Pre-Sessions 53

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Conflict Women Ltd.

Violence Against Women

The following recommendations were supported at the previous UPR session by Trinidad & Tobago:

- Prioritize access to shelters, medical services, legal aid and counselling services for women exiting domestic violence situations.

- Strengthen measures to combat violence against women by creating specialized police units to investigate these crimes and mitigate impunity.

- Address the problem of gender-based violence and fully implement the Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act, 2020, and thereby guarantee that particularly vulnerable migrant women have access to gender-based violence services and are protected from trafficking.

Conflict Women's Proposed Recommendations

Reinstate a Ministry of Gender & Child affairs, with a designated Minister, Permanent Secretary, and adequate budget.

Adequately fund shelters, that include migrant women and victims of trafficking,e nsuringt hat these shelters are financially sustainable with trained staff and measures in place for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and the provision of realistic strategies for women to transition into stable living environments after leaving.

Increase resources, staffing, GBV training, and partnerships for the TTPS' Special Victims Department and the Community Mediation Services Division adopting a survivor-centric approach, in accordance with the Victims Rights Act of June 2026, ensuring that the well-being, protection, and dignity of survivors is prioritized.

Creating a specialized GBV court to expedite processing, reduce femicides, and reduce the further violence/victimization of survivors of sexual abuse.

Establish a specialized government website for GBV survivors, providing assistance with: protection, psychosocial support, skills training, job placement, legal support, and safe houses, utilising the UN's Catalogue of Services for the Economic Empowerment of Women as a resource.

Developments Since The Last UPR

Following **national elections** held on April 28, 2025, and the **return to office of Kamla Persad-Bissessar**, who had held the office of Prime Minister from 2010 to 2015, the **Gender Affairs and Child Affairs Divisions were moved** from the Office of the Prime Minister to the Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services. This resulted in a **decrease of resources** and the non-renewal of the majority of staff contracts.

Since the last UPR, the **National Strategic Action Plan to End Gender-Based and Sexual Violence was approved** and a safe shelter for women and their dependents was constructed. The authorities **continued provision of a National Domestic Violence hotline** 800-SAVE through the Gender Affairs Division, which was an integral part under the umbrella of the Office of the Prime Minister. However, **safe shelters are still insufficient to match needs** with **4 shelters out of 14** being reported **closed in 2020 due to a lack of funding and government subventions** despite the troubling statistic that 1 in 3 women is experiences violence according to the Women's Health Survey (2017).

It is therefore a matter of deep concern that **between 2020 and the present additional shelters have closed**, with only 8 shelters operational, 7 led by NGOs and 1 by Government. The dedicated **Domestic Violence hotline was physically relocated** from the capital city of Portof-Spain to a residential rural community called Couva and no longer operates on a 24 hour cycle due to the non-renewal of numerous listener contracts.

Conflict Women Ltd. is an organization in Trinidad & Tobago which financially empowers survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and provides them with livelihood and legal services. For more information, please contact Asiya Mohammed (Founder and CEO) at asiya@conflictwomen.com.