



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

The Honourable Vandana Mohit
Minister of the People, Social Development and
Family Services

Disaster Relief and Home Repair Grant Distribution –
Sangre Grande Region

Wednesday 15th July 2026
11:00AM

North Eastern Regional Multipurpose Sport Facility,
Ojoe Road, Sangre Grande

SALUTATIONS

- The Honourable Wayne Sturge, Minister of Defence and Minister in the Ministry of Homeland Security and Member of Parliament for Toco / Sangre Grande,
- The Honourable Shivanna Sam, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Public Utilities, and Member of Parliament for Cumuto/Manzanilla,
- Senator Dr. Natalie Chaitan- Maharaj, Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services
- Mr. Kenwyn Phillip, Chairman, Sangre Grande Regional Corporation and Councillor for the Electoral District of Manzanilla / Fishing Pond
- Mr. Ryan Ramcharan, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services
- Ms. Vera Deonanan-Balkaran, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services.
- Ms. Patricia De Leon Henry, National Director, National Social Development Programme

- Ms. Michelle Pierre, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services.
- Staff of the Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services
- Staff of each respective Constituency Offices present.
- Esteemed Grant Recipients

Welcome to our Thirty Seventh (36th) Disaster Relief and Home Repair Grant Distribution, and today once again we are here in the beautiful region of Sangre Grande.

At the outset, I wish to acknowledge and thank our Members of Parliament, Councillors and all Local Government Representatives who continue to work closely with the Ministry in identifying the needs of their communities and ensuring that assistance reaches those who need it most. Your dedication to public service is deeply appreciated.

Today is another demonstration of this Government's unwavering commitment to championing the poor, the vulnerable and those who often find themselves facing life's greatest challenges.

We have always believed that the true measure of governance is not in words, but in action, not in promises, but in the lives we improve.

That philosophy has guided every initiative we have undertaken at the Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services.

Over the past year, we introduced the revised Standard Means Test, we have intensified efforts to reduce longstanding backlogs that left far too many vulnerable citizens waiting, ensuring that deserving families receive the support they require in a more timely manner.

We have also continued to invest in empowering people beyond traditional social assistance.

Through our Sowing Empowerment through Entrepreneurial Development (SEED) Programme, we have distributed 66 Micro Business Grants, benefiting 223 household beneficiaries.

Recognising the invaluable work of civil society, the Ministry has also awarded eight one-off grants to Non-Governmental

Organisations supporting targeted social interventions, including therapy services for children with disabilities, caregiver education, clothing assistance for displaced persons and programmes dedicated to improving the lives of our senior citizens.

Our commitment to disaster recovery has likewise remained unwavering. Between **1st May 2025 and 30th June 2026**, the Ministry distributed **Three Hundred and Three (303)** Home Repair Grants under the National Social Development Programme (NSDP), benefiting **Nine Hundred and Eighty-Two (982)** citizens at a total value of **Four Million, Four Hundred and Seven Thousand, Five Hundred and Seventy-Nine Dollars and Twenty-Eight cents (\$4,407,579.28)**.

During the same period, we also distributed **One Thousand Five Hundred and Twenty-Nine (1,529)** Disaster General Assistance Grants, providing critical support to **Three Thousand, Four Hundred and Ninety-Eight (3,498)** beneficiaries at a total cost of

Six Million, Six Hundred and Ninety-Three Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty-Eight Dollars and Seven cents (\$6,693,158.07).

These are not merely achievements on paper. They represent families supported, homes restored, businesses created, opportunities provided and, above all, hope renewed.

It is about responding. And it is about ensuring that no community, no matter how distant, is ever made to feel forgotten.

Today, we are providing **Disaster General Assistance Grants to 45 households**, benefiting **140 citizens**, and **Home Repair Grants to 14 households**, benefiting **38 citizens**. In total, **59 households, representing 178 beneficiaries, will receive assistance valued at more than \$651,000.**

These grants will help families recover from disaster, restore damaged homes, and begin moving forward with renewed confidence.

But today is not about the monetary value of what is being distributed.

It is about parents who can finally breathe a little easier.

It is about seniors who will sleep more comfortably in safer homes.

It is about children who deserve to grow up in an environment where hope is stronger than hardship.

Those are the victories that truly matter.

As Minister, I have made it clear from the very first day that this Ministry must stand beside those who need us the most. We are not here merely to administer programmes. We are here to restore hope, protect dignity, and remind every citizen that they matter.

The measure of any Government is not found in speeches or headlines. It is found in how we treat the most vulnerable among us.

That philosophy continues to guide every decision we make.

When disaster strikes, families should not have to wonder whether help is coming.

When a roof is damaged, when floodwaters invade a home, or when life's unexpected challenges threaten a family's stability, Government must respond, not eventually, but compassionately and responsibly.

That is the kind of Government we are building.

A Government that is present.

A Government that listens.

A Government that acts.

To the residents of Sangre Grande, I want you to know this: your concerns are our concerns. Your struggles are not invisible, and your voices continue to be heard.

This is not our first visit to this region, and I can assure you today that it certainly will not be our last.

We will continue to return because development cannot happen from behind a desk in Port of Spain. It happens by walking

communities, speaking with residents, understanding their realities, and ensuring that assistance reaches the people it was intended to serve.

You are, and will always remain, a priority.

I also wish to thank the dedicated officers of the Ministry, our social workers, technical staff, regional teams, and everyone whose commitment has made today's distribution possible.

Very often, they work quietly behind the scenes, but their efforts change lives every single day. They deserve our appreciation for serving with professionalism, empathy, and care.

To every family receiving assistance today, I want to leave you with this simple message.

Please never allow difficult circumstances to define who you are.

Hardship is something you experience, it is not who you become.

Your strength brought you this far.

Your resilience continues to inspire us.

And as your Government, we will continue doing everything within our power to stand beside you as you rebuild, recover, and move forward.

Together, we are building stronger families.

Together, we are building stronger communities.

And together, we are building a Trinidad and Tobago where compassion is not simply spoken about, it is demonstrated through action.

May God continue to bless each of you, bless the people of Sangre Grande, and bless our beloved Trinidad and Tobago.

Thank you.

