



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

Levels 8 -10, Tower C,
International Waterfront Complex,
1A Wrightson Road, Port of Spain,
Trinidad and Tobago

Phone: 624-1403
Fax: 624-6737

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MEDIA RELEASE

Ministry of Tourism Launches Community-Based Tourism Initiative for Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts launched its Community-Based Tourism (CBT) Initiative for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) today at the Bon Air West Community Centre. The launch welcomes the roll out of a series of workshops done in collaboration with Tourism Trinidad Limited and National Entrepreneurship Development Company (NEDCO) to train community members on starting, operating and promoting CBT businesses.

The Lopinot community was selected for the roll-out given that the Ministry has recently been conferred jurisdiction over the Lopinot Historical Complex and intends to develop the site to facilitate increased tourism activity. Participating residents will be engaged in a three-day workshop in the form of presentations, group discussions and individual and group learning activities.

In her feature address, Ms. Simone Thorne-More Quinones, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts said that the initiative was critical given the Ministry's mandate to facilitate increased tourism activity. She encouraged participants to apply the knowledge received to improve their businesses and offer authentic, immersive and memorable experiences to visitors.

“The principal objective of this workshop is to enable your businesses to generate increased revenue from tourism. Apply it. Align yourself with the needs of the discerning and well informed traveler.” She urged.

She also shared that the Ministry is developing a Community Based Tourism Sub-policy which will provide the guidance for the sustainable development and growth of this niche market segment.

Councillor Desirée DeFreitas, who brought remarks on behalf of the Honourable Marvin Gonzales, Minister of Public Utilities and MP for Lopinot/Bon Air West, reiterated that sharing the rich history and culture of the Lopinot community will be vastly beneficial.

“The quality of life of members of the community will be improved, their traditions will be maintained and passed down to future generations, and there will be a sense of ownership and belonging that will positively impact the ways in which they live and interact with each other and the broader society,” she said.

She acknowledged the importance of capacity building to manage, optimise and monetise the ways in which others can experience all this community has to offer.

About Community Based Tourism & the CBT Toolkit

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is a type of tourism that engages and empowers local residents in the development, management and ownership of tourism products and services in their communities. CBT emphasises the need to protect, preserve and promote the environmental and socio-cultural assets of the community.

The CBT Toolkit, of which the CBT Enterprise Handbook is a part, comprises components that are designed to assist communities in four main areas, namely: community tourism development; enterprise development; product development; and market development.

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