



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services

Opening Statement

The Honourable Vandana Mohit

Minister of the People, Social Development and

Family Services

- Standing Finance Committee –

Fiscal 2025/2026

Mr. Chairman, Members of this Honourable Committee,

It is my privilege to present the work and direction of the Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services under our allocation of six billion, twelve million, two hundred and fifteen thousand, two hundred and eight dollars (TT\$6,012,215,208.00) for Fiscal 2025–2026.

At the core of our Ministry's mission is the heart of our nation, the people. Every policy, every programme, and every dollar spent is directed toward helping, empowering, and transforming lives, particularly among our most vulnerable, the poor,

the elderly, persons with disabilities, women, children, and families in crisis.

Despite the fiscal challenges, this Ministry has remained focused on impact over expenditure. In the last fiscal year alone, over \$4.5 billion was invested in Senior Citizens' Grants, \$267 million in Public Assistance, \$79 million in Disability Grants, and \$10 million in relief through the National Social Development Programme, ensuring no citizen is left unseen or unsupported.

In the coming fiscal year, we will continue to strengthen the social protection ecosystem through:

A comprehensive review of the Standard Means Test to promote fairness and inclusion;

Modernization of delivery systems for greater efficiency and reach; and

Closer collaboration with agencies like the Children's Authority to enhance protection and service delivery for at-risk citizens.

Our approach is rooted in accountability, compassion, and people-centered governance, the pillars upon which this Budget, themed "Trinidad and Tobago First: Building Economic Fairness Through Accountable Fiscal Policies," stands.

As we deliberate today, let us be reminded that social development is not an expense, it is an investment in the strength, dignity, and future of our people.

Thank you.