



Final Report

Municipality of Siparia Local Area Economic Profile

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Submitted to:

Permanent Secretary

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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
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
Petrotrin	-	Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago
SC	-	School Certificate
TCPD	-	Town and Country Planning Division
THA	-	Tobago House of Assembly
TLA		Trinidad Lake Asphalt
Trintoc	-	Trinidad and Tobago Oil Company Limited
Trintopec	-	Trinidad and Tobago Petroleum Company Limited
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 Siparia was developed with a view to build on the existing Municipal Development Plan and to introduce the Siparia 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 for Municipality of Siparia² was developed with the aid of quantitative and qualitative methodologies proffered by the LED approach and which captured vital information from all stakeholders in the municipality. The methodologies consisted of the following:

- A review of secondary data for the Municipality of Siparia including the Siparia Regional Corporation Spatial Development Plan, the Siparia Municipal Investment Plan and the Medium Term Policy Framework 2011 – 2014, and Vision 2020;
- 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 Siparia;
- 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 detail as data permit.

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

² Municipality of Siparia (also called the Regional Municipality of Siparia) 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

Siparia is situated in south-western corner of Trinidad with the Penal-Debe region to its east and with the Point Fortin region nestled in its north (Figure 2.1). Its most western extremity, Icacos Point on the Serpent's Mouth channel, is situated between the waters of the Gulf of Paria and the Columbus Channel. The Siparia Municipality area is the sixth largest municipality in Trinidad and Tobago with just over 51,000 hectares.

There are sixty-two communities in this region. Three of which are shared with the northerly Point Fortin Municipal Corporation region and another three with the Penal-Debe Regional Corporation.

2.2 Geography

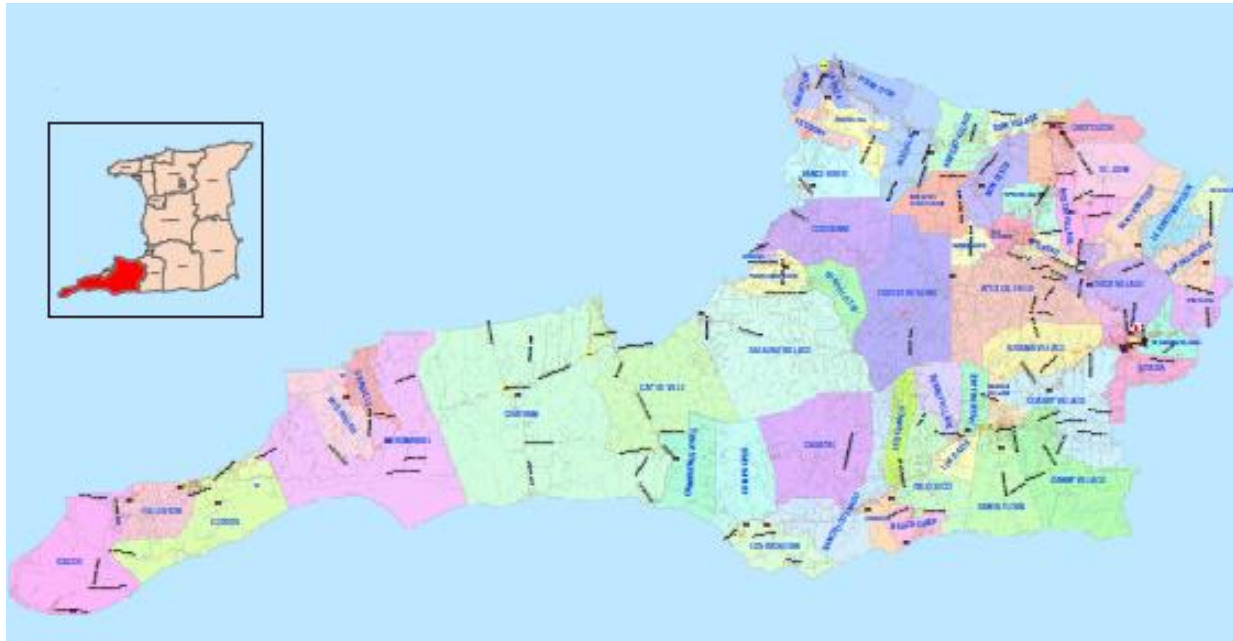


Figure 2.1: Location of the Municipality of Siparia illustrating the distribution of Communities

Based on its features, the region has a variety of land uses- settlement of various sizes, on-shore areas and bases for off-shore oil production, ports, industrial areas, fishing centres, forest, swamps, agriculture and numerous beaches stretching along the 100 kilometre coastline of southwest Trinidad from Godineau River to Quinam Bay.

Trinidad has two clearly defined seasons; a dry and wet season. As the climate of Trinidad does not vary much spatially, the municipality of Siparia also has a tropical climate with two distinct seasons due to its proximity to the equator. 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 which 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

In 2011, according to the Population and Housing Census, 86,949 people resided in the region of Siparia. This roughly is 6.5 percent of the national population of Trinidad and Tobago of 1,328,019. Between 2011 and 2000, the population of Siparia grew by 6.14 percent. This is comparable to the national population growth of 5.2 percent seen for the same time period.

The 2011 census showed that an average of 3.3 individuals lived in 22,393 private households in Siparia. This shows a decline of 0.4 persons in the average household size, down from 3.7 persons, since the census of 2000. However the number of occupied private households increased from 22,393 to 26,125. This estimated 16.7 percent increase is comparable to national increase of 17 percent and an island household increase of 16.2 percent.

2.3.2 Population Density

In 2011, Trinidad and Tobago with a land mass of 5,127 km² had a density of 259 persons per km². Compared to 2000's density of 246 persons per km², the country became slightly more densely populated over the eleven years (Table 2.1). Siparia's population density was below 200 persons per square km² in both 2011 and 2000. The municipality experienced an increase in population over the period 2000-2011. The region occupies roughly 10 percent of the total land area and it hosts 6.5 percent of Trinidad and Tobago's population.

Table 2.1: Population Density of the regional corporation of Siparia

Municipality/Parish	Land Area (sq. km)	Density (per sq. km) 2011	Density (per sq. km) 2000	Population 2011	Population 2000
Trinidad and Tobago	5,127	259	246	1,328,019	1,262,366
Trinidad	4,827	263	250	1,267,145	1,208,282
Siparia	495	176	165	86,949	81,917

Source: CSO 2011 Population and Housing Census

2.3.3 Age Profile and Dependency

Figure 2.2 shows the Siparia's population age and sex pyramids for 2011 and 2000, reflecting the changing structure of the population over time. A comparison between 2000 and 2011 pyramid reveals a population increase in the youngest age group (0-4 years). A similar widening of the older age groups is also noted and reflects an aging of the Siparia population.

The population of Siparia is relatively young, with more than half of the population (54.0 %) under 35 years of which 21.8 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 13.9 percent of Siparia's population. Persons, 65 years and older, made up 9.2 percent of the total population (Figure 2.2).

The population of dependent groups (all persons aged 0-14 years and 65+ years) decreased from 33.6 percent of the total population in 2000 to 29.7 percent in 2011. Conversely, the working-age population (persons between 15 and 64 years) increased from 66.4 percent in 2000 to 70.4 percent in 2011.

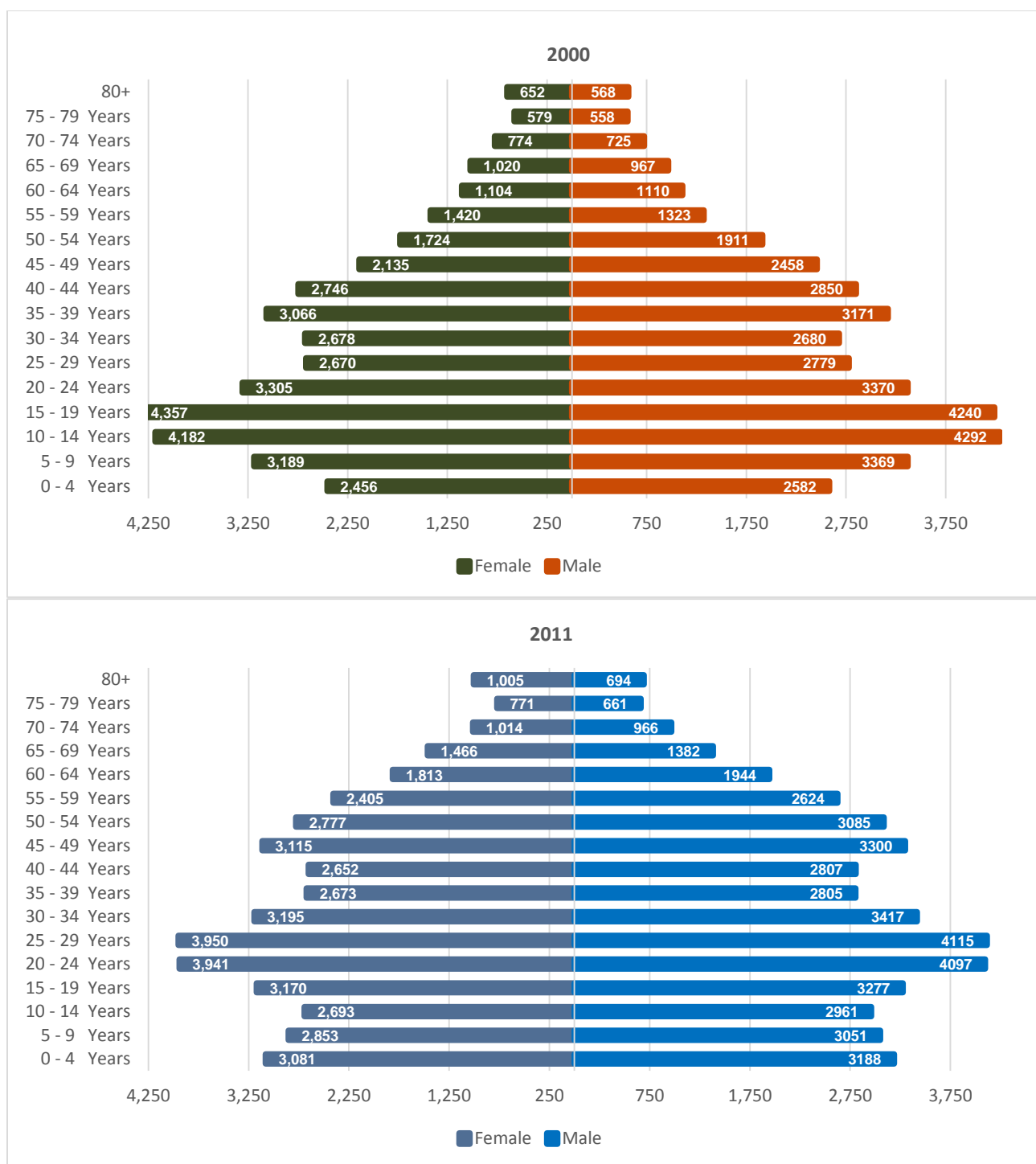


Figure 2.2: Age-Sex Pyramid for Population of Siparia for 2000 and 2011

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 Siparia in 2011 stood at 42.2 percent; marginally higher than the national ratio of 42 percent and this was due primarily to the increased aging population. This ratio for Siparia represents a decrease compared to the 2000 figure of 50.7 percent. The child dependency ratio in 2011 was estimated at 29.2 percent, and elderly dependency at 13.0 percent.

2.3.4 Ethnicity

Trinidad and Tobago as a country, is a plural society and Siparia's population is an example of that, with its diverse ethnic composition (Table 2.2). East Indians, with 43.6 percent of the total population, are the predominant ethnic group in Siparia, followed by Africans who made up 31.7 percent, and the 'Mixed- Other' group, which account for 14.1 percent (Figure 2.3).

Table 2.2: Total Population of Siparia by Ethnic Group	
Siparia	86,898
African	27,522
Caucasian	26
Chinese	150
East Indian	37,901
Indigenous	234
Mixed - African/East Indian	5,930
Mixed - Other	12,251
Portuguese	10
Syrian/Lebanese	15
Other Ethnic group	79
Not stated	2,780

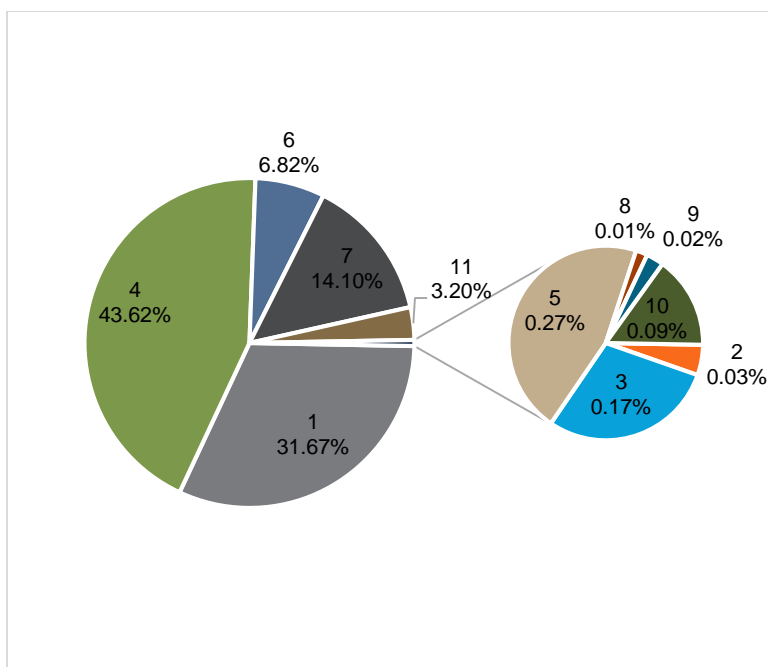


Figure 2.3: Distribution of Ethnic Groups in Siparia

2.3.5 Religious Affiliation

In 2011, Hinduism was the largest single religious grouping in Siparia (23.4 % of the population), followed by Roman Catholic (18.4%). Interestingly, the groupings 'Other' and 'Not Stated' constituted a significant proportion of the population. Table 2.3 gives a distribution of the population by religious affiliations based on the 2011 Population and Housing Census, while Figure 2.4 shows the distribution of the population for the six largest religious groupings.

