

# PVE-YES



Preventing Violent Extremism -  
Youth Empowering and Strengthening  
in Trinidad and Tobago



## PROJECT UPDATES

*March 2022*

## Overview and Background

UNDP Trinidad and Tobago is in full implementation mode with respect to its [Prevention of Violent Extremism – Youth Empowerment and Strengthening \(PVE-YES\) Project](#).

Evidence suggests that in Trinidad and Tobago, the drivers that attract persons to gang involvement and violence, are the same drivers that attract them to radicalization and extremist groups. It is this underpinning that forms the government's P/CVE agenda which focuses on:

- i. **Policy responses** including the development of the draft National Plan for P/CVE in 2019, and the development of policies focused on returnees and whole of government approaches.
- ii. **Community responses** especially evidenced through the formation of national entities which address violence prevention including P/CVE issues through working with women and youth at the community level.

As such, the PVE-YES project was developed to align with the government's PVE agenda which states that youth must be empowered, and their resilience strengthened so that they can make targeted, purposeful decisions to meaningfully contribute to society. A focus is placed on working with youth in communities and those in detention, to address those drivers that cause youth to be attracted to gangs and extremist groups including disenfranchisement, poverty, unemployment, stigmatization, lack of education and skills, and mistrust of authority among others.

## Latest Updates

### *Peace Innovation Challenge*

The Final Event of the UNDP TTO Peace Innovation Challenge (PIC) was held on **March 29, 2022**, from 2:00pm to 4:00pm. Please see below for the invitation flyer.

The PIC was launched in October 2021. Jointly run by the PVE-YES team and the Accelerator Lab, the PIC is a peacebuilding intervention which seeks to engage youth led/youth focused organisations, women's groups, NGOs, CBOs and FBOs in the development and implementation of projects that promote peace at the community level. Applicants were challenged to conceptualize innovative and sustainable peacebuilding projects utilizing music, creative arts, theatre, sports and physical activity, mentorship, psychosocial development, peacebuilding training, agriculture, and other areas. Close to 90 applications were received from across Trinidad and Tobago. All applicants participated in a three-week Peacebuilding and Project Management series. The aim was to build the capacity of organisations operating in the peacebuilding space. Out of the 90 applications, 18 were selected for the semi-finals. These 18 received one-on-one coaching to develop full proposals which were then evaluated by a panel of judges.

Out of the 18 semi-finalists, the **TOP 10** finalists were chosen to pitch their ideas live to a panel of judges. They will be competing for one of five prizes of TT\$50,000 to implement their project ideas.

### *Learning Space for girls at YTRC*

In March 2022, the establishment of a Learning Space for girls at the Youth Transformation and Rehabilitation Centre (YTRC/youth detention centre), commenced. As a backdrop, a girls' wing of the YTRC was established in 2018. However, due to the newness of the inclusion of girls at YTRC (an institution which housed boys in conflict with the law for decades), the girls' programmes were not as advanced as the boys and they did not have access to classrooms. The UNDP recognized a need to build out a full academic and vocational programme for the girls, along with recreational offerings suitable for their age and interests. As a first step, a Learning Space is being established which will be a dedicated space for classes, programmes etc.

Between February and March 2022, UNDP team facilitated several consultations and focus group meetings with YTRC leadership, staff, officers, and past and present female residents at YTRC to determine various elements of the Learning Space design. The Learning Space will be completed by May 2022. As a result, [Trinidad and Tobago will be able to ensure that girls in detention are afforded equitable access to education and opportunities.](#)

### **Upcoming (April 2022)**

#### *Training for Prison Officers*

In April 2022, UNDP TTO will host a training series for Prison officers attached to the YTRC.

The PVE-YES project recognizes that prison officers interact with the youth on a daily basis and should be exposed to training in approaches that build their capacity to effectively deal with the youth in their charge. Feedback from prison officers and on-the-ground evidence highlight a need for training and re-training of prisons/YTRC officers in restorative justice and best practices in juvenile justice administration. As such, the four-day training will include the following:

- **Motivational Interviewing:** with a focus on collaboration instead of confrontation, expressing empathy and healthy communication.
- **Mentoring Youth in Conflict with the Law:** with a focus on essential mentoring techniques; mentoring youth in conflict with the law, and the mentoring process from beginning, middle, to end.
- **Understanding Issues Facing At-Risk Youth:** With a focus on abuse, trauma, grief and loss, suicidal behaviour, aggression, gangs, and extremism.
- **Understanding My Role as Prison Officer and Youth Worker:** with a focus on the exploration of the uniqueness of the role of the officer at YTRC, how to navigate the different roles, and positive boundary-setting.

## Invitation flyer- Peace Innovation Challenge Finals



**PVE-YES**

**UNDP** accelerator labs

# Finals of the Peace Innovation Challenge

Meet our peacebuilders and watch them pitch their innovative projects LIVE to an esteemed panel of judges

## SHARK TANK STYLE COMPETITION

**Tuesday March 29, 2022**  
**2:00 PM - 4:00 PM**

Use this link to register for the **VIRTUAL EVENT**  
<https://tinyurl.com/4hnuere2>

For more details email: [tt.acceleratorlab@undp.org](mailto:tt.acceleratorlab@undp.org)  
Or visit: [www.tt.undp.org](http://www.tt.undp.org)

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