actual Number of Contract Employees currently employed	58
Number of Vacant Contract Positions	35

7.0 Public and Community Relations

i) Trade Minister meets with THA Chief Secretary

Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry met with the Honourable Farley Augustine, Chief Secretary, Tobago House of Assembly (THA),



Councillor Tashia Grace Burris, Secretary of Tourism, Culture, Antiquities and Transportation and senior THA officials on February 18, 2022 to discuss trade and investment matters pertinent to Tobago.

The Chief Secretary expressed keen interest in strengthening the working relationship between the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and the THA, Division of Finance, Trade and the Economy. One such initiative highlighted by Minister Gopee-Scoon is the ongoing effort by the MTI to assist the THA with the establishment of a Unit dedicated to Trade in Services. The Unit would strengthen the capacity of the THA to develop a services trade policy and strategies for Tobago. Minister Gopee-Scoon further added that under the national Export Booster Initiative, which is a strategic and targeted programme to promote the export of manufactured goods, targeted support is available to Tobago based firms. Under this Initiative, specific focus is placed on building the capacity of indigenous confectioners in Tobago with the provision of technical support to improve the product and packaging of Tobago's indigenous and specialty sweets which would ensure standardization and readiness for the international market.

ii) **Trade Minister announces TT\$10M grant funding facility for Micro and Small Enterprises in the Yachting Industry**



Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry announced on March 2, 2022 the establishment of a Grant Fund Facility of TT\$10-million for the Micro and Small Enterprises within

the yachting sector.

Minister Gopee-Scoon said “Micro businesses (classified as companies with less than or equal to \$250,000 in annual turnover) will be eligible for a cash grant of up to TT\$20,000.00 to cover 100% of business costs; and small businesses (classified as businesses with more than \$250,000 but less than or equal to \$8-million in annual turnover) will be eligible for a cash grant of up to TT\$50,000.00 to cover 75% to 100% of particular business costs.”



The Minister noted that the roll out of this Grant Fund Facility is immediate and application forms will be available on the Ministry of Trade and Industry’s website at www.tradeind.gov.tt and at YSATT’s office from March 4, 2022. She also urged the businesses in the sector to take advantage of these opportunities to maximise their business potential.

iii) Trade Minister Visits Manufacturing Family Business

Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, on March 4, 2022 presented two (2) local manufacturers with grant funding totalling **TT\$471,867.00** to assist their companies with the acquisition of new machinery and equipment.

The Grant Fund Facility (GFF) which was launched in November 2017 remains accessible to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to provide support for capacity building and technological advancements across various non-energy sectors of the economy, including manufacturing.



Minister Gopee-Scoon congratulated the two (2) most recent beneficiaries, Pinguino Purified Water Limited (Pinguino) and Caribbean Adhesives and Chemicals Limited (CACL), on their aptitude to strategically invest and expand amidst the unprecedented times being experienced as a result of the on-going pandemic. In lauding the companies, the Minister stated, *“These manufacturers have capitalized on the financial resources afforded to them as they embark on their new ventures. Their implementation of new technology and decisions to diversify and expand reflect their inclination to not only survive, but thrive and increase their competitiveness.”*

Under the GFF, SMEs that have been in operation for a minimum of two (2) years in the designated sectors, can access 50%, up to a maximum of TT\$250,000.00, of the cost of new capital requirements/expenditure.

These eligible sectors

included Financial services, Maritime services, Aviation services, Fishing and fish processing, Software design and applications, Creative Industries, Agriculture and agro-processing, and Manufacturing.



iv) Trade Minister encourages manufacturing companies to penetrate China's Market

Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry, together with His Excellency Fang Qiu, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, and Ms. Tricia Coosal, President of the Trinidad and



Tobago Manufacturers' Association, on May 6, 2022 toured the manufacturing facilities of Angostura Limited and Trinidad and Tobago Fine Cocoa Company Limited. During the tour, they gained insight into both

companies' manufacturing processes, as they seek to build capacity and develop new, innovative products, with the possibility of entering the Chinese market.