Table 2.3: Percentage Distribution of Siparia's Total Population by Religious Affiliation, 2011		
Religious Grouping	Population	Percent
Anglican	4,022	4.6%
Baptist-Spiritual Shouter	6,417	7.4%
Baptist-Other	1,249	1.4%
Hinduism	20,307	23.4%
Islam	3,388	3.9%
Jehovah's Witness	1,104	1.3%
Methodist	150	0.2%
Moravian	1	0.0%
Orisha	598	0.7%
Pentecostal/ Evangelical / Full Gospel	9,359	10.8%
Presbyterian/ Congregational	3,129	3.6%
Rastafarian	310	0.4%
Roman Catholic	15,991	18.4%
Seventh Day Adventist	3,067	3.5%
Other	7,831	9.0%
None	1,357	1.6%
Not Stated	8,618	9.9%

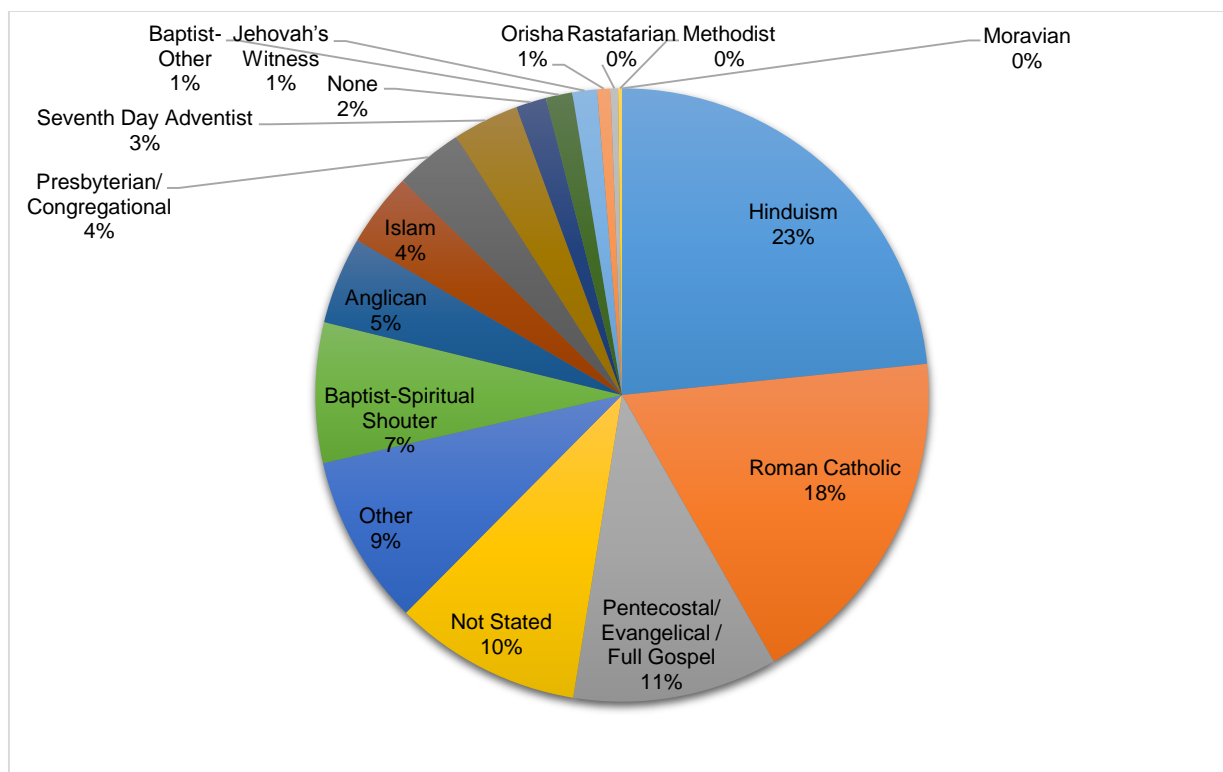


Figure 2.4: Population Distribution amongst the Top Religions of Siparia

2.4 Educational Attainment

According to the 2011 Census, 31 percent of Siparia's population had attained primary-level education which is higher than the national figure of 29.8 percent. Forty three percent of population of Siparia had attained secondary and 2.71 percent attained post-secondary education, 1.8 percent and 0.4 percent respectively higher than observed with the national population. Tertiary non-university level educational attainment stood at 5.7 percent and 5.4 percent for those who attained tertiary university-level education. Males outnumbered females up to the primary and secondary levels. However, the number of females who attained tertiary level university and non-university education was greater than the number of males. Table 2.4 shows the educational attainment of the Siparia population by age group.

Table 2.4: Non-Institutional Population of Tunapuna/ Piarco by Age Group and Educational Attainment

Age	Total	None	Nursery/ Kindergarten	Primary	Secondary	Post Secondary	Tertiary/Non- University	Tertiary/ University	Other	Not Applicable	Not Stated
Siparia	86,898	1,637	2,709	27,012	37,463	2,353	4,931	4,685	729	4,378	1,001
0 – 4	6,269	-	1,850	41	-	-	-	-	-	4,378	-
5 - 9	5,901	178	595	5,064	-	-	-	-	-	-	64
10 - 14	5,653	117	189	2,828	2,484	-	-	-	-	-	35
15 - 19	6,441	33	10	482	4,955	308	331	242	35	-	43
20 - 24	8,036	58	6	282	5,019	377	943	1,204	90	-	57
25 – 29	8,065	50	3	551	5,207	316	877	895	106	-	60
30 – 34	6,613	40	5	554	4,400	240	666	587	52	-	68
35 - 39	5,478	66	6	727	3,547	189	451	382	55	-	55
40 - 44	5,459	88	-	1,180	3,229	171	360	315	43	-	73
45 - 49	6,415	127	2	2,085	3,192	175	369	283	73	-	107
50 - 54	5,859	114	5	2,755	1,999	191	344	262	89	-	101
55 - 59	5,028	99	8	2,574	1,489	174	277	240	72	-	96
60 - 64	3,757	118	7	2,219	931	92	135	132	54	-	68
65 - 69	2,848	125	11	1,933	491	56	93	71	25	-	43
70 - 74	1,974	108	5	1,447	245	31	47	32	13	-	48
75 -79	1,425	110	5	1,063	159	19	23	18	9	-	18
80+	1,678	205	3	1,226	116	13	17	20	14	-	64

Source: CSO Population and Housing Census, 2011

Examination of the highest qualification attained by Siparia's population showed that some 49.2 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 2.5 shows that 3.5 percent indicated that their highest qualification attained was school leaving certificate, with another 1.5 percent reporting that they attained CSEC Basic as their highest qualification.

Almost one fifth of the population (19.3%) 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 7.5 percent were granted Diplomas, Associate Degrees or Equivalent Certification. Another 2.4 percent would have achieved either a Bachelor's degree, Postgraduate Diploma/Professional Qualification or a Master's degree. Some 0.05 percent of the population 15 years and older earned other qualifications. More women attained Bachelors, Masters and professional certification than their male counterparts. This can be seen in Table 2.5.

Table 2.5: Non-Institutional Population of Siparia by Age Group and Highest Qualification

	Total Population	Female Population		Male Population		Percent Population
		Percent Population	No of Persons	Percent Population	No of Persons	
Total	86,898	100.0	42,548	100.0	44,350	100.0
None	42,749	49.2	20,042	47.1	22,708	51.2
School Leaving Certification	3,003	3.5	1,492	3.5	1,511	3.4
CSEC Basic	1,317	1.5	584	1.4	733	1.7
GCE 'O'/CSEC Gen/SC	16,739	19.3	9,180	21.6	7,560	17
GCE "A"/ CAPE/ HSC	1,612	1.9	976	2.3	636	1.4
Diploma or Equivalent Certificate of Achievement	5,233	6	2,312	5.4	2,921	6.6
Associate Degree Higher Diploma	1,285	1.5	740	1.7	545	1.2
Bachelor Degree	1,538	1.8	875	2.1	663	1.5
Master Degree	306	0.4	173	0.4	133	0.3
Postgraduate Diploma/ Professional Qualification	150	0.2	76	0.2	74	0.2
Doctorate	40	0.0	13	0.0	27	0.1
Other	462	0.5	186	0.4	277	0.6
Not Stated	12,463	14.3	5,900	13.9	6,563	14.8

Source: CSO Population and Housing Census, 2011

2.4.1 Living Conditions in Siparia

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. Siparia was ranked among the higher than average with an NHDI at 0.683. Measurement of the Inequality-adjusted NHDI (INHDI)³ ranked Siparia as the tenth highest in the country with respect to human development with a value of 0.614 (Figure 2.6). With regard to the dimensions of health, education and income for the INHDI, Siparia was ranked among the highest.

