



Mayaro/Rio Claro Municipality

Local Area Economic Profile

Final Report

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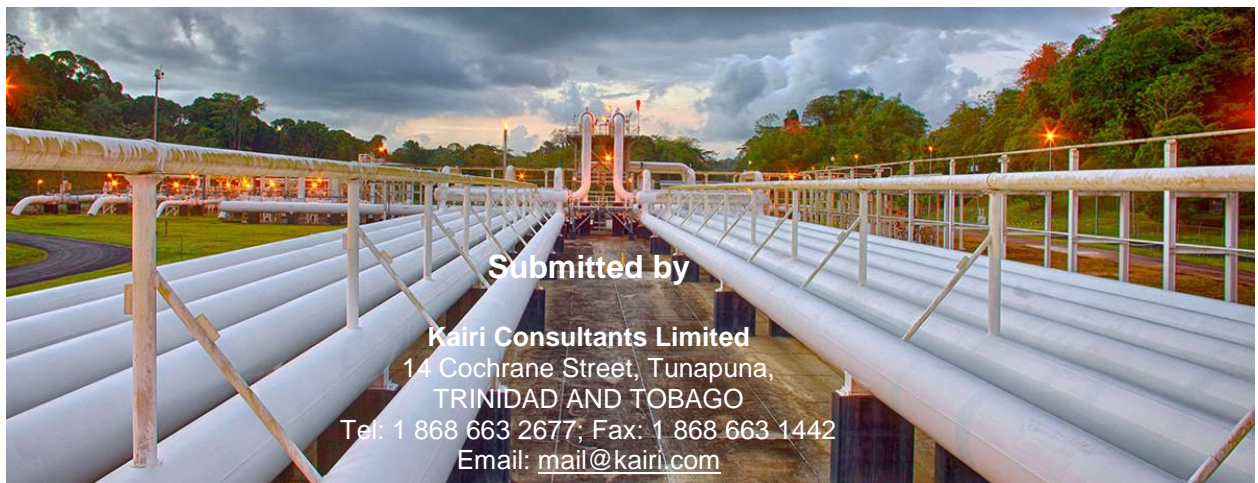
Local Area Economic Profile

Final Report

Submitted to:

Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government
Kent House, Maraval, Trinidad and Tobago



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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	i
List of Figures	iv
List of Tables	v
Acronyms and Abbreviations	vi
1 Introduction	1
2 Area Information and Demography	2
2.1 Location	2
2.2 Geography	2
2.3 Population and Demography	4
2.3.1 Population and Household Size	4
2.3.2 Population Density	4
2.3.3 Age Profile and Dependency	5
2.3.4 Ethnicity	7
2.3.5 Religious Affiliation	7
2.4 Educational Attainment	8
2.5 Living Conditions in Mayaro/ Rio Claro	11
2.6 Crime	14
3 Land Use and Land Resources	17
3.1 Land Use and Resources	17

3.2	Physical Infrastructure.....	18
4	Municipal Physical and Social Assets	19
4.1	Physical Infrastructure.....	19
4.2.1	Information and Communications Technology Infrastructure	19
4.2.2	Storm water Management	19
4.2.3	Transportation (Land, Air and Sea).....	19
4.2.4	Water Supply and Distribution.....	20
4.2.5	Electricity	20
4.2.6	Wastewater Management	20
4.2.7	Solid Waste Management	20
4.3	Social/Cultural Infrastructure.....	21
4.3.1	Dwelling and Building Stock.....	21
4.4	Social Facilities	21
4.4.1	Education.....	21
4.4.2	Health	21
4.4.3	Disaster Management	21
4.4.4	Social Services and Community Development	22
4.4.5	Recreation, Sports and Entertainment.....	22
5	The Area Economy	23
5.1	Gross Domestic Product of Trinidad and Tobago	23
5.2	Key Economic Drivers (Activities)	24
5.3	Key Business Activity	26
5.3.1	Major Clusters or Value Chain Linkages.....	26
5.4	Challenges	29
5.4.1	Economic and physical infrastructure	29
6	Municipal MSME Profile	31
6.1	Municipal MSME Survey (2015)	32
6.1.1	General Characteristics	32
6.1.2	Size of Enterprise	33
6.1.3	Legal Status.....	34
6.1.4	Primary Business Activities	35
6.1.5	Markets and Annual Sales	37
6.1.6	Financing and Investment	37
6.1.7	Use of Internet	38

6.1.8	Technical Support.....	39
6.1.9	Key issues faced MSMEs.....	40
6.2	Partners in Local Area Economic Development in Trinidad	40
6.2.1	The Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development	40
6.2.2	The National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited	41
6.2.3	Micro-Enterprise Loan Facility	42
6.2.4	FairShare Programme	42
6.2.5	Employers' Consultative Association	43
6.2.6	Trinidad and Tobago Manufactures Association.....	43
6.2.7	Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce	43
7	Local Government System in Trinidad and Tobago and the CARILED Model	44
8	Recommendations for Local Economic Development.....	46
8.1	Strategic Sectors.....	46
8.1.1	Energy	46
8.1.2	Agriculture and Food	47
8.1.3	Tourism.....	47
8.1.4	Culture and Creative Industries.....	48
8.1.5	Commerce and Distribution	48
8.2	Proposed Projects and Implementation Plan	49
8.2.1	Establishing Institutional Structures within the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation for Local Economic Development	49
8.2.2	Recommended Sectoral Initiatives.....	52
8.2.3	Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan	54
8.3	Conclusion.....	62
	References	64

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Location of the Municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro Illustrating the Distribution of Communities.....	3
Figure 2.2: Age/Sex Composition of the Population of Mayaro/Rio Claro, 2000, 2011	6
Figure 2.3: Ethnic Composition of Mayaro/Rio Claro Population	7
Figure 2.4: Religious Affiliations in Mayaro/Rio Claro, 2011	8
Figure 2.5: Non-Institutional Population of Mayaro/Rio Claro by Educational Attainment	9
Figure 2.6: National Human Development Index 2008/2009 by Administrative Regions.....	11
Figure 2.7: Inequality-adjusted National Human Development Index 2008/2009 by Administrative Regions.....	12
Figure 2.8: Police Divisions of Trinidad and Tobago	15
Figure 2.9: Share of Serious Crimes by the Type of Crime in Eastern Police Division, 2010.....	16
Figure 5.1: Businesses in Operation 2000 – 2007.....	24
Figure 6.1: Distribution of MSMEs by Ethnicity.....	33
Figure 6.2: Male Ownership of MSMEs	34
Figure 6.3: Female Ownership of MSMEs	34
Figure 6.4: Length of Time in Operation	34
Figure 6.5: Distribution of Registered Versus Unregistered MSMEs	34
Figure 6.6: Distribution of MSMEs by Primary Business Activities.....	36
Figure 6.7: Annual Sales for MSMEs.....	37
Figure 6.8: Amount Invested in Plant Equipment and Other Assets	38
Figure 6.9: Reported Uses of Internet and Category of Business.....	39

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Changes in Non-institutional Population and Household Characteristics in Trinidad and Tobago and Mayaro/Rio Claro, 2000-2011.....	4
Table 2.2: Population Density of the Borough of Mayaro/Rio Claro, 2000 and 2011.....	5
Table 2.3: Percentage Distribution of Total Population of Mayaro/Rio Claro by Ethnic Group, 2011...7	
Table 2.4: Percentage Distribution of Mayaro/ Rio Claro's Total Population by Religious Affiliation, 2011.....	8
Table 2.5: Non-Institutional Population of Mayaro/Rio Claro by Age Group and Educational Attainment.....	9
Table 2.6: Non-Institutional Population of Mayaro/ Rio Claro by Age Group and Highest Qualification	10
Table 2.7: Various Statistics on Living Conditions in Mayaro/Rio Claro.....	13
Table 5.1: Trinidad and Tobago Selected Economic Indicators.....	24
Table 5.2: Enterprises by Sector and Size.....	25
Table 6.1: Domestic Definition of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.....	31
Table 6.2: Criteria Used to Define Mini-Micro, Micro and Small-sized Businesses	32
Table 6.3: Category of Business by Age of Respondent.....	32
Table 6.4: Category of Business by Sex of Respondent	33
Table 6.5: Length of Time in Operation by Size of Business.....	35
Table 6.6: Legal Status of MSMEs by Size of Enterprise	35
Table 6.7: Key Business Activities by Size of Enterprise.....	36
Table 6.8: Key Business Activities for MSMEs by Gender	36
Table 6.9: Primary Markets for Goods and Services by Size of Enterprise	37
Table 6.10: Key Suppliers of Financing for MSMEs by Size of Enterprise.....	38
Table 6.11: Businesses Reporting Routine Use of Internet and Category of Business	38
Table 6.12: Sources of Technical Assistance and Training.....	39
Table 6.13: Other Sources of Technical Assistance and Training.....	40
Table 6.14: Type of Technical Assistance and Training Received.....	40
Table 6.15: Rating of Challenges Faced and Category of Business.....	40

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BDC	-	Business Development Company
CAPA	-	Crime and Problem Analysis Unit
CARILED	-	Caribbean Local Economic Development Project
CARIRI	-	Caribbean Industrial Research Institute
CBOs	-	Community Based Organisations
CBTT	-	Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago
CCTP	-	Conditional Cash Transfer Programme
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
CARICOM	-	Caribbean Community
CSO	-	Central Statistical Office
CSEC	-	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CSME	-	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
ECA	-	Employers' Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago
EDD	-	Enterprise Development Division
EIF	-	Enterprise Investment Fund
ETIIC	-	Entrepreneurial Training Institute and Incubation Centre
GCE	-	General Certificate of Education
GORTT	-	Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
HDC	-	Housing Development Corporation
HDI	-	Human Development Index
HSC	-	Higher School Certificate
IBIS	-	National Integrated Business Incubation System
ICT	-	Information and Communications Technology
IFF	-	Innovation Financing Facility
INHDI	-	Inequality-adjusted National Human Development Index
LABIDCO	-	La Brea Industrial Development Company
LAEP	-	Local Area Economic Profile
LARPDU	-	Local Area and Regional Planning and Development Unit
LATT	-	Lake Asphalt Company of Trinidad and Tobago
LED	-	Local Economic Development
LEDO(s)	-	Local Economic Development Officer(s)
LEDU(s)	-	Local Economic Development Unit(s)

MCD	-	Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts
MDP	-	Municipal Development Plan
MEL	-	Micro Enterprise Loan
MIC	-	Metal Industries Company Limited
MLG	-	Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government
MOLSED	-	Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development
MOOCs	-	Massive Open Online Courses
MSE(s)	-	Micro and Small Enterprise(s)
MSM	-	Micro, Small and Medium
MSME(s)	-	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise(s)
MTI	-	Ministry of Trade and Industry
NEDCO	-	National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited
NESC	-	National Energy Skills Centre
NGC	-	National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Ltd
NGO(s)	-	Non-Government Organisation(s)
NHDI	-	National Human Development Index
OJT	-	On-the-Training
SC	-	School Certificate
SWD	-	Social Welfare Division
TCPD	-	Town and Country Planning Division
THA	-	Tobago House of Assembly
TLA		Trinidad Lake Asphalt
TT	-	Trinidad and Tobago
TT\$	-	Trinidad and Tobago Dollar
TVET	-	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
US\$	-	United States Dollar
UTT	-	University of Trinidad and Tobago
UWI	-	The University of the West Indies
WASA	-	Water and Sewerage Authority

1 Introduction

The Local Area Economic Profile (LAEP) for Mayaro/Rio Claro was developed with a view to build on the existing Municipal Development Plan and to introduce the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation¹ to the Local Economic Development (LED) approach. The LED approach was introduced to Trinidad and Tobago by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities through its Caribbean Local Economic Development (CARILED) programme in collaboration with the Caribbean Forum of Local Government Ministers, the Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum.

The LED approach aims not only to enhance the economic capacity of a local area for the purpose of improving living conditions but also strives to develop a business-friendly environment in which micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) could prosper. This approach has been advocated by the Local Area and Regional Planning and Development Unit (LARPDU) since it creates a framework through which local government, civil society, the private sector and the local community could collaborate to improve the local economy.

The profile of the Municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro² was developed with the aid of quantitative and qualitative methodologies pioneered in the LED approach, which captured vital information from a range of stakeholders in the municipality. The methodologies consisted of the following:

- A review of secondary data for the Municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro including the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation Spatial Development Plan, the Mayaro/Rio Claro Municipal Investment Plan and the Medium Term Policy Framework 2011 – 2014;
- Capacity Workshops to train and sensitise the Local Economic Development Officer (LEDO) about the approach to preparing a LAEP;
- The conduct of a survey of MSMEs (120 enterprises)*;
- The conduct of discussions with the Municipal Council to glean useful insights into opportunities for LED within the communities of Mayaro/Rio Claro;
- The conduct of focus group discussions with micro, small and medium entrepreneurs; and
- The conduct of interviews with the State Agencies, Private Sector Agencies and NGOs

This draft LAEP report will profile the MSME sector and its physical and social assets in as great detail as data permit.

¹ *Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation means the body corporate constituted by the Chairman, Aldermen, Councilors and electors of Regional Municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro to which the Municipal Corporation Act (Act No. 21 of 1990) applies.*

² *Municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro (also called the Regional Municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro) refers to the geographic area (whose boundaries are applied under Section 4 of the Municipal Corporation Act (Act No. 21 of 1990)).*

2 Area Information and Demography

2.1 Location

The Municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro is situated in southeast Trinidad and is bounded on the north by the Sangre Grande Municipality and on the northwest by Couva-Tabaquite-Talparo and Princes Town in the southwest. The Region is delimited by the Atlantic Ocean on the east and Columbus Channel in the south and so its coastal frontages are marked by Cocos Bay and Mayaro Bay on the east coast and Guayaguayare Bay and the adjacent coastline to Canari Point, on the south coast of the island. Mayaro/Rio Claro covers approximately 853 km². Figure 2.1 indicates the location and boundaries of Mayaro/Rio Claro.

The municipality is largely rural in character with 27 communities, which are located along the major arterial network and at their main intersections. The communities must be seen as part of a larger network of communities in south and east Trinidad to which they all relate. The towns of Sangre Grande and Princes Town are eminent in this spatial context and the intervening settlements of New Grant and Tableland are of significance to the west of the Municipality.

2.2 Geography

For the most part, the Municipality is low-lying to mildly sloping, consisting of sections of the Central Range in the north and the Southern Range in the south. The highest peak is the Trinity Hills rising to 303.9 metres (997 feet). The Region is drained by several major systems, the Pilote and Moruga Rivers in the south, the Poole-Ortoire River in the central sections, and the Navet River in northern areas. There are a number of mangroves on the Coast; the most extensive is the Nariva, which is the largest and most diverse wetland ecosystem in the country.

Trinidad has two easily distinguishable seasons; a dry and wet season. Taking into consideration that Trinidad does not vary much spatially with two distinct seasons due to its proximity to the equator. The municipality has a tropical climate therefore. The dry season, the period from January to May, is characterised by a tropical maritime climate with moderate to strong low-level winds, warm days, cool nights and showers due to daytime convection. A modified moist equatorial climate characterised by low wind speeds, hot humid days and nights, a marked increase in rainfall that results mostly from migrating and latitudinal shifting of equatorial weather systems, symbolises the wet season during June to December. Trinidad's geographical location puts it on the southern periphery of the North Atlantic hurricane basin.



Although the wet season is generally warmer than the dry season, Trinidad and Tobago's daily temperature cycle is more pronounced than its seasonal cycle. The long term mean (1971 - 2000) annual maximum and minimum temperatures are 31.3 °C and 22.7 °C respectively with a mean daily temperature of 26.5 °C. Trinidad's rainfall pattern displays a distinct bi-modal behaviour with June and November rainfall season maxima. Trinidad's primary rainfall mode occurs in June.

2.3 Population and Demography

2.3.1 Population and Household Size

According to the 2011 Population and Housing Census, the population of Mayaro/Rio Claro stood at 35,650 persons, representing some 2.7 percent of the national population of 1,328,019 persons. Between 2000 and 2011, the population of Mayaro/Rio Claro grew by 10.9 percent, twice the national increase of 5.2 percent. The population of Mayaro/Rio Claro is almost equally distributed in terms of gender, with a female population of 17,120 (48%) and a male population of 18,530 (52%).

The 2011 Census revealed that an average of 3.4 persons lived in the 10,351 recorded private households in Mayaro/Rio Claro. Although Mayaro/Rio Claro had one of the largest in household size in Trinidad and Tobago, there was a decline in the size of the average household since the 2000 Census of 0.4 persons, down from 3.8 persons per household (Table 2.1). However, the number of households in Mayaro/Rio Claro increased by 16.9 percent, which is comparable to the growth in the number of households observed in Trinidad (16.1%).

Table 2.1: Changes in Non-institutional Population and Household Characteristics in Trinidad and Tobago and Mayaro/Rio Claro, 2000-2011

Country/Region	Non-Institutional Population		Number of Occupied Private Households		Average Household Size		Average Annual Rate of Growth in Population	Average Annual Rate of Growth In Households
	2011	2000	2011	2000	2011	2000	2000-2011	2000-2011
Trinidad and Tobago	1,322,546	1,250,652	401,382	343,180	3.3	3.6	0.5%	1.5%
Trinidad	1,261,812	1,197,426	381,257	328,000	3.3	3.7	0.5%	1.4%
Mayaro/ Rio Claro	35,649	33,474	10,351	8,852	3.4	3.8	0.6%	1.5%

Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census

2.3.2 Population Density

Table 2.2 highlights the fact that in 2011, the region of Mayaro/Rio Claro was the least densely populated area of Trinidad and Tobago with a density of 44 persons per square kilometre. The region's population density is significantly lower than the national average of 259 person per square kilometre and is due to 2.7 percent of the national population resident in a land area that occupies

15.9 percent of the total land area of Trinidad and Tobago. Combined populations of Mayaro/Rio Claro and Sangre Grande, another sparsely populated region, occupy more than one third of the total national land area but comprise only 8.4 percent of the national population. As the population of Mayaro/Rio Claro rose, the population density of the region increased correspondingly from 39 persons per square kilometre in 2000. From 2000 to 2011, the region maintained its population density position relative to the other municipalities.

Table 2.2: Population Density of the Borough of Mayaro/Rio Claro, 2000 and 2011

Year	Density (per sq. m)	Population
2000	39	32,143
2011	44	35,650

*Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census
CSO 2000 Population and Housing Census*

2.3.3 Age Profile and Dependency

Figure 2.1 shows the region's age and sex pyramids for 2000 and 2011, reflecting the changing structure of the population over time. The 2011 pyramids for both the male and female population show growth in the youngest age group (0-4 years). A similar widening of the older age groups is also noted and reflects an aging population.

The population of Mayaro/ Rio Claro is relatively young, with more than half of the population (56.8%) under 35 years of which 24.2 percent is between 0 and 15 years. The age group between 10 and 19 years, the majority of whom make up the secondary school age population, accounts for 15.8 percent of the corporation's population. Persons, 65 years and older, made up 7.4 percent of the total population (Figure 2.1).

