



## A Trinidad and Tobago Civil Society Report:



# Spotlight on Sustainable Development Goal 13 Climate Action March 2020

### Climate change, a cross-cutting sustainable development issue

Climate change is recognised as a cross-cutting development issue that has impacts on multiple sectors and dimensions of society – our food security, health, gender and social equality, livelihoods and forests, oceans and other natural ecosystems. As a small island developing state (SIDS), Trinidad and Tobago is especially vulnerable – impacts include higher temperatures causing health impacts on humans and animals, extreme weather contributing to major flooding and coastal erosion, and changes to our wet and dry seasons affecting water supply for households, businesses and agriculture.

**Civil society in Trinidad and Tobago recognises the need for urgent and accelerated action on climate change.** To mobilise action, civil society organisations



CSOs from diverse sectors discuss how climate change affects their sectors and priorities for action. *Photo: CANARI*

(CSOs) working across diverse sectors, came together to analyse progress in implementing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 Climate Action in Trinidad and Tobago and identify priorities and recommendations for improvement.

### Developing a civil society spotlight report

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) in collaboration with the [SDGs Catalysts Network](#)<sup>1</sup> convened under the [CSOs For Good Governance project](#) (2017-2020), mobilised CSOs and developed the *Trinidad and Tobago Civil Society Report: Spotlight on Sustainable Development Goal 13 Climate Action* to support the [Voluntary National Review](#) (VNR) at the 2020 United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Specifically, it will support knowledge sharing and advocacy on civil society priorities and recommendations to accelerate implementation of SDG 13 Climate Action in the country.

CSOs identified and mapped priority actions and recommendations to accelerate climate action under five SDG clusters:

1. Gender & equality
2. Sustainable cities & communities
3. Energy & responsible consumption & production
4. Biodiversity
5. Health, water & food security

### Civil society priorities for climate action

Thirty key priorities were identified by civil society for addressing or accelerating action on climate change across sectors in Trinidad and Tobago. CSOs additionally ranked the level of progress in meeting these priorities. A summary scorecard was produced which outlines the 30 priorities, and the level of progress in meeting each priority, as assessed by civil society.

<sup>1</sup> An informal network of 21 leading CSOs working across sectors in Trinidad and Tobago to address the full range of development priorities encompassed by the 17 SDGs (e.g. environment, poverty, inequality, gender, youth, health, education, social and community development, culture and heritage etc.), with some CSOs working across several Goals.



# Scorecard - 30 civil society priorities for action on climate change in Trinidad & Tobago

|  Little progress   |  Intermediate progress   |  Significant progress |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Cross-cutting climate change priorities</b></p>                                  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enable coordinated national level efforts and partnerships to address the SDGs, including SDG 13 Climate Action, across sectors</li> <li>2. Strengthen linkages to and action on SDG 13 Climate Action within various sectors and with other SDGs</li> <li>3. Establish adequate spaces and mechanisms for supporting civil society participation in climate action and broader national governance and development processes</li> <li>4. Increase transparency, reporting and accountability on actions being taken by Government and other actors at the national level</li> <li>5. Ensure efforts to address climate change and other development issues are focused on the poorest and most vulnerable</li> </ol> | <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p>   |
| <p><b>Climate change, gender &amp; equality</b></p>                                    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Enhance capacity across the public, private and civil society sectors for gender sensitive, equitable and just climate change responses</li> <li>7. Collect and use gender and sex-disaggregated data for mainstreaming gender into climate change responses</li> <li>8. Facilitate meaningful collaboration of all stakeholders, including the most vulnerable, in decision-making and planning for joint action</li> <li>9. Include gender and equity considerations in assessments of climate actions across sectors</li> <li>10. Align, harmonise and enforce policies and conventions to promote gender sensitivity and equity</li> </ol>  | <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p>   |
| <p><b>Climate change, sustainable cities &amp; communities</b></p>                   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Integrate climate change into the agenda of local government</li> <li>12. Institutionalise community voices in decision-making</li> <li>13. Promote entrepreneurial opportunities for sustainable and integrated waste management</li> <li>14. Adopt best practices and models for sustainable cities and communities</li> <li>15. Support sustainable community livelihoods and community co-management</li> <li>16. Build the capacity of community groups for climate change adaptation and mitigation</li> </ol>   | <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p>  |
| <p><b>Climate change, energy &amp; responsible consumption &amp; production</b></p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. Transform financing, including access and diversification, to support climate action and green business</li> <li>18. Strengthen laws and policies for sustainable energy and waste management</li> <li>19. Apply triple bottom line approaches which incorporate social and environmental concerns in economic decision-making</li> <li>20. Open economic spaces for diversification and green business</li> <li>21. Educate consumers to promote responsible and sustainable behaviours</li> </ol>  | <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p>   |
| <p><b>Climate change &amp; biodiversity</b></p>                                      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22. Improve access to/transparency of environmental data and information to inform decisions</li> <li>23. Enhance research and monitoring to support policy implementation</li> <li>24. Support development of a long-term environmental manifesto (10-15 years) by civil society</li> <li>25. Improve functionality of the Green Fund to support civil society action on climate change</li> <li>26. Increase public awareness and engagement in climate change decisions and actions</li> </ol>  | <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p>   |
| <p><b>Climate change, health, water &amp; food security</b></p>                       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>27. Encourage CSOs to work multi-sectorally to address health, water and food security</li> <li>28. Promote climate-smart agriculture and sustainable food production, storage and distribution</li> <li>29. Enhance research and monitoring on climate change impacts on food, water and air quality</li> <li>30. Improve water management systems to ensure access to clean drinking water</li> </ol>  | <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p> <p>●</p>  |