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

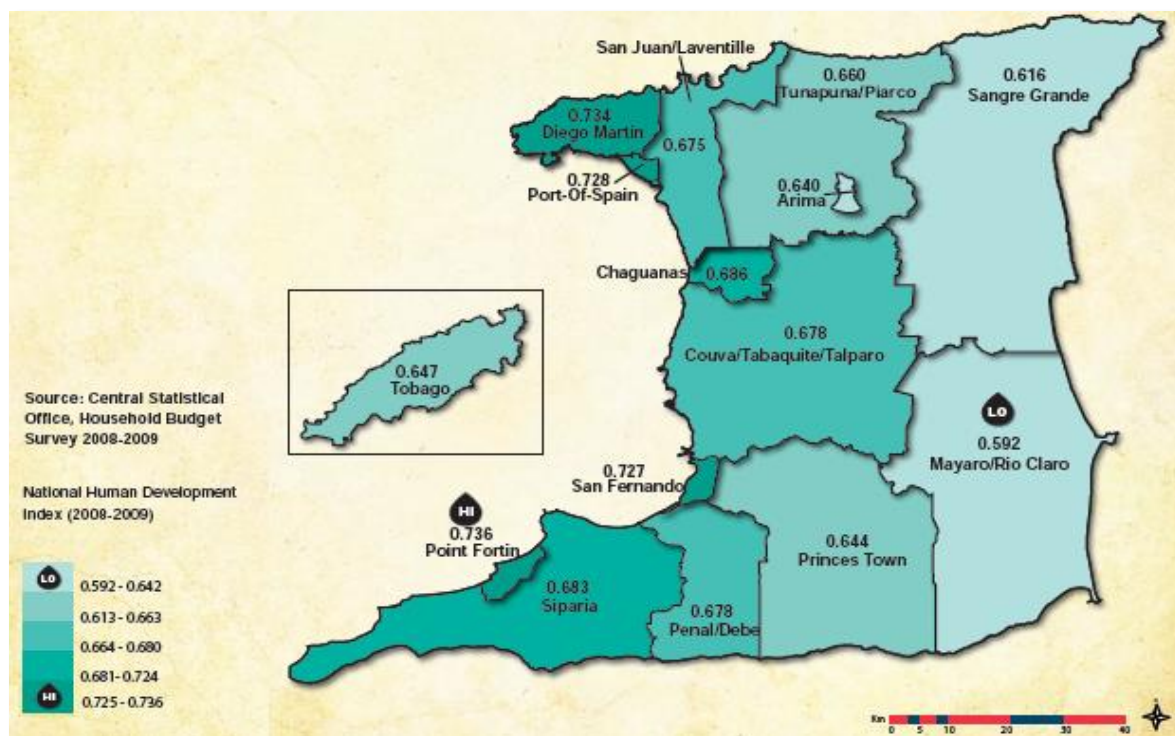


Figure 2.5: National Human development Index 2008/2009 by Administrative Regions

Source: *Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012*

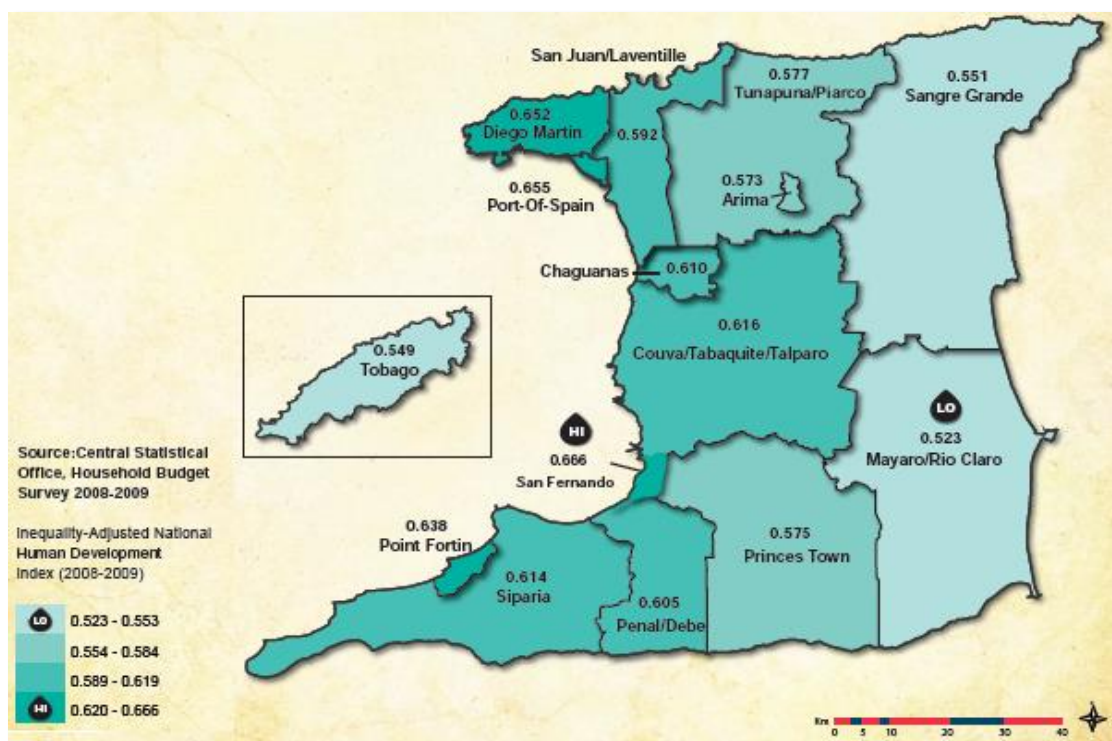


Figure 2.6: Inequality-adjusted National Human Development Index 2008/2009 by Administrative Regions

Source: *Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012*

Table 2.6 presents statistics highlighting living conditions in Siparia taken from the Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Atlas. The Atlas provided information on the NHDl 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:

- Siparia has a lower than average household income per capita per annum.
- Siparia, with an education attainment rate of 76.8 percent for both females and males between the ages of 6 and 16 years, was among highest education attainment rate. However the region has an average educational attainment rate (63%) for persons above 17 years and older who have attained secondary level education and higher.
- Siparia was among the regions that scored the lowest in the gender inequality index indicating that gender inequalities were lower in Siparia compared to other regions in the country.
- Siparia had a low Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), indicating a lower incidence and intensity of poverty compared to those areas with higher indices.
- The region was among the regions which had a lower rate of adolescent births.
- Siparia had a higher than average female labour force participation rate in the country (50.3%).
- Siparia recorded a slightly higher life expectancy of 74.65 for both sexes; 73 for males and 76.6 for females, higher than the national average of 73.2 years for both sexes; 70.2 years for males; and 76.5 years for females. However Siparia has a slightly lower incidence of chronic diseases of 21.8 percent compared to the national average.
- The percentage of the population that consumes iodised salt was higher than average in Siparia, 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 region recorded the seventh lowest population percentage without adequate sanitation facilities,⁴ with 6.9 percent of its households.⁵

⁴ *Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012. Website 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.

Table 2.6: Various Statistics on Living Conditions in Siparia

Indicators	Value	Rank and Rating out of the Country's 15 Administrative Regions
Total population, 2011	86,949	9 th (medium-high)
National human development index, 2010	0.683	10 th (medium-high)
Population having chronic illnesses ⁶ , 2008/2009 (%)	21.8	7 th (low-medium)
Primary and secondary educational attainment rate ⁷ , 2008/2009 (%)	96.8 ⁸	***1 st (high)
Secondary and higher educational attainment rate ages 17 and above, 2008/2009 (%)	63	9 th (medium-high)
Household income per capita (TT\$/US\$)	27 217/ 5,904	5 th (low-medium)
Inequality-adjusted national human development index, 2010	0.614	10 th (medium-high)
Gender inequality index, 2010	0.328	4 th (low-medium)
Adolescent fertility rate ⁹ , 2010	37.1	5 th (low-medium)
Multidimensional poverty index (MPI), 2006	0.013	3 rd (low)
Intensity of multidimensional poverty, 2006 (%)	26.5	10 th (medium-high)
Incidence of multidimensional poverty, 2006 (%)	5	4 th (low-medium)
Life expectancy at birth, 2010 (years)	74.7	4 th (low-medium)
Households in which a child died, 2006 (%)	1.4	1 st (low)
Population without electricity, 2006 (%)	3.2	10 th (medium-high)
Population access to without clean drinking water, 2006 (%)	2.7	8 th (medium-high)
Population access to without improved sanitation ¹⁰ , 2006 (%)	6.9	9 th (medium-high)
Households not consuming iodised salt (%)	62.4	8 th (medium-high)
Labour force population – male (%)	75.7	6 th (low-medium)
Labour force population – female (%)	50.3	7 th (low-medium)

Source: Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012

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 97.4% and 96% school attainment rate for males and females respectively

⁹ Number of births among women 15-19 years per 1,000 women (CSO: Population, Social and Vital Statistics Division 2010)

¹⁰ 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 house-holds (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.

2.4.2 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.”

Siparia belongs to the South Western Police Division (see Figure 2.7). The 2010 Citizen Security Survey showed that in The South Western Division, compared to all other areas, had a relatively low percentage of victims of crime (16%) within the last 10 years and of persons reporting that crime was a problem in their community (36%). Only nine percent of the South Western Division’s respondents indicated that there was a gang in their neighbourhood. Residents in the South Western Division also felt safe and this was reflected in the survey by the highest level of persons who felt very secure (3%). However, more than one third of respondents felt fearful in the last year about the possibility of becoming a victim of crime (50%) and did not have much confidence in the police services in effectively controlling the crime problem in the country (47.5%).

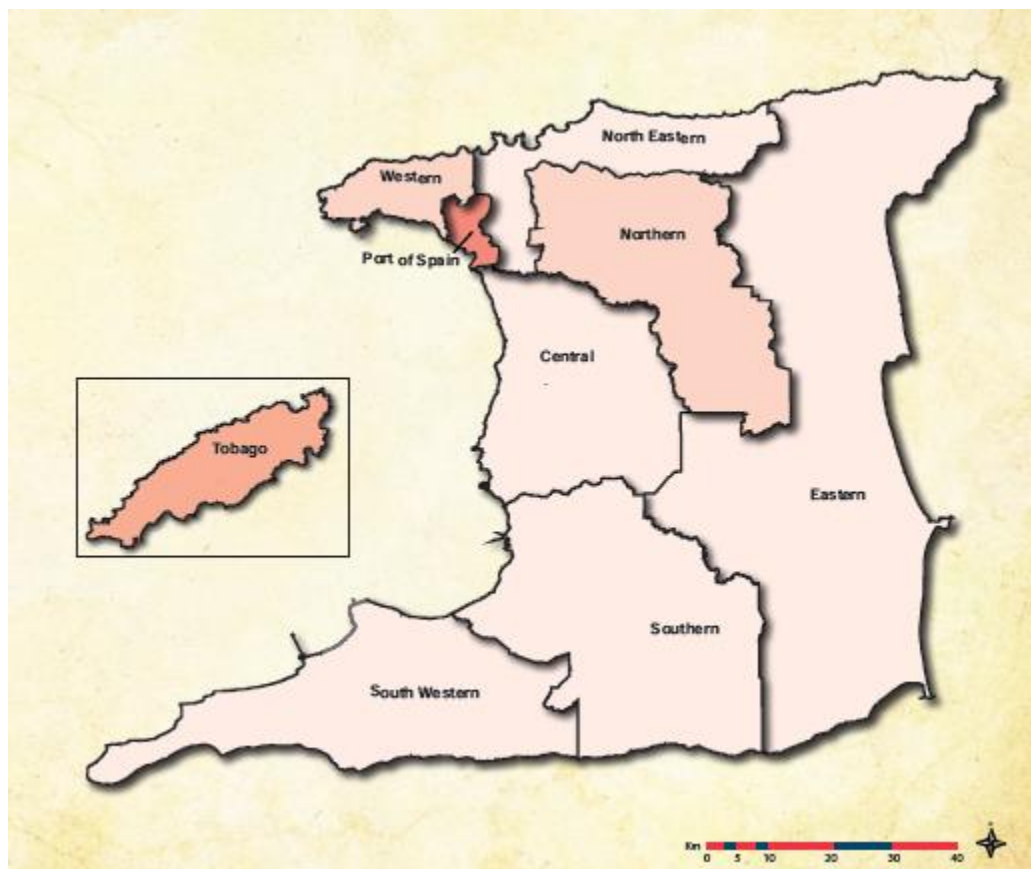


Figure 2.7: Police Divisions in Trinidad and Tobago

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 South Western Division had the lowest level of reported serious crime per 100,000 persons in the country. 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). Figure 2.8 illustrated that serious crimes of major concern in The South Western Division included burglaries and break-ins, general larceny and robberies, with 313.8, 194.7 and 210.6 reported cases per 100,000 persons, respectively. With the high number of reported cases, it would also be important to pay particular attention to kidnapping (11.7).

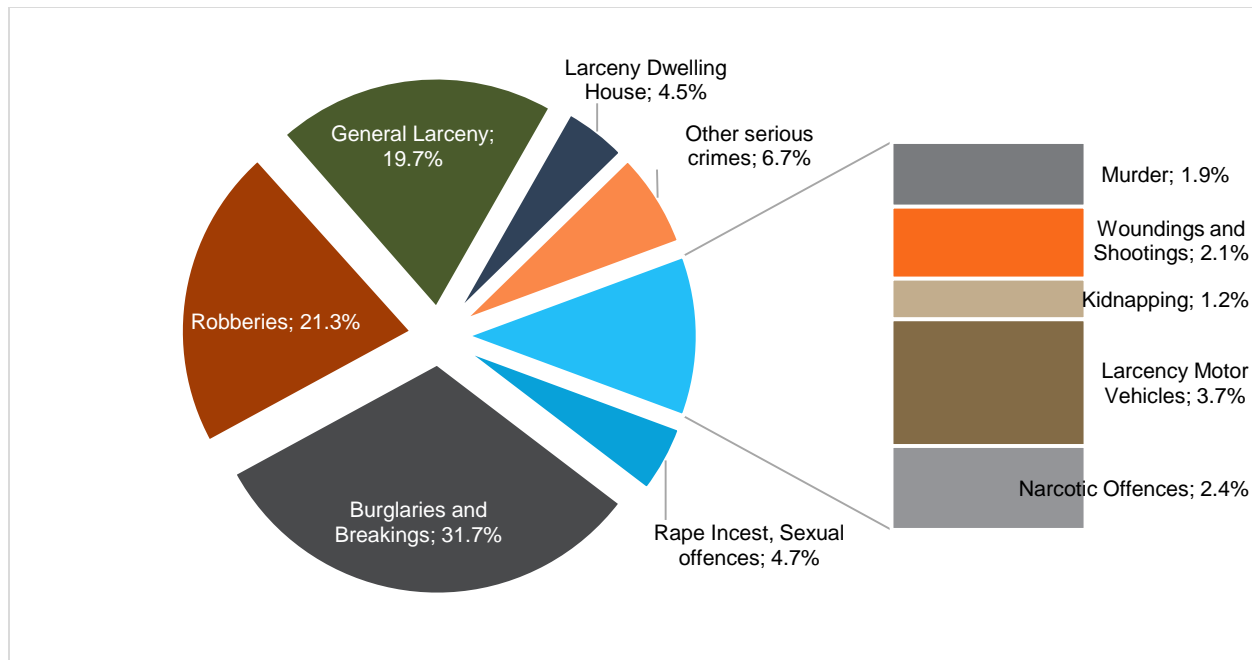


Figure 2.8: Share of Serious Crimes by the Type of Crime in South Western Police Division, 2010

Source: *Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Profile, 2012*

3 Land Use and Land Resources

3.1 Land Use and Resources

With a total area of over 51,000 hectares (495 sq. km), the municipality is the sixth largest of all municipalities in the country. Siparia presents a wide range of land uses including agriculture, fishing centres, forest reserves, forested state lands, coconut estates, swamps, industrial areas, ports, on-shore stations and zones for offshore oil production, wetlands and many beaches across its 100 km of coastal lands, which run from Quinam Bay on the Columbus Channel to the Godineau River on the Gulf of Paria. The region itself can be classified as being largely rural, with a number of small urban settlements, which have been defined by the prevalent arterial road network (All-Inclusive Project Development Services Limited 2010).



Quinam Bay¹¹, Siparia

The municipality is home to 62 communities, three of which are on the boundary of the Penal/Debe and Point Fortin Regional Corporation. With a marginal increase in municipality's population from 81,917 in 2000 to 86,251 in 2011, the population density for the municipality is 174 persons per sq. km, positioning Siparia 11th among the 15 municipalities in Trinidad. The below average population density is mainly owing to the municipality's vast forests, swamps and land areas allocated towards the energy sector. The region continues to rely substantially on the nearest City, San Fernando, for commercial, national governmental and regional services.