The population of dependent groups (all persons aged 0-14 years and 65+ years) decreased from 34.9 percent of the total population in 2000 to 30 percent in 2011. Conversely, the working-age population (persons between 15 and 64 years) increased from 65.1 percent in 2000 to 70 percent in 2011.

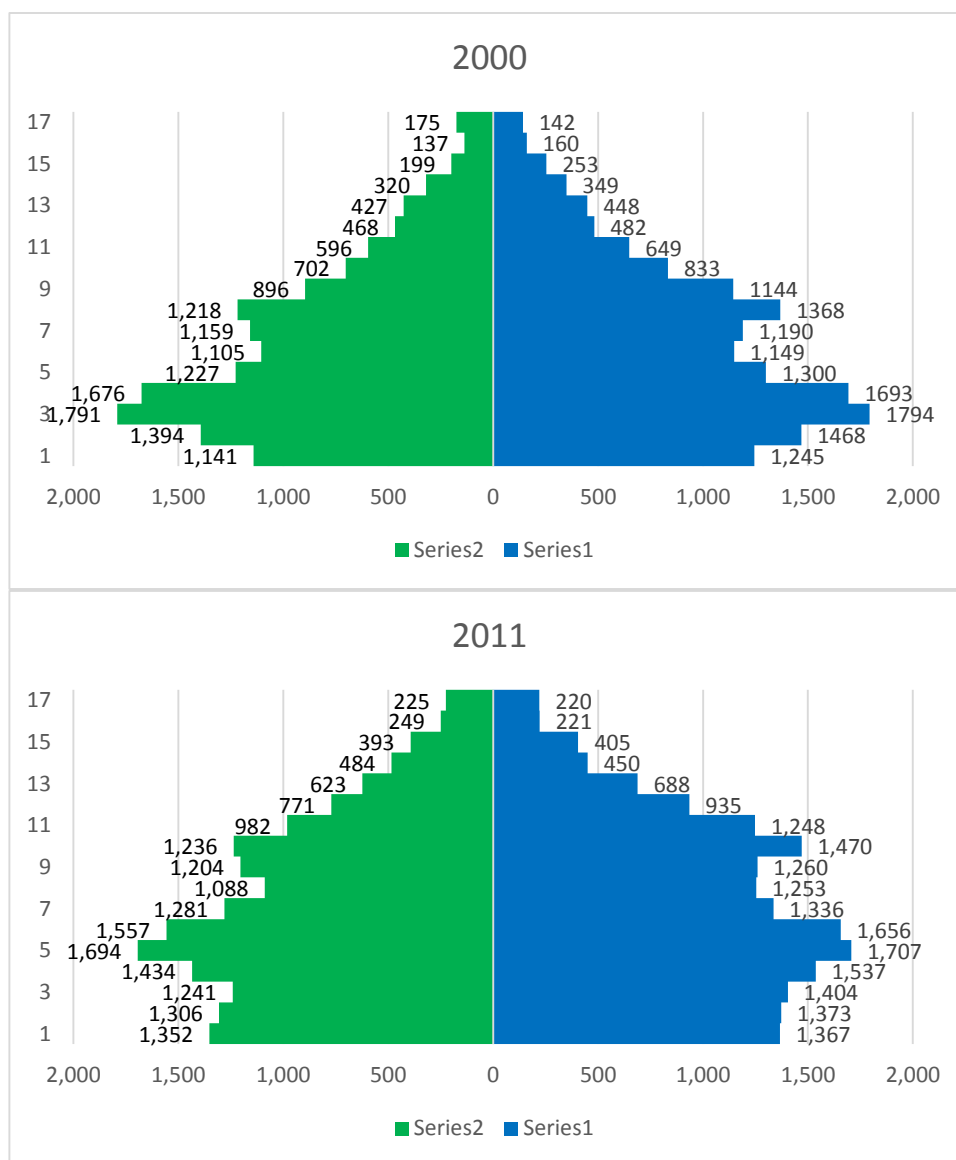


Figure 0.2: Age/Sex Composition of the Population of Mayaro/Rio Claro, 2000, 2011

Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census; CSO 2000 Population and Housing Census

The age dependency ratio (the ratio of the population between 0 and 14 years and 65+ years to the working- age population, between 15 and 65 years) for Mayaro/ Rio Claro in 2011 stood at 42.8 percent, which was above the national ratio of 41.9 percent and this was due primarily to the increased aging population. This ratio for Mayaro/Rio Claro represents an improvement compared to the 2000 figure of 53.6 percent. The child dependency ratio in 2011 was estimated at 32.2 percent, and elderly dependency at 10.6 percent.

2.3.4 Ethnicity

Trinidad and Tobago is a plural society and as such, the Mayaro/ Rio Claro's population has a diverse ethnic composition (Table 2.3). East Indians, with 48.8 percent of the total population, are the predominant ethnic group, followed by the Africans who made up 23.7 percent and 'Mixed-Other' group', which account for 15.2 percent (Figure 2.2).

Table 2.3: Percentage Distribution of Total Population of Mayaro/Rio Claro by Ethnic Group, 2011	
Ethnic Group	Percentage
African	23.7
Caucasian	0.1
Chinese	0.1
East Indian	48.8
Indigenous	0.1
Mixed - African/East Indian	9.1
Mixed - Other	15.2
Portuguese	0.0
Syrian/Lebanese	0.0
Other Ethnic group	0.0
Not stated	3.1
<i>Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census</i>	

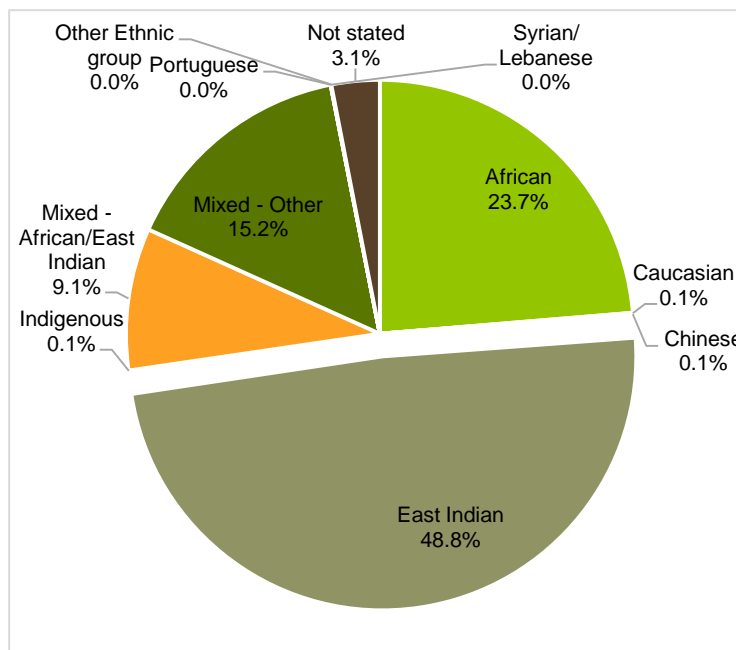


Figure 0.3: Ethnic Composition of Mayaro/Rio Claro Population

2.3.5 Religious Affiliation

In 2011, Hinduism was the largest single religious grouping in Mayaro/ Rio Claro (22.5% of the population), followed by Roman Catholic (18.3%), Pentecostal/Evangelical/Full Gospel (12.4%), and Baptist-Spiritual Shouter (6.9%). Interestingly, the groupings 'Other' and 'Not Stated' constituted a significant proportion of the population. Table 2.4 gives a distribution of the population by religious affiliations based on the 2011 Population and Housing Census, while Figure 2.3 shows the distribution of the population by religious groupings.

Table 2.4: Percentage Distribution of Mayaro/ Rio Claro's Total Population by Religious Affiliation, 2011

Religious Group	Percent
Anglican	1.6
Baptist-Spiritual Shouter	6.9
Baptist-Other	2.6
Hinduism	22.5
Islam	6.1
Jehovah's Witness	2.0
Methodist	0.0
Moravian	0.0
Orisha	2.1
Pentecostal/ Evangelical/ Full Gospel	12.4
Presbyterian/ Congregational	3.7
Rastafarian	0.2
Roman Catholic	18.3
Seventh Day Adventist	4.6
Other	4.9
None	2.1
Not Stated	10.2

Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census

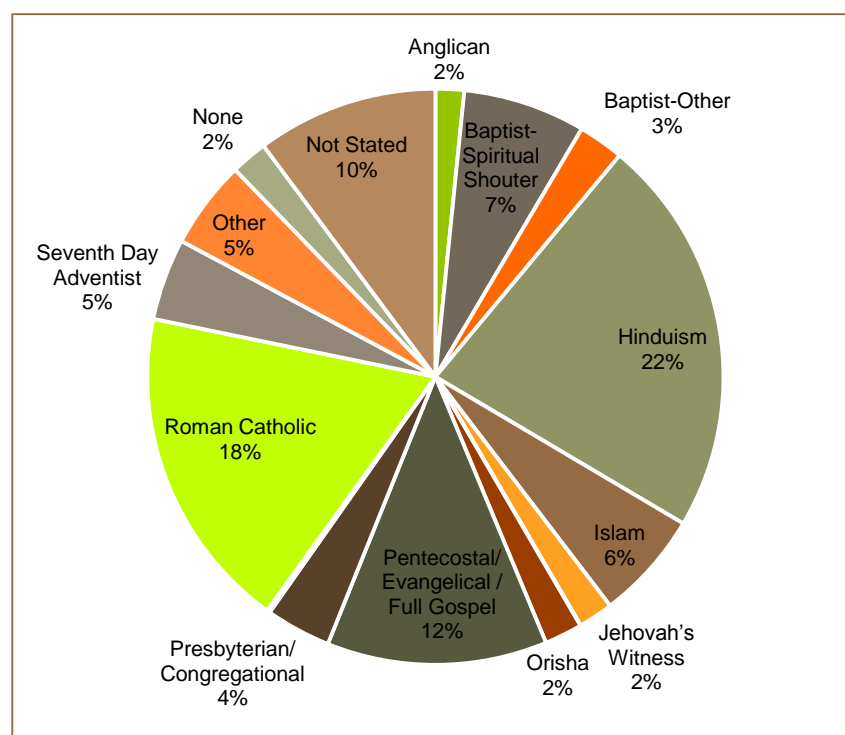


Figure 0.4: Religious Affiliations in Mayaro/Rio Claro, 2011

2.4 Educational Attainment

According to the 2011 Census, 39.7 percent of Mayaro/Rio Claro's population had attained only primary-level education, which is higher than the national figure of 29.8 percent (Figure 2.4). On the other hand, thirty-nine percent of population of Mayaro/ Rio Claro had attained secondary and post-secondary, making it 5 percent lower than the observed for the national population. Tertiary non-university level educational attainment stood at 3.7 percent, and for those who attained tertiary university-level education, 4.1 percent. Males outnumbered females up to the primary and secondary levels. However, the number of females who attained tertiary level education was greater than the number of males. Table 2.5 shows the educational attainment of the Mayaro/ Rio Claro population by age group.

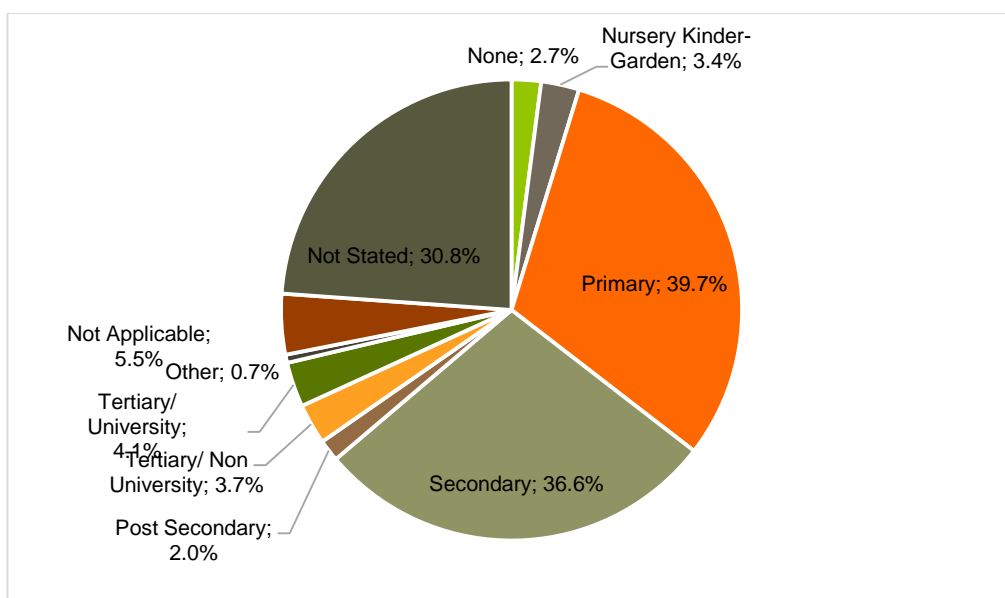


Figure 2.5: Non-Institutional Population of Mayaro/Rio Claro by Educational Attainment

Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census

Table 2.5: Non-Institutional Population of Mayaro/Rio Claro by Age Group and Educational Attainment

Educational

Age	Total	None	Nursery/ Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post- Secondary	Tertiary/ Non University	Tertiary/ University	Other	Not Applicable	Not Stated
Mayaro/ Rio Claro	35,649	951	1,228	14,146	13,041	706	1,308	1,447	263	1,957	603
0 – 4	2,719	-	754	9	-	-	-	-	-	1,957	-
5 - 9	2,678	124	315	2,198	-	-	-	-	-	-	41
10 - 14	2,644	59	120	1,415	1,007	-	-	-	-	-	43
15 - 19	2,971	41	7	341	2,211	109	101	104	32	-	25
20 - 24	3,401	31	2	305	2,164	107	302	413	54	-	24
25 – 29	3,213	47	2	776	1,643	99	269	277	44	-	57
30 – 34	2,617	23	2	759	1,327	87	173	181	24	-	41
35 - 39	2,342	28	1	689	1,246	66	122	137	17	-	35
40 - 44	2,464	55	-	946	1,153	71	94	85	15	-	46
45 - 49	2,706	74	1	1,343	1,003	55	73	69	22	-	66
50 - 54	2,230	79	5	1,343	562	42	64	60	22	-	54
55 - 59	1,705	73	5	1,112	326	36	40	52	20	-	41
60 - 64	1,310	68	5	908	216	16	32	30	3	-	32
65 - 69	933	56	3	711	89	7	15	18	6	-	28
70 - 74	798	69	3	608	50	5	15	13	3	-	32
75 -79	470	43	2	368	25	6	3	7	1	-	15
80+	445	81	1	313	18	1	6	1	-	-	24

Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census

A look at the highest qualification attained by Mayaro/Rio Claro's population showed that some 56.8 percent of those 15 years or older had no qualifications. This group would also include some persons who may not have written examinations to receive certification. Table 2.6 shows that 3.4 percent of respondents indicated that their highest qualification attained was school leaving certificate; with another 1.3 percent reporting that they attained CSEC Basic as their highest qualification.

Almost 18.2 percent of the population attained General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary ('O') level/CSEC General or Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE)/GCE 'A' Levels as their highest educational qualification, while 4.5 percent were granted Diplomas, Associate Degrees or Equivalent Certification. Another 1.4 percent would have achieved either a Bachelor's degree, Post Graduate Diploma / Professional Qualification or a Master's degree. Less than zero percent of the population 15 years and older earned doctorate degrees. More women attained Bachelors, Masters and professional certification than their male counterparts. This can be seen in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Non-Institutional Population of Mayaro/ Rio Claro by Age Group and Highest Qualification

	Mayaro/ Rio Claro		Female Population		Male Population	
	No of Persons	Percentage of Population	No of Persons	Percentage of Population	No of Persons	Percentage of Population
Total	35,649	100.0	17,120	100.0	18,529	100.0
None	20,251	56.8%	9,197	53.7%	11,054	59.7%
School Leaving Certification	1,204	3.4%	562	3.3%	642	3.5%
CSEC Basic	452	1.3%	234	1.4%	217	1.2%
GCE 'O'/CSEC Gen/SC*	6,149	17.2%	3,360	19.6%	2,789	15.1%
GCE "A"/CAPE/ HSC**	368	1.0%	250	1.5%	117	0.6%
Diploma or Equivalent Certificate of Achievement	1,297	3.6%	602	3.5%	694	3.7%
Associate Degree Higher Diploma	306	0.9%	180	1.1%	126	0.7%
Bachelor Degree	349	1.0%	223	1.3%	126	0.7%
Master Degree	68	0.2%	34	0.2%	34	0.2%
Post Graduate Diploma/ Professional Qualification	67	0.2%	32	0.2%	35	0.2%
Doctorate	11	0.0%	3	0.0%	8	0.0%
Other	107	0.3%	44	0.3%	63	0.3%
Not Stated	5,019	14.1%	2,397	14.0%	2,622	14.2%

SC: School Certificate; Higher School Certificate

Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census

About 43 percent of persons in the age groups 20-24 years to 40-44 years had qualifications of CSEC/GCE 'O' levels and above. About 56 percent of the population in the 20-24 age grouping had obtained CSEC/GCE "O" level passes and above, demonstrating higher levels of educational qualification compared to the older age groups. Further, as much as 47 percent of the population within the age group of 15-19 years to the 54-59 years reported that they did not have any certification, thereby placing them in a "low skill trap" where they are not likely to participate in certification programmes on their own unless motivated to do so.

2.5 Living Conditions in Mayaro/ Rio Claro

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/CSO Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Atlas notes,

“Giving people the choice to enjoy a long and healthy life; being educated; having access to resources that enable one to live in dignity; and being able to participate in decisions that affect one’s community are core capacities for human development.”

The National Human Development Index (NHDI), developed by CSO is based on Human Development Index (HDI) developed by UNDP and measures the level of human development of Trinidad and Tobago and its sub-regions, using three basic dimensions of human development – a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. Figure 2.5 shows the NHDI for the various regions within the country. Mayaro/ Rio Claro was ranked the lowest with an NHDI at 0.592. Measurement of the Inequality-adjusted NHDI (INHDI)³ ranked Mayaro/ Rio Claro as the lowest in the country with respect to human development with a value of 0.523 (Figure 2.6). With regard to the dimensions of health, education and income for the INHDI, Mayaro/ Rio Claro was ranked among the lowest.