Speaking at Angostura Limited, Minister Gopee-Scoon noted that the visit was an opportunity to give the Chinese envoy an insight into Angostura Limited. While encouraging Angostura to expand its market reach with specialty products such as rum and bitters, the Trade Minister



gave the assurance that the Government, through the Ministry of Trade and Industry and exporTT, stands ready to assist in penetrating Asia's largest economy.

Minister Gopee-Scoon commended Mr Parasram on the innovative products being introduced to the local market. She said, *"The visit today shows China what is being done with the variety of cocoa that is well known across the globe. The infusion of Chinese liquor and the use of local fruits with chocolate to create niche products show the potential for innovation and value-added, and open up the opportunities for new export markets and increased foreign exchange earnings"*.



v) MTI Launches the Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Business Information Portal

Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry launched the Trinidad and Tobago Trade and Business Information Portal (TBIP) on May 25, 2022, at



the Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre Hotel, Port of Spain.

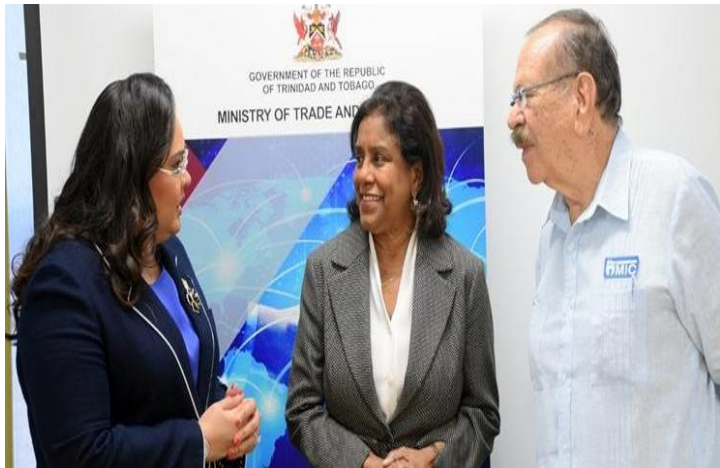
The Portal is an integral component of TTBizLink which provides access to multiple tools and resources under three main categories: Trade,

Business, and Investment with detailed step-by-step guidance on how to import and export goods; regulatory requirements for starting a new business or expanding an existing business; and regulatory requirements when undertaking an investment.

In addressing the audience, Trade Minister Paula Gopee-Scoon noted, in light of the Mid-Year Review, “we must now redouble our efforts to build the international competitiveness of the economy and enhance the ease of doing business locally.” Minister Paula Gopee-Scoon further emphasised that the rapid utilisation of digital technologies; modernization of trade laws and reengineering of our processes have the potential to rapidly transform this country’s international trade performance. She noted that the launch of the portal also represents a significant step toward fulfilling Government’s commitments to the implementation of the World Trade Organisation’s (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA). Trinidad and Tobago has implemented 22.7% of the TFA, as at March 2022 and indicated that full implementation is expected by December 2027.

vi) New Apprenticeship Programme for the Wood and Wood Related Products

Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry launched the Apprenticeship Programme for the Wood and Wood Related Products Manufacturing Sub-sector on Tuesday August 16, 2022. The Programme was developed in collaboration with the MIC-IT,



the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers Association (TTMA) and the National Training Agency (NTA).

Minister Gopee-Scoon emphasised that the Wood and Wood Related Products is a crucial Manufacturing Sub-sector that has untapped potential and poised for growth, this sub-sector contributes 0.02% to GDP, employs approximately four thousand (4000) persons and exports valuing an estimated TT\$24-million in 2020. She reinforced that “a skilled and competent labour force is a critical component of an enhanced manufacturing sector facilitating the achievement of optimal productivity and increased competitiveness”. Therefore, the two-year Apprenticeship Programme aims to fill existing vacancies and skills gaps within the wood and wood related products manufacturing sub-sector including Manufacturing/warehouse manufacturing, Upholstery making, Wood Science, Hand tools and fabrication equipment, drafting in construction or building materials related industry, Carpentry, Project Management, Machine Operation and automated finishing methods including UV curing.

