

PEERSS TT NEWS

CULMINATION ISSUE

Strengthening Evidence Informed Policymaking in Trinidad and Tobago through Intersectoral Collaboration: The Culmination of the PEERSS Project

The [Caribbean Centre for Health Systems Research and Development](#) (CCHSRD) recently hosted a culmination event to celebrate achievements towards the strengthening of capacity to support the development of evidence-informed and equity-based social policies in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T).

As a part of the [Partnership for Evidence and Equity in Responsive Social Systems](#) (PEERSS) project, CCHSRD had conducted Evidence Informed Policymaking (EIP) training and coaching for four social sector Ministries. The goal was to strengthen their capacities to utilise evidence in decision-making as well as to incorporate the views of stakeholders in the process; which is consistent with T&T's National Development Strategy's call for "evidenced-based decision-making" to reduce government inefficiencies and wastage, and to reduce costly ad-hoc and reactionary policies.

The four participating Ministries utilised their newly acquired skills to co-produce Knowledge Translation (KT) products in collaboration with CCHSRD. Each Ministry's KT product synthesised local, contextualised evidence as well as international evidence to address a pressing issue in T&T that requires policy action:



- ▶ The Ministry of Labour (MoL): *"Unfilled Demand for Labour and Skills Gaps in the Civil Service in Trinidad and Tobago"*
- ▶ The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services (MSDFS): *"Key Strategies/Interventions to Address the "Dependency Syndrome" on the State's Social Welfare System in Trinidad and Tobago"*
- ▶ The Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD): *"Key Strategies/ Interventions to Address the Underperformance of Males in the Education System in Trinidad and Tobago"*
- ▶ The Ministry of Sport and Community Development (MSCD): *"Facilitating Sustainable Communities in Trinidad and Tobago with an Emphasis on Community Based Participatory Approaches" (in progress)*



(L-R): Ms Jasmine Pascall, Deputy Permanent Secretary, MSDFS; Ms Kevar Cummings-Williams, Deputy Permanent Secretary, MoL; Ms Beverly Reid-Samuel, Deputy Permanent Secretary, MSCD; Dr Stewart Smith, Senior Health Systems Advisor, MoH; Professor Indar Ramnarine, Deputy Principal, The UWI; Professor Donald Simeon, Director, CCHSRD; and Ms Natalie Willis, Permanent Secretary, MoL on stage at the culmination event

At the culmination event, each of the four participating Ministries shared highlights from their KT products as well as their experiences with the training and coaching programme. The event was attended by several Permanent Secretaries and Deputy Permanent Secretaries as well as the Deputy Principal of The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine and the Dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences. There was also an awards ceremony at which the top performers of the programme were celebrated.

CCHSRD intends to continue collaborating with these social sector Ministries and it is expected that the learnings from this project would be sustained and transferable through continued engagement and re-training, and the sharing of successful EIP practices, across the health and social sectors.

Photos from the PEERSS T&T Project Culmination Event & Luncheon



Left: Professor Terence Seemungal, Dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences (The UWI) during his Remarks

Below (L-R):

1. Coachees from the Ministry of Labour with Ms Natalie Willis, Permanent Secretary (center) and Ms Kevar Cummings-Williams, Deputy Permanent Secretary (second from right);
2. Coachees from the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services;
3. Coachees from the Ministry of Planning and Development with Ms Debra Dipchand Singh, Acting Director, Socio Economic Policy Unit (second from left); and
4. Coachees from the Ministry of Sport and Community Development with Ms Beverly Reid-Samuel, Deputy Permanent Secretary (fourth from right)



Coachees were awarded for their excellence throughout the coaching programme:

(L-R): Ms Renee Francois-Trumpet (Ace of Initiative), Ms Tanisha Ash (Team Pacemaker), and Ms Andreah Baksh (Evidence Informed Policymaking (EIP) Enthusiast) received their awards from Professor Indar Ramnarine, Deputy Principal, The UWI St. Augustine.