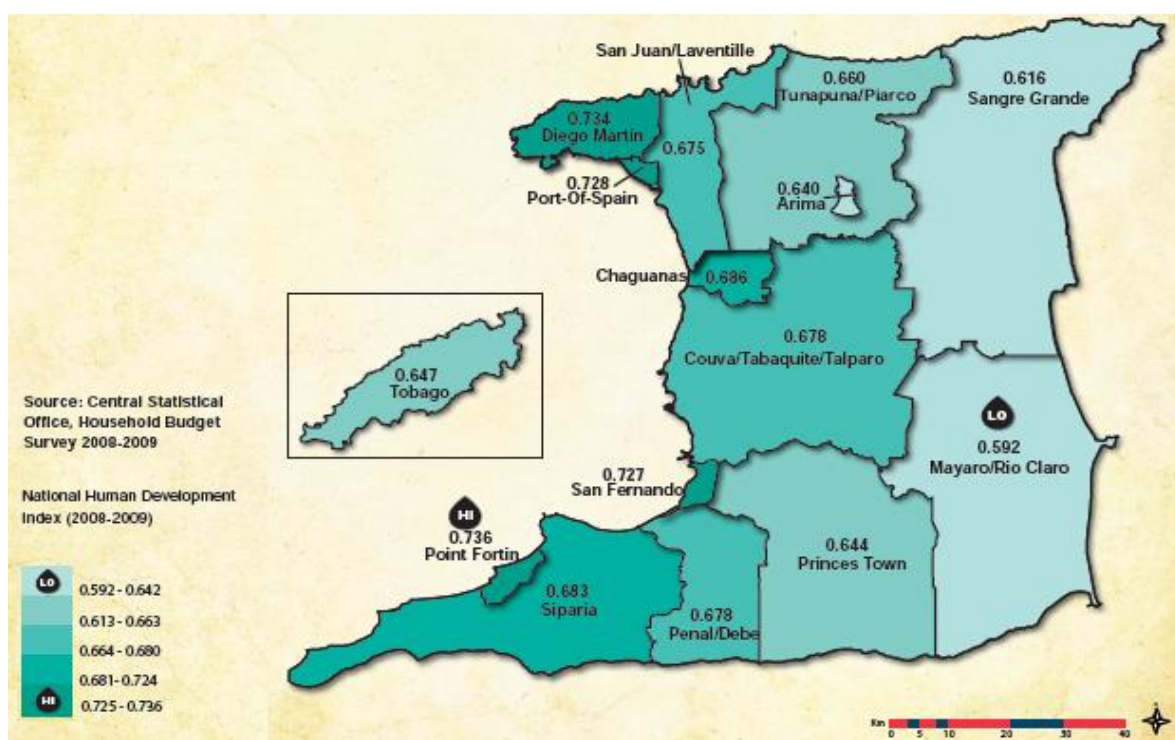


Figure 0.6: National Human Development Index 2008/2009 by Administrative Regions

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012

³ Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012. Web site source: http://www.planning.gov.tt/sites/default/files/content/mediacentre/documents/Human_Development_Atlas.pdf.

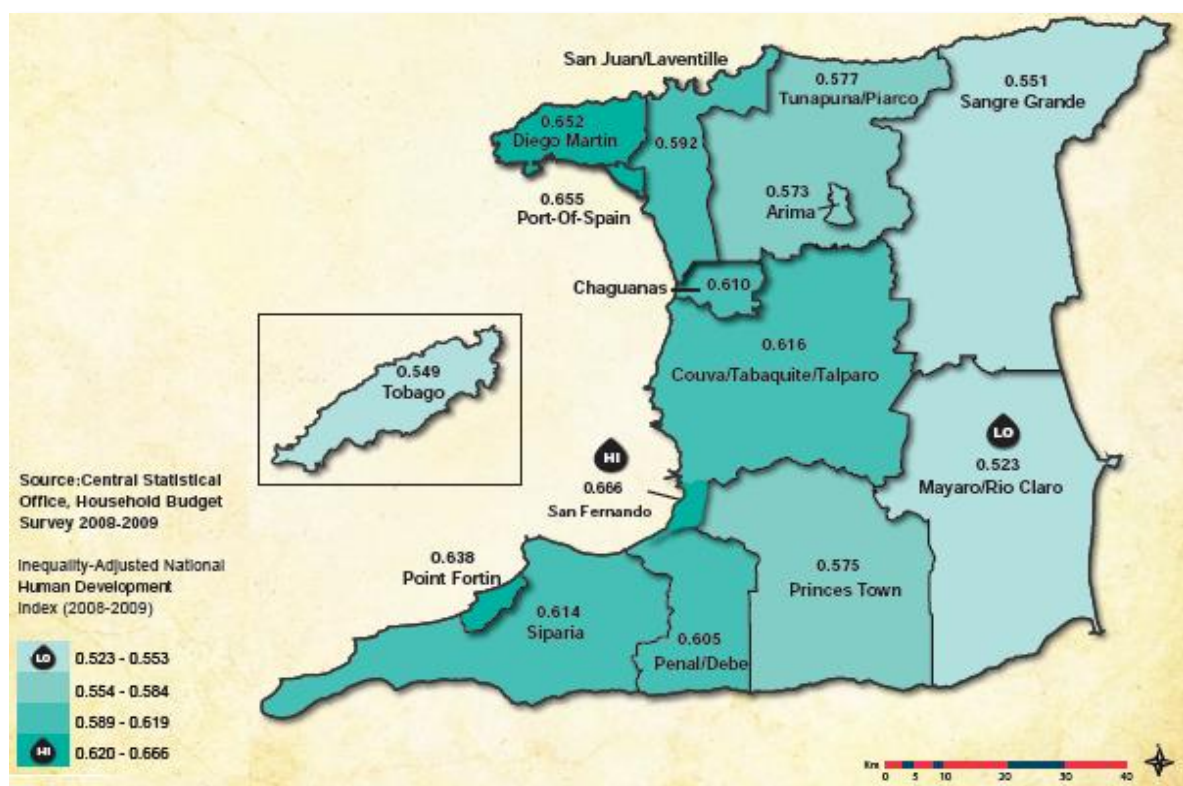


Figure 0.7: Inequality-adjusted National Human Development Index 2008/2009 by Administrative Regions

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012

Table presents statistics highlighting living conditions in Mayaro/ Rio Claro taken from the Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Atlas. The Atlas provided information on the NHDI and its dimension indicators, which were disaggregated at the sub-regional level to compare levels and disparities among different sub-populations within the country. Data from the Atlas highlight the following:

- Mayaro/ Rio Claro had the second lowest household income per capita per annum.
- Mayaro/ Rio Claro, with an education attainment rate of 64.5 percent for both females and males between the ages of 6 and 16 years, had the lowest education attainment rate. Similarly the region had one of the lowest rate (53.2%) for persons above 17 years and older who had attained secondary level education and higher.
- Mayaro/ Rio Claro scored the highest in the gender inequality index indicating that gender inequalities was higher in Mayaro/ Rio Claro than any other region in the country.
- Mayaro/ Rio Claro had a relatively high Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), indicating a higher incidence and intensity of poverty compared to those areas with low indices.
- The region had a higher than national average rate of adolescent births.
- Mayaro/ Rio Claro had the fourth lowest female labour force participation rate in the country (46.2%).

- Mayaro/ Rio Claro recorded a high life expectancy comparable to the national average of 73.2 years for both sexes; 70.2 years for males; and 76.5 years for females. However, Mayaro/ Rio Claro has a relatively high incidence of chronic diseases of 22.5 percent.
- Consumption of iodised salt was the sixth highest in Mayaro/ Rio Claro, indicating that children from the region were at low risk of iodine deficiency disorder, which in turn can decrease susceptibility to miscarriages and still births.
- The municipality recorded the third lowest population percentage without adequate sanitation facilities,⁴ with 4.4 percent of its households.⁵

Table 2.7: Various Statistics on Living Conditions in Mayaro/Rio Claro

Indicators	Value	Rank and Rating out of the Country's 15 Administrative Regions
Total population, 2011	35,650	3 rd (low)
National human development index, 2010	0.592	1 st (low)
Population having chronic illnesses ⁶ , 2008/2009 (%)	22.5	8 th (medium-high)
Primary and secondary educational attainment rate ⁷ , 2008/2009 (%)	64.5	15 th (low)
Secondary and higher educational attainment rate ages 17 and above, 2008/2009 (%)	53.2	2 nd (low)
Household income per capita (TT\$/US\$)	21,178/ 4,594	2 nd (low)
Inequality-adjusted national human development index, 2010	0.523	1 st (low)
Gender inequality index, 2010	0.374	15 th (high)
Adolescent fertility rate ⁸ , 2010	51.4	10 th (medium-high)
Multidimensional poverty index (MPI), 2006	0.019	11 th (medium-high)
Intensity of multidimensional poverty, 2006 (%)	24.8	2 nd (low)
Incidence of multidimensional poverty, 2006 (%)	7.6	13 th (high)
Life expectancy at birth, 2010 (years)	73.9	9 th (low-medium)
Households in which a child died, 2006 (%)	4.7	14 th (high)
Population without electricity, 2006 (%)	3.5	12 th (medium-high)
Population access to without clean drinking water, 2006 (%)	0	1 st (low)
Population access to without improved sanitation ⁹ , 2006 (%)	4.4	13 th (low)

⁴ Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012. Web site source: http://www.planning.gov.tt/sites/default/files/content/mediacentre/documents/Human_Development_Atlas.pdf.

⁵ Anecdotal evidence suggests that this situation may have greatly improved over the last eight years.

⁶ The chronic illnesses include: Heart Disease, Cancer, HIV/AIDS, Lupus, Kidney Disease, Sickle Cell Anemia, Lung Disease, Epilepsy, Neurological Disorder, Clinical Mental Disease.

⁷ Primary and secondary educational attainment rate refers to the percentage of children between ages 6-16 who have attained primary or secondary school level of education.

⁸ Number of birth among women 15-19 years per 1,000 women (CSO: Population, Social and Vital Statistics Division 2010)

⁹ Population without Access to improved Sanitation Facilities (2006) Population without access to improved sanitation facilities refers to the proportion of the population with sanitation facilities that are not improved or sanitation facilities which are improved but shared with other households (the toilet is shared) (Ministry of the People and Social Development, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey III, 2006). Improved sanitation facilities for excreta disposal are the followings: flush or pour-flush to a piped sewer system, septic tank, or latrine; ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrine and pit latrine with slab.

Indicators	Value	Rank and Rating out of the Country's 15 Administrative Regions
Population not consuming iodised salt (%)	60.2	6 th (low-medium)
Labour force population – male (%)	76.4	3 rd (high)
Labour force population – female (%)	46.2	12 th (low)

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012

2.6 Crime

The Human Development Atlas acknowledges that

“Crime and Violence continues to be one of the most critical areas that need to be addressed in the context of national development. Economic growth and meaningful democracy will not be possible unless crime and violence is brought under control and all citizens can feel safe and secure.”

Figure 2.7 illustrates the fact that Mayaro/ Rio Claro is policed by the Eastern Police Division of Trinidad and Tobago. The 2010 Citizen Security Survey showed that in the Eastern Police Division, compared to all other areas, had an average percentage of victims of crime (20.8%) within the last 10 years and persons reporting that crime was a problem in their community (49.5%). Fourteen percent of the Eastern Police Division's respondents indicated that there was a gang in their neighbourhood. Residents in the Eastern Police Division also felt safe and this was reflected in the survey by the second highest level of persons who felt very secure (4.6%). However, half of the respondents felt fearful in the last year about the possibility of becoming a victim of crime and did not have much confidence in the police services in effectively controlling the crime problem in the country (45.4%).

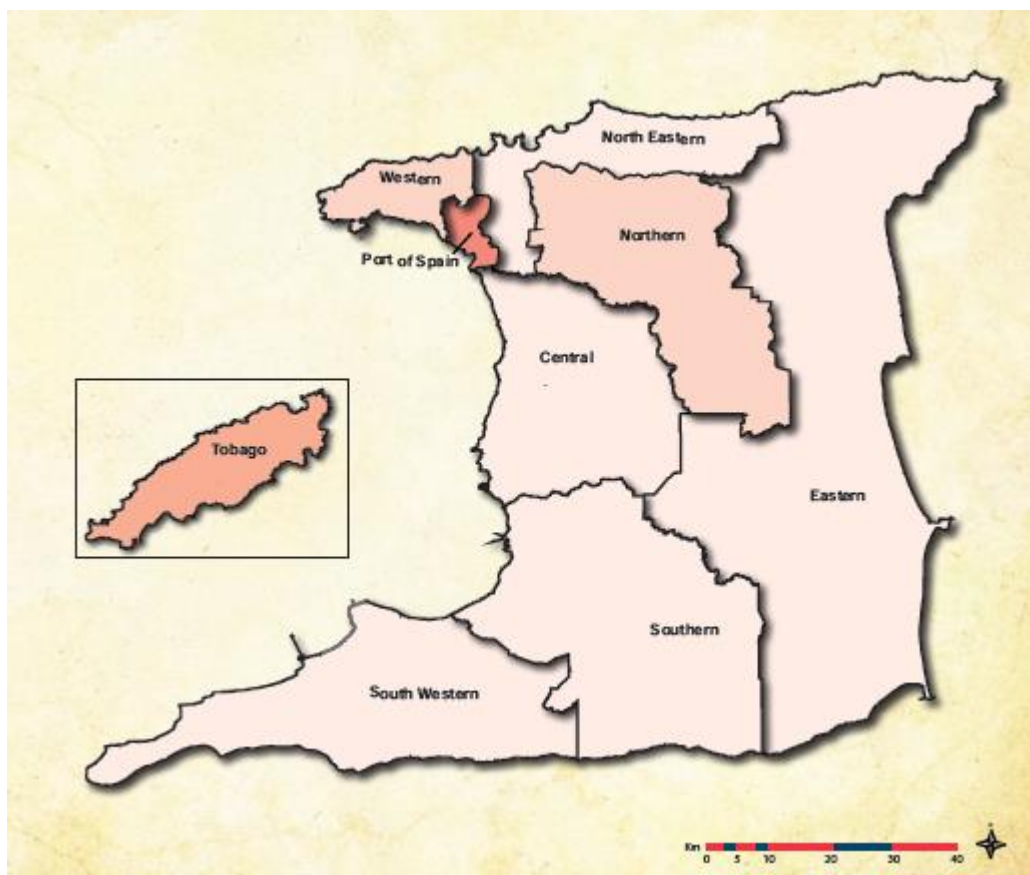


Figure 0.8: Police Divisions of Trinidad and Tobago

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012

According to statistics on crime and violence in the various police divisions compiled by the Crime and Problem Analysis Unit (CAPA) of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, the Eastern Police Division had the second lowest level of reported serious crime in the country, of 1,057 per 100,000 persons. It was less than half the number reported in Port of Spain Division, which had the highest reported level of serious crime (4,800.5 reports). Contiguous police divisions witnessed notably higher serious crimes being reported; with 2,010, 1,396 and 1,153 cases per 100,000 being reported in the Northern, Central and Southern police divisions respectively. Figure 2.8 highlight the fact that serious crimes of major concern in the Eastern Police Division included burglaries and break-ins, general larceny and robberies, with 316, 123.2 and 191.8 reported cases per 100,000 persons, respectively. With the highest number of reported cases, it would also be important to pay particular attention to rape, incest and other sexual offences (132.2) and narcotic offences (102.4).

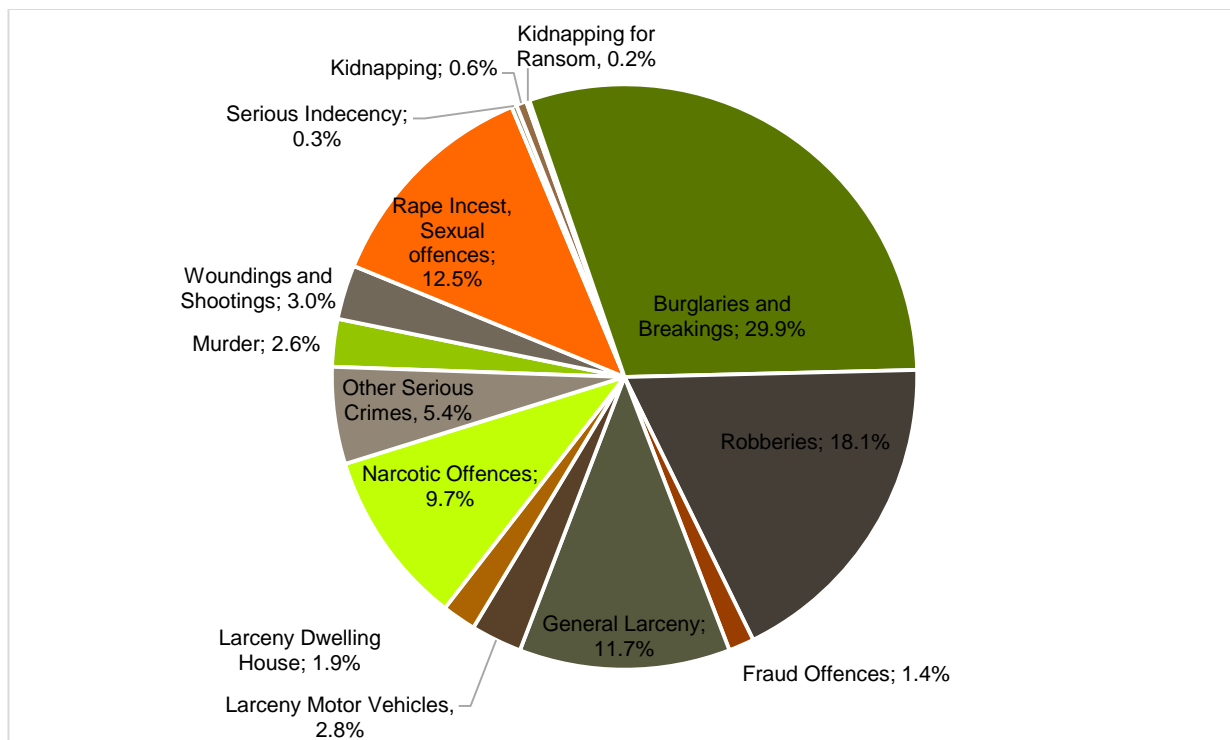


Figure 0.9: Share of Serious Crimes by the Type of Crime in Eastern Police Division, 2010

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012

3

Land Use and Land Resources

3.1 Land Use and Resources

The Mayaro/Rio Claro Municipality presents a wide range of geographical attributes such as coastal lands, the mountainous terrain and flat lands. Coastal lands in the municipality are located both along the southern coastline near the Columbus Channel and along the Eastern coastline which borders the Atlantic Ocean. The municipality is also home to both the eastern end of the southern range as well as the eastern foothills of the central range. Flat lands within the area are located largely along the coastal areas of the eastern side of the municipality, with the remaining lands being of an undulating nature.

A considerable expanse of public lands exists across Mayaro/Rio Claro, most of which is either protected or forested. More than 50 percent of the land throughout the municipality has been protected by special legislation. This includes the Nariva Swamp, which is protected as a Ramsar Site and a National Park, in addition to the Victoria Mayaro Forest Reserve, the largest forest reserve in the country. Considering the magnitude of protected public lands located within the municipality, it is not surprising that a proportion of these lands are vital for communities dependent on agriculture, hunting and ecotourism. Additionally, some lands have been developed for housing purposes, with a considerable amount of lands being developed for farming purposes in communities including Biche, Cedar Grove, Charuma, Cushe, Cascadoux, Ecclesville, Kernahan, La Savanne, Mafeking, Maloney and Union Village.