¹¹ "Quinam bay, Columbus Channel, South Coast, Trinidad & Tobago" by Kalamazadkhan - Own work. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Quinam_bay,_Columbus_Channel,_South_Coast,_Trinidad_%26_Tobago.jpg#/media/File:Quinam_bay,_Columbus_Channel,_South_Coast,_Trinidad_%26_Tobago.jpg

The municipality has a wide variety of natural assets with notable potential for ecotourism. Environmental resources of economic importance include the following:

- Archaeological Sites;
- The Pitch Lake;
- Mud Volcanoes;
- Fishing Areas;
- Bays and Beaches;
- Rivers;
- Wildlife reserves;
- Mangrove/Wetlands; and
- Forest Reserves.

3.2 Forest Resources

The municipality is home to six forest reserves, namely:

- Southern Watershed Forest Reserve;
- Erin Forest Reserve;
- Cedros Forest Reserve;
- Morne L'Enfer Forest Reserve;
- Siparia Forest Reserve; and
- Cap-de-Ville Forest Reserve/Nursery.

Additionally, four mangrove/wetland areas could be found within the confines of the municipality:

- Icacos Basin;
- Los Blanquizales Lagoon;
- Rousillac Swamp; and
- Godineau/ South Oropouche Swamp.

3.3 Coastal and Marine Resources

Major fishing zones are located in the municipality at Cedros, Erin, Icacos, La Brea and Otaheite. Additionally, the municipality is home to four turtle nesting sites in the following areas:

- Erin Bay and Galfa Point;
- Icacos Point;
- Cedros Bay; and
- Otaheite Bay.

3.4 Mineral Resources of Economic Importance

Given the geologic nature of Trinidad, minerals excavated are predominantly sedimentary in origin. Minerals extracted from the region include asphalt, oil sand and porcellanite. These minerals are of economic importance to the municipality since porcellanite is utilised as an alternative to Portland cement, while asphalt and oil sand are used for the paving of roads. The region is home to numerous quarries in communities including Chatham, Erin and Point Fortin.

4 Municipal Physical and Social Assets

4.1 Physical Infrastructure

4.1.1 Information and Communications Technology Infrastructure

As the location with a number of industrial towns, the telecommunications infrastructure is excellent in many communities. Residents in many areas have access to telephone services – fixed and mobile, cable television and internet access but some rural and remote locations may suffer unreliable access. In the urban centres, however, access is good. Across the municipality, the majority of residents that can afford it, have access to educational and entertainment services, including broadband. This means that residents can access all free online educational programmes through Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCS) now available from some of the most reputable tertiary institutions like Harvard University and Stanford University.

4.1.2 Storm Water Management and Coastal Protection

There are parts of the municipality that are subject to flooding. Indeed, one of the worst episodes of flooding occurred in October 2014 when with a heavy rainfall event, rivers overflowed their banks and created flooding in wide expanse of the municipality. There has also been the perennial problem of seawater intrusion at high tide at Mosquito Creek in particular.

Major infrastructure upgrade being undertaken in the municipality would address these problems, but they are not likely to eliminate them entirely from the municipality. Moreover, in the light of sea level rise as a result of global warming, there is need to address the matter of sea defences the absence of which can create damage to existing infrastructure and disrupt economic activity, including the conduct of business by micro and small businesses.

4.1.3 Transportation (Land and Sea)

There is a substantial arterial road infrastructure in the Municipality, but in many parts, it is of low quality and/or not well-maintained thus rendering transport costs relatively expensive in some communities. It is generally inadequate relative to the level of traffic that is now carried. Heavy vehicles service the energy industry in this municipality on roads that are too narrow and lacking in the base to sustain the weights of these vehicles.

Access to, through and within the La Brea remains a problem, although it is recognised that the land in the area is subject to continuous subsidence, and requires quality engineering in all construction and in maintenance. Any expansion in the work of the Lake Asphalt Company of Trinidad and Tobago (LATT) and the La Brea Industrial Development Company (LABIDCO) will create greater demands on the infrastructure. The Highway that is being extended to Point Fortin from San Fernando will bring considerable improvement in some parts of the municipality.

Passenger services by sea are contemplated between the municipality and Port-of-Spain, which might ease costs of doing business in the municipality and increase the number of visitors to the area from the north of Trinidad. The port of Cedros has created a flow of visitors back and forth between a number of eastern communities in Venezuela and Trinidad. Many of the Venezuelan

visitors come for shopping in Trinidad, thereby creating possibilities for some types of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the municipality. It is known however, that the improvement in the transportation links with the east of Venezuela imposes certain costs as a result of the improved attractiveness of Trinidad as a market and as a conduit to other markets to those engaged in the underground economy based on the transshipment of cocaine and other banned narcotics.

4.1.4 Water Supply and Distribution

Water supply and distribution have been the focus of attention in the more recent past and a number of areas are now better served and with greater regularity. However, there are squatter settlements which may not be well served.

4.1.5 Electricity

Electricity supply is universal in the area, and the few households without access to electricity suffer problems of affordability from extreme poverty.

4.1.6 Wastewater Management

Wastewater management and treatment remain a major problem to be addressed in the municipality. The Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA) is responsible for the development and implementation of a Waste Water Plan for the municipality.

4.1.7 Solid Waste Management

The municipality is largely underserved in terms of a central sewer system and there is a much higher level of septic tank and latrine use in the area than in the country as a whole. There is uncontrolled dumping of waste in some parts of the municipality. There is need for improvement in solid waste management in this municipality, which has an economic base in primary agricultural and fishing activities as well as in large scale industrial production in world class plants in the petrochemical and related sectors.

4.2 Social/Cultural Infrastructure

4.2.1 Dwelling and Building Stock

The Municipality has suffered a decline in the quality of its housing stock, as relative incomes fell as the land based oil industry shrank. There were a higher percentage of residences constructed of wood than in the national average. Projects identified by the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) were the only likely source of correction of this situation in the medium term, in the absence of major investments in the region, which can trigger substantial migration into the municipality.

4.3 Social Facilities

4.3.1 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. However, there may yet be some shortfall in facilities for early childhood care. There has been developing some level of expansion for post-secondary education, and tertiary education with UWI University Centre in San Fernando and UWI

Distance Education facilities available to students in the Municipality and a Campus in the neighbouring municipality of Debe/Penal.

4.3.2 Health

Primary health care facilities are relatively well distributed through Health Centres in the Municipality. Secondary care services are available only at some distance to most communities at the Point Fortin Area Hospital and at the San Fernando Hospital. The Cedros Health Centre is also available for emergency services. However, these might be more than one hour away for many communities. This means that many residents are at risk in the case of medical emergencies that require immediate treatment and intervention.

A new hospital is being constructed for the area at Egypt Village to replace the Point Fortin Area Hospital. This will lead to major improvement in access. Moreover, the extension of the Highway from San Fernando to Point Fortin will also lead to reduced time in access to secondary and emergency care services.

4.4.3 Disaster Management

Within the Siparia 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 major industrial operations, on-shore drilling for oil, and on-land gas pipelines means that there are risks of oil spills, explosions and industrial accidents that can be of disaster proportions. The three major national industrial companies of the municipality have their own disaster units. The Disaster Management Unit of the Corporation has the wide remit of the municipality. The most recent major episode has been severe flooding in October 2014, which affected more than fifteen communities in the municipality, occasioning damage to property and disrupting economic and social life.

4.4.4 Social Services and Community Development

Social services agencies beyond health and educational facilities are available across the various communities. The Ministry of the People and Social Development established a 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 Council's remit is to:

- Appraise, monitor and evaluate grants to NGO's/CBO's in the region under the Regional Micro Project Funds (RMPF);
- Identify and analyse the needs and responses in the regions; and
- Develop integrated anti-poverty strategies for the regions;

Its work places it in direct contact with the MSMEs of the municipality.

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 – e.g. Siparia Town, Sobo, and Palo Seco. Palo Seco has a major athletic event in the National calendar of track and field sports.

The area is also amenable to Sports Tourism and can be marketed for off-season training for international athletes and sports people. The week-long Siparia Fete which is built on the religious festival of La Divina Pastora, which attracts visitors to the area, and Siparia Town, as the birthplace of Daisy Voisin remains a community of focus in the annual Christmas Parang Festival.

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

This section of the document elaborates on key elements of the municipality of Siparia. The first subsection provides the general review of the economic performance of Trinidad and Tobago while the second subsection highlights the key economic drivers in the municipality of Siparia.

5.1 Gross Domestic Product in 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 sustained expansion of 2.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 2013, see Table 5.1 below. An unanticipated 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 as well 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 (CBTT), Central Statistical Office and Ministry of Finance

5.2 Key Economic Drivers (Activities)

Of those Businesses formally registered in Trinidad and Tobago, those currently operating in the municipality of Siparia accounted for 3.85 percent. Enterprises were concentrated largely in the Siparia town centre (19.10%) and Fyzabad (13.75%), but were also located in smaller numbers in La Brea (7.24%), Palo Seco (5.22%) and Oropouche (4.74%). The local economy in Siparia is predominantly comprised of businesses involved in Retail and Distribution (59.67%), the provision of Personal Services (16.37%), and Construction (7.95%), see

¹² Growth rates are derived from the CBTT'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

Table 5.2 below. Businesses involved in retail and distribution and the provision of personal services accounted for the largest proportion of micro and small businesses. In contrast, though businesses involved in Petroleum and Mining Activity and Construction were fewer in numbers, these companies employed the largest workforce, accounting for 30 percent of all enterprises in the municipality hiring 50 employees and over. The single largest private sector employer in the municipality, which employed roughly 500 to 999 employees was involved in Food Processing and Beverage Production.

Table 5.2: Number of Businesses in Operation by Size and Sector

Sector	Size of Enterprise					
	Micro (1 to 5)	Small (6 to 25)	Medium (26 to 50)	Large (50 and over)	Branch	Grand Total
Distribution	69.03%	28.35%	19.05%	0.00%	46.15%	59.67%
Personal Services	17.67%	15.75%	0.00%	5.00%	0.00%	16.37%
Construction	4.38%	16.54%	42.86%	40.00%	0.00%	7.95%
Petroleum and Other Mining Industries	2.42%	18.11%	19.05%	30.00%	0.00%	5.81%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Business Services	2.42%	7.09%	4.76%	5.00%	46.15%	3.91%
Transportation, Communication and Storage	1.21%	4.72%	4.76%	5.00%	7.69%	2.02%
Food Processors and Drink	0.45%	3.94%	0.00%	15.00%	0.00%	1.30%
Educational and Cultural Community Services	1.06%	2.36%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.19%
Assembly Type and Related Industries	0.45%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.36%
Chemicals and Non-Metallic Minerals	0.15%	0.79%	4.76%	0.00%	0.00%	0.36%
Textiles, Garments, Footwear, Headwear	0.30%	0.79%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.36%
Wood and Related Products	0.30%	0.00%	4.76%	0.00%	0.00%	0.36%
Hotels and Guest Houses	0.15%	0.79%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.24%
Printing, Publishing and Paper Converters	0.00%	0.79%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.12%
Grand Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Central Statistical Office

5.2.1 Industrial Activities

Given the significance of the Energy sector to the national economy and the prevalence of Petroleum and Mining Companies within the municipality, the burgesses of Siparia tend towards direct employment on the industrial estates of the energy sector as well as those areas closely linked to the energy sector. There exists a very well established industrial sector within the municipality which is dominated by three large companies, namely Lake Asphalt of Trinidad and Tobago Limited, National Energy Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago and Petrotrin. These large companies contribute not only to the provision of employment and expenditure in the region, but also directly to community life through initiatives emanating from their corporate social responsibility.

5.2.1.1 Lake Asphalt of Trinidad and Tobago

Lake Asphalt of Trinidad and Tobago (1978) Limited (Lake Asphalt) is a wholly owned state enterprise located in Brighton, La Brea, Trinidad and is charged with the responsibility of the commercial development of the Pitch Lake of Trinidad and Tobago, the world's largest deposit of natural asphalt. The location serves as both a tourist attraction as well as an economic natural resource since the material extracted from the Pitch Lake is used in the production of asphalt products. The firm has been in the business of mining, refining, manufacturing and distributing asphalt products for a variety of purposes for over one hundred years and has alliances in five continents around the world.

The company produces a range of exported products including Trinidad Lake Asphalt (TLA), TLA Pellets, LASCO Sealant and LASCO Bituminous Black Paint. The introduction of the TLA Pellets in 2005 came out of years of continuous research done both in house and in collaboration with experts locally, regionally and internationally. The prominence of the company in the La Brea Community has contributed not only to local economic development in the community and municipality but also to in the nation's development efforts.

