



MINISTRY OF **FINANCE,**
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS & INVESTMENT

Barbados Economic & Social **REPORT 2023**



APPENDIX I

BARBADOS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REPORT 2023

DRAFT

31 December 2024

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I. ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Agricultural Business Company
ADR	Average Daily Rate
AMCECC	Adaptation Measures to Counter the Effects of Climate Change
BAMC	Barbados Agricultural Management Company
BATCRAS	Barbados Accelerating Transition to Climate Resilient Agri-Food Systems
BCH	Biosafety Clearing House
BDF	Barbados Diabetes Foundation
BDS	Barbados Drug Service
BDSPHL	Best-dos Santos Public Health Laboratory
BERT	Barbados Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan
BESCO	Barbados Energy and Sugar Company
BEST	Barbados Employment and Sustainable Transformation Programme
BIDC	Barbados Investment Development Corporation
BMA	Barbados Manufacturing Association
BSE	Barbados Stock Exchange
BSO	Business Support Organizations
BTFL	Barbados Trust Fund Limited
BTMI	Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.
BWA	Barbados Water Authority
CAF	Corporacion Andina de Fomento (Development Bank of Latin America)
CAPE	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations
CAR	Capital Adequacy Ratio
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency
CBB	Central Bank of Barbados
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBER	Conserving Barbados' Endemic Reptiles
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CIF	Cost, Insurance and Freight
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COVID	Coronavirus SARS-CoV2 Disease
CLIA	Cruise Lines International Association

CPB	Cartagena Protocol for Biosafety
CPD	Consumer Protection Division
CRAFT	Clearance, Route, Altitude, Frequency, Transponder
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
CZMU	Coastal Zone Management Unit
DAE	Direct Access Entities
DCCA	Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
DPL	Development Policy Loan
EE	Energy Efficiency
EFF	Extended Fund Facility
EGFL	Enterprise Growth Fund Limited
EGS	Environmental Goods and Services
EMAC	Emergency Management Advisory Council
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
EPD	Environmental Protection Department
ESEP	Education Sector Enhancement Program
ETIP	Energy Transition and Investment Plan
ETMU	Education Technical Management Unit
ETTC	Erdiston Teachers' Training College
EU	European Union
EV	Electronic Vehicle
FEED	Farmer's Empowerment and Enfranchisement Programme
FISIM	Financial Intermediation Services Indirectly Measured*
FOPL	Front of package Labelling
FTC	Fair Trading Commission
FY	Fiscal Year
GAIA	Grantley Adams International Airport
GAPS	Global Atmospheric Passive Sampling
GBF	Kungming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GCFI	Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility

GIR	Gross International Reserves
GOB	Government of Barbados
GRULAC	Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries
H-NAP	Health National Adaptation Plan
HCFC	Hydrochlorofluorocarbon
HLPF	High Level Political Forum
HSFB	Heart and Stroke Foundation of Barbados
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IE	Inclusive Education
IEP	Individualized Education Plans
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSSP	Integrated Nuclear Security Sustainability Plans
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
ITAS	Integrated Tax Administration System
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
LDN-TSP	Land Degradation Neutrality Targets Setting Programme
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
LPG	Liquid Petroleum Gas
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MENB	Ministry of Environment and National Beautification
METVT	Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training
MHLM	Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance
MHW	Ministry of Health and Wellness
MIS	Management Information Systems
MIST	Ministry of Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology
MLF	Multilateral Fund
MLSD	Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Human Resource Development
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSDCF	Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning

NACOSH	National Advisory Committee on Occupational Health and Safety
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NEB	National Employment Bureau
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NNC	National Nutrition Centre
NPL	Non-Performing Loans
NSOP	National Standard Operating Procedures
NTI	National Transformation Initiative
ODS	Ozone Depleting Substances
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
PCB	Pesticides Control Board
PEU	Project Execution Unit
PMCT	Project Monitoring and Coordination Team
PMCU	Project Management Coordination Unit
POPS	Persistent Organic Pollutants
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSIP	Public Sector Investment Programme
QEH	Queen Elizabeth Hospital
RAC-REMPEITC	Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre
RE	Renewable Energy
REMDAP	Regional Environmental Monitoring Data Portal
RETOS	Readiness Evaluation Tool for Oil Spills
REVPAR	Revenue per Available Room
RSF	Resilience Sustainability Facility
SBA	Small Business Association
SBDC	Small Business Development Centers
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEED	Student Entrepreneurial Empowerment Programme
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SJPI	Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute
SOE	State Owned Enterprises
SSFA	Small Scale Funding Agreement
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
SPAW	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region