A small number of major settlements exist within the municipality, while ribbon development has been observed in Mayaro-Guayaguayare, Cunapo Southern Main Road and Naparima-Mayaro. This trend is notably prevalent in western parts of the Naparima-Mayaro stretch. The principal settlements in the municipality include Biche, Guayaguayare, Mayaro and Rio Claro while smaller communities are located along the ribbon development south of Mayaro and north of Rio Claro. Though major urban centres may not be large when compared nationally, the town centre of Rio Claro emerges as the largest in the municipality. Both Mayaro and Rio Claro are centred on a transportation hub and significant amounts of business activity. On the contrary, Biche and Guayaguayare are settled in linear patterns and as such, centralised development is not clearly prevalent.

3.2 Physical Infrastructure

Institutions for the provision of social services are present and distributed across the municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro. In spite of the prevalence of such institutions, facilities and robust infrastructure are indeed inadequate at the community levels.

Access to primary and secondary healthcare in the municipality remains a challenge with the need for a major hospital to cater to the needs of the energy sector and resident population being established. Adequately maintained and ethically managed leisure and sporting facilities is necessary in the municipality. The presence of sporting facilities must contribute not only to healthier lifestyles among the burgesses of the municipality but must also inspire and enable greater partaking in such activities.

The access to and timely delivery of social and community services and facilities is still a pressing need for the municipality. The Social Welfare Division (SWD) of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services offers a range of Social Assistance Grants to persons in need, who have little or no means of support through its District (F) sub office in Rio Claro. Services provided include Senior Citizens' Pension, Public Assistance Grant and Disability Grant. The Family Services Division within this ministry also operates out of the Social Welfare Building in Rio Claro.

A Social Services Centre was opened in Rio Claro in 2011, which serves as the base for the Regional Social & Human Development Council that brings together all the public social service providers of the area as well as Private Sector Organisations and NGOs, to coordinate efforts at poverty reduction and social services delivery. The services of the Centre are not yet integrated even though they fall under the ambit of one central authority. The Conditional Cash Transfer Programme (CCTP) is offered to residents of the municipality through a regional office of the Ministry of Social Development in Princes Town. Community development plays an integral role in this region particularly through the provision of outreach training courses. Women are the major participants in these courses which provide a foundation for advancement into entrepreneurship.

4 Municipal Physical and Social Assets

4.1 Physical Infrastructure

4.2.1 Information and Communications Technology Infrastructure

The municipality is well served with telecommunications. Residents in most areas have access to telephone services – fixed and mobile, cable television and internet access although some rural and remote locations may suffer unreliable access. In the urban centres, however, access is good. There are locations where information services are provided to the public, and the Mayaro Resource Centre has a UWI Open Campus which offers access to online educational programmes in addition to onsite classes. This means that students can access all free on line educational programmes through Massive On-line Open Courses (MOOCS) now available from some of the most reputable tertiary institutions like Harvard University and Stanford University.

There are two public libraries in the region; Mayaro and Rio Claro; they possess stations for up to five users and provides free Wi-Fi as well. There is Guayaguayare Star.tt ICT Access Centre which provides Cyber Café Facilities, ICT training and conference room facilities. E-learning is also offered at the ICT Centre through free online Microsoft Learning Resources and knowledge.tt; e-Government Services. Printing, faxing and free access to the Wi-fi Lounge and patio are also available.

4.2.2 Storm water Management

There are parts of the municipality that have been subject to flooding. Indeed, one of the worst episodes of flooding occurred in the first half of 2015, when a storm event led to the destruction of parts of the main road in the Manzanilla area and curtailed access from the Municipality to the north east of the country, to the road through the forest by way of Biche. The storm revealed the weakness in the storm water management in the low-lying areas of the municipality and the importance of treating with sea defences in the light of sea rise. There is a study currently being undertaken on beach erosion that has relevance to the issue of storm water management and might be linked to regional drainage plans.

4.2.3 Transportation (Land, Air and Sea)

The Municipality suffers from low quality in the road infrastructure. The existing roads are inadequate relative to the level of traffic that is now carried. Heavy vehicles service the energy industry in the Southeast quadrant of the municipality on roads that are too narrow and lacking in the base to sustain the weights of these vehicles. Work is due to start on the development of a highway from San Fernando that should lead to a major improvement in access from the west of the country. Major access routes into the municipality include the Manzanilla Mayaro Road, the Naparima-Mayaro Road, the Cunapo Southern Main Road, the Tabaquite Road and lastly the Guayaguayare Mayaro Road. These main roads are all supported by a system of secondary roads which provide access to the numerous communities prevalent within the municipality.

The establishment of a Port at Point Galeota should improve access by sea. However, it seems that the port's use so far is limited to the needs of the oil and gas sector operating in the offshore, and its services have not been extended to the rest of the municipality. A heliport at Galeota is used mainly by the energy sector in the transport of personnel and for air ambulance service for accidents in the offshore operations of the sector.

4.2.4 Water Supply and Distribution

Water supply and distribution have been the focus of attention in the more recent past and a number of areas that had to rely on truck-borne supplies are now served with piped access on a daily basis or according to some regular schedule.

4.2.5 Electricity

Electricity supply is universal in the area, and there would be very few households without access to electricity. As expansion of hotel and other facilities takes place, there may be need to increase power supply to the area.

4.2.6 Wastewater Management

Wastewater management and treatment remain a major problem to be addressed in the municipality. WASA is responsible for the development and implementation of a Waste Water Plan for the municipality. As it stands, wastewater disposal systems remain largely at the household level. Nevertheless, limited private and publicly owned wastewater treatment plants exist in the municipality. The Rio Claro Secondary School in addition to the Mayaro Composite School¹⁰ are both home to waste water treatment plants, which came out of efforts in the 1970s to ensure that a number of Junior and Senior Comprehensive Schools were constructed with their own wastewater facilities¹¹. The continued mushrooming of housing developments in the municipality also precipitated the construction of a Wastewater Treatment Plant and Pumping Station in Rio Claro to cater to the needs of the Mora Heights Housing Development.

4.2.7 Solid Waste Management

The municipality is largely unserved by a sewer network. Solid Waste management plants are planned for the area. The Municipal Corporation has responsibility for the removal and disposal of household waste, and provides services in most communities. However, there are squatter settlements and there is illegal dumping and burning of garbage.

¹⁰ Water and Sewerage Authority of Trinidad and Tobago. (2007). WASA Business Plan 2007-2011 Revised Draft. Retrieved from Water and Sewerage Authority of Trinidad and Tobago: <http://www.ric.org.tt/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/wasa-business-plan-for-2007-2011-revised-draft.pdf>

¹¹ Water and Sewerage Authority of Trinidad and Tobago . (2015). Retrieved from WASA Home Page: <http://www.wasa.gov.tt/Forms/SchoolQuiz2015/Study%20Guide%202015.pdf>

4.3 Social/Cultural Infrastructure

4.3.1 Dwelling and Building Stock

There has been significant expansion in the housing stock in the municipality over the last decade with private developments mainly. There has also been an increase in vacation homes and hotel and guesthouse facilities, and there are plans for major developments in the tourism in the municipality, which will lead to new facilities in the medium term. There is, however housing in a state of disrepair in poor communities especially in spontaneous settlements. Close to one fifth of households in the municipality were constructed with wood being the material used for their outer walls, while just under one tenth of households in the municipality were constructed using plywood/box board.

4.4 Social Facilities

4.4.1 Education

The municipality is reasonably well supplied with school places at the primary and secondary levels allowing relatively ease of access to the relevant cohorts. There has been developing some level of services for post-secondary education, with Distance Education facilities and UWI Open Campus facility at the Mayaro Resource Centre. Scholarships to pursue tertiary education has been offered to students through BPTT's Brighter Prospects Programme. The Mayaro Resource Centre (MRC) is a nucleus for development. The centre has been instrumental in addressing one of the biggest concerns for Mayaro/Guayaguayare residents: The lack of tertiary level educated persons in the community. Today the MRC is the home of the Brighter Prospects programme and the University of the West Indies Open Campus.

The NESC Skills Centre in the region of Mayaro augers well for apprenticeship, construction and maintenance training. In the field of business, the School of Higher Education & Learning (SHEL) recently opened a Business School in the municipality which provides Level 4-6 of the ABE Diploma Programme with specializations in Travel and Tourism, Marketing, Business Management and Human Resource Management. In the near future, SHEL will provide full degree programmes inclusive of entrepreneurial management. Since its inception, SHEL has attracted sixty-one students from various localities in this region. In late 2013, the prospect of establishing a campus of COSTAATT in Rio Claro was reviewed. However, to date no progress has been made on this endeavour.

4.4.2 Health

While primary health care facilities are relatively well distributed through Health Centres in the Municipality, secondary care services are available only at some considerable distance in Sangre Grande and in San Fernando, or at least one hour away. This means that residents are at risk in the case of medical emergencies that require immediate treatment and intervention.

4.4.3 Disaster Management

Within the Mayaro/Rio Claro Corporation, there exists the Disaster Management Unit which is linked to the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management, the national organisation charged with the responsibility of disaster preparedness for the nation. The Disaster Management Plan for the region recognises the possibilities of natural and man-made disasters. The presence of offshore drilling and

on-land gas pipelines means that there are risks of oil spills, explosions and industrial accidents that can be of disaster proportions. A major Fire Station is being constructed in Mayaro that would add to the firefighting facilities of the area which have been solely a small Fire Station in Rio Claro.

4.4.4 Social Services and Community Development

Social services agencies beyond health and educational facilities are available across the various communities. A Social Services Centre was opened in Rio Claro in 2011, which serves as the base for the Regional Social & Human Development Council that brings together all the public social service providers of the area as well as Private Sector Organisations and NGOs, to coordinate efforts at poverty reduction and social services delivery. The services of the Centre are not yet integrated even though they fall under the ambit of one central authority. Community development plays an integral role in this region particularly through the provision of outreach training courses. Women are the major participants in these courses which provide a foundation for advancement into entrepreneurship.

4.4.5 Recreation, Sports and Entertainment

There are facilities for the popular sports of cricket and football in most of the major population concentrations – Mayaro, Rio Claro and Guayaguayare. Mayaro has a major public facility as well for basketball, which can support major tournaments. There are fewer facilities to encourage the participation of girls and women in sports.

The area is also amenable to Sports Tourism and can be marketed for off-season training for international athletes and sports people.

In most communities, there are privately owned locations for recreation and entertainment in the form of bars and gaming machines. Recent passage of legislation has legalised the operation of private members clubs that exist in the municipality.

5 The Area Economy

5.1 Gross Domestic Product of Trinidad and Tobago

The economy of Trinidad and Tobago witnessed reduced growth over the period January to September 2014 of 0.7 percent which followed on a period of expansion of 2.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 2013, see Table below. A decline in the performance of the energy sector during the first two quarters of 2014 was the largest factor contributing to the sluggish growth observed.

Nevertheless, this was largely offset by continued growth in the non-energy sector for the same period. Increased production in petrochemicals and natural gas in the third quarter resulted in an expansion of the energy sector of 2.8 percent subsequent to the previous two quarters of decline. This third quarter expansion could be attributed to growth of 3.6 percent observed in natural gas production when compared with the same period in 2013 when large-scale maintenance activity occasioned a reduction of 4.6 percent.

The momentum in fourth quarter non-energy sector growth was sustained in 2013 of 1.9 percent was sustained into the first three quarters of 2014 where an average growth rate of 2.2 percent was observed. The continued growth resulted largely due to strong activity in the finance, distribution and construction sectors. Substantial increases in local cement sales precipitated average growth rate of 3.1 percent observed in the construction sector over the first three quarters of 2014. Robust activity in the construction sector was reflective of numerous continuing large-scale public sector developments including but not limited to the Port at Point Galeota, the National Aquatic Centre, the Children's Hospital, and the Point Fortin Highway. Greater production of materials required for construction, such as cement, caused the growth observed in manufacturing sector growth of 1.2 percent. New car sales drove the growth observed in the distribution sector while resilient activity in commercial banking stimulated financial sector growth of 3.2 percent. At the national level, agriculture grew on average by 3.5 percent for the first 3 quarters of 2014.

The third quarter of also 2014 witnessed increased inflationary pressures following comparative calm over the three preceding quarters. Inflationary pressures were propelled largely by prices of food and greater spending by consumers as demonstrated by precipitous growth in new car sales, robust growth in consumer lending and notable increases in government spending. Headline inflation by the third quarter of 2014 increased from 3.4 percent for the first two quarters to roughly 8 percent by the end of the third quarter of 2014. Food price inflation for the third quarter rose to 18.2 percent up from an average of 4.4 percent over the preceding two quarters of 2014. Increases in the prices of vegetables, fruit and other food products were the primary contributing factors. Furthermore, the most recent official estimates on the labour force have indicated that unemployment is at a historic low of 3.1 percent for the first quarter of 2014. Robust labour force participation and increasing job creation have resulted in the improvement in the unemployment rate when compared to the rate of 3.7 percent observed in 2013. Increases in employment were most notable among personal services, social services and community services. To a lesser extent, increased labour force participation was observed in the agriculture, water and electricity and manufacturing sectors.

Table 5.1: Trinidad and Tobago Selected Economic Indicators

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Jan-Sep-14
Real GDP Growth (%) (2000 = 100) ¹²	-3.4	-0.3	-1.2	0.3	2.1	0.7
Energy Sector	1.3	1.8	-3.7	-1.9	0.2	-1.5
Non-Energy Sector	-6.6	-1.8	0.6	1.8	3.5	2.2
Agriculture	-0.7	-15.7	1.2	-2.4	0.3	3.5
Manufacturing	-6.6	0.8	1.7	-1.3	2.6	1.2
Construction	-2.5	-5.8	-2.4	-0.9	3	3.1
Financial Services	-1.8	2.5	0.9	2.5	4.8	3.2
Inflation Rate (%) ¹³						
(period average)	7	10.5	5.1	9.3	5.2	4.6
(end of period)	1.3	13.4	5.3	7.2	5.6	7.8
Unemployment Rate (%) ¹⁴	5.3	5.9	4.9	5	3.7	3.1 ¹⁵

Sources: Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, Central Statistical Office and Ministry of Finance

5.2 Key Economic Drivers (Activities)

The municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro is home to a wide range of business enterprises. As can be seen in Figure below, the mix of micro, small and medium sized enterprises has gradually been changing over time. The proportion of micro sized enterprises fell from just over 95 percent of all MSMEs in 2000 to roughly 86 percent in 2007. In contrast, small and medium sized enterprises increased in proportion from roughly 1 percent and 3 percent respectively in 2000 to 3 percent and 11 percent in 2007.

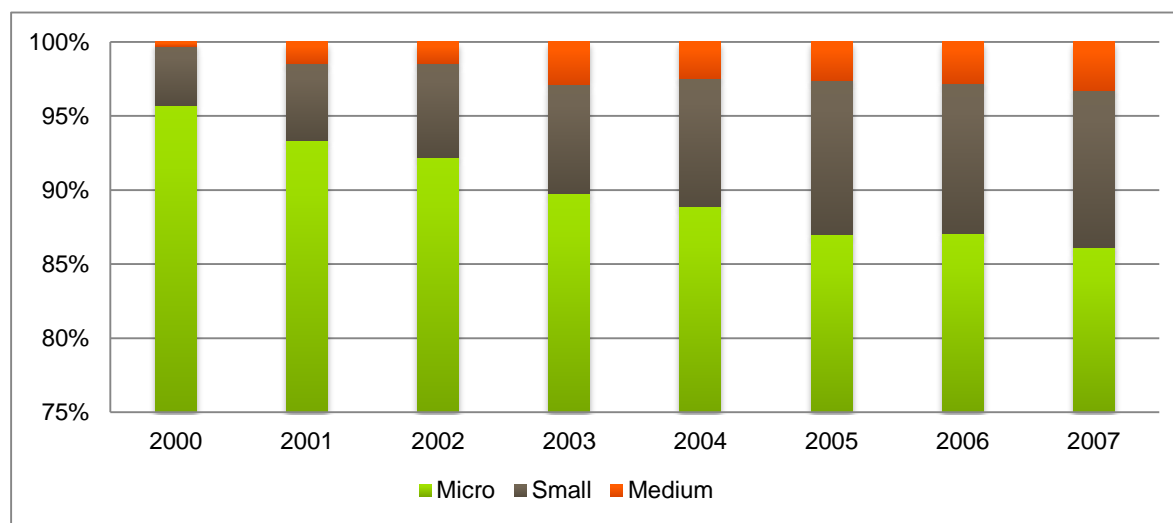


Figure 5.1: Businesses in Operation 2000 – 2007

¹² Growth rates are derived from the Central Bank's Quarterly Index of Gross Domestic Product

¹³ Changes in the Index of Retail Prices (RPI), January 2003 = 100

¹⁴ This represents the average of the four quarters

¹⁵ For the period January - March

Consistent with that observed in municipalities around the country, the enterprises in Mayaro/ Rio Claro operate predominantly in the Retail and Distribution, Personal Services and Construction Sectors, accounting for 56.15, 15.38 and 11.08 percent of all actively operating enterprises, see Table 5.2 below. While micro enterprises tend to operate more in Distribution and Personal Services, Small, Medium and Large Enterprises exhibit greater activity in the Construction and Energy Sectors. Interestingly, enterprises were largely concentrated in the communities of Rio Claro (35.69%), Guayaguayare (14.62%), Mayaro (14%), Poole (4.46%) and Navet Village (4%).

Table 5.2: Enterprises by Sector and Size

Sector	Size of Enterprise					
	Micro (1 to 5)	Small (6 to 25)	Medium (26 to 50)	Large (50 and over)	Branch	Grand Total
Distribution	67.09%	30.36%	21.43%	25.00%	26.67%	56.15%
Personal Services	19.64%	7.14%	7.14%	16.67%	6.67%	15.38%
Construction	2.81%	16.07%	42.86%	33.33%	13.33%	11.08%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	2.04%	10.71%	0.00%	0.00%	53.33%	4.92%
Petroleum and Other Mining Industries	2.30%	12.50%	28.57%	16.67%	0.00%	4.31%
Transportation, Communication and Storage	1.79%	7.14%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%	2.46%
Educational and Cultural Community Services	1.28%	3.57%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.85%
Wood and Related Products	1.28%	5.36%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.38%
Assembly Type and Related Industries	0.77%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.77%
Hotels and Guest Houses	0.26%	5.36%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.62%
Chemicals and Non-Metallic Minerals	0.26%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.46%
Food Processors and Drink	0.26%	1.79%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.46%
Printing, Publishing and Paper Converters	0.26%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.15%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Central Statistical Office

The offshore region of the municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro is the base of some of the nation's largest deposits of natural gas and crude oil, which has served and continues to serve as a major driver of both local and national economic development. Natural gas extracted from offshore deposits is brought on shore to Mayaro/Rio Claro using a network of Natural Gas Pipelines which connect the fields with the Point Lisas Industrial Estate and Atlantic LNG in Point Fortin for exportation and use in industry. The onshore fields of the municipality are among the oldest in the world and completely exploited.