5.2.1.2 National Energy Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago

The National Energy Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Ltd. (National Energy) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Ltd (NGC) and has been committed to supporting the infrastructure of the energy sector, while providing quality service in the area of natural gas based development and downstream industries for over thirty-five years. The subsidiary was incorporated in 1979 to continue the work commenced by the Coordinating Task Force in monetising the country's natural gas resources. National Energy lead the heavy industrial development programme concentrated at Brighton Port, La Brea and Union Estates. The programme was key for contemporary development in the community of La Brea. La Brea Industrial Development Company (LABIDCO) Limited, which is managed by National Energy on behalf of its primary share holder NGC, was formed in February 1996 to develop the La Brea Industrial Estate for industrial activity. It was envisioned that LABIDCO would provide port, logistics, industrial land and bio-remediation services at competitive prices for the La Brea Industrial Estate.

5.2.1.3 Petrotrin

The Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago (Petrotrin) was incorporated on January 21, 1993 to consolidate and operate the petroleum producing, refining and marketing assets of State-owned enterprises: Trinidad and Tobago Oil Company Limited (Trintoc) and Trinidad and Tobago Petroleum Company Limited (Trintopec). In 2000, these assets were further extended with the acquisition of Trinmar Operations. The company is an integrated oil and gas company, engaged in the full range of petroleum operations including the exploration for, development of and production of hydrocarbons, and the manufacturing and marketing of a wide range of petroleum products. The company is currently the country's largest producer of cruder oil and the country's only petroleum refinery. The company provides support for local economic development via its policy on the usage of local content, with thousands of registered suppliers and hundreds of registered contractors including those located within the municipality.

5.3 Prevalent Clusters or Value Chain Linkages

As mentioned in detail above, the municipality of Siparia is home to a substantial energy industry cluster. As each company emerged over time, the energy industry cluster has not only shown successful performance but has also demonstrated unmistakably the capacity to drive growth both at the local and national level. The location of this cluster within the geographical confines of the municipality has presented opportunities for local enterprises, particularly MSMEs, to benefit from the heightened economic activity in the municipality. Though the three largest companies within this cluster in the municipality of Siparia are locally owned enterprises which emerged as a result of direct national industrial policy, the openness of these companies and the fact that a substantial proportion of its finished products are exported have brought additional benefits both at the local and national level. The energy cluster within the municipality is currently in the sustainment stage of its developmental life cycle.

6 Municipal MSME Profile

It is recognised that MSMEs are a key driver of socio-economic growth in national economies. The CBTT 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 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 CBTT, 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 CBTT, 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 6.1). Because of the limited information available for SMEs on sales or assets, the CBTT'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 Ministry of Labour and Small and Medium Enterprise Development 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 6.2).

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: Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro Enterprise Development, 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;
- Impediments to MSME Development

6.1.1 General Characteristics

Of the 120 respondents, the vast majority (96.7%) were over the age of 36 (Table 6.3). Only 3.3 percent of entrepreneurs were under the age of 35, none of whom operated Micro Mini enterprises.

Table 6.3: Category of Business by Age of Respondent

Category of Business	Age at Last Birthday		
	Less than 35 years (%)	36 Years and Over (%)	Total (%)
Micro Mini	0.0	100.0	100.0
Micro	5.0	95.0	100.0
Small	5.0	95.0	100.0
Total	3.3	96.7	100.0

In conducting the survey, equal numbers of micro mini, micro and small entrepreneurs were interviewed. The survey revealed almost equal representation of male and female entrepreneurs in all categories of businesses investigated (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: Category of Business by Age of Respondent and Sex

Category of Business	Age Last Birthday		
	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Micro Mini	33.8	32.5	33.3
Micro	32.5	35.0	33.3
Small	33.8	32.5	33.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

In the municipality of Siparia, entrepreneurs were predominantly of East Indian descent (71%) (Figure 6.1). The remaining entrepreneurs were of African descent (17%), Mixed ancestry (8%) and Chinese descent (4%).

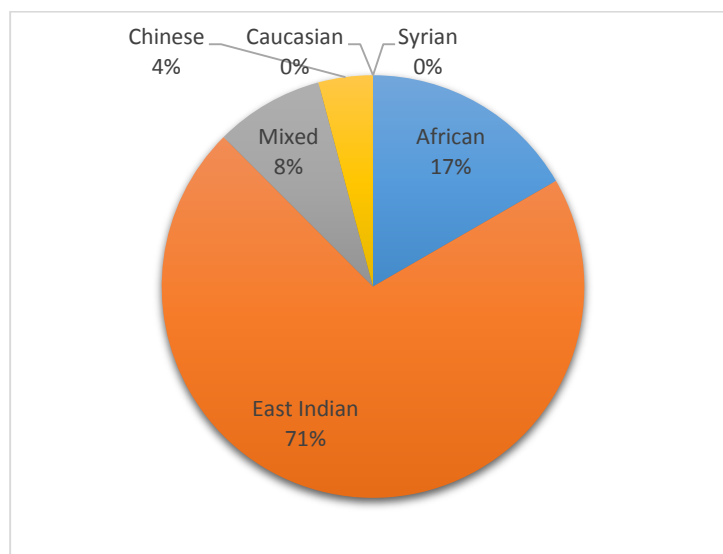


Figure 6.1: Distribution of MSMEs by Ethnicity

6.1.2 Size of Enterprise

The survey revealed almost equal proportions of enterprises of Micro Mini, Micro and Small categories (Figure 6.2, Figure 6.3). However, female entrepreneurs exhibited a marginally higher propensity to operate micro size enterprises (35%).

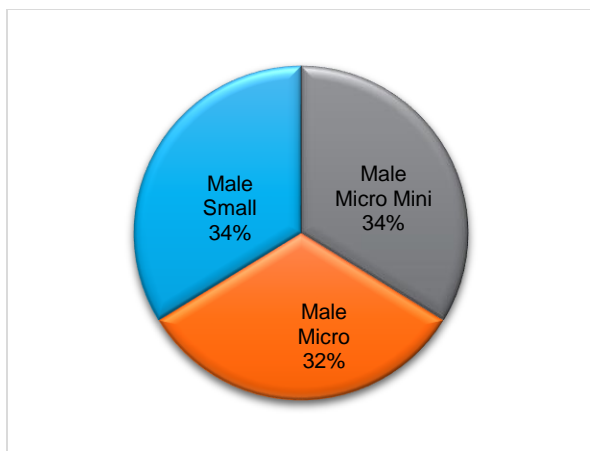


Figure 6.2: Male Ownership of MSMEs

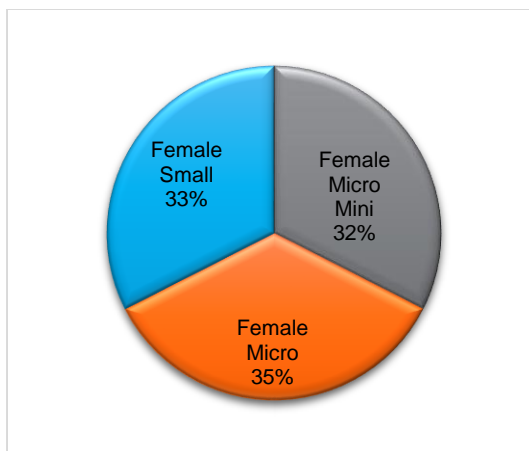


Figure 6.3: Female Ownership of MSMEs

6.1.3 Legal Status

The majority of respondents were in business for more than 10 years (86%) at the time of the survey (Figure 6.4). Just under 15 percent of respondents were in operation for five years or less, with 2 percent of that group being in operation for one year or less. Of the 120 participants, 93 percent admitted that their business had been formally registered (Figure 6.5). Only a small minority of 7 percent admitted to being part of the informal sector (Table 6.5)¹⁶. Registration of businesses is encouraged and affords operators the benefit of programmes geared at promoting and fostering MSME development. Non-registration of unincorporated enterprises refers to absence of registration under commercial, tax or social security laws, professional groups' regulatory acts or similar laws or regulations established by national legislative bodies.

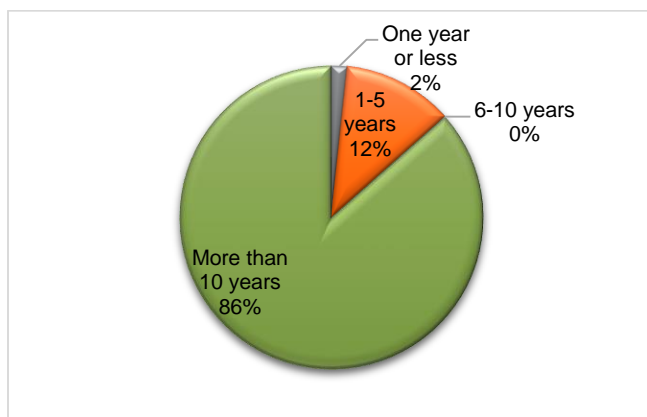


Figure 6.4: Length of Time in Operation

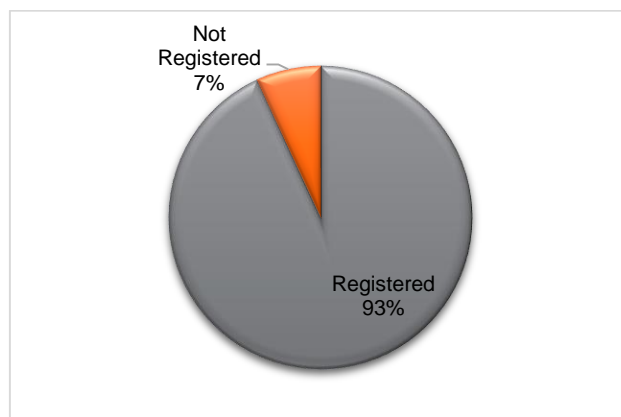


Figure 6.5: Distribution of Registered Versus Unregistered MSMEs

¹⁶ 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 licence, permit or certification to operate” (p. 89).

Table 6.5: Length of Time in Operation by Size of Business

Category of Business	One year or less	1-5 years	6-10 years	More than 10 years	Total
Micro Mini	5.0%	17.5%	0.0%	77.5%	100.0%
Micro	0.0%	15.0%	0.0%	85.0%	100.0%
Small	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	95.0%	100.0%
Total	1.7%	11.7%	0.0%	85.8%	100.0%

Considering the sizes of the businesses surveyed, it is not surprising that the majority were registered as sole proprietors (66.7%) and to a lesser extent as Limited Liability Companies (Table 6.6). While greater numbers Micro Mini (78.1%) and Micro (80%) respondents were registered as sole traders, a greater proportion of Small entrepreneurs were registered as limited liability companies (53.8%). Very few participants (1.8%) indicated that they had registered as Co-operatives, with this registration status being observed exclusively among Micro (2.6%) and Small (2.6%) enterprises exclusively.

Table 6.6: Legal Status of MSMEs by Size of Enterprise

Category of Business	Legal Status of Business				Total
	Sole Proprietor	Partnership	Limited Liability Company	Cooperative	
Micro Mini	78.1%	0.0%	21.9%	0.0%	100.0%
Micro	80.0%	0.0%	17.5%	2.5%	100.0%
Small	43.6%	0.0%	53.8%	2.6%	100.0%
Total	66.7%	0.0%	31.5%	1.8%	100.0%

Interestingly, gender differences have been observed among the registration status of entrepreneurs (Table 6.7). While both male and female entrepreneurs generally exhibited a greater propensity to register as sole proprietors (67.5% and 50% respectively), a greater proportion of female entrepreneurs registered as limited liability companies; 37.5 percent of female companies versus 25 percent of male companies. In addition, the only co-operatives were run by female entrepreneurs of the micro and small business categories (7.1% respectively).

Table 6.7: Legal Status of MSMEs by Size of Enterprise and Sex

		Legal Status of Business					
		Sole Proprietor	Partnership	Limited Liability Company	Cooperative	Not stated	Total
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	Micro Mini	66.7	0.0	14.8	0.0	18.5	100.0
	Micro	88.5	0.0	11.5	0.0	0.0	100.0
	Small	48.1	0.0	48.1	0.0	3.7	100.0
	Total	67.5	0.0	25.0	0.0	7.5	100.0
Female	Micro Mini	53.8	0.0	23.1	0.0	23.1	100.0
	Micro	64.3	0.0	28.6	7.1	0.0	100.0
	Small	30.8	0.0	61.5	7.7	0.0	100.0
	Total	50.0	0.0	37.5	5.0	7.5	100.0

6.1.4 Markets and Annual Sales

Of the respondents, roughly 41 percent identified the nearest town/city as the primary market for their products and services (Table 6.8). As much as 35 percent of respondents reported that their market extended to Trinidad at large, while only 7.5 percent indicated that they operated at the National level. Though the enterprises surveyed fell into the micro mini, micro and small categories, only 15.8 percent of respondents indicated that their primary market was solely at the local community level.

Table 6.8: Primary Local Markets for Goods and Services by Size of Enterprise

Category of Business	Primary Market (%)					
	Local community	Nearest town/city	All of Trinidad	Trinidad and Tobago	Not stated	Total
Micro Mini	30.0	55.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Micro	12.5	45.0	37.5	5.0	0.0	100.0
Small	5.0	22.5	52.5	17.5	2.5	100.0
Total	15.8	40.8	35.0	7.5	.8	100.0

The annual sales for respondents ranged from under TT\$100,000 to as much as TT\$5,000,000 (Figure 6.6). Just over half of all respondents generated sales under TT\$100,000 up to as much as TT\$ 200,000 annually. Interestingly, as much as 8.33 percent of respondents reported the capacity to generate sales in the TT\$500,000 to TT\$5,000,000 annually.