TASA	Transaction Advisory Services Agreement
UDC	Urban Development Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
US	United States
USA	United States of America
UWI	University of the West Indies
VAT	Value Added Tax
WHO	World Health Organization
YES	Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Global economic growth in 2023 faced several headwinds, driven by a combination of recurrent geopolitical tensions in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, drought-induced disruptions in the Panama Canal, and Central Banks' efforts to curb inflationary pressures. As a result, the global growth rate slowed to 3.3 percent, down from 3.5 percent in 2022. Amid these external factors, the Barbadian economy managed to expand at a higher rate than the average growth rate of developing countries in the review period, growing by 4.4. percent in 2023. Sustained economic activity from the tourism sector continued to fuel the recovery of Barbados' economy following the COVID-19 pandemic, as the country experienced two consecutive years of real GDP growth above 4 percent- a feat not experienced since 2005 to 2006. Inflation increased slightly by 0.1 percent from the previous year to 5.0 percent in 2023, while elevated inbound tourism flows had positive ripple effects on both traded and non-traded sectors. This contributed to unemployment levels remaining below double digits at 7.9 percent, well below the 20-year average of 10.3 percent.

When measured against 2016 prices, Barbados' real GDP per capita exceeded the pre-pandemic average of \$38.5 thousand by 7 percent, reaching \$41.4 thousand in 2023. This estimate not only signals that each person in the economy is likely earning more income on average, but it also shows improved economic well-being and inclusive growth in the country, as envisioned in the second iteration of the Barbados Economic Recovery and Transformation (BERT) 2.0 programme.

Growth in all of Barbados tradeable sectors, primarily in tourism receipts and international business, led to a more positive external position for the country in 2023. Additionally, inflows of policy-based loans improved the country's financial account and supplemented the expansion of its gross international reserves. During the review period, the current account deficit decreased by \$105.8 million, resulting in a reduced deficit of \$1,167.1 million by December 2023. Concurrently, the overall balance of payments shifted from a \$98.9 million deficit in 2022 to a surplus of \$146 million in 2023. These favorable developments caused Barbados' gross international reserves to expand by \$229.2 million, to reach \$2,999.5 million by the end of 2023. The value of gross reserves in 2023 stood equivalent to 30.9 weeks of imports of goods and services, well above the 3-month international standard for import-cover, and is the second-largest end-of-year reserve position for Barbados on record.

In 2023, the government of Barbados continued to maintain prudent fiscal management, as outlined in its medium-term fiscal framework that supports the core objectives of the Barbados Economic Reform and Transformation (BERT) 2022 programme. Structural reform policies increased the financial viability of the National Insurance Scheme, addressed inefficiencies within State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), and strengthened revenue administration. These reforms helped the government of Barbados manage rising interest costs, increasing wages, and reduced revenues from the now-ceased pandemic levy, leading to a primary surplus of \$493.9 million, equivalent to 3.7 percent of GDP for the fiscal year. This surplus exceeded the initial target of \$378 million, and with other quantitative targets being met by the government (under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) of the IMF), the country remained on the path to fiscal sustainability. Despite higher policy-related loans and increased uptake of domestic securities, the improved fiscal balance continued to push the debt-to-GDP ratio for the calendar year downwards, as the ratio fell from 120.3 percent in 2022 to 115.5 percent in 2023.

Modest credit growth, due to an increase in business activity, led to higher bank profits and a fair

improvement in the banks' ability to cover potential losses, as the Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) increased from 17.6 percent in 2022 to 20.4 percent in 2023. Higher credit demand from an expansionary environment led to a 6 percent increase in total loans to private non-financial corporations in 2023, moving from \$2.08 billion in 2022 to \$2.21 billion in 2023. Despite an increase in drawdowns by borrowers of \$43.8 million in 2023 that suppressed banks' liquidity, improvements in employment earnings and firms' profitability contributed to a reduction in non-performing loans (NPLs), which decreased from 5.9 percent in 2022 to 5 percent in 2023.