## What key overarching challenges and recommendations were noted by civil society for addressing climate change?

### Key challenges

- Poor access to funding
- Lack of information for decision-making and a clear understanding of the scale of the threat
- Weak policies, legislation and political will
- Limited coordination within Government and with civil society and the private sector
- Limited awareness, education and knowledge dissemination to the populace to enable behaviour change

### Key recommendations

|  |   |  |   |  |  |  |   |   |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| Update the National Climate Change Policy (2011); mainstream climate change in all sectoral policies and plans | Review and update the national development monitoring framework to properly track progress on SDG 13 Climate Action | Strengthen or develop mechanisms for improved inter-sectoral coordination and civil society engagement | Recognise and support civil society as key partners in implementing climate responses on the ground | Ensure climate change and disaster responses target the most vulnerable and disempowered | Increase focus on climate change adaptation and building local adaptive capacity | Improve the functionality, and enhance access of CSOs to the Green Fund of Trinidad and Tobago | Strengthen understanding of the economic impact of climate change including on businesses and livelihoods | Sign and ratify the Escazú Agreement to enhance the enabling environment for climate action |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|



CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago call for accelerated climate action.

*Photo: CANARI*

## Call for accelerated climate action

To accelerate action on climate change, the SDGs Catalysts Network and wider civil society call on the Government of Trinidad and Tobago:

- 1** To consider the 30 priorities and actions identified by civil society in addressing climate change and tracking progress on implementing SDG 13 Climate Action.
- 2** To practice more participatory approaches to implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Vision 2030 by partnering with civil society.
- 3** To ensure that civil society is guaranteed an active role in national decision-making on climate change issues, including a role in deciding on priorities and monitoring implementation.
- 4** To recognise the contribution being made by civil society to delivering results on SDG 13 Climate Action.
- 5** To offer the support civil society needs including access to information, finances, partnerships and formalised roles in decision-making so that it can serve as a critical partner in climate action and sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago.
- 6** To ensure that a multi-sectoral, integrated approach is taken to effectively address climate change and SDGs in Trinidad and Tobago and that the poor and most vulnerable are recognised and included in decision-making.
- 7** To put in place an adequate monitoring framework to effectively track progress on SDG 13 Climate Action.
- 8** To practice good governance and prioritise access to information, transparency and accountability in all actions taken to address climate action and sustainable development in Trinidad and Tobago.

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union under the project *CSOs For Good Governance: Enhancing Civil Society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad & Tobago (CSOs4GoodGov)* (2017-2020) (CSO-LA/2016/382-815) and the Green Climate Fund Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: Enhancing Caribbean Civil Society's Access and Readiness for Climate Finance (LAC-RS-004). CANARI and the SDGs Catalysts Network gratefully acknowledge the support of the European Union, the Green Climate Fund and valuable input made by additional contributing CSOs.

CSOs4GoodGov project partners:



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Citation:

CANARI. 2020. A Trinidad and Tobago Civil Society Report: Spotlight on Sustainable Development Goal 13 Climate Action. Port-of-Spain: CANARI.



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