

# E.M.P.O.W.E.R

Educate

Motivate

Promote

Organize

Work

Evolve

Rise



**The Honourable Shamfa Cudjoe**  
Minister of Sport and Community Development

## PARTNERING TO SERVE YOU

Harnessing others' strengths and abilities from different corners of our ecosystem is one of the most strategic ways for businesses to scale up their innovation and solve complex challenges. In today's fast-paced environment, a "do-it-alone" approach is not the best strategy for growth. We must work together, effectively and efficiently, to ensure that we progress as a people, and advance as a country. Our Government takes pride in leveraging public/private partnerships by merging talent, expertise, technology, and purpose with the objective to provide a better quality of life for our citizens. Our aim is to support and promote collaborations that are relevant, timely and impactful.

**“ These are the strategic partnerships that are fundamental to improving the lot for our society and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago will continue to nurture these relationships to better serve you. ”**

I therefore wish to congratulate the Self Help Commission for its foresight in this timely partnership with the Land Settlement Agency (LSA) and the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) as part of the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Month (NDPPM). Every year we face the challenges of the rainy season and it is important that we are prepared and protected as much as humanly possible. Within recent days, we have also seen many families lose their homes due to fires. The hands on training programme which you executed in partnership with the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS) and Fire Warden Training will serve you and our nation well.

Ongoing dialogue is extremely critical to staying focused on our shared vision. Working collaboratively with our partners generates the kind of energy that fuels growth, innovation, and creativity. These are the strategic partnerships are fundamental to improving the lot for our society and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago will continue to nurture these relationships to better serve you.

***A Message from The Honourable Shamfa Cudjoe  
Minister of Sport and Community Development***

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**The Chairman's Message • P. 2**

**Reaching Out to You • P. 3**

**Partnering With ODPM • P.4**

**Projects Unit • P.5**

**Outreach in St. Joseph • P.7**

**Fire Warden Training • P.8**

**International Women's  
Day 2021 • P.10**

**Exercise in the Workplace? • P.12**

# THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

## EMPOWER

At the Commission, we take pride in achieving our mandate to nurture and develop a culture of self-help and self-reliance within communities and to facilitate the promotion, design and implementation of self-help projects throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

To accomplish this, we empower persons by lending them a hand of assistance to fulfil their home and community improvement needs. We kept this notion of empowerment at the forefront of our decision making when we sought to name our organization's quarterly newsletter.



**Chairman of the Board of Directors  
Anthony Campbell**

Our team took time to deliberate various names and "E.M.P.O.W.E.R" with its expansion, (Educate. Motivate. Promote. Organize. Work. Evolve. Rise), captured the true essence of our mandate and conveyed the positive impact that our organization has on our stakeholders and our nation's citizens.

We hope you enjoy our new look newsletter and that the information you find here empowers each of you, our readers.

With that said - the only constant is change and the best change is for the better.

**Chairman - Anthony Campbell**



**The Honourable Penelope Beckles MP for Arima** opened the program and welcomed guests.



**Project Officer Gerard Oberius** gives guidance on the application process.

## REACHING OUT TO YOU, WITH LAND SETTLEMENT AGENCY (LSA) IN BLANCHIESSEUSE

Community Outreach Programs are a staple on the Commission's calendar having participated in over one hundred (100) outreach programs in its thirty-three (33) year history. When COVID-19 arrived in Trinidad and Tobago, our caravan style outreach program was brought to a halt to ensure the safety of all citizens and in accordance with our Government's Public Health COVID-19 guidelines. One year later, with the "new normal" adopted by the masses, the Land Settlement Agency (LSA), an agency of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, resumed their community outreach program on Saturday 6th February 2021.

We joined their first community outreach for 2021 which served the Blanchiesseuse community at the Blanchiesseuse Community Center and the La Fillette Secondary School. Blanchiesseuse sits midway along the North coast of Trinidad at approximately 24km North of Arima.

Minister of Housing and Urban Development and Member of Parliament for Arima, The Honourable Penelope Beckles, officially opened the event and set up an on-site office to assist residents along with Councillor Sudhir Sagramsingh. Minister Beckles emphasized that the outreach programs were critical to ensuring that every citizen was afforded the opportunity to gain access to state agencies that provide assistance to persons wanting to improve their living conditions.

The Commission attended this event not only for the benefit of the citizens but also because it provided us with a sense of familiarity and a sign that things are beginning to resemble what we consider "normal" work operations, allowing us to better serve you.

With COVID-19 precautions adhered to, the Commission's Project Officers and members of the Communications Unit attended the outreach program. Other support agencies present were:

- Trinidad and Tobago Mortgage Finance (TTFM)
- Ministry of Labour (On-the-Job Trainee Program Representatives)
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
- Housing Development Corporation (HDC)
- Ministry of Social Development

CEO LSA, Hazar Hosein, was present and mentioned just how important it was to have the community outreach program as rural communities face considerable challenges accessing support services because they are located in city areas.

The Commission looks forward to working with the various Government agencies as we continue to be our brother's keeper.



Disaster victims make their way to safety in a raft through high waters.



A fallen tree blocks the roadway after disastrous windstorm.

## PARTNERING WITH OFFICE OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS MANAGEMENT (ODPM)



The cabinet mandated National Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Month (NDPPM) Multi Sectorial Committee began planning its month-long disaster awareness program led by the ODPM.

As a social support agency our work becomes more effective through partnerships and establishing new working relationships. The Commission's relationship with ODPM began in 2015 with our most recent engagement being a member of the ODPM's Multi Sectoral Committee.

The plans developed in these meetings aim to build a heightened sense of disaster awareness, preparation and readiness across our nation.

May was selected as the month to activate the program as it is the month immediately prior to the beginning of the Atlantic Hurricane Season, which runs from June 1st to November 30th and coincides with our wet/rainy season. A period which represents the greatest disaster-related losses in Trinidad and Tobago.

The activities in May will place focus on different segments of our society each week with sub-committees formed for each one.

The Commission sits on two of these sub-committees, Individual & Families and Civil Society Sub Committee.

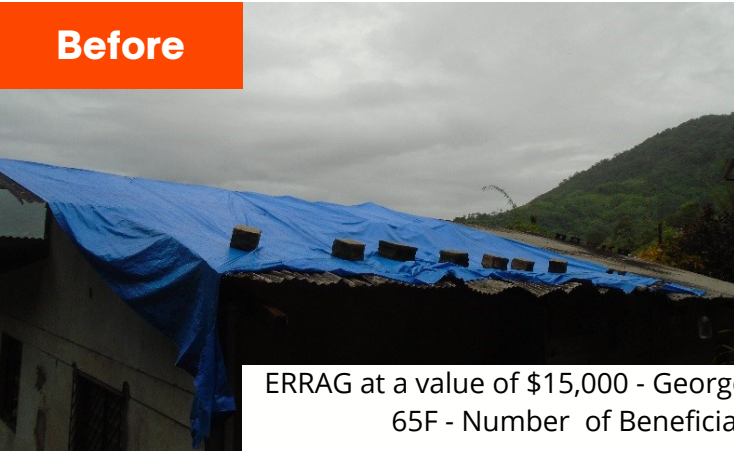
- Week 1 - Individuals and families.
- Week 2 - Communities.
- Week 3 - Civil society organizations.
- Week 4 - Public and Private Sectors as well as Regional and International bodies.

These activities would ultimately prepare citizens, leading to a reduction in injuries, loss of lives and livelihoods and damage to property during disasters.

CEO of the ODPM, Major General (Retired) Rodney Smart stated that the plan is aligned to both the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and CDEMA's Comprehensive Disaster Management approach, the respective global and regional initiatives to which our Government has made its commitment to accomplish.

Our involvement and activation of this program will empower persons, making them more self-reliant

**Before**



**After**



ERRAG at a value of \$15,000 - George Grant - Factory Road Diego Martin Lp 65F - Number of Beneficiaries 4 - Start Date - Nov 2020

**Before**



**After**



ERRAG at a value of \$20,000 - George Barnwell - Pole #61A Upper Cuthbert Circular Road Four Road Diego Martin - Number of Beneficiaries 3 - Start Date - Jan 202

**Before**



DP at a value \$25,000 Completed Paving Exercise at the Paramin Community Center, La Finette Road Paramin Maraval Number of Beneficiaries 26 Start Date Apr 2019 - Completion Date - July 2019

**After**



## DEPARTMENT FEATURE - PROJECTS UNIT

### BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS

The Projects Unit is responsible for assessing the requests of applicants and establishing communication channels with internal and external stakeholders while monitoring and coordinating project resources and adhering to objectives and timelines with measurable results. They do this in collaboration with our management team and conduct evaluations of our services, programs and projects.

For the first quarter of 2021 the Projects Unit has implemented a total value of approximately \$600,000.00 in MRRGs, ERRAGs and DPs across Trinidad.

The Projects Unit ensures that all construction works are carried out in compliance with construction guidelines.

# HOW TO GET ASSISTANCE FROM NCSHL: STANDARD AND CRITERIA FOR GRANT APPLICATION

## HOW TO GET ASSISTANCE FOR A SELF HELP COMMUNITY PROJECT

- Any self-help, community action group, village group, NGO can get assistance. However, a project coordinator must be appointed by the community and be prepared to do all the manual labor involved with the project.
- The community must indicate in writing the commitment to undertake the project and to finance an agreed percentage of the total cost (labour, materials, funds etc.).
- The number of beneficiaries and background to the project must be stated. Hardships, experiences and benefits to be derived after completion.
- For water and electricity projects to be completed, WASA or T&TEC must complete detailed evaluations.

### PLEASE NOTE

*That funding will not be provided directly to the affected family or senior citizen but funding as may be approved will be disbursed to the approved supplier of materials.*



## CRITERIA FOR MINOR REPAIRS AND RECONSTRUCTION GRANT

- Income eligibility (i.e. Household size in relation to monthly income/poverty line).
- Applicants must fit into one of the following categories: senior citizen, fire victim, destitute or victim of natural disaster.
- Applicants will be considered only if the projects are community driven and an identifiable community or organization (Kiwani's, Lions, Rotary, SVP, Village Council) is prepared to co-ordinate the necessary repair/ construction work.
- In the case of repairs, the dwelling house must be owner occupied.
- Land tenancy on which the house is located must be freehold, leasehold or rented.
- Assistance will not be extended to squatting households except where there is regularization of squatting.

## OUR SOUTH REGIONAL OFFICE HAS MOVED!

The National Commission for Self Help Limited has relocated its South Regional Office to **#54 Southern Main Road, Marabella.**

This relocation was necessary to improve our applicants' customer service experience at the South Regional Office.

Our office telephone numbers remain the same, therefore we can be contacted at **652-3044/652-8861.**

The Commission remains committed to best serving the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago.

# SOCIAL OUTREACH AND CARE CARAVAN WITH ST. JOSEPH CONSTITUENCY EXECUTIVE

The Commission joined the first ever St. Joseph Constituency Executive Social Outreach and Care Caravan supported by Member of Parliament for St. Joseph and Minister of Health Mr. Terrence Deyalsingh took place at the St. Joseph Community Center on Tuesday 23rd February 2021 where over seventy (70) constituents appeared for the late evening program.

We gave insight into our offered services and received feedback about the concerns of current and prospective applicants at the event. The time of the event, while uncommon (6pm -8pm), was used to facilitate persons returning from their workday and to capture a wider cross-section of the St. Joseph constituency.



Standing to open the event in prayer



Residents gather at the Commission's station to learn more about our services.

We attended "in person" along with the Water and Sewage Authority (W.A.S.A) Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC) while other invited government agencies, Ministry of Social Development & Family Services, Ministry of Sport & Community Development etc. attended virtually via the Zoom platform.

Constituency Secretary Marcia Chan Pak chaired the event with Councillor Raphael John while T&TEC's Corporate Communications Manager, Annabelle Brasnelle represented T&TEC. Technical Officers Winston Cottoy, and Sean Ragbir represented WASA and Project Officer Mr. Steven Sam and Corporate Communications Officer, Ms. Kerri-Ann Joseph represented the Commission.

Most residents questioned the Commission and W.A.S.A about works to be completed on their properties such as indoor lavatories, drainage, roof repairs and a steady flow of pipe-borne water.

The event marked the second caravan that the Commission participated in for the year 2021.



HSE Assistant, Ms. Arianne Rigaud, learns control of the fire hose by TTFS Officers at Savonetta Fire Station.



IT Officer, Ms. Monifa Harry, practices the "Underrun" exercise at Savonetta Fire Station.

## FIRE WARDEN TRAINING WITH TTFS

### PROTECTING OURSELVES AND OUR CLIENTS

According to Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS) the year 2020 saw eight hundred and thirty-five (835) reported structural fires in Trinidad and Tobago with the majority being commercial and residential fires. These incidents are important to us because one of our target groups is fire victims. We partnered with TTFS in keeping with the OSH Act, and hosted a two-day fire warden training on Feb 10th and 11th 2021 facilitated by the TTFS in an effort to develop skills, practice safety in the organization and serve our internal public.

Fire Wardens ensure employee/employer safety in the event of an emergency and assist in preventing fires. Fifteen (15) participants embraced the opportunity to learn both theory and practical aspects of fire warden duties.

Key learnings from this activity included the Triangle of Combustion, Key Duties of a Fire Warden, how to use a Fire Extinguisher, Methods of Fire Extinction, and the Frequency of Fire Drills.

CEO Elroy Julien, supported the training initiative and commended the TTFS for including the Commission in their schedule of activities, while encouraging Staff to use the information and experience to their advantage in their daily lives.



The Commission's Fire Wardens performing a hose training exercise at Savonetta Fire Station

### Some Key Duties of a Fire Warden

- Accept the responsibility of a fire warden
- Assist in implementing and improving effective emergency procedures in the workplace
- Help prevent emergencies by monitoring the adequacy of fire risk control
- Instruct workers how to respond in an emergency
- Direct everyone to leave the building using the appropriate route
- Activate the alarm
- Ensure all workers are accounted for in an evacuation

### Key Terms

- Evacuation Plan – A pre-determined plan of action which allows for the safe egress of occupants.
- Means of egress – An exit which must lead to a street, walkway etc.



# FIRE SAFETY FACTS & TIPS

## How to Use an Extinguisher

- Evaluate the environment
- Pull out the extinguisher pin – discharge a small amount of the medium to check for distance
- Get in a crouching position with extinguisher in hand
- Carefully approach the base of the fire
- Aim the discharge nozzle at the base of the fire
- Squeeze the discharge nozzle
- Sweep the nozzle from side to side
- Fire is extinguished when there are no visible flames, remain crouching and observe the area.

## Where Should Extinguishers be Placed?

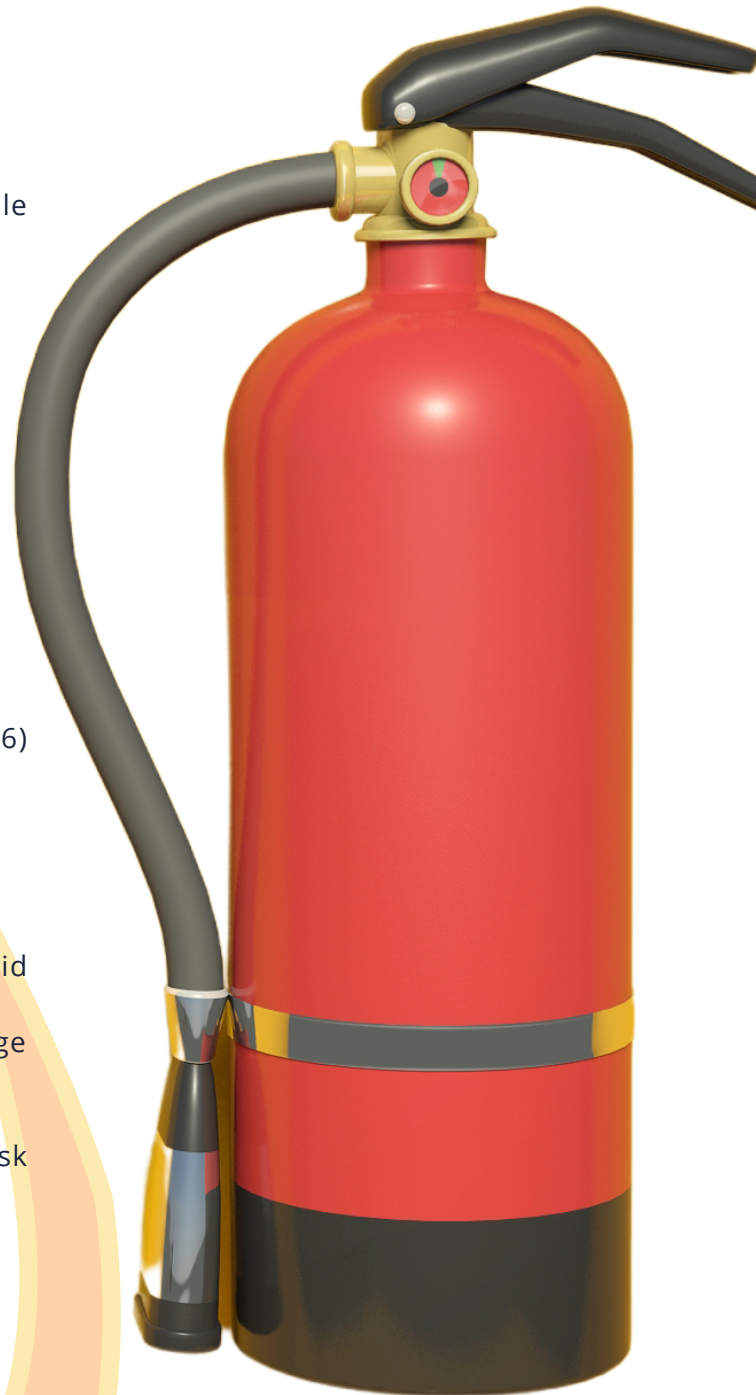
- Within 30ft of each other in a corridor
- In an area clearly seen and labelled
- Near the risk but not in the risk
- Should be mounted off the floor
- Near escape routes
- Similar location on all floors of a building

## Must Know

- Extinguishers must be serviced every six (6) months
- Extinguisher lasts from 10 to 35 seconds
- Always check extinguishers before use
- Keep the wind at your back always
- Know the location of fire extinguishers
- You can refuse to fight a fire but must have a valid reason
- Fire should be extinguished in the beginning stage if you choose to fight it.
- Fire drills should be conducted
  - Every twelve (12) months (low risk environments)
  - Every six (6) months (high risk environments)

## Methods of Extinction

- Starving -removing fuel
- Smothering – removing oxygen
- Cooling – removing heat



# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2021

International Women's Day is recognized and celebrated on March 8th each year and grew out of the labour movement to celebrate women and their achievements around the world by addressing gender inequality, bias and discrimination. The event formed by the United Nations (UN) marked its 110th year in 2021. This year's theme "Women in Leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 World", with the hashtag #ChoosetoChallenge, was a call to challenge the status quo and stand up for an equitable world.

Deputy Chairman of the Commission's Board of Directors (B.O.D), Janice Perouse-Sullivan, extended greetings on behalf the B.O.D and Management. Director Sullivan expressed the fundamental role women play at the Commission noting that the B.O.D comprise more than 50% women who perform a pivotal role in decision making. The entire greeting can be viewed on our social media platforms, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

Did you know that a key target group of the Commission's work is single parents, with women making up the majority of this group? We encourage their self-reliance by lending a helping hand.

Over the decades improvements have been made to see women's representation in various fields of work. However, some women still are not paid equally to their male counterparts and are subject to violence worse than that of men.

Women's achievements and those who choose to challenge continue to inspire us to keep moving forward, remaining committed to progress and equality. #ChoosetoChallenge



**Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors Mrs. Janice Perouse-Sullivan** after delivering her greeting to recognize the day.



**Project Officer Ms. Faria Karamath** poised and ready for the day



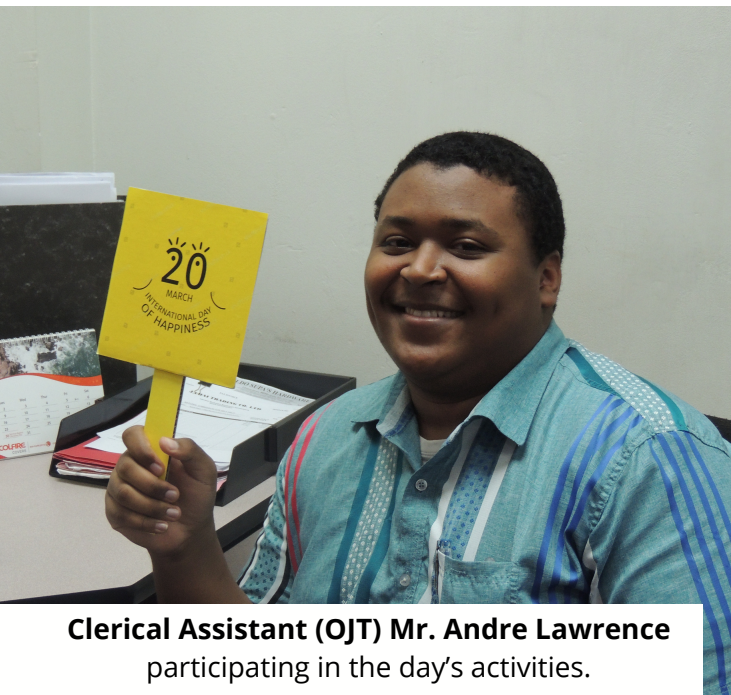
**Corporate Secretary Ms. Jullisa George** joined the celebrations



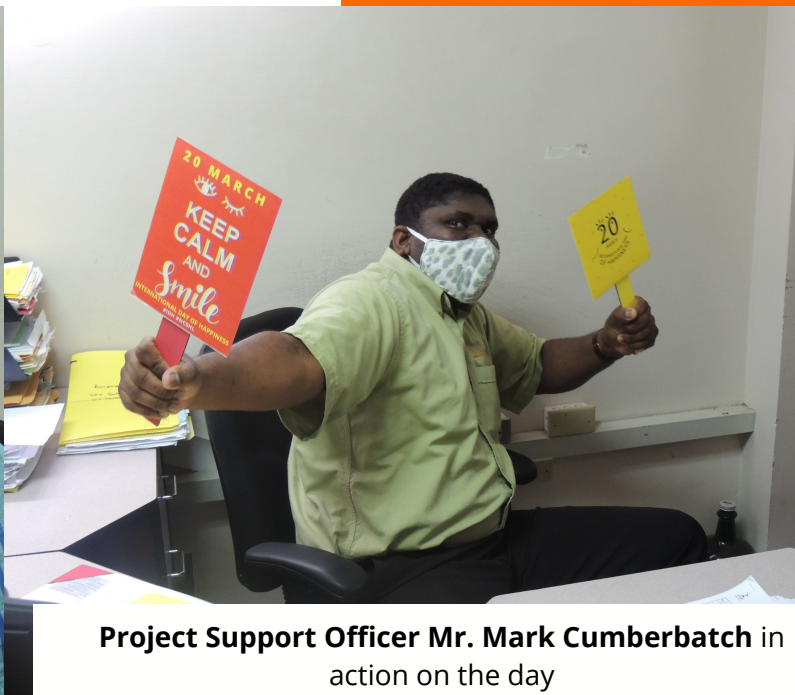
**IT Assistant (OJT)** stands outfitted in her pink attire on the day



**HR Officer (OJT) Mrs. Neva Apple St. Hill** smiles in celebration of the day



**Clerical Assistant (OJT) Mr. Andre Lawrence** participating in the day's activities.



**Project Support Officer Mr. Mark Cumberbatch** in action on the day

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HAPPINESS 2021

A wide majority of people do not know that each year on March 20th the world celebrates International Day of Happiness. International Day of Happiness promotes the idea that feeling happy is a global human right and is organized by the United Nations.

This year the theme was Keep Calm. Stay Wise. Be Kind, in light of the pandemic.

To promote this happiness, we shared tips with our colleagues to help increase their chance of staying calm and being kind.

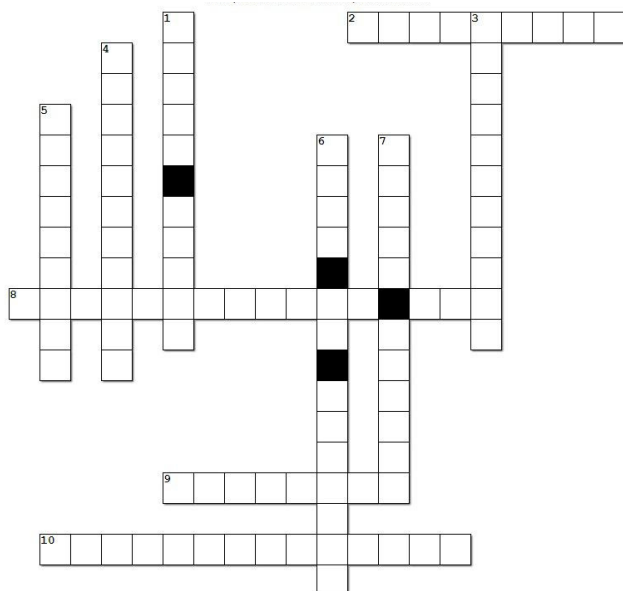
**T**ake three (3) deep breaths when you feel yourself being stressed out.

**I**f you feel yourself feeling angered the situation kindly ask to be excused and take 5 minutes to yourself.

**P**ause -make sure to set aside time in your day to just find a quiet space and let your mind relax for 3 minutes.

*Remember, you can always choose to be happy.*

### Commission's Crossword



#### Down

1. Legal, First Encounter, Latin
3. Catalog, Database
4. Waterfall, Sister Isle, North Western
5. Executives, Round Table
6. Chief Bean Counter, Dough
7. Compass, Below, Subdivision

#### Across

2. Movement, Slippery, Precipitation
8. Equipment, Movement, Cost
9. Stretch, Olive Branch, Community
10. Humpty Dumpty, Put Together, Restore

**NB:** All clues are Commission related.

# EXERCISE IN THE WORKPLACE? YES, IT'S POSSIBLE

Exercise has incredible health benefits and sometimes we are challenged to prioritize it in our daily schedules. Covid -19 has caused gym closures and for those that are open, there is mandatory low occupancy. But did you know that there are exercises you can complete while at the office? Yes! A Harvard Medical School research paper says, 'The secret to better health — exercise' and explains that whether you're 9 or 90, abundant evidence shows exercise can enhance your health and well-being. Here are three (3) different exercises you can perform at your desk.



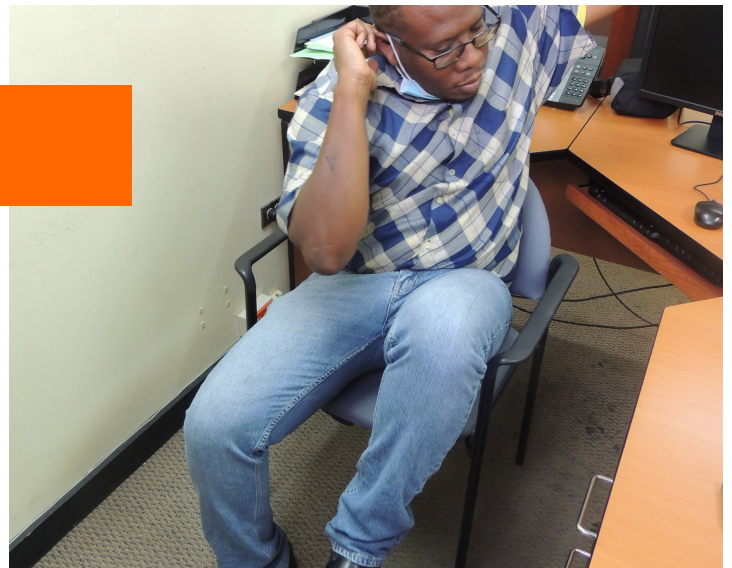
## ARM PULSES

They work your triceps and help stretch out your shoulders. Stand up at your desk with arms by your sides and palms facing behind. Pulse the arms backward for 20 seconds, keeping arms as long and straight as possible.

## SEATED BICYCLE CRUNCHES

This is the good kind of "crunch time". Sit in your chair with your feet flat on the floor. Position your hands behind your head and lift one knee toward the opposite elbow, twisting your body down toward it, then return to the seated, straight-back position.

Finish 15 twists, then repeat on the other side.



**Project Officer Reynard Callander**  
demonstrates the exercise.

## ARM CIRCLES

This move gives new meaning to the popular term "circle back." Stand with feet shoulder-width apart, arms extended straight out to sides at shoulder height. Move your arms in a small backward circle. Do 20 times in this direction, switch directions, and repeat.

# “ RECIPIENT CORNER

I am fortunate to know that I am able to get a grant to fix my home

*It is a great joy for me because I am a pensioner and would not be able to afford to repair my board home on my own.*

I thank God that in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic this program still continues and I appreciate the encouragement from representatives of the Commission and my MP's office to continue checking the Commission's offices to get my grant."

**Mr . Herman Barnett**  
**Grant Recipient**



**NATIONAL COMMISSION  
FOR SELF HELP LIMITED**

*"Empowering Communities Since 1987"*

**THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SELF HELP LIMITED**

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