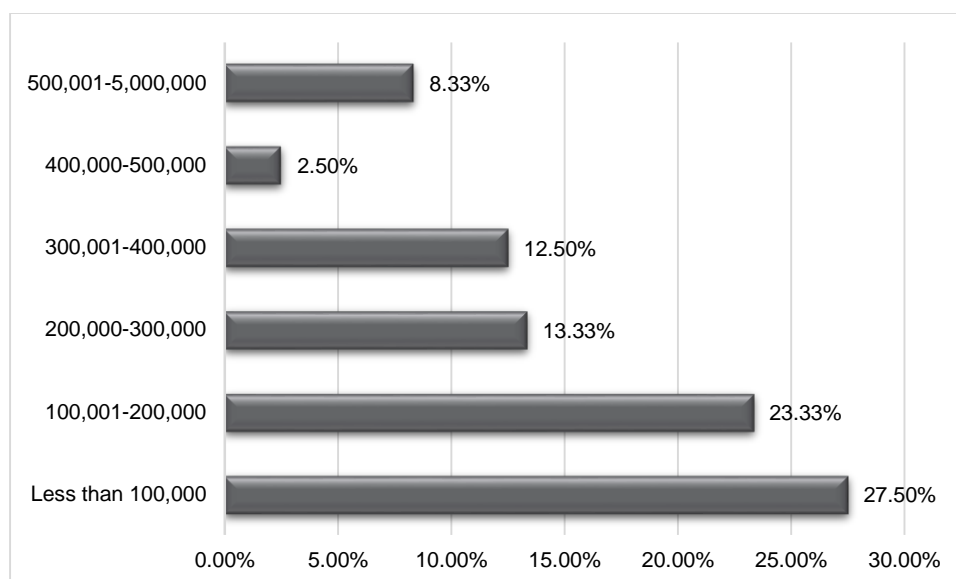


Figure 6.6: Annual Sales for MSMEs

While the survey revealed that the primary market of respondents extended to the national level, only a small minority (1.7%) actually engaged in exportation (Table 6.9). Over 98 percent of respondents did not engage in any export activity.

Table 6.9: Business Exporting/Not Exporting Products and Category of Business

Export Products	Category of Business			
	Micro Mini	Micro	Small	Total
	%	%	%	%
Yes	0.0	0.0	5.0	1.7
No	100.0	100.0	95.0	98.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Of those respondents that did engage in exportation, products were exported regionally to Grenada (50%) and as far as Saint Lucia (50%) (Table 6.10).

Table 6.10: Primary Export Markets for Goods and Services by Size of Enterprise

Country Exporting To	Category of Business			
	Micro Mini	Micro	Small	Total
Grenada	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
St Lucia	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Total	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%

6.1.5 Financing and Investment

Access to finance is perhaps one of the greatest challenges faced by enterprises of these size categories. MSMEs require financing not only for “seed” capital for business start-ups but also for working capital and expansion. Of the 120 respondents, the vast majority were self-financed or received financial assistance from their families (73.1%) (Table 6.11). Though commercial banks are the pivot of the local financial system, these institutions are particularly the most difficult to get access to funding for businesses of this size. Consequently, just under a quarter of respondents

identified commercial banks as a key supplier of financing, with small enterprises (39.7%) exhibiting a greater reliance on commercial banks than micro-mini enterprises (6.8%). Only a minority of respondents turned to NEDCO (1.9%) and Credit Unions (2.6%) for small business financing.

Table 6.11: Key Suppliers of Financing for MSMEs by Size of Enterprise

Source of Funds	Category of Business			
	Micro Mini	Micro	Small	Total
Self/Family	88.6%	79.6%	57.1%	73.1%
Credit Union	2.3%	6.1%	0.0%	2.6%
Commercial Bank	6.8%	14.3%	39.7%	22.4%
NEDCO	2.3%	0.0%	3.2%	1.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Over half of those surveyed reported that they invested under TT \$ 250,000 in Plant Equipment and Other Assets (Figure 6.7). As much as 27 percent of respondents operated businesses that necessitated no investment in plant equipment whatsoever.

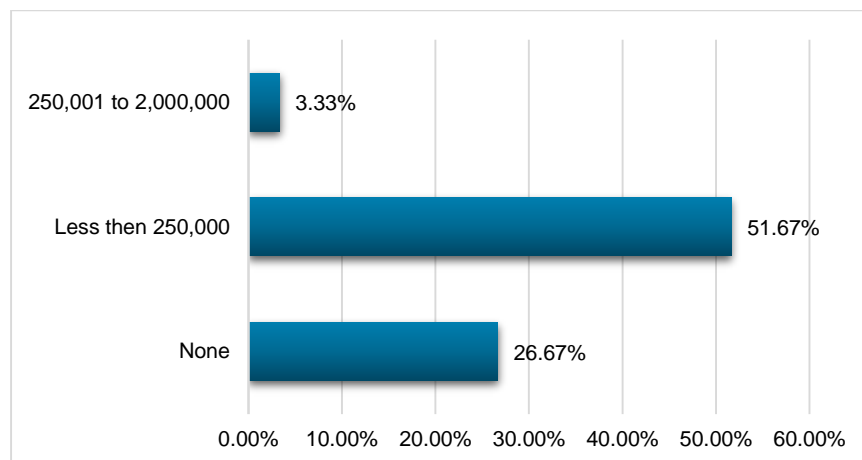


Figure 6.7: Amount Invested in Plant Equipment and Other Assets

6.1.6 Use of Internet

Almost two-thirds of the respondents indicated that they routinely use the internet in business (Table 6.12). Size related differences were also observed among respondents, with micro-mini enterprises three-fifths of all micro-mini enterprises not utilising the internet in their operations whatsoever. However, Micro and Small businesses exhibited greater employment of this technology in their operations.

Table 6.12: Businesses Reporting Routine Use of Internet and Category of Business

Routinely Use The Internet in Business	Category of Business			
	Micro Mini	Micro	Small	Total
Yes	40.0%	70.0%	82.5%	64.2%
No	60.0%	30.0%	17.5%	35.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Of those respondents that indicated routine use of the internet in their operations, just over three-fifths used it exclusively for email, while roughly 22 percent sought to access product information and the remaining 16 percent used it for researching market information (Figure 6.8). Size based differences were observed within the sample with Micro and Micro-mini enterprises using internet access predominantly (80%) for emails, while small enterprises sought information on products and markets to a greater extent (22.3% and 15.7% respectively).

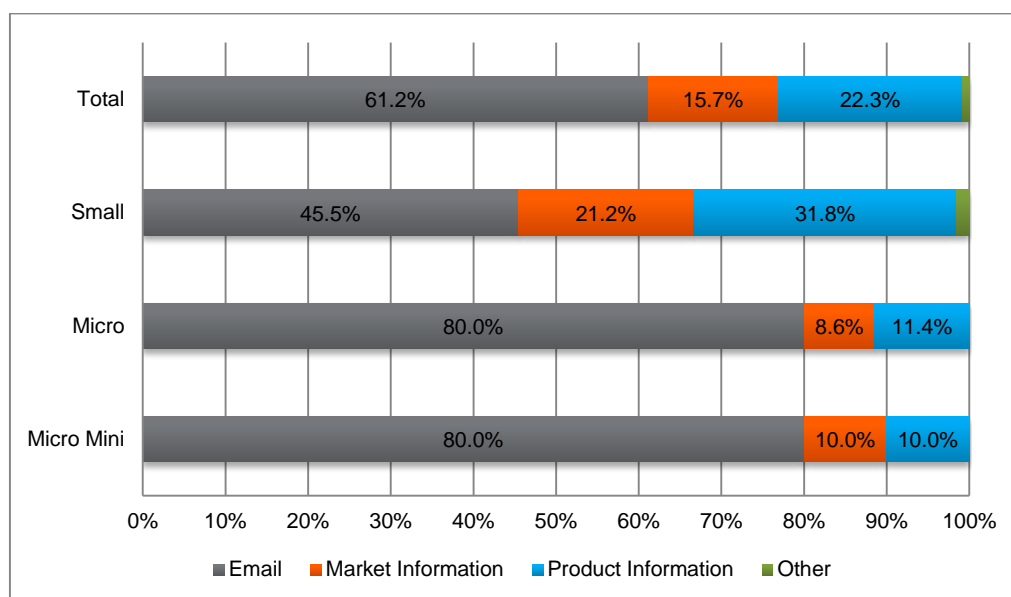


Figure 6.8: Reported Uses of Internet and Category of Business

6.1.7 Technical Support

Almost 70 percent of respondents indicated that informal apprenticeship served as an alternative source of technical assistance (Table 6.13). Small enterprises utilised private apprenticeship (41.7%) to a greater extent when compared to micro enterprises (20%).

Table 6.13: Other Sources of Technical Assistance and Training

Other Sources of Technical Assistance and Training	Category of Business			
	Micro Mini	Micro	Small	Total
Informal Apprenticeship	0.0%	80.0%	58.3%	68.2%
Private	0.0%	20.0%	41.7%	31.8%
Total	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

6.2 MSME Focus Group Discussions

In order to investigate the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities facing MSMEs, Focus Group Discussions were held in the Municipality. A sample of entrepreneurs along with a group of representatives of village/community councils, special interest groups, civil societies and the Siparia Chamber of Commerce were interviewed. The sample of entrepreneurs comprised a balance of male and female participants both under and over the age of 35 who operated micro mini, micro and small enterprises in the municipality. However, as revealed in the municipal survey,

participants were predominantly over the age of 35. The sample of participants was selected with the assistance of the Local Area Economic Development Officer attached to the Siparia Regional Corporation from the Corporation's database of municipal entrepreneurs. The discussions, which lasted approximately one hour, were structured and had an emphasis on the opportunities and challenges facing entrepreneurs within the municipality.

Emerging from the focus group discussions was the fact that entrepreneurs operating in Siparia faced a range of very similar challenges. Access to finance continues to be a significant challenge faced by MSMEs. Participants revealed that accessing finance from Commercial Banks poses a notable challenge to MSMEs given the high transaction costs, heavy collateral requirements and complex procedures. Many participants indicated that they had benefitted from the services offered by NEDCO, the Agricultural Development Bank, Credit Unions, The Ministry of Community Development and the Siparia Chamber of Commerce. Entrepreneurs were aware of other support institutions operating in the municipality but noted that greater collaboration between support institutions should take place. Participants suggested not only that greater networking should take place among Support Institutions, but also that Community Development Officers should be present at institutions such as the Agricultural Development Bank and NEDCO to improve the synergies between the institutions and maximize the impact on the outcomes of MSMEs.

The location of an enterprise is one of the most critical factors determining not only the volume of trade that can take place but also the success of the business. Entrepreneurs revealed that finding affordable commercial spaces to locate their establishments presented a notable challenge. The administrative and commercial centre of the municipality is the town of Siparia. However, one entrepreneur indicated that locating affordable commercial spaces at the city centre was indeed challenging since a monopoly of ownership existed in the prime real estate located along the town centre, High Street. Furthermore, Siparia is predominantly residential in nature and one entrepreneur identified the town as "an area where people who work in the energy sector come to relax," alluding to the fact that a substantial proportion of the municipality's population find employment outside of the municipality in municipalities such as Point Fortin and San Fernando. Given the concentration in and around the town of Siparia, entrepreneurs indicated that the development of communities outside Siparia should occur specifically with a view to create conditions propitious for the growth of enterprises of all sizes. The lack of an area carved specifically for industry was identified as one of the major local factors acting as inhibitors for the growth and development of MSMEs.

One of the most prominent challenges facing entrepreneurs was obtaining a reliable workforce. While this trend has been observed in municipalities around the country, the presence of the energy sector in the municipality has played a major role. Given the remuneration, perks and job security offered by firms operating in the sector, would-be employees tend towards training that would allow them entry into the industry. As a result, MSMEs face a notable challenge in retaining employees. Entrepreneurs also claimed that employees displayed a reluctance to engage in demanding work, an unwillingness to learn on the job and a generally poor attitude towards work.

The issue of the small number of young entrepreneurs was explored in the discussions. Entrepreneurs admitted that the youth of today usually have little interest in starting a business. One major inhibitor identified was the mind-set of the youth of today, where one entrepreneur stated "...it is a matter of comparing the wealthy mentality with the average thinking. [The average young person

was] taught go to school, get your education then get a good job. Whereas the wealthy tell their children go to school, get your education, then start a business. So from a very young age the average young person is taught that their goal in life is to go and look for a good job...” Consequently, the youth of today tend towards employment in large public and private institutions. Participants thought it should be necessary to begin moulding young entrepreneurs from the “pre-school stage” to think along the lines of engaging in entrepreneurial endeavours with a macro view of developing the local economy, and by extension the national economy at large. Furthermore, in spite of the fact that a number of support institutions exists, there is a lack of awareness of the prevalence and availability of these services among those who it would benefit most, young entrepreneurs. Another inhibitor identified by participants was the monetary incentives (stipends) offered to trainees of programmes offered in YTEPP, Metal Industries Company Limited (MIC) and National Energy Skills Centre (NESC). Entrepreneurs firmly believed that such incentives created conditions not propitious for hiring employees. One entrepreneur said, “In the past we learned to earn, but now we learn to learn” referring to the fact that incentives offered to trainees have created a much more challenging situation for small enterprises seeking new employees.