While certain agricultural products such as Coconut, Coffee and Cocoa have fallen in prominence over time, the municipality contributes significantly to the domestic food market with the production of root crops such as Cassava, and Dasheen in areas including Charuma, Cushe and Navet and for Watermelons and other short term crops in areas including Biche, Kernahan and Plum Mitán. There are fishers located near coastal areas such as Guayaguayare, Ortoire and Plaisance often engaged

in fishing. There are persons in these communities involved in fish processing activity. There are also fishers based at smaller landing sites in Grand Lagon, St. Ann's, St. Joseph and St. Margaret.

5.3 Key Business Activity

5.3.1 Major Clusters or Value Chain Linkages

5.3.1.1 Eco Tourism

The area is blessed with the amenities for sustainable eco-tourism development. Even with the expansion of infrastructure and influx of workers and an increase in the resident population, it is likely to retain the sense of remoteness that its rivers, wet lands, forests, and long coastline and sparse settlements create. The Manatees that frequent the Nariva swamp distinguish the area as the only such location in the Eastern Caribbean. The forests of the area are inhabited by a range of fauna, including forest dwelling animals and birds, which have their home in nearby South America. Thus, in addition to the tourism potential of sun, sea and sand available on its beachfront of over ten miles, the area offers the possibility for eco-tourism with its unique flora and fauna. There is also the possibility of establishing an indigenous zoo that builds on the initiatives already taken by a small group of enthusiasts.

The physical characteristics of the municipality are propitious for greater focus and direct policy towards the development of an agricultural cluster. The municipality has a land area of roughly 852 square kilometres, much of which is very well suited for agricultural endeavours. Greater emphasis on this area is in fact in line with one of the six strategic business clusters identified by the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development, namely food sustainability¹⁶. There are farmers currently engaged in the production of root crops such as Cassava, Yam, Dasheen and short-term crops such as watermelon and pumpkin. These products are sold largely in local markets, with substantial share of the production also transported from the municipality to be sold in Markets in Debe, San Fernando, Macoya and Port of Spain.

5.3.1.2 Cluster Structure

There are a number of clusters that have emerged naturally in the economic space of Rio Claro/Mayaro. The production of root crops suggests that various stages of the value chain beyond primary production might be considered, with packaging, grading and some agro-processing taking place in Rio Claro as a potential location. There is some embryonic fish processing taking place in Guayaguayare which can be expanded if there is greater stability in fish catch in the southeast fisheries. The bottling of coconut water is another possibility in the agro-processing chain, with the resuscitation of the coconut plantations.

The swamps and lagoons in the low-lying coastal zone can be exploited with a sensitive aquaculture that relies on brackish water: shellfish like conch, and some species of crab are examples. All of such economic initiatives will require coherent planning and collaboration between a number of

¹⁶ Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development. 2013 . "Building Competitive Advantage: Six Strategic Business Clusters and Enablers." Government of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago.

public sector agencies and the private sector of the area, including start-ups and micro, and SMEs in the municipality.

5.3.1.3 Collective Efficiency

Much depends on state agencies and their capacity to facilitate development in this community. All the major agencies of Government involved in the provision of services are represented in the community. The Ministries of Labour and Micro-enterprises (within which there is the Cooperative Department), Food Production, Education, Tertiary Education and Community Development have a presence in the municipality. However, the arrangement of meetings by the Municipal Corporation and the Consulting Group involved in this project, based on the CARILED Model, was one of the few occasions when the local representation met with the other agencies involved in the provision of services to the communities of the municipality. Clearly, there will be need for institutionalisation of these arrangements around the development of economic activity.

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services has, as conscious policy, arrangements for the coordination of initiatives in respect of the delivery of a range of services at a decentralised level. There is no such comparable arrangement among the agencies involved in the facilitation of delivery of services related to economic organisation and economic development. The development of micro-businesses and SMEs has to be contextualised in the economic thrust that might be facilitated by the Government, and involving the private sector and NGOs operating in the area. The Municipal Corporation is the natural locus for the coordination of facilitation of services of state agencies, in support of economic activity in the municipality.

The Mayaro Rio Claro Spatial Development Plan (2010-2020) remains relevant in respect of the programme of economic development outlined more than five years ago. Outside of the oil and gas sector, and related downstream activities which were expected to remain an enclave in the economy of the municipality, the economic drivers identified consisted of:

- Industrial development and commerce in Rio Claro much of which will be anchored in agro-processing operations packing and packaging downstream of increased agricultural output and promotion of food production in the municipality;
- Fishing and fish processing operations in Ortoire, Mayaro, and Guayaguayare;
- Financial services in Rio Claro and Mayaro; and
- Commerce and Distribution including micro and SMEs in the main and smaller developing urban centres.

The more recently outlined strategy of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago proposes the building of competitive advantage in the economic transformation of the country with a focus on six strategic business clusters and related enablers:

- Energy;
- Food Sustainability;
- Culture and Creative Industries;
- Maritime Industries;
- Tourism; and
- Financial Services.

The people of the Municipality can be geared for a dynamic participation in the tradable components of five of these clusters: it is not expected that the municipality will assume centre-stage in the creation and development of a Trinidad and Tobago presence in international financial services in the short to medium terms. However, in the other five areas, there will be need for the various agencies to collaborate with the Municipal Authorities in facilitating coherence and ensuring that a directional thrust in the allocation of resources and in the mobilisation of the people in the area, and more particularly, promoting enterprise from the ground up.

5.3.1.4 Innovation Capacity

Ordinarily, but not exclusively, innovation is driven by persons with tertiary level education and training. There is limited provision of tertiary educational facilities in the area, and in particular in the fields of Science and Technology. There are tertiary level graduates resident in the municipality and, as well, students enrolled in tertiary level institutions in various parts of the country. There is a Learning Resource Centre in Mayaro, which provides access to programmes being delivered through the internet by institutions in the Caribbean and from other parts of the world. Thus, although the percentage of the population with secondary and higher educational attainment is lower in the municipality than the national average, some catching-up is occurring.

There are areas in the local economy which invite personnel with innovative capacity. The processing of tropical produce from the area, the development of new products, and systems of production for small scale operations, the adaptation of equipment and processes imported from abroad, are areas worthy of focus. The Municipal authorities would be well advised to secure the services and expertise of agencies like CARIRI, the University of the West Indies and the University of Trinidad and Tobago, where necessary. The staff of some of these agencies especially of the Universities might well be placed and indeed pleased to contribute, thereby ensuring that their theoretical knowledge can be tested in practical applications. The upgrading of the population generally and the workforce in particular, through education and training will need to be addressed in complementing the thrust in economic expansion and in the harnessing of innovative initiatives.

5.3.1.5 Role of Policies

Economic development policies have focused and/or need to focus on the following:

- Expansion of the existing productive potential, development of new activities and the generation of viable employment opportunities;
- Raising the profile of the municipality as a destination in international and domestic tourism;
- Stimulation of new growth activity in tourism, ecotourism and entertainment but with sensitivity to protecting the amenity resources of the area; and
- Stimulation of supporting commercial and distribution activities for a growing community.

In the context of the thrust to devolution and decentralisation of governance that is explicit in the Act creating the Municipal Corporation, the Municipal Authorities are the agencies expected to play a major role in the implementation of policy set at the national level. Moreover, as an entity responsible for representing the views and aspirations of people of an area, the Corporation can be expected to

contribute to the articulation of policy at the national level. The Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government (MLG) is geared to implement policy regarding:

- Building and land development;
- Public health and sanitation;
- Community Services;
- Roads, drains and infrastructure;
- Burial and cremation services; and
- Information and education.

The adoption of the CARILED model implies a more expansive role, and, therefore a widening of the interpretation accorded to the functions above.

5.4 Challenges

5.4.1 Economic and physical infrastructure

There are deficiencies in the existing infrastructure. The most serious challenge is the road infrastructure serving the area. The road access to Rio Claro from Sangre Grande requires major upgrading in linking the various villages that are engaged in agricultural production. The coastal access from Manzanilla to Mayaro and then from Mayaro to Guayaguayare along the coast needs to be widened in any upgrading. Having regard to the traffic that it carries, its present condition makes it hazardous to life and limb.

There are plans to undertake a major highway that would link San Fernando in the west to Mayaro in the east. This coast to coast upgrade will be the most important development for the south east, in decades and should create a major transformation, in bringing produce out of the area, as well as contributing to elevating Mayaro and the coastal zone to an international tourism destination. The distributional and commercial implications are considerable for micro businesses and SMEs in the region.

5.4.2 Brain Drain

The slow pace, or lack of development has been a factor in the difficulty that the area experiences in retaining personnel with tertiary level or post-secondary education and training. Such personnel, who chose to remain resident in the area, invariably seek employment outside the region. The enclave sector employs little labour and only a small percentage of the regional work force can be accommodated. Limited skills and education put residents at a disadvantage in accessing the few employment opportunities.

However, over the last ten years, there has been an increase in the number of residents with appropriate qualifications. In sum, the promotion and facilitation of a number of the lead sectors and the associated clusters, as well as general business and enterprise supported by an improved infrastructure will result in the creation of a range of employment opportunities. This would arrest and reverse the drain of talent and brains from the area.

5.4.3 Labour shortfall

The GORTT has been sensitive to the slow pace of development in communities of the Municipality of Mayaro Rio Claro. The response of the state has been the promotion of state employment programmes to mop up unemployment and underemployment in the area. The net effect has been an increase in the reserve price of labour even in elementary occupations. This has slowed the expansion of SMEs which find it difficult to attract workers whose effective rate of pay is based on a very short labour data – four hours at most – for a full day's pay.

5.4.4 Lack of parking and inadequate road networks

There are already problems of parking in a few of the urban centres: with the expansion of urban areas, there is need for this to be addressed as an inherent feature of the growth of business and commerce in the municipality. The road infrastructure still reflects requirements appropriate to the mid-20th century. The expansion of the road network has to adopt a horizon of at least a decade or more. In that regard, the existing road network and infrastructure are severely inadequate for a municipality that is going to grow in the years ahead given the commitment of the Government to decentralise economic activity and to create new nodes of growth in areas of the country that have suffered marginalisation and retardation in their development.

6 Municipal MSME Profile

It is recognised that MSMEs are a key driver of socio-economic growth in national economies. The Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago in 2008/2009 undertook a comprehensive study of the small and medium sized business in the country, the results of which were presented in the report entitled, “Developing Viable Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago: Challenges and Priorities - The Structure, Performance and Networks of SMEs in Trinidad and Tobago.”

There is considerable variation about what constitutes a micro, small or medium-sized (MSME) enterprise. There are various definitions in the literature that tend to be largely dependent on the purpose of the study being undertaken at the time, or the use to which the results are to be put by the particular author(s) or organisations. At the time of the study sponsored by the Central Bank, there was no national definition on MSMEs. The study acknowledges that businesses tend to be lumped either into one grouping called the “SME Sector” or further broken down into the subcategories of “micro, small and medium-sized” enterprises.

The report revealed that the definition then currently in use by the Central Bank, the then Business Development Company (BDC) and the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development (MOLSED) was based on the Report of the Cabinet-appointed Task Force on Small and Medium Enterprise Development (June 1995). This considered three factors: number of employees, assets and sales (Table 18). As a result of the limited information available for SMEs on sales or assets, the Central Bank’s study employed the approach of using “at least” the number of employees as a guide for placing a firm into one category or another.

Table 6.1: Domestic Definition of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Size	No. of Employees	TT\$ Assets (Excluding Land and Buildings)	TT\$ Sales
Micro	1 – 5	< \$250,000	< \$250,000
Small	6 – 25	> \$250,000 - <\$1,500,000	> \$250,000 - <\$5,000,000
Medium	26 – 50	> \$1,500,000 - <\$5,000,000	> \$5,000,000 - <\$10,000,000

Source: The MOLSED quoted in the Report of the Cabinet Appointed Task Force on Small and Medium Enterprise Development (June 1995) as quoted in the report: Developing Viable Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago: Challenges and Priorities – The Structure, Performance and Networks of SMEs in Trinidad and Tobago

Currently, Trinidad and Tobago has a draft Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) Policy which provides definitions for micro- mini-micro and small-sized businesses which were equivalent to the categories previously used. During this study on Tobago, it was clear that not many persons were aware of the new definition. The criteria for the new MSE definition are provided in the table below (Table 19).

Table 6.2: Criteria Used to Define Mini-Micro, Micro and Small-sized Businesses

Size of Enterprise	Number of Employees	Asset Value (TT\$)	Turnover (per annum) (TT\$)
Mini-micro	≤1 including owner/manager	Up to \$100,000	Up to \$250,000
Micro	≤5 including owner/manager	\$100,001 - \$500,000	Up to \$2,000,000
Small	≤25 including owner/manager	\$500,001 - \$5,000,000	Up to \$10,000,000

Source: MOLSED, Enterprise Development Division, 2013. Draft Micro and Small Enterprise (MSE) Policy for Trinidad and Tobago 2013-2016, September 2013.

6.1 Municipal MSME Survey (2015)

The Municipal MSME Survey was conducted over the period April – May 2015 among 120 MSMEs operating within the confines of the municipality. The results of this survey are presented in the following categories:

- General Characteristics;
- Size of Enterprise;
- Legal Status;
- Primary Business Activities;
- Employment;
- Markets and Annual Sales;
- Financing and Investment;
- Use of Internet;
- Technical Support;
- Key issues faced MSMEs; and
- Impediments to MSME Development

6.1.1 General Characteristics

Of the 120 Entrepreneurs surveyed (17 women and 103 men), the majority (97.5 %) were over the age of 36 (Table). Entrepreneurs under the age of 35 years accounted for merely 1.7 percent of the sample.

Table 6.3: Category of Business by Age of Respondent

Size of Business	Less than 35 years		36-55 years		More than 55 years		Age Not Given		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Micro Mini	2	5.0%	37	92.5%	0	0.0%	1	2.5%	40	100.0%
Micro	0	0.0%	37	92.5%	3	7.5%	0	0.0%	40	100.0%
Small	0	0.0%	40	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	40	100.0%
Total	2	1.7%	114	95.0%	3	2.5%	1	0.8%	120	100.0%

The results of the survey suggest that men in the municipality exhibited a greater tendency towards entrepreneurship with 85.8 percent of MSME operators being male when compared to female operators, which accounted for 14.2 percent of the sample.

Table 6.4: Category of Business by Sex of Respondent

Category of Business	Male		Female		Total	
Micro Mini	33	82.5%	7	17.5%	40	100.0%
Micro	35	87.5%	5	12.5%	40	100.0%
Small	35	87.5%	5	12.5%	40	100.0%
Total	103	85.8%	17	14.2%	120	100.0%

In the municipality, entrepreneurs of East Indian descent (61%) accounted for the largest proportion of operators, followed by persons of Mixed ancestry (35%) and persons of Chinese descent (3%). Notwithstanding the fact that more than 20 percent of the population was of African descent in the last Census, only one percent of the entrepreneurs were African.

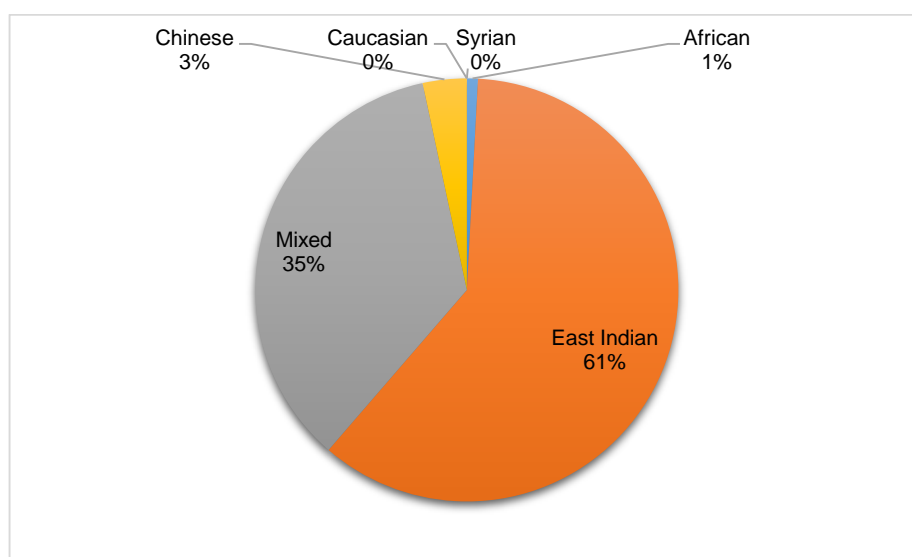


Figure 6.1: Distribution of MSMEs by Ethnicity

6.1.2 Size of Enterprise

The survey targeted equal numbers of enterprises falling into the categories Micro Mini, Micro and Small. However, gender differences were observed among those businesses in operation with female entrepreneurs operating a larger proportion of Micro Mini (41%) enterprises. In contrast, male entrepreneurs operated more Micro and Small enterprises (34% and 34% respectively) (Figure and Figure).

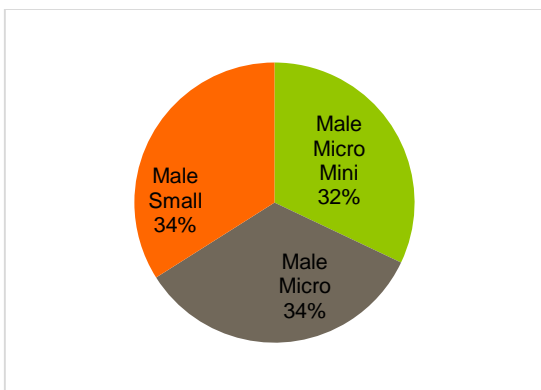


Figure 6.2: Male Ownership of MSMEs

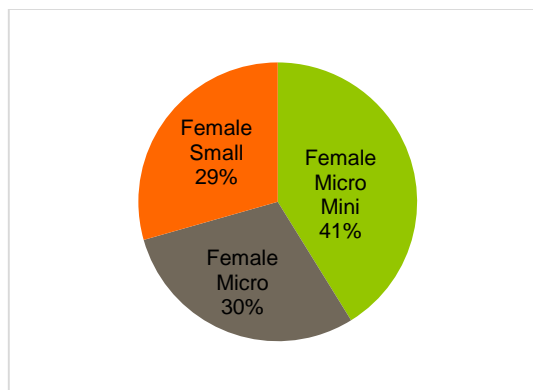


Figure 6.3: Female Ownership of MSMEs

6.1.3 Legal Status

Figure illustrates that 79 percent of businesses were in operation in excess of ten years, while 30 percent of the other businesses operating in the municipality were in existence for no longer than 5 years. Of the enterprises surveyed, only one was in operation for one year or less, (see Table 0.1). The vast majority of enterprises (97%) were formally registered businesses with only a small percentage of the sample (3%) operating in the informal sector¹⁷, see Figure . In this context, the non-registration of unincorporated enterprises is indicative of an absence of formal registration under tax or commercial laws, or consistently with relevant regulations laid by national regulatory bodies. It is believed however that the informal sector may indeed be substantially larger; however, the survey could not capture the true size of the informal sector within the municipality.