The Apprenticeship Programme for the Wood and Wood Related Products will be administered in three (3) phases. The Programme covers the occupational areas of; Carpentry; Woodworking and Joinery Technology and will be delivered using a 1:3 ratio of theory to practical; employing a process-based mode, where learning content is transferred practically through project work. Apprentices will be trained in areas of Wood Technology, Design and Construction, Furniture Construction, Cabinet Making and gain practical experience on various woodworking equipment.

Apprentices will receive a monthly stipend of TT\$2,000 which will be covered by the Government. Upon successful completion of the Programme, apprentices will be presented with an Apprenticeship Programme for the Wood and Wood Products Manufacturing Sub-sector Diploma.

8.0 The Way Forward

In Fiscal 2023, the MTI will continue to develop and execute policy initiatives approved by Cabinet and seek to execute initiatives designed to support the achievement of its mandate for business, trade, investment and consumer empowerment. These will be as follows:

- Negotiations for the expansion of Partial Scope Trade Agreements with Chile, Curacao and Colombia.
- Initiatives within the Action Plan to combat illicit trade in consumer goods.
- Implementation of the Export Booster Initiative.
- Implementation of Trinidad and Tobago Trade Policy aimed at growing exports.
- Implementation of the National SheTrades for female entrepreneurs.
- Completion of the New Phoenix Industrial Park in Couva.
- Tenanting of Industrial Parks.
- Negotiations of Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement with key strategic partners.
- Establishment of Commercial Offices and Commercial Attachés in selected markets.
- Establishment of a Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (TIPA).
- Implementation of the National Services Exporters Registry Platform.
- Development and Implementation of Gateway to Trade Programme.
- Implementation of CARICOM Regional Services Strategy (professional, postal and courier; tourism).
- Implementation of Scale Up Trinidad and Tobago Programme.
- Enactment and operationalisation of the Special Economic Zones Legislation.
- Development and Implementation of the National Apprenticeship Programme.
- Modernisation of the Trade Licence Unit of MTI.
- Facilitation of donors through the Aid for Trade Strategy.
- Implementation of the National Quality Policy through promotions and other development initiatives such as the establishment of a Trinidad and Tobago Accreditation Services for Conformity Assessment (TTASCA).
- Development and Implementation of the National e-Commerce Strategy;
- Completion of the Framework for the development of the Maritime Sector (Commercial and Leisure).

- Implementation of the Grant Fund Facility to support small and medium businesses in the manufacturing and agro-processing sectors.
- Implementation of the Research and Development Facility to assist manufacturing and service companies develop innovative products, processes, systems and services.
- Implementation of various projects in the music industry aimed at creating new opportunities for artists in the music industry and address concerns of local stakeholders.
- Implementation of various projects in the fashion industry aimed at building capacity in different areas in the Fashion industry.
- Implementation of various projects in the film industry aimed at building capacity in different areas, facilitating investment in film productions.
- Expansion of the roll-out of the 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.
- Strengthening and the expansion of the Single Electronic Window (TTBizLink);
- Implementation of Consumer protection, education and Research programmes.
- Development of a new harmonized consumer protection and empowerment legislation.

9.0 Conclusion

In Fiscal 2022, 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 together with its State Agencies' performance has been illustrated through the successful execution of a number of programmes, policies and projects of which resulted in the following:

- i. improvements in the ease of doing business;
- ii. improvements in the national quality infrastructure;
- iii. continued negotiations for partial scope trade agreements
- iv. facilitation of investments through the expansion economic infrastructure;
- v. strengthening of export capacity through:
 - a. grant funding for MSMEs;
 - b. training programmes;
 - c. engaging in trade missions and trade fairs;
- vi. acceleration of economic diversification in targeted sectors such as
 - a. creative;
 - b. maritime (marine and leisure);
 - c. manufacturing; and
 - d. agriculture and agro-processing

The MTI is keen on 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 for both men and women; 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.