The focus group discussions explored a range of challenges faced by small entrepreneurs in the municipality. These challenges ranged from access to finance to finding reliable sources of labour. The discussions drew attention not only to the need to develop greater institutional collaboration in the support of MSME development, but also to the need for the promotion of enterprise as a means of earning a livelihood among young persons within the municipality from a very early stage. Greater emphasis on the promotion of MSME development along with the development of backward linkages and clusters will be paramount moving forward in the drive to contribute to greater levels of local economic development.

6.3 Partners in Local Area Economic Development in Trinidad

6.3.1 Local Economic Development in the South West Peninsula

The Inter-American Development Bank, in collaboration with Atlantic and the Point Fortin Borough Corporation has championed a Local Economic Development Programme, which placed marked emphasis not only on generating opportunities for development but also building capacity in the south-west peninsula. The primary aim of the project was to diversify the local economy of south west region where extractive industries are located and by extension materially improve the livelihoods of its burgesses. With contributions from both the IDB and Atlantic, six communities including Icacos, Cedros, Buenos Ayres, Chatham, La Brea and Point Fortin have benefitted from the LED Programme. These communities were singled out due to the prevalence of poverty and indigence at levels that were substantially higher than national averages. A working group which is comprised of representatives from the Point Fortin Borough Corporation, Atlantic, Civil Society, the Social Sector and Academia was developed to coordinate the LED programme in these communities. Work has progressed on four priority areas:

1. Learning and Communication;
2. Human Development, Specifically Youth Development;
3. Development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; and
4. Institutional Capacity Building

6.3.2 The Ministry of Labour and Small and Micro 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 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).

6.3.3 The National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited

The National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited (NEDCO) was established in July 2002 under the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development (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 as they seek to diversify the economic landscape of Trinidad and Tobago.

There is no NEDCO office within the municipality of Siparia, however, they work closely with the business sector in the area to promote a positive outcome for the various business ventures. The loan facility does not however, make funds available for primary agriculture, bars, professional services or casinos. NEDCO funding is specifically designed to assist those who face difficulty in accessing funds 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 their loan entry ceiling from \$100,000 to \$250,000 for first time borrowers and a maximum of \$500,000 for second time borrowers. NEDCO 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 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 SME 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.

6.3.4 Micro-Enterprise Loan Facility

The clients can also seek the services of the Micro Enterprise Loan (MEL) Facility for accessing business grants and loans for business start-up 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.

6.3.5 The FairShare Programme

The FairShare Programme, launched in January 2011, is a set-aside programme that enables SMEs to access opportunities to do work with the Government for contracts valued up to TTD 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 to a maximum of six years. The objective of the FairShare Programme is to create independent and strong SMEs by allowing SMEs to participate in Government spending over a fixed period 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 SMEs to market their products and services through online profiles; and
- Offers training to SMEs in procurement, business management and other important areas of relevance to improve their ability to win contracts.

6.3.6 Other Stakeholders

6.3.6.1 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.

6.3.6.2 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 and Industry (MTI). Members are encouraged to maintain and adhere to the required standards and grades of quality in all manufactured goods and services.

6.3.6.3 Siparia Chamber of Commerce

The Siparia 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 legislations affecting business practices are held. Strategic alliances are forged with local and sometimes foreign organizations 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 Municipality of Siparia was 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 Ministry of Local Government, 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, through various political administrations, 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. the current Government administration has pledged to transform “Local Government Services through the devolution of authority from Ministries to ensure increased efficiency”.¹⁷ There is unidirectional movement to devolution over the last seven years and this is evident in:

- Ministry of Local Government, Draft White Paper on Local Government Reform, 2009.
- Ministry of Local Government, Policy on Local Government Transformation and Modernisation, 2012.
- Ministry of Local Government, Draft White Paper on Local Government Transformation and Modernization 2013.
- Government of Trinidad and Tobago, Planning and Facilitation of Development Act, 2014.
- People's National Movement, *Manifesto*, 2015.

The present administration is firmly committed to restructuring local government in Trinidad after the model of the Tobago House of Assembly Act, which already accords substantial control to the Assembly in matters relating to Tobago.

¹⁷ Ministry of Planning and the Economy, 2011, *Medium-Term Policy Framework 2011-2014*, Government of Trinidad and Tobago, pg. 19.

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 1901.¹⁸ 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 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.¹⁹

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.

¹⁸ <http://www.fcm.ca/home.htm>

¹⁹ <http://cariled.org/about-led/definitions/>

8 Promoting for Local Economic Development – Issues and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

Government's strategy is designed to diversify within the energy sector, promote services and creative industries, tourism and agricultural sectors, and achieve better balance in economic activity through diversified investments by the public and private sectors. The economic base of the municipality although suffering decline in the latter years of the 20th century, remains one of the more diversified in the country, with a mix of heavy industry catering to demand in the international economy, and of primary agriculture and fishing catering to the domestic economy, with a range of services, some of high level in between.

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 clusters being promoted as official policy and strategy of diversification of the National Government. Some of these are addressed in the present concluding section which identifies some of the key issues to be addressed in the way forward for the Municipality of Siparia.

The Siparia Regional Corporation would do well to focus on the promotion of the involvement of its emerging entrepreneurs in the sectors of Energy, Agriculture and Fishing, Eco and Cultural Tourism and Commerce and Distribution. In the planning of projects and providing the supporting infrastructure, the Corporation would contribute substantially to local economic development and to the improvement of the quality of life of the residents in the various communities in the municipality.

There are physical infrastructure issues that confront the Municipal Corporation and which have a bearing on business in the area. The road infrastructure has to be addressed, given that poor quality roads imposes high transport costs on the movement of goods and in the provision of some services. The roll out of telecommunications services has to be universal allowing all communities access to broadband and other services. The long shoreline of Siparia has suffered serious erosion in a number of areas, and the absence of sea defences puts many communities at risk with implications for residential accommodation and businesses in these communities.

There is also the matter of the institutional infrastructure to be addressed. If local economic empowerment is to be driven by the Municipal Corporation and the planning and facilitation of business activity become part of its remit, there is need for institutional collaboration in order to ensure that the services of specialised agencies become available to residents of the area who are the immediate clientele and stakeholders of the Municipality in its thrust into business development. New or would-be entrepreneurs need considerable support by way of training in business management and operations. In the course of this project, stakeholders identified the need for handholding, especially among groups that might have had no experience in running a business.

There is the generalised challenge of the upgrading of the human resources in the municipality and of entrepreneurs and persons involved in MSMEs. The Census data and the survey conducted in the present exercise establish that while most of the population is literate, there is a deficiency in the educational base relative to the demands of a competitive economy. The fact that persons may need to engage in MSMEs does not absolve them of the need to have a sound educational base on which training and retraining programmes can be mounted.

The Municipal Corporation has to ensure that there are accessible programmes across communities which are user friendly and can attract participation and involvement of those who might not have had the opportunity of a good secondary education in their earlier educational career. Internet access in community centres might be part of the infrastructure to be put in place: there is now a wide array of free on-line programmes

There is also the issue of informal sector operators who, with adequate support, might be able to formalise their operations. The Municipal Corporation has to be provided with the assistance to promote the transition of informal activities into structured businesses. In that regard, there are NGOs and CBOs operating in the Municipality which are familiar with its communities, which might be able to provide services in communities, and which can complement or supplement what is available from agencies like NEDCO and IBIS.

8.2 Strategic Sectors

8.2.1 Energy

What is today the municipality of Siparia has had a long history of involvement in the oil and gas sector. Indeed, Trinidad's earliest involvement in the sector was as a result of the discovery of oil in the area in the 19th century. The exhaustion of wells in the last half of the 20th century led to economic decline. As the major oil companies reduced their onshore presence, institutional arrangements were put in place to allow small-scale producers to engage in extraction, through work-overs, which would have been uneconomic for the major oil companies to exploit. A number of such small firms have developed and are now part of the energy sector, and success in this activity has led to their embarking on other areas of the sector.

While the official policy of the country is the diversification 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. 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, along with diversification from the sector as a whole.

In that regard, oil and gas will continue to have a significant place in the economy of Siparia, with the sector providing employment for some of its residents, and with MSMEs engaged in servicing some of the demands created by the sector. The experience garnered in servicing the sector in the municipality will allow some MSMEs to extend their operations into other neighbouring municipalities and even into the offshore operations which are now the location of much of the extraction conducted in the country.

It will continue to be necessary to support the educational and training preparation within the municipality for the technical and professional occupations relevant to the sector.

8.2.2 Agriculture and Food

The municipality is endowed with the considerable potential for addressing the food sustainability needs of the nation. Historically, a substantial acreage was devoted to plantation agriculture, in cocoa, coffee, citrus, sugar cane and coconuts. Much of the coconut output was processed into vegetable oils and fats. However, the industry was devastated by the red ring disease, which affected supply, and then by a fall in demand triggered by presumed negative impact of coconut-derived vegetable oils on health. There is now a full reversal of demand based on the presumed benefits of coconut oil on health, and coconut water is in high demand as a beverage also with presumed health benefits.

Coconut, Cocoa, Coffee and Citrus: The resuscitation of the coconut industry with small but surely medium-sized farmers represents an important initiative in food sustainability. There is also a range of other tree crop agriculture that can be promoted as part of the post-plantation phase: cocoa, coffee and citrus can be revived. Targeted support for farmers by way of technical and extension services, land suitability and capability studies, the selection of planting material, post-harvest technology, and marketing, can contribute to substantial increase in food supplies and to the reduction in imports. Small animal husbandry can be expanded also with appropriate support from the Ministry of Food Production: pigs, goats, rabbits, and poultry including duck are possibilities.

Fishing: The improvement of landing sites through the provision of infrastructure – refrigeration and ice-making facilities etc. – in locations like Erin, Icacos, Fullerton and Bonasse can contribute to improvement and to viability in operations of fishers in the municipality. Fishers need training to ensure that they can comply with national and possibly international food safety standards. Indeed, export readiness of such products actually prepare them to withstand competition from imports.

Aquaculture: There are areas in the municipality that are amenable for fish farming. Swamps and lagoons and riverine areas with brackish water can be exploited for the growing of fresh water and brackish water fisheries e.g. tilapia, cascadox, conch, and shrimp. With appropriate infrastructure and training and extension services from the Ministry of Food Production, residents in some communities might avail themselves of the opportunities for viable businesses e.g. Fullerton and Icacos. Access to state lands and to in-shore waters will require the appropriate management of these special areas as part of the commons and regulation on the part of the state, represented by the Municipal Corporation.

Beekeeping: The substantial forested area and tree crop agriculture lend themselves well to beekeeping and the production of honey. The municipality has distinguished itself internationally with the winning of awards by beekeepers in the World Honey Competition. With appropriate infrastructure support, the municipality can promote the expansion of this industry, with a number of MSMEs involved.

Agro-processing: 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. While

domestic markets are likely to be the target with the fisheries, with HACCP, it is possible that the area can become engaged in exports. 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 observe the appropriate standards, thereby guaranteeing widening of markets.

8.2.3 Eco, Heritage and Cultural Tourism

The Municipality is teeming with historic, cultural and other resources that allow for tour guiding services and adventure experiences as part of the expansion of the tourism industry of Trinidad. A tourist in the area has as possibilities visits to:

- The Pitch Lake in La Brea, and the site of the first oil well in Trinidad in 1857;
- The historic site of the Labour Movement in Trinidad and Tobago at Fyzabad;
- Archaeological sites;
- Los Blanquizales and Icacos Swamps;
- Mud volcanoes at Columbus, Galfa Point and Chatham;
- Siparia Town, birth-place of Daisy Voisin, with for video and musical display;
- The Mudhouse in Avocat; and
- The forest and wilderness which because of the close proximity to South America has made the area unique in terms of the bird-life and some of the wildlife, for example the Morne L'Enfer Forest.

There is also the major event in Cultural Tourism with the celebration of La Divina Pastora of the Catholics and with appropriate syncretism the Soparee Mai of the Hindus, both leading up to the Siparia Fete which attracts visitors from all over the country and which might attract visitors from abroad. Moreover, it might be promoted as the major occasion for homecoming for locals who have migrated and welcome the opportunity of returning home when many more of their contemporaries are doing so. There have developed popular beach-parties and these might be structured, organised and managed with the involvement of the Municipal Corporation. The locations which seem appropriate are Erin, Vessigny Beach, Quinam Beach, Los Iros or Palo Seco Bay.

The Municipal Corporation in association with the Tourism Development Company and the Ministry of Tourism can market the area as a unique location in Trinidad. Indeed, guest accommodation might actually become part of the marketing to international visitors, opening the possibilities for small guesthouse operators and restaurant services, catering to visitors to the municipality. Restaurant services promoting the produce of the area might well serve to create uniqueness of the Municipality with attendant employment for those with special culinary skills.

All of this would require some level of enterprise on the part of the Municipal Corporation in recognising that there is a product in the municipality that can be marketed with a number of residents becoming the 'distributors' of the product as they become involved in catering to guests from the rest of the country and from the rest of the world. A number of MSMEs can develop around the cultural tourism and eco-tourism amenity resources of the municipality.