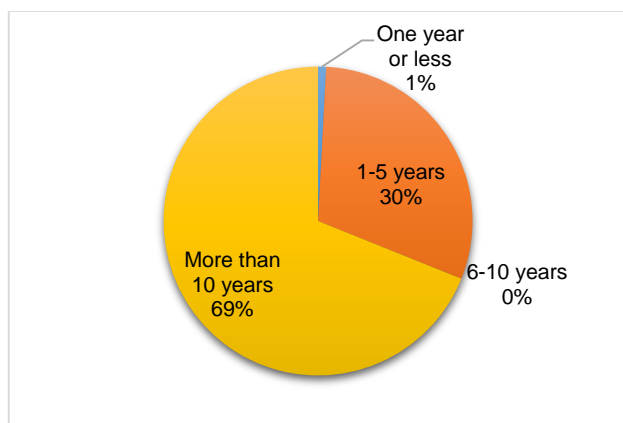


Figure 6.4: Length of Time in Operation

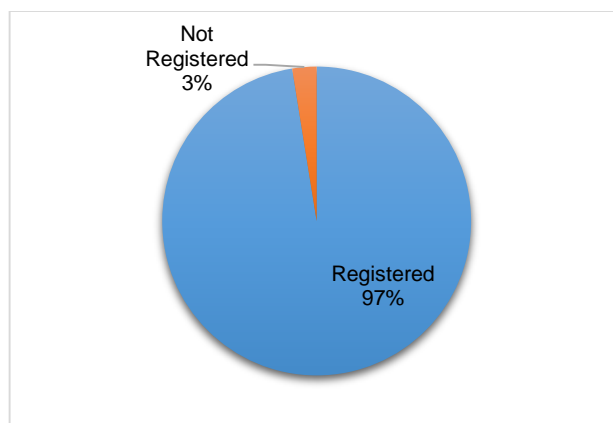


Figure 6.5: Distribution of Registered Versus Unregistered MSMEs

¹⁷ The 1995 National Baseline Survey (Characteristics and Constraints of Small Businesses in Trinidad and Tobago prepared in 1996) defines an informal business as “a small firm with less than 5 workers (no more than 2 of whom are regular employees), which does not have any license, permit or certification to operate” (p. 89).

Table 0.1: Length of Time in Operation by Size of Business

Number of Years in Business	Micro Mini		Micro		Small		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
One year or less	1	2.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	.8
1-5 years	24	60.0	7	17.5	5	12.5	36	30.0
6-10 years	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
More than 10 years	14	35.0	33	82.5	35	87.5	82	68.3
Not stated	1	2.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	.8
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	120	100.0

The survey revealed that of those registered businesses, the majority (72.5%) were registered as sole proprietorships, followed by Limited Liability Companies (20.8%) and Partnerships (4.2%) (Table). A relationship was observed between the size of enterprise and the legal status of the business, with 42.5 percent of small businesses being registered as Limited Liability companies as compared to 0 percent of Micro Mini enterprises. In addition, 92.5 percent of micro mini enterprises were registered as sole proprietorships as compared to 47.5 percent of small enterprises.

Table 6.6: Legal Status of MSMEs by Size of Enterprise

Legal Status of Business	Micro Mini		Micro		Small		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Sole Proprietor	37	92.5	31	77.5	19	47.5	87	72.5
Partnership	0	0.0	1	2.5	4	10.0	5	4.2
Limited Liability Company	0	0.0	8	20.0	17	42.5	25	20.8
Cooperative	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Not stated	3	7.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	2.5
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	120	100.0

6.1.4 Primary Business Activities

As mentioned previously in the report, MSMEs operating in the municipality were predominantly in the Retail and Distribution Sector (42%) (Figure). Enterprises investigated also operated in the Service Sector (11%), the Food and Beverage Sector (9%), the Craft Sector (2%) and the Fisheries Sector (1%).

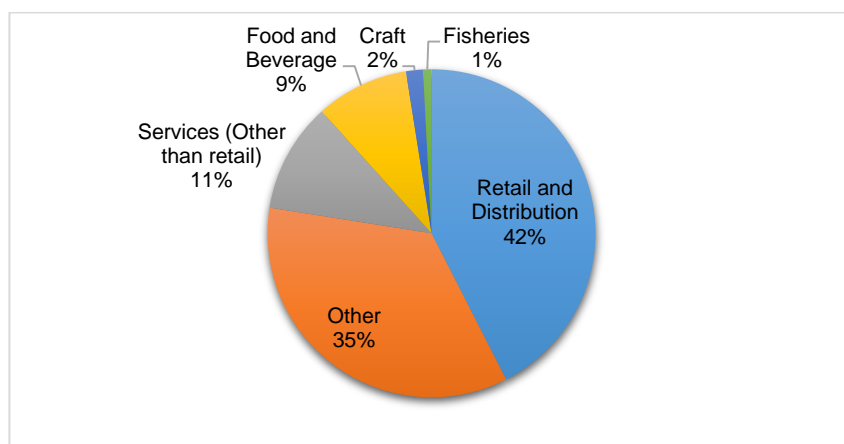


Figure 6.6: Distribution of MSMEs by Primary Business Activities

In Table 0.2, it can be noted that while Micro Mini enterprises were largely concentrated in the Retail and Distribution Sector (40%) and showed much less sectoral diversification, small enterprises operated in a wider range of sectors including Services (5%), Fisheries (2.5%) and Food and Beverage (27.5%).

Table 0.2: Key Business Activities by Size of Enterprise

Primary Business Activity or Sector	Micro Mini		Micro		Small		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Services (Other than retail)	4	10.0	7	17.5	2	5.0	13	10.8
Retail and Distribution	16	40.0	16	40.0	19	47.5	51	42.5
Fisheries	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.5	1	.8
Craft	0	0.0	2	5.0	0	0.0	2	1.7
Food and Beverage	1	2.5	3	7.5	7	17.5	11	9.2
Other	19	47.5	12	30.0	11	27.5	42	35.0
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	120	100.0

Table 0.3 captures the gender-based differences in the sectors within which entrepreneurs operated. It was observed that male-headed enterprises operated largely in the Retail and distribution Sector (45.6%), while Female-headed enterprises operated largely in the Food and Beverage Sector (29.4%) followed closely by the Retail and Distribution Sector (23.5%).

Table 0.3: Key Business Activities for MSMEs by Gender

Key Business Activities	Male		Female		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Retail and Distribution	47	45.6	4	23.5	51	42.5
Other	37	35.9	5	29.4	42	35.0
Services (Other than retail)	11	10.7	2	11.8	13	10.8
Food and Beverage	6	5.8	5	29.4	11	9.2
Craft	1	1.0	1	5.9	2	1.7
Fisheries	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	.8
Total	103	100.0	17	100.0	120	100.0

6.1.5 Markets and Annual Sales

The majority of enterprises generated products and services to cater to the local community (86.7%), see Table . Only a small proportion (12.5%) of enterprises catered to demands for their products and services throughout Trinidad at large. No enterprise investigated operated at the national scale.

Table 6.9: Primary Markets for Goods and Services by Size of Enterprise

Category of Business	Local community		Nearest town/city		All of Trinidad		Trinidad and Tobago		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Micro Mini	40	100.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	40	100.0%
Micro	36	90.0%	0	0.0%	4	10.0%	0	0.0%	40	100.0%
Small	28	70.0%	1	2.5%	11	27.5%	0	0.0%	40	100.0%
Total	104	86.7%	1	0.8%	15	12.5%	0	0.0%	120	100.0%

The survey revealed that the majority (50.8%) of enterprises generate average annual sales of under TT \$100,000 (Figure). Roughly, one fifth of all businesses surveyed reported annual sales in the TT \$ 100,000 to TT \$ 200,000 range. Interestingly, as much as 15 percent of MSMEs were able to generate average annual sales upwards of TT \$400,000. Only 0.8 percent of enterprises admitted to have generated average annual sales of TT \$500,000 to TT \$5,000,000.

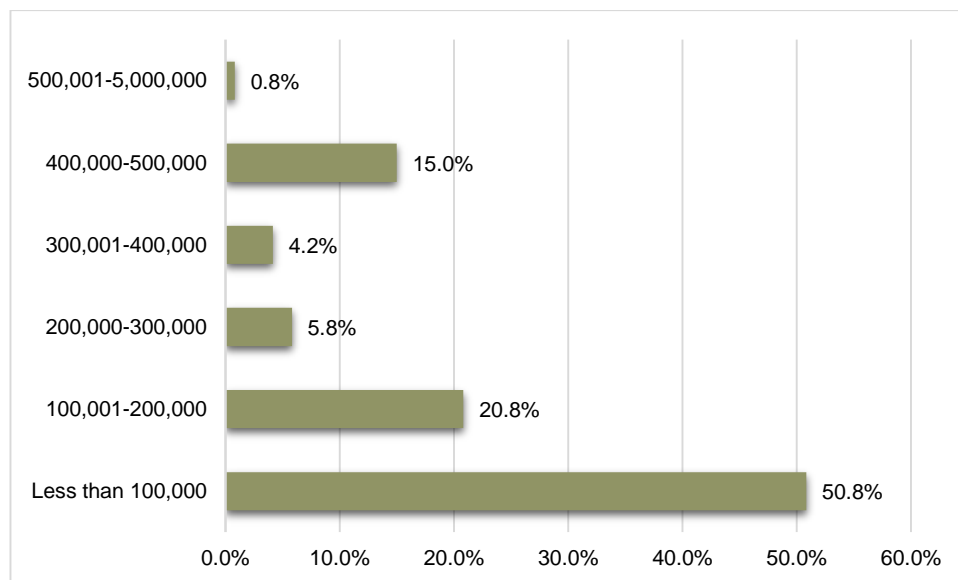


Figure 6.7: Annual Sales for MSMEs

6.1.6 Financing and Investment

MSMEs require “seed” capital to start up business enterprises and working capital financing which is short term for day-to-day operations. The survey revealed that, in respect of financing, 86.7 percent of enterprises were self provided or sourced from family members (Table).

Table 6.10: Key Suppliers of Financing for MSMEs by Size of Enterprise

Source of Funds	Micro Mini		Micro		Small		Total	
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Self/Family	97.5	39	82.5	33	80.0	32	86.7	104
Commercial Bank	7.5	3	35.0	14	80.0	32	40.8	49
NEDCO	0.0	0	2.5	1	0.0	0	.8	1
Total	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	120

Figure illustrates that 31.6 percent of enterprises investigated invested less than TT \$250,000 in Plant and Equipment. Most units (39.3%) invested TT \$250,001 to TT \$2,000,000 in plant equipment for their enterprises, with 0.9 percent of the sample investing as much as TT \$2,000,000.

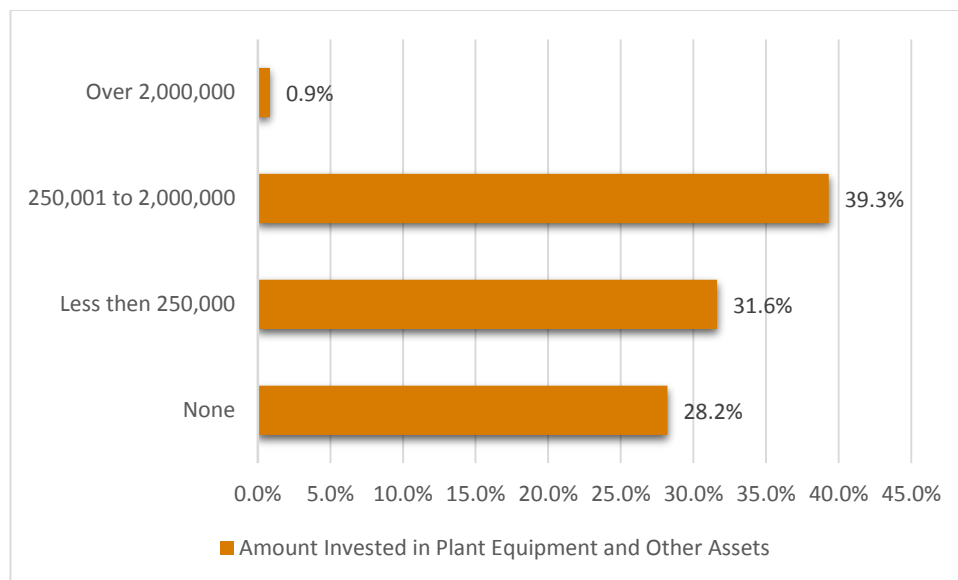


Figure 6.8: Amount Invested in Plant Equipment and Other Assets

6.1.7 Use of Internet

The survey revealed that only 35 percent of MSMEs routinely use the internet for any reason in their business, see Table 0.4 below. Small enterprises routinely utilised the internet in business the most (55%), followed by Micro Enterprises (40%), and Micro Mini enterprises (10%).

Table 0.4: Businesses Reporting Routine Use of Internet and Category of Business

Routinely Use The Internet in Business	Micro Mini		Micro		Small		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	4	10.0	16	40.0	22	55.0	42	35.0
No	36	90.0	24	60.0	18	45.0	78	65.0
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	120	100.0

Figure illustrates that of those enterprises that did routinely use the internet in business, the internet was used predominantly for e-mail communication (40.2%), followed by finding product information (34.5%) and searching for market information (25.3%).

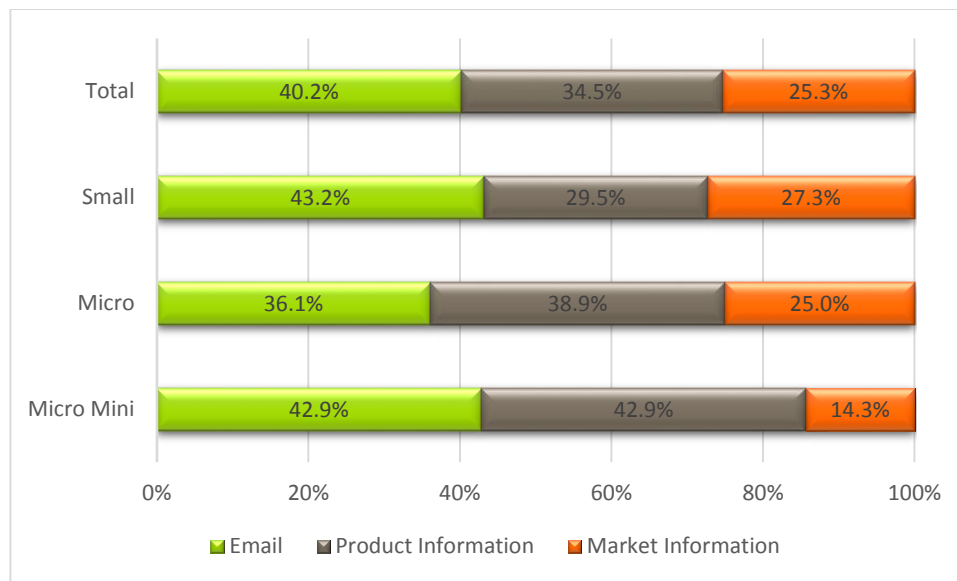


Figure 6.9: Reported Uses of Internet and Category of Business

6.1.8 Technical Support

Technical assistance and training was provided to businesses by personnel with certain levels of training. In only 2.5 percent of cases was this through personnel with university level training. Most training was provided by persons whose qualifications fell in the category of “Other”. This is seen in Table 6.12.

Table 0.5: Sources of Technical Assistance and Training

Sources of Technical Assistance and Training	Total	
	Count	%
University	3	2.5
Other	115	95.8
None	2	1.7
Total	120	100.0

The survey revealed that the majority of employees working in MSMEs in the municipality get training through informal apprenticeship (98.3%), see Table below. Those enterprises that did receive technical training of any kind covered general skills training (2.5%) and Quality Management (0.8%) (Table)

Table 6.13: Other Sources of Technical Assistance and Training

Other Sources of Technical Assistance and Training	Total	
	Count	%
Informal Apprenticeship	113	98.3
Local apprenticeship	2	1.7
Total	115	100.0

Table 6.14: Type of Technical Assistance and Training Received

Type of Technical Assistance/Training Received	Total	
	Count	%
Skills Training	3	2.5
Quality Management	1	.8
Other	1	.8
None	117	97.5
Not Stated	1	.8
Total	120	100.0

6.1.9 Key issues faced MSMEs

Table 0.6 highlights the challenges faced by MSMEs in Mayaro/Rio Claro. The environment for doing business seems to have been very challenging with major hurdles in every aspect of business operations. In respect of Family Support, only 5.8 percent had problems, and 40percent, faced challenges from bureaucracy. Over 80 percent had raw material supply problems and over 90 percent faced problems with regard to access to credit, business support services, marketing, and government regulation. The environment for business seems hardly facilitative of business and enterprise in general and of MSMEs in particular.

Table 0.6: Rating of Challenges Faced and Category of Business

Challenge Faced	Percentage
Market/Marketing	99.0
Government Regulation	99.0
Access to Credit	98.1
Energy Cost	100.0
Management Skills	99.0
Transport and Infrastructure	99.0
Business Support Services	99.0
Raw Materials	81.6
Bureaucracy	39.8
Corruption	95.1
Crime	99.0
Family Support	5.8
Other	98.1

6.2 Partners in Local Area Economic Development in Trinidad

6.2.1 The Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development

The MOLSED is specifically designed by the Government to foster and implement labour strategies on a national level. Whilst MOLSED is multidimensional, its major focus is in establishing and maintaining a steady industrial relations environment in the work place which promotes productivity and sustainability.

Six Strategic Objectives of MOLSED:

- Facilitation of labour market equilibrium
- Promotion of opportunities for poverty reduction, employment and wealth creation
- Promotion of the application of the principles of decent work in the workplace
- Promotion of industrial relations peace in the economy
- Enhancement of the capacity of the MOLSED to undertake an expanded role in formulating and implementing national development goals and strategies
- Management of Government's regional and international commitments and responsibilities with respect to the Labour Market Agenda, in particular, CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

6.2.2 The National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited

The National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited (NEDCO) was established in July 2002 under the MOLSED to assist small and micro businesses with regard to the accessing of loans for business start-up and expansion purposes. Skills, training and financial support for entrepreneurs are also offered by NEDCO which seeks to diversify the economic landscape of Trinidad and Tobago.

There is no NEDCO office located in the municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro. However, the agency works closely with the business sector in the area to promote a positive outcome for the various business ventures. The loan facility does not make funds available for primary agriculture, bars, professional services or casinos. NEDCO funding is specifically designed to assist those who face difficulty in accessing fund from commercial banks or other commercial lending agencies, and as such, its loan facility is characterised by simple procedures and minimal collateral requirements.

NEDCO has increased the loan entry ceiling from \$100,000 to \$250,000 for first time borrowers and a maximum of \$500,000 for second time borrowers. NEDCO's Sangre Grande office also provides business advisory services and information in areas such as Marketing, Financial Management, Business Planning and Records Management.

The Entrepreneurial Training Institute and Incubation Centre (ETIIC) is an institution under NEDCO, which provides entrepreneurial training, basic support, mentoring, and marketing and distribution support to SMEs. The institute also offers start-up business support, onsite information technology (IT), administrative and business services as well as office, computer labs and virtual office services. In addition, users can avail themselves of the reference library services which have publications covering a range of MSE development and entrepreneurship topics.