Total assets in the credit union rose by 2.2 percent (or \$68.9 million) to an estimated \$3,131.8 million by December 2023, with growth being detected in all of the various asset classes. The expansion in the asset base was largely driven by loans to members, which increased by 41.7 million or 2.2 percent and remained the largest asset class for credit unions. The sector's investments increased by \$16.4 million or 3.2 percent over the year, while fixed assets registered the highest percentage increase (4.07 percent) from the previous year.

Tourism in Barbados has been experiencing a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Buoyed by enhanced airlift capacity and targeted promotional efforts in crucial markets, the country experienced an 18 percent increase in tourist arrivals and a \$450 million surge in tourism receipts in 2023 compared to the previous year. All of Barbados' major source markets experienced significant increases, indicating a prolonged recovery trajectory. CARICOM arrivals increased by more than 51 percent in 2023 compared to the previous year, indicating a strengthening of intra-regional travel, with seating capacity growing by 60 percent. The UK continued to be Barbados' largest source market, with arrivals from the territory surpassing the 2019 levels and accounting for 38.3 percent of long-stay arrivals for 2023. Similarly, growth in tourist arrivals from Canada (38.3 percent) and the United States (19.1 percent) contributed to the island's total of 636,540 visitors in 2023.

The revival of the cruise industry has also played a pivotal role in energizing related sectors, including transportation and tourist attractions in 2023. Notably, the introduction of additional cruise visits and new homeporting agreements have propelled in-transit cruise arrivals by an impressive 76.3 percent during the period of review, to reach a total of 441,677 cruise passengers by the end of 2023.

Overall manufacturing output expanded by 1 percent in 2023 despite the discontinuation of the local production of clinker -an essential element in cement production- and a sizable decline in the non-metallic minerals category. Elevated tourism activity and the post-pandemic resurgence in major rum source markets led to an upturn in overall beverage production, which increased by 3.5 percent relative to 2022. Additionally, the heightened tourism activity spurred an increase in demand for local food, resulting in a 2.6 percent expansion in that sector. Likewise, steady demand for products such as paints, fertilizer, and cleaning products from domestic and regional markets like Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, augmented chemical output by 1.4 percent compared to the previous period.

High temperatures and inconsistent weather in the summer of 2023 impacted the production of certain agricultural commodities such as milk, chicken, and root crops like sweet potato. Despite the challenges experienced in the country's second most important tradeable sector in goods, a 20.7 percent increase in food crop production (like bananas, chives, thyme, plantain, and cassava) outweighed the declines in meat, milk, and other agricultural commodities; leading to an overall increase of 1.1 percent in the agricultural sector in 2023.

During 2023, Government's Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) continued with the major investments concentrated in the areas of Infrastructure, Energy, Roads, and Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building.

The Energy Transition and Investment Plan sought to assess the least cost optimized energy transition pathway in all sectors for the entire economy. The intention is to be able to account for the total energy systems costs for various scenarios compared to business as usual to achieve net-zero emissions from energy supply and use. Various technology pathways associated with an accelerated net-zero transition and the investment needs and cost benefits of the transition over the period of 2020 - 2040, were intended to provide a policy roadmap which will increase Barbados' economic development while addressing climate change goals with the energy transition.

Additionally, a Renewable Energy and Storage Hosting Capacity Study was executed and guidelines and operational procedures were recommended to identify the quantity of solar photovoltaic (pv) generation which can be integrated onto the grid to facilitate independent power producers (IPPs) who were applying for licences. These proposed guidelines would provide a framework for the efficient integration of systems onto the grid thereby promoting grid reliability and improving power quality. The general objective is to further reduce Barbados' dependency on imported fossil fuels through the increased use of Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) technologies.

Also, a framework and work plan for developing an Energy Storage Policy for Barbados which satisfied the tenets of the Barbados National Energy Policy, and aligned with the new utility license and licensing regimes was developed to highlight a systematic approach to the successful implementation and integration of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) into the existing energy system. Proposed immediate actions under the framework and work plan focused on regulatory adjustments, the technical and financial aspects of efficiently integrating BESS into the renewable energy sub-sector and its effect on enhancing grid stability, and stakeholder engagement with a view to foster a transparent and efficient environment to facilitate energy storage investments.

The government of Barbados has made significant strides in 2023 towards biodiversity conservation and management. Key initiatives include the continued implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and the advancement of the Invasive Alien Species project aimed at protecting local ecosystems. The government also focused on enhancing public awareness