With an increase in visitors to the area, there opens the possibility for the supply of craft goods and artefacts from the area itself. The ingenuity of the people with the resources of the forests, swamps,

mangrove and the sea will provide considerable material to be reflected in craft products. There is already some amount of craftwork done by women on a part-time basis in some of the communities. Visitors to the Pitch Lake usually seek to take with them a piece of Pitch: this and other mementoes from the area can be appropriately packaged. Such craft related items remain unique and cannot be easily copied and manufactured in China to be sold in Trinidad as craft of the country, and more particularly, as craft of Siparia in Trinidad.

There will be need for appropriate training and preparation of the residents in the local population who will become engaged in the various dimensions of the emerging tourism sector. The Municipal Corporation will need to be at the centre of the process of organising most of the elements involved in creating a presence in the tourism sector of the country. However, planning and implementing its initiative in the development of its tourism product will require inputs from the state agencies and consultants specialised in tourism development.

Business Tourism: The municipality has Cedros as an entry point for Venezuelans resident on the western shores of the Gulf of Paria. Given that an increasing number come to Trinidad for shopping, it is in the interest of the Municipality and residents that businesses in Cedros exploit this opportunity. There is need to promote bilingualism with residents learning Spanish to ease communications. The official name of the municipality recognises the earlier presence of Spain in the history of Trinidad, and also of Venezuela, over the centuries.

There is legitimate business to be conducted between the countries, and the Municipality can play an important role, care being exercised to protect the country from its ports being used as a conduit for the underground economy. There will be need for persons involved in MSMEs to be prepared with language and other skills to conduct trade and business relations with Venezuelans in the communities in the east of that country. The Municipal Corporation will need to ensure that the authorities responsible for National Security invest the area with the appropriate infrastructure and facilities to dissuade engagement in illegitimate activities.

8.2.4 Commerce and Distribution

Commerce and distribution will expand with the improvement of economic activity in the municipality and in neighbouring municipalities of Point Fortin, Debe/Penal and San Fernando. With the establishment of new enterprises on the industrial estate at LABIDCO, there will be employment opportunities for residents and workers entering the municipality. Inflows of new residents and expansion of the population will create a widening of the market for commerce and distribution.

However, 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 of them sharing work or custom 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. Table 8.1 collates a number of high projects for implementation with relevant agencies identified.

8.3 8.2 Proposed Projects and Implementation Plan

Local government reform will require Municipal Corporations to play a more active role in securing better economic and social outcomes within the municipalities. Preparation of the Municipal LAEPs is a first step in directing 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.

8.3.1 8.2.1 Establishing Institutional Structures within the Siparia Regional Corporation for LED

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

1. **Establishing a Siparia LED Group** – This Group, which should operate out of the Siparia 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 Siparia Chamber of Commerce and a MSME representative),
- Local knowledge and research institutions; and
- Public sector business support agencies (such as NEDCO and the Cooperative Division), and La Brea Industrial Development Company Ltd (LABIDCO).

2. **Strengthening the capacity of the Siparia 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 Siparia.

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 Point Fortin Borough Corporation and Debe/Penal Regional Corporation** – 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.²⁰ 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 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.

²⁰ Finance and markets, entrepreneurial skill development, training (soft and technical skills), and mentoring and coaching, etc.

- 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.

8.3.2 8.2.2 Recommended Sectoral Initiatives

The recommendation here is to identify the local sectoral initiatives in Siparia during the LED strategic planning phase and should be based on the strategic sectors identified. All the projects developed should be based on an inclusive model which ensures the participation of residents of the Municipality, including the poor, women and youths. The following should be considered:

1. Siparia Tourism Development Initiative

The Municipal Council and a number of local organisations are in support of developing the tourism potential of the Municipality. If effectively planned, the development of unique Siparia tourism experiences can boost local development, strengthen inter-sectoral linkages, and lead to growth of non-tourism sectors. It is important that the local tourism sector be examined holistically and in the context of economic development of the region as a whole.

The LAEP exercise supports the development of ecotourism, heritage and cultural tourism and business tourism. Siparia Regional Corporation and industry and business support stakeholders and external partners should define and develop new and existing tourism experiences in the region.

During this planning phase, discussions should be held among stakeholders to identify ideas for new and innovative low impact tourism experiences in Siparia and to ascertain potential business and investment opportunities. Such discussions would pinpoint also areas for joint investment between the Government and the community (NGO and community sector) or private sector entities, and identify areas of external support and policy change are needed.

The main output at the planning phase would be the development of a municipal tourism development plan which should:

- Identify the vision and objectives for tourism development in the Municipality;
- Analyse the status of tourism assets and provide a plan of action where rehabilitation and protection are required;
- Identify proposed tourism products and tourism development areas;
- Contain activities to be implemented (including activities that would lead to the development and expansion of local tourism-related MSMEs, and areas for cluster development;

- Identify inter-sectoral linkages (with local food and agriculture sector, arts and craft industry, etc.) and propose actions to strengthen linkages;
- Identify strategic partnerships and areas of investment for Government and the private sector, and for the NGO and community sector;
- Includes a strategy for monitoring and evaluating the progress of implementation of the plan and mechanism for data collection and management; and
- Include a communication plan.

The tourism development plan 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 plan, the next steps should be :

- Improve the business support environment within the Municipality for ;local tourism development through the Municipal Business Support Programme and other mechanisms;
- Brand and market the areas and their amenities in keeping with the new development thrust for the area;
- Collaborate with central Government agencies, local NGOs/CBOs and private sector in managing local natural resources; and
- Work with stakeholders in collecting information to monitor the performance of the local tourism sector.

2. Promoting the Local Agriculture and Food Sector

Discussions with stakeholders identified agricultural potential of the area, particularly in regards to the production and tree crops (for example, cocoa, coffee and fruits). There is also the need to explore opportunities for agro-processing and manufacture of value-added products. Boosting the agricultural sector would require in-depth discussions among stakeholders with a common goal of identifying strategic crops, fisheries and livestock, farming areas, fish landing sites, and interventions for improve marketing, increase production of agricultural produce and value-added products, strengthen inter-sectoral linkages, and build capacity in industry organisations.

The Regional Corporation should work with the Ministry of Agriculture, farmers and other industry stakeholders in developing and promoting the local agricultural sector and agri-businesses. This would require the collaboration of local farmers, 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”.

3. Promoting MSMEs in the Energy Sector

Training and Experiential Learning: This underlines the importance of the reach of programmes offered through YTEPP, NESC, MIC and OJT to residents across the various communities. It is training and work experience in the related fields that eventually will provide the training for the more entrepreneurial to create new start-ups that will eventually develop into vibrant firms and enterprises, as the nature of the industry changes. With some skills being fungible across sectors, many of those engaged in servicing the Energy Sector will switch to alternative activities as demand for their skills and expertise declines and increases in other sectors. Support for focused training will allow some percentage of graduates to develop the capacity to establish and run their own businesses in the services industries in energy and related.

8.3.3 8.2.3 Siparia LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
Establishment of a Siparia 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>Siparia Regional Corporation (SRC) (through its Municipal Council)</p> <p>Siparia Chamber of Commerce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ministry of Agriculture ○ Ministry of Tourism Economic Development Board ○ NEDCO ○ TTIInvest, ○ 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 Siparia 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 the necessary resources • Officially establish the LEDU. 	SRC	<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 and Clerk/Typist</p>	1

8.3.3 8.2.3 Siparia LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
Preparing a comprehensive strategy and action plan for the Municipality of Siparia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold Siparia 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. 	<p>Siparia Local Economic Development Group</p> <p>SRC-LEDU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Siparia 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 – Siparia LED Strategy and Action Plan	
Establishing a Siparia Business Establishments Database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 of owner; type of business; years in operation; size of business/number of employees, etc. • Advertise and encourage business owners to register with the 	SRC LEDU/ LEDO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CSO ○ Siparia Chamber of Commerce ○ NEDCO ○ MOLSED 	3 months to establish database and ongoing	Computer Spreadsheet or database software Clerk Campaign to encourage business registration	1

8.3.3 8.2.3 Siparia LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	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	• 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	SRC	o Neighbouring Corporations	6 months and ongoing	Chairmen and CEOs of the Corporations Meeting place	1
Establishing a Municipal Business Support Programme for MSMEs	• Hold meetings with key business support service providers to discuss service provisioning and areas of collaboration between SRC and service providers. • Reach agreement on the SRC one-stop service model for MSMEs to be used (e.g. SRC 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 provisioning and places to existing and potential MSME clients (in collaboration with other Local Governments). • Launch Siparia MSME Support	SRC-LEDU	o Siparia Chamber of Commerce o Established local businesses o NEDCO o MOLSED including the Cooperative Division o Ministry with responsibility for development of medium-sized enterprises o Local Banks o ADB o Authur Lok Jack GSB	9 months to establish and on-going	Cooperation of central government, NGO and private sector service providers For development of the app - Graphic designer Copy writer Software developer Service provision – brochures, factsheet and information on product and services for small businesses	1

8.3.3 8.2.3 Siparia LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
Siparia Tourism Initiative	<p>Programme.</p> <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 Siparia product and identify which ones will be 'marketed' to domestic and foreign visitors and how they will 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 	<p>SRC-LEDU</p> <p>Ministry of Tourism</p> <p>Local NGOs/ CBOs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o NGOs/CBOs o UWI/UTT o Tourism Development Company Ltd o Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government o MCD o Siparia Chamber of Commerce o Participating Communities 	<p>36 months</p> <p>Month 1-3: consultations with the communities about project and building stakeholder support*</p> <p>Month 4-6: Conduct of the audit</p> <p>Month 7-12: Development of the tourism action plan)*</p> <p>Month 11-36: Implementation</p>	<p>Consultancy – stakeholder consultations, tourism audit; and development of community tourism plan (12 months)</p>	

8.3.3 8.2.3 Siparia LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	<p>management structure and systems for the initiative, and product and destination development strategies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and address how SRC, 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 communication between the communities (local CBOs , businesses, residents) and SRC, Ministry of Tourism, Tourism Development Company, the private sector, and other tourism stakeholders; and - Include mechanism for 					

8.3.3 8.2.3 Siparia LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	<p>monitoring and evaluation of the community tourism initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Siparia Tourism Initiative. 					
Siparia 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. • Seek funding for proposed activities; • Implement proposed projects/activities • Promote locally grown foods. 	<p>SRC-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 ○ Siparia 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>	
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 	SRC-LEDU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LABIDCO ○ Siparia Chamber of Commerce ○ Ministry of Education 	36 months	Consultancy – to design and prepare plan of action for the implementation of	

8.3.3 8.2.3 Siparia LED Implementation Plan

Project	Activities	Implementing Agencies	Collaborating agencies	Time Frame	Resources Requirement	Priority Rating (1-2)
	<p>willingness to implement the programme and reach agreement on programme structure, organisation and management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 external funding sources). • Prepare proposals and applications for external funding of projects. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MOLSED ○ NEDCO ○ Ministry of Planning and Development ○ Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts ○ Local NGOs/CBOs ○ Local businesses ○ UWI/UTT 		<p>the programme, including marketing and financial plans</p> <p>Training facilities</p> <p>Business training tutors and instructors</p> <p>Business support services</p>	

8.4 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 collaborate with the Municipality of Siparia in the promotion of fish processing for external markets. The Ministry of Food Production has to contribute in the focused attempt of the Municipal Corporation of Siparia to develop aquaculture operations in the lagoons in Fullerton and Icacos. The technical personnel of the Corporation have to enlist the support of Tourism Business Development Company in planning and implementation of the initiatives to realise the tourism potential of the Municipality that is well endowed with the amenities for eco-tourism and cultural tourism.

Competitiveness: Residents in the municipality of Siparia are no strangers to international competition. Historically, residents have been involved with the firms engaged in the heavy industries with production geared to the international market. The small firms engaged in work-overs are sensitive to international energy prices. As the Energy Sector adapts to the changing international market for fossil fuels, domestic firms servicing the sector will need to adjust. As the Corporation mounts its own strategy in support of the diversification and resuscitation of the non-oil sector with the area, there will be need to be sensitive to the requirements imposed on large and small firms including micro-enterprises.

Expansion and revival of agriculture has to be seen in the context of a huge bill and foreign exchange usage on imported food. Domestic agriculture based on production in Rousillac and Erin has to withstand and/or push back on imports from Florida. The producers, large and small have to be fully seized of the nature of the competition in organising production from farm to market. Dressed or processed fruit and vegetables from 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. In other words, entrepreneurs even in micro-enterprises in Siparia Town or Icacos are players on the world stage.

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 that there does exist a 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 Cap-de-Ville is no less knowledgeable and no less technically competent than his counterpart in Costa Rica. While this may not be 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. Moreover, those interested in undertaking the provision of high level information services from a base in Siparia Town, must be readily equipped to develop the start-up based on the infrastructure provided by the Municipal Corporation or with the assistance that it can mobilise from agencies at the national level to support local economic empowerment. There are persons engaged in on-line marketing from Siparia, thereby demonstrating that residents can be and are involved in the international market place from the various locations in the municipality.

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.