The recently established EIF is a project-based mechanism which aims to provide a strengthened support system for the MSE sector by providing funding to entrepreneurship-support programmes developed by the private sector, academic institutions and other NGOs so that they can utilise their expertise to play a greater role in MSE development.

6.2.3 Micro-Enterprise Loan Facility

The client can also seek the services of the Micro Enterprise Loan (MEL) Facility for accessing business grants and loans for business starts and expansion.

The MEL Facility is a community empowerment and poverty reduction initiative, which equips Community Based Organisations (CBOs) to actively engage in promoting sustainable livelihoods among the poor through the provision of micro loans and support to micro entrepreneurs. A grant is given to a CBO to on-lend to individuals in their communities. The individuals start new or expand existing micro enterprises and repay the loans at a minimal interest rate.

This programme aims to contribute to the reduction of poverty by facilitating the creation of sustainable livelihoods; empower CBOs to discharge micro credit services; and support and promote entrepreneurship at the community level. This programme is aimed at persons in receipt of public assistance; persons earning at subsistence level or at the minimum wage; or unemployed persons who live under impoverished conditions. MEL provides borrowers with community based business loan services; business training for all interested persons and after-loan services and business support.

6.2.4 FairShare Programme

The FairShare Programme, launched in January 2011, is a set-aside programme that enables MSEs to access opportunities to do work with the Government for contracts valued up to TT\$1.0M to SMEs. Simultaneously, the FairShare Programme provides some training to MSEs to improve business management, use of technology and understanding of legal obligations. FairShare utilises an online platform where Government Ministries post opportunities and where MSEs search for and bid on those opportunities. However, SMEs can only register with the FairShare programme for a maximum of six years. The objective of the FairShare Programme is to create independent and strong MSEs by allowing SMEs to participate in Government spending over a fixed period of time during which time they should have increased their capacity, skill, product quality and other capabilities. Additionally, the FairShare programme:

- Is an incentive for formalisation because it is only open to registered MSEs, compliant with state regulations;
- Compiles an online registry of micro and small businesses categorised by economic sector;
- Creates a real-time, online listing of all Ministry contracts worth up to a maximum of \$1M;
- Provides automated notification of opportunities to SMEs for the purpose of bidding
- Provides a space for MSEs to market their products and services through online profiles; and
- Offers training to MSEs in procurement, business management and other important areas of relevance to improve their ability to win contracts.

6.2.5 Employers' Consultative Association

This agency seeks to quality representation for employers and to ensure the strength and success of the Employer Community, which will auger well for the socio-economic well-being of Trinidad and Tobago. The Employers' Consultative Association of Trinidad and Tobago (ECA) was formed with 21 firms in 1960 primarily to assist and support Employers in industrial relations matters and to give them an association that would speak on their behalf on matters of similar interest. Since then, the ECA has built a strong reputation for handling all issues concerning Employers in Trinidad and Tobago. Today, the ECA is still a not-for-profit enterprise whose membership grows yearly and includes companies that belong to a variety of sectors.

6.2.6 Trinidad and Tobago Manufactures Association

The Trinidad and Tobago Manufactures Association (TTMA) acts as a representative of the manufacturing sector in dealing with local and foreign governments and in the monitoring of legislation affecting manufacturers. Members are provided with information on all local, regional and international trade related matters of relevance and they act as a liaison between the membership and the Government, specifically the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Investment. Members are encouraged to maintain and adhere to the required standards and grades of quality in all manufactured goods and services.

6.2.7 Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce

The Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce's goal is to further the interests of businesses within the region by lobbying for favourable policies for their members. Regular dialogues with government to advocate, provide feedback on, and help fine-tune policies and legislation affecting business practices are held. Strategic alliances are forged with local and sometimes foreign organisations to establish and develop mutually beneficial business relationships. The Chamber also provides their members with efforts to trouble-shoot, address, and solve common problems and issues affecting business operations. On-going recruitment and sustaining the membership is important to the Chamber's growth and development.

7

Local Government System in Trinidad and Tobago and the CARILED Model

The Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation is established and operates under the Municipal Corporations Act Chapter 25:04. This Act was enacted in 1990 and has been amended over time, the last amendment being in 2013. The Councils are allocated funds by the MLG, and are responsible for House Rates and Local Taxes, Finance, Planning, and allocation of Resources, Public Health and Physical Infrastructure, maintenance of markets, slaughterhouses, pastures, commons, recreation grounds or cemeteries and crematoria, the distribution of truck-borne water subject to the provisions of the Water and Sewerage Act, oversight of Pedlars, Hawkers and Hucksters.

The Tobago House of Assembly (THA) enjoys wider powers than the Municipal Corporations. The THA exercises considerable authority in respect of business development and economic planning. In that regard, the THA has developed a comprehensive economic development plan (CEDP 2.0) in a participatory process, and which provides structure to its initiatives deriving from its annual budgetary exercises.

The Division of Finance and Enterprise of the THA promoted business development through its Business Development Unit which provides funding to micro businesses and SMEs. It has established an eco-industrial park, on which small and medium sized enterprises can be established. There is also a Venture Capital Company which provides funding for certain types of businesses. There is much in the existing paradigm of the THA that conforms to the CARILED Model.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has promoted in recent years, the idea of devolution through the development of growth poles and the alignment between national priorities and regional priorities within the 14 local government jurisdictions and the House of Assembly in Tobago, as well as with the 585 communities identified throughout Trinidad and Tobago. In its Medium Term Framework, the Government pledged to transform “Local Government Services through the devolution of authority from Ministries to ensure increased efficiency”.¹⁸

CARILED has been inspired by the experience of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. The Federation is the “national voice” representing the vast majority of the municipal population of Canada. The membership includes Canada’s largest cities, small urban and rural communities and 19 municipal associations and has been functioning since 1901.¹⁹ The Federation is thus steeped in the philosophy of federalism and in the advocacy of deep involvement of people in the planning and organisation in the place in which they reside. In that regard, local economic development is

¹⁸ Ministry of Planning and the Economy, 2011, *Medium-Term Policy Framework 2011-2014*, Government of Trinidad and Tobago, pg. 19.

¹⁹ <http://www.fcm.ca/home.htm>

premised on a participatory process involving communities, civil society organisations and the private sector in partnership with local governance authorities or local government.

CARILED Initiatives in the Caribbean have involved:

1. Helping communities establish and manage committees of government, private-sector and community representatives to lead local economic development
2. Increasing the capacity of local governments (and decentralised agencies of central governments) to facilitate private-sector growth in a sustainable and equitable manner
3. Strengthening the ability of local government officials to engage civil society in local economic development planning and implementation
4. Collaborating with business support organisations and educational institutions to provide training to micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises
5. Funding pilot LED projects with the potential to show how local governments, the private sector and communities can work together to create jobs, increase micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprise revenues, and bring economic and social benefits to communities
6. Working with national governments, local government associations and regional organisations to replicate good practices and successful LED models, and institute policy reforms to support LED

The partnerships provide for the harnessing of local resources, encouragement of investment and the stimulation of local commercial activities including the involvement of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. The experience is that local commercial activities contribute to job creation, business development and improved quality of life for citizens.²⁰

Adoption of CARILED represents signalling of decentralisation and further devolution in economic planning and more particularly in implementation in the Trinidad and Tobago and will require further changes in the existing legislation in the Act establishing the Municipal Council and Regional Authorities.

²⁰ <http://cariled.org/about-led/definitions/>

8

Recommendations for Local Economic Development

There are possibilities for a vibrant participation of the Municipality in the clusters promoted at the national level, and for substantial local economic development around a number of initiatives on the part of the Municipal Corporation and the National Government. Some of these are addressed in the present concluding section.

The point of departure is the Medium Term Framework of the political administrations over the years, but starting with the most recent, which supports the goal of economic diversification and the principle of social equity across the various groups that comprise the society, and participatory modes with devolution and decentralisation of decision-making from a governance structure that has tended to be centralised at the national level.

8.1 Strategic Sectors

8.1.1 Energy

While diversification immediately invokes notions of escape from the reliance on the Energy Sector, Trinidad and Tobago cannot avoid exploiting opportunities that its participation in the sector will provide over the medium term even if the world commits to replacing fossil fuels as the source of energy in the long run. The underlying strategy for the country is likely to be built around continuing exploitation of the sector, in the traditional mode of extraction and processing, diversification within oil and gas, and diversification from the sector as a whole.

The Energy Sector is not a major employer of labour, and given the nature of the operations in the offshore area of the municipality – drilling and extraction of gas and oil, and transport by pipeline to other parts of the country – only a limited number of very specialised personnel is required. There are very few residents who have been able to secure full-time employment in the offshore operations, except when new drilling platforms are being installed. There are specialised services that are contracted out by the major energy companies and require a dense network of service providers, like catering, transport of equipment by sea, haulage by land, and equipment repair and maintenance.

It is necessary therefore to support the educational and training preparation for the technical and professional occupations relevant to the sector. It is training and work experience in these fields that eventually will allow some from the area to establish small firms that might provide certain services to the oil and gas companies: the base for specialised start-ups among the people in the municipality can be laid.

8.1.2 Agriculture and Food

The municipality is endowed with the considerable potential for addressing the food sustainability needs of the nation. Targeted support for small farmers by way of technical and extension services in seed selection, planting material, post-harvest technology, and marketing, can contribute to substantial increase in food supplies and to a reduction in imports. The establishment of small scale and medium scale agro-processing operations in the municipality will be the natural link in the development of a value chain to final consumers in Trinidad and Tobago and in respect of some products, there is possibility of export potential.

The fishing industry should be the target of infrastructure support: the regularisation of arrangements in Guayaguayare needs to be addressed such that the excellent facilities can be utilised by the fishers. Other landing sites need to be brought up to par. Fishers need training to ensure that they can comply with national and possibly international food safety standards.

The Municipal Corporation in association with the offshore oil and drilling companies might need to invest in fish attracting devices (FADS) to allow fishers to maintain their livelihoods in fishing in compensation for the loss of fishing grounds with the establishment of drilling operations in the vast expanse in which they previously conducted their fishing activity. The Municipal Corporation with the support of the Ministry needs to take an active role in support of the fishers and in the protection of their livelihood.

There is the possibility of small scale aquaculture operations, that might be promoted in the brackish waters in lagoons and low lying areas along the coast: crab, cascadou and other type of fish might be farmed in such near-shore waters: access to state lands and the appropriate management of these special areas as part of the commons, will require regulation on the part of the state, represented by the Municipal Corporation.

There is already a thrust in fish processing that is in need of support. In respect of both agro-processing and fish processing, the Municipal Corporation will need to enlist the services of CARIRI to ensure that the food processing and fish processing in particular observe the appropriate standards, thereby guaranteeing widening of markets.

8.1.3 Tourism

There are a number of opportunities that will arise from the promotion of the tourism sector in the municipality. There are incentives that have been provided by the Government for the establishment of both small and medium to large guest facilities – from guesthouses and hotels of less than 50 rooms to larger operations of over 50 rooms. The Municipality is likely to experience a take-off into domestic and international tourism in the years ahead.

In addition to the traditional tourism based on sun, sea and sand that exist on the coastline, there are substantial amenity resources to support eco-tourism and sports tourism. The Municipal Corporation will need to recognise responsibilities for the maintenance of beaches in good order at all times. This would require the deployment of manpower on a daily basis. There will be need to engage the population in programmes to promote a healthy and clean environment, and to inculcate a sense of commitment among the population of their responsibility in this regard.

There is also the capital expenditure and regular maintenance that need to be incurred in respect of the physical infrastructure of beach defences to control erosion and coastal flooding. Construction and maintenance of such facilities will involve the hiring of local contractors who will need to secure appropriate equipment and to have in their employ a work force with the relevant skills.

There are a number of income earning opportunities that will arise from the tourism sector directly by way of personal care services. These include are transport, restaurants, landscaping and grounds maintenance, security, and tour guiding on land and sea. Given that medical tourism is also contemplated, there is a range of medical care personnel are likely to be required. Some of the local population will need to train for such services including to the top of health care pyramid.

8.1.4 Culture and Creative Industries

Mayaro/Rio Claro municipality is a microcosm of the Trinidad and Tobago cultural space, with all its plural dimensions. Some areas of the municipality contain artefacts of the First Peoples of Trinidad whom Columbus met on his arrival in the southern Caribbean. At various times in the past, there have been inflows from the rest of the world. Place names mark the presence of the peoples that have inhabited this space. Mayaro and Guayaguayare are place names of the language of the First Peoples and there are middens that attest to their material culture.

With the colonisation by the Spaniards, there are place names like Rio Claro. The French in the late 18th century fleeing the Haitian Revolution, with their loyal slaves and settled in this part of Trinidad, gave names like Ortoire and Biche to villages. The British named Bristol and Kernahan and the African Slaves, to be followed by Indian indentees with Charuma. The place is rich in history.

The ingenuity of the people with the resources of the forests and the sea will provide considerable material to be reflected in craft products. With the emergence of a tourism industry in the area, there is the likelihood of a market for craft goods. It will be important from the beginning, that craft goods suppliers to be aware of the competition that they face from Chinese and similar suppliers that mass-produce mementos to be sold in the Caribbean, by putting the name of the respective island on the product. This is to purport a Caribbean derivation. The craft goods suppliers will need to take care to differentiate their products from such fare.

The Entertainment Arts offer an opportunity for people of the area with the growth of tourism. There is an emerging entertainment site in Mayaro where the two access roads – one from the north and the other from the west converge. The area attracts a considerable following on major public holidays and occasionally on weekends. The model of St. James at nights in Trinidad, or Gros Islet in St. Lucia demonstrates the possibilities for open-air entertainment, which might attract clientele from the surrounding community and others from further afield. Restaurant services heavily focused on the produce and seafood of the area might well serve to create uniqueness of Mayaro with attendant employment for those who are in the business of entertainment.

8.1.5 Commerce and Distribution

Commerce and distribution will expand with any heightening of economic activity in the area. These are sectors which, because of relative ease of entry attract considerable numbers of micro entrepreneurs. The result is often a particular sequel of excess supply as many seek to copy the

success of first entrants. With oversupply, some find themselves in debt since their businesses which might have appeared attractive at first blush, end up in most sharing work from the same level of clients. The Corporation will need to exercise care in the promotion of entry of micro and small businesses. The allocation of licences to operate can be the mechanism to prevent oversupply.

Support for the development and expansion of commercial and distributional activities will require interventions on the part of agencies involved in the provision of credit and training in entrepreneurship, micro and small business development, but will need to be tempered with constant review of levels of involvement to protect the municipality and some of the potential entrepreneurs from losses because of oversupply in sectors that might appear to be easy in terms of market entry.

8.2 Proposed Projects and Implementation Plan

Local government reform will require the Mayaro/Rio Claro Municipal Corporations to play a lead and proactive role in securing better economic and social outcomes within the region. Though pivotal, the preparation of the Mayaro/Rio Claro LAEPs should be seen as the first step in several steps towards creating a Mayaro/Rio Claro where investment for business and community development. Further work is now needed to build support structures within the Corporations and to identify LED initiatives at the sectoral level. The Municipal Corporations must also work with local and external partners in identifying and implementing sectoral economic projects that can provide employment, positive local economic growth and support the expansion of MSME sector in the Municipalities.

8.2.1 Establishing Institutional Structures within the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation for Local Economic Development

The following recommendations are provided to create support mechanisms that would the Corporation to play a greater role in economic development of Mayaro/Rio Claro:

1. **Establishing a Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Group** – This Group, which should operate out of the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation, aims to provide a municipal platform to facilitate and support the implementation of targeted local economic activities. The main functions of the Group should be as follows:
 - a. To listen and interact with local and external stakeholders on LED related matters;
 - b. To identify and tackle the challenges to local business and economic development;
 - c. To recommend new initiatives and investments (to be implemented by the Municipal Corporation, Central Government Agencies and others) that would improve the local business environment, foster innovation and strengthen the municipal economy;
 - d. To monitor, advise on and support the implementation of LED activities undertaken by the Corporation; and
 - e. To provide guidance on the use of Corporation's resources to achieve the objectives of Municipal LED.

The Group should meet regularly (monthly or at least quarterly) and comprise:

- Councillors/Aldermen;

- Representatives of the private sector and the NGO and community sector (inclusive of the Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce, Mayaro Chamber of Commerce and a MSME representative; farmers organisations, tourism operators);
- Local knowledge and research institutions; and
- Public sector business support agencies (such as NEDCO and the Cooperative Division).

2. **Strengthening the capacity of the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation to facilitate local business and economic development** - The goal here is to build technical capacity within the Corporation that would allow the Corporation to effectively lead and participate in sustainable LED of Mayaro/Rio Claro.

This calls for the establishment of the LEDU which would be lead by a LEDO and assisted by an Assistant LEDO. These officers should be seen as the nucleus of industrial, commercial and business development within the municipality. The LEDO should be charged with the following responsibilities:

- To facilitate LED planning in order to identify and establish business and development economic opportunities;
- To collaborate with stakeholders inside and outside of the Municipality in engaging in scenario planning and identifying possibilities for local resource use and mobilisation that might otherwise remain untapped. The LEDO should be instrumental in organising and recording discussions between the Municipal Council and MSME and institutional stakeholders within their jurisdiction.
- Work with local businesses, organisations, schools, and communities in supporting and promoting LED and individual, school and community-led entrepreneurship;
- Identify opportunities that will allow the Corporation and its stakeholders to develop the local MSME sector, programmes and projects;
- Identify and secure funding for MSME and LED initiatives;
- Assist local organisations, communities, businesses and individuals to develop project proposals and business plans for financing; and
- Assist with communities and businesses to establish business groups and other support networks, including working closely with stakeholders in the informal economy in and around main commercial districts.

3. **Preparing a comprehensive LED strategy and action plan** – One of the efforts in supporting municipal LED, is the formulation of an LED strategy and action plan for the municipality. The preparation of this strategy should be the responsibility of the LEDO. This strategy and action plan should be tailored to the needs of the Municipality and provide a comprehensive agenda for LED including the identification of potential areas where the Corporation and its partners can focus investment, additional actions to create enabling mechanisms to support the work of local organisations, businesses, communities and individuals within the Municipality. The strategy should also identify and contain concrete proposals for creating and expanding economic and business opportunity in the strategic sectors identified earlier in this chapter.

The strategy should also provide the necessary baseline information to be used for monitoring and evaluation and strategic LED decision-making.

4. **Developing a database of municipal entrepreneurs (of all sizes)** – This should be developed based on the sector within which these business establishments operate. This will serve well not only in terms of the conduct of research activities but will also be required for collaborative and promotional partnership activities. The Corporation should actively encourage informal MSME business owners to register with the Corporation to ensure that all can access benefits from future business programming. The LEDO should be charged with the responsibility for developing and regularly updating of the databases, and maintaining contact with the local MSM businesses.
5. **Establishing Strategic Partnerships with Sangre Grande Regional Corporation and other Municipal Corporations** – The Corporation should seek strategic partnerships and collaborate with neighbouring Local Governments to explore joint economic opportunities, for example in the areas of industrial development, tourism development and agricultural production.
6. **Establishing a Municipal Business Support Programme for Local MSMEs** – The success of this programme depends heavily on the commitment and cooperation between the Corporation and the national business support service providers. The approach here is not to duplicate the work of the MSME support agencies, but rather to bridge the current gap in services identified during the study. The goal is to provide a one-stop-shop platform within the Corporation.

The model for service provisioning should allow clients to have easy access to the various services provided by agencies.²¹ The Corporation should work closely with providers to create a system where clients can access information on the full range of business support services available and to connect them to the services they need. Moreover, the Programme should facilitate the implementation of the sectoral projects implemented by the Corporation.

Therefore, the Corporation should approach and work with service providers to seek their assistance in establishing this one-stop-shop mechanism. For example, the platform can be:

- The main source for accessing information on business support services offered by the various providers. In addition, several Municipal Corporations should collaborate in developing an app that would provide information and facilitate clients' more ready access to services.
- Locate suitable space for the conduct of specific business training programmes as identified in the LAEP study that would facilitate the increase use of ICT and the Internet in business and to foster personal development of entrepreneurs. The objective here should be to address the entrepreneurial characteristics and functional competencies of participants through effective training programmes.
- Provide access to business advisory and mentoring services through the establishment of municipal business support networks, business associations and

²¹ Finance and markets, entrepreneurial skill development, training (soft and technical skills), and mentoring and coaching, etc.

business support cooperatives. A lack of business mentorship and business advisory programmes was highlighted by MSMEs as a major barrier to the survival of businesses.

- Facilitate business cluster development and establishment industry and marketing cooperatives as vehicles for achieving critical mass in specific sectors.
- Offer business Incubator support services - the MOLSED and NEDCO should use the Municipal Programme to expand the reach of the IBIS, ETIIC and Women in Business programmes.

Special attention must be paid to the findings of the study with regards to the challenges faced by women and youth in setting up and operating their own business. The object would be to put mechanisms in place that would eliminate any barriers to women's and youth's entrepreneurship.

The programme should be audited and its impact monitored regularly to ensure it remains attractive, relevant and accessible to its target clients.

8.2.2 Recommended Sectoral Initiatives

The recommendation here is to identify the local sectoral initiatives in Mayaro/Rio Claro during the LED strategic planning phase and should be based on the strategic sectors. A number of sectoral projects were identified out of the stakeholder consultations. Detailed planning of these projects should be based on an inclusive model which ensures the participation of residents of the Municipality, including the poor, women and youths. The following are sector initiatives initially proposed for business and economic development in Mayaro/Rio Claro that can be further explored during the strategic planning exercise:

1. Mayaro/Rio Claro Community Tourism Initiative

This initiative is in support of ED Proposal-3 of the Mayaro/Rio Claro MDP²². This initiative should focus on:

Tapping into the natural and heritage/cultural resources in Mayaro/Rio Claro for investment opportunities – Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation, its municipal stakeholders and outside partners should define and develop new and existing tourism experiences. Existing visitor experiences include sea bathing, river bathing, kayaking, camping, bird-watching, turtle watching, surfing and research tourism. New experiences could include agro-tourism (farm stays and visits), adventure tourism, heritage tourism, wellness tourism and cultural tourism (cuisine preparation and sampling, local stories and legends).

Consultations with communities and key individuals (including land owners and business operators and visitors, etc.) in Mayaro/Guayaguayare, Ortoire/Kernahan/Cascadoux, and along Cunapo-Southern Main Road would identify new and innovative low impact tourism ideas, areas of business and investment opportunities and the role of stakeholders in the industry. The idea here is to create new and exciting tourism experiences that are unique to each sub-region, which collectively distinguish tourism in the Municipality from the rest of the country.

²² Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Municipality, 2011-2020.

It will be important to take into consideration existing projects being conducted within the region by other entities. One such project is the *Improving Forest and Protected Area Management in Trinidad and Tobago project*, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the GORTT, the European Union and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Its overarching objective is to improve the sustainability of protected areas systems in Trinidad and Tobago, one of which is the Nariva Wetlands. Another is the National Restoration, Carbon Sequestration, Wildlife and Livelihoods Project (NRCSWLP). The project aims to sustainably restore and sustain the wetland, but has evolved over the years since it commenced in 2010, to meet the changing demands of our environment and needs within the communities.

The end-product of these discussions is a community tourism plan for each of three sub-regions. These plans must be aligned to existing municipal and national development plans. Since these tourism experiences are expected to be viable, it would be important to conduct feasibility studies, cost/benefit analyses, and environmental and socioeconomic assessments of the proposed ventures.

Along with the implementation of the plans prepared for each sub region, the next steps should be as follows:

1. Brand and market the area and its amenities in keeping with the new development thrust for the area;
 2. Collaborate with central Government agencies, local NGOs/CBOs and private sector in managing local natural resources; and
 3. Improve the business support environment within the municipality for community tourism. It is important to ensure that new and existing businesses have the necessary support through the Municipal Business Support Programme.
2. Mayaro/Rio Claro Food and Agriculture Initiative

This initiative is linked to ED Proposal-2 of the Mayaro/Rio Claro MDP. The municipality comprise several key farming areas and fish landing sites. Agricultural commodities produced in the municipality range from vegetable and tree crops as well as poultry and livestock production.

The Regional Corporation should work with the Ministry of Agriculture, farmers, fisherfolk and other industry stakeholders in developing and promoting the local agricultural sector, fishing industry and agri-businesses. This would require the collaboration of local farmers, fishers, vendors, agro-processors, the private sector, NAMDEVCO and research institutions (UWI/UTT) to achieve such a vision. New investment opportunities should also identified for new and existing products and the means of realising stated objectives. The activities implemented should foster an entrepreneurial spirit and increased development in the sector. Support for new and existing entrepreneurs (inclusive of farmers) under this programme should be provided through the “Establishing a Municipal Business Support Programme for MSMEs Programme”.

The following is the proposed implementation plan for LED in Mayaro/Rio Claro.

8.2.3 Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
Establishment of a Mayaro/Rio Claro Local Economic Development Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop scope, responsibility, function and reporting procedures of the Group. • Identify the prospective agencies/individuals to comprise the Group. • Prepare and issue invitations to prospective Group members/agencies. • Hold inaugural meeting and orientation session. • Hold regular/monthly meetings. • Monitor and provide advice on on-going LED programmes and projects 	<p>Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation (MRCRC) (through its Municipal Council)</p> <p>Mayaro Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ministry of Agriculture ○ Ministry of Tourism ○ Economic Development Board ○ NEDCO ○ TTInvest, ○ ExportTT Cooperative Division ○ Ministry of Local Government ○ National Council of Village and Community Councils ○ Local MSME owners representative ○ CARILED Project ○ UTT ○ LABIDCO 	4 months to establishment and ongoing	Representatives who are decision makers in their organisations	1
Strengthening the capacity of the Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation to facilitate local business and economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit the LEDO • Establish a Chairman's Advisory Subcommittee to oversee the establishment of the LEDU, comprised of two other Councillors, and the CEO with the LEDO as Secretary. • Prepare requisite documentation for establishing the LEDU - rationale for its establishment, resources requirement (staffing, furniture, equipment, software, training, etc.); and estimated cost. • Obtain the necessary approvals for establishment of the Unit. • Recruit additional staff and procure 	MRCRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ministry of Local Government ○ Ministry of Public Administration ○ CARILED Project 	12 Months	<p>Ministry of Public Administration and Consulting Services to assist the Council in developing a business oriented focus to support the emergence of businesses in the area.</p> <p>Provision for appointment of a LEDO, two Assistant LEDOs and supporting staff – Statistical Assistant</p>	1

8.2.3 Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	the necessary resources • Officially establish the LEDU.				and Clerk/Typist	
Preparing a comprehensive strategy and action plan for the Municipality of Mayaro/Rio Claro	• Hold Mayaro/Rio Claro LED workshop on way forward and the LED and MSME creation. • Hold consultations with specific industry stakeholders to elaborate strategies and actions agreed on at the workshop • Prepare a local economic development strategy and action plan in collaboration with relevant stakeholders. This plan should include cost estimates, funding sources and mechanism for continuous monitoring and evaluation.	Mayaro/Rio Claro Local Economic Development Group MRCRC-LEDU	○ Mayaro Chamber of Commerce ○ Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce ○ Local business owners ○ MOLSED ○ NEDCO ○ TTInvest, ○ ExportTT Cooperative Division ○ Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government ○ MCD ○ National Council of Village and Community Councils ○ MSME owners representatives ○ CARILED Project ○ UTT ○ LABIDCO	6 months	Consultancy – Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Strategy and Action Plan	
Establishing a Mayaro/Rio Claro Business Establishments Database	• Hold discussion with the CSO, NEDCO and other relevant agencies on the establishment of the database. • Identify resource requirement for database. • Acquire software and other support tools. • Determine the type of information to be recorded in the database - business owner name and contact details for communications, gender	MRCRC LEDU/ LEDO	○ CSO ○ Mayaro Chamber of Commerce ○ Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce ○ NEDCO ○ MOLSED	3 months to establish database and ongoing	Computer Spreadsheet or database software Clerk Campaign to encourage business registration	1

8.2.3 Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	<p>of owner; type of business; years in operation; size of business/number of employees, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise and encourage business owners to register with the Corporation. • Undertake initiatives to actively register businesses. • Develop a profile of local businesses by sector which can help understand local business owners' needs. • Update profiles regularly based on additional information received. 					
Establishing Strategic partnerships with neighbouring municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold discussions with Chairmen and CEO of neighbouring municipalities, and the Mayor and CEO of Point Fortin. • Identify and reach agreement on areas for collaboration and support and resource requirements • Undertake agreed joint activities • Monitor and evaluate partnerships biyearly 	MRCRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Neighbouring Corporations 	6 months and ongoing	Chairmen and CEOs of the Corporations Meeting place	1
Establishing a Municipal Business Support Programme for MSMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold meetings with key business support service providers to discuss service provisioning and areas of collaboration between MRCRC and service providers. • Reach agreement on the MRCRC one-stop service model for MSMEs to be used (e.g. MRCRC as a business information and advisory hub, provide space where service providers offer selected services, etc.). • Develop MSME services app to provide information on service 	MRCRC -LEDU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mayaro Chamber of Commerce ○ Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce ○ Established local businesses ○ NEDCO ○ MOLSED including the Cooperative Division ○ Ministry with responsibility for development of medium-sized 	9 months to establish and on-going	<p>Cooperation of central government, NGO and private sector service providers</p> <p>For development of the app - Graphic designer Copy writer Software developer</p> <p>Service provision – brochures, factsheet</p>	1

8.2.3 Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	provisioning and places to existing and potential MSME clients (in collaboration with other Local Governments). • Launch Mayaro/Rio Claro MSME Support Programme.		enterprises ○ Local Banks ○ ADB ○ Authur Lok Jack GSB		and information on product and services for small businesses	
Mayaro/Rio Claro Tourism Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold consultations within key stakeholder to determine support for such initiative. • Undertake an audit of tourism assets in the Municipality, including the identification and analysis of community resources, tourism resources, infrastructure, services and experiences available. • Undertake stakeholder engagement process to identify strategies/ actions to be taken as part of the initiative • Prepare a municipal tourism development action plan in collaboration with the targeted communities. The plan should address the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop vision, goals and objectives as well as strategies for meeting the objectives; - Contain the results of the analysis of the community resources, tourism resources, infrastructure, services and experiences available; - Identify existing and new tourism experiences that will form part of municipal tourism product and identify which ones will be 'marketed' to domestic and foreign visitors and how they will 	MRCRC-LEDU Ministry of Tourism Local NGOs/ CBOs	○ NGOs/CBOs ○ UWI/UTT ○ Tourism Development Company Ltd ○ Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government ○ MCD ○ Mayaro Chamber of Commerce ○ Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce ○ Participating Communities	36 months Month 1-3: consultations with the communities about project and building stakeholder support* Month 4-6: Conduct of the audit Month 7-12: Development of the tourism action plan)* Month 11-36: Implementation	Consultancy – stakeholder consultations, tourism audit; and development of community tourism plan (12 months)	

8.2.3 Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be marketed; - Identify a compilation of all baseline information relevant for future decision-making, monitoring and the overall direction of tourism development; - Address organisational and management structure and systems for the initiative, and product and destination development strategies; - Identify and address how MRCRC, central government and other enablers will be utilised, and how identified risks will be managed; - Identify skills and human resources required and presently available in the communities (a skills matrix) and present plans to building capacity to fill skill gaps; - Identify a mechanism for maintaining standards and quality control; - Determine future key milestones, actions, timelines and responsibilities; - Estimate the cost of implementing the plans and identify actions (projects) for external, community and local government funding; - Identify areas of community and external investment, proposals for promoting small enterprise development, and funding sources; - Contain a plan for continuous 					

8.2.3 Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	<p>communication between the communities (local CBOs , businesses, residents) and MRCRC, Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Development Company, the private sector, and other tourism stakeholders; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the community tourism initiatives. • Prepare proposals and applications for external funding; • Implement projects in the plan; • Continuously monitor and evaluate the implementation of the initiatives and actions/ projects implemented under the Mayaro/Rio Claro Tourism Initiative. 					
Mayaro/Rio Claro Food and Agriculture Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake consultations of industry stakeholders of the potential of developing the local agricultural value chain. • If feasible, develop food and agriculture industry strategy and action plan collaboration with all industry stakeholders for the marketing, production and agro-processing of agricultural produce and food products. The plan should also include details for cluster development and for establishing inter-sectoral links. In addition, proposals for quality control, and for monitoring and evaluation. The cost of project activities should be estimated, and a strategy prepared for funding implementation. 	<p>MRCRC-LEDU</p> <p>Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries</p> <p>Local Farmers Organisations</p> <p>Local Fisherfolk Organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government ○ Mayaro Chamber of Commerce ○ Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce ○ Local farmers ○ Local agro-processors ○ Green market and farmers market vendors ○ Supermarket Association of Trinidad and Tobago ○ Local Supermarkets ○ CARIRI 	24 months	<p>Consultancy – feasibility study, industry strategy and action plan</p> <p>Project proposals for funding</p>	

8.2.3 Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding for proposed activities; • Implement proposed projects/activities • Promote locally grown foods. 					
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold discussion with the Ministry of Education, TVET institutions and business support service providers to discuss programme – assess willingness to implement the programme and reach agreement on programme structure, organisation and management. • Hold discussion with local Chamber of Commerce, civil society organisation, and select individuals on the implementation of the programme to build MSM entrepreneurship in Arima • Design programme and prepare an action plan for implementation of the programme in collaboration with industry stakeholders including vision and objectives, key milestones, proposed actions, timelines, responsibilities, mechanism for quality control; cost estimates; skills and human resource requirements, mechanism for regular monitoring and evaluation, etc. • Obtain necessary approval at the Central Government level for implementation of the programme; • Develop a plan how the programme will be marketed. • Develop a financial plan (including the identification of local and 	MRCRC-LEDU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mayaro Chamber of Commerce ○ Rio Claro Chamber of Commerce ○ Ministry of Education ○ MOLSED ○ NEDCO ○ Ministry of Planning and Development ○ Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts ○ Local NGOs/CBOs ○ Local businesses ○ UWI/UTT 	36 months	<p>Consultancy – to design and prepare plan of action for the implementation of the programme, including marketing and financial plans</p> <p>Training facilities</p> <p>Business training tutors and instructors</p> <p>Business support services</p>	

8.2.3 Mayaro/Rio Claro LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	external funding sources). <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare proposals and applications for external funding of projects.					

8.3 Conclusion

Decentralised Governance: The adoption of the CARILED Model involves a widening and deepening of decentralisation and devolution in the governance structure of the country. The Municipal Corporations are at the epicentre of this process. The authorities and the elected representatives of residents in municipalities have to embrace responsibilities that will extend to the economic development within the municipalities.

Business Facilitation: There is evidence that the country does not lack agencies that are formally entrusted with the responsibility for the facilitation of business and enterprise and for the provision of such supports as credit supply and training. However, their reach into communities is limited and constrained. In the context of the CARILED Model, the authorities in Municipal Corporations will have the responsibility for coordinating and enlisting the services of these agencies, and parlaying their support for residents in municipalities as they seek to create productive activity within the economic space of the municipality.

In this regard, CARIRI has to be available to the Women's Cooperative engaged in fish processing in Guayaguayare, and for assistance in process innovation for a farmer in Biche seeking to undertake some processing in going up the value chain with dasheen. The personnel at the Mayaro/Rio Claro Corporation have to ensure that this type of support is available, just as they have to ensure that the loan guarantee arrangements in place for guesthouses from the Tourism Business Development Company are accessible to the guesthouse operator in Mayaro who is seeking to upgrade her facilities.

Competitiveness: In a municipality like Mayaro/Rio Claro with a small population base, economic production except in respect of commerce and distribution at the local level has to be set in the context of the demand and supply for goods and services in the nation at large and even in the wider context of regional and international demand.

In other words, entrepreneurs even in micro-enterprises in Biche or Kernahan are players on the world stage. Dressed or processed fruit and vegetables from these geographically remote locations in the municipality, on entering the market place in an upscale supermarket in Port-of-Spain are in competition for shelf space with sweet potato from Louisiana in the USA and muskmelon from Florida, and cassava from the Dominican Republic.

Structuring Economic Equity: The survey data show that there is differential participation of ethnic groups in the area of business and enterprise. On the grounds of social equity, there will be need to ensure that state involvement in the provision of support for business and enterprise does not contribute to the creation of structural barriers and marginalisation of non-traditional participants in business and enterprise.

Information, Training and Educational Upgrading: The Census Data and the survey data collected in the course of this exercise establish the human capital challenge in the municipality. This imposes a constraint on the capacity of residents in the establishment of viable business and productive enterprises. There is need to institutionalise a support system that would allow large numbers of the residents although located in relatively remote communities to embrace technology and access

information, and, most importantly, initiate themselves on the path of lifelong education and upgrading such that they can correct for previous marginalisation in the education system. The task is to ensure that the avocado farmer in Bristol is no less knowledgeable and no less technically competent than his counterpart in Israel. While this is not currently the case, the measures and initiatives undertaken by the Municipality in association with the Ministry of Food Production and with the cooperation of UTT or the Distance Education Programme, would allow such transformation to take place in less than a decade.

Paradigm Shift. The CARILED Model involves a major paradigm shift in thinking in local governance. The responsibilities of Municipal Councils require perspectives that extend beyond what seems to be incorporated in the current legislation. At the level of the Ministry, there is need to win the resources including the fiscal space for Municipalities to become entrepreneurial in implementing national policy relating to the economy.

There is need to recognise the enormity of the task of investing people in their communities with the capacity to transform their economic reality with the resources that reside in their community such that they can create a high quality of life from their respective spaces.

Given the fine homes that they created, it is evident that the French settlers in the late 18th century were able to create a relatively high quality of life for themselves at that time and in the space that is now defined as Mayaro/Rio Claro. The residents of today might be able to do so again, once empowered by their Municipal Corporation.

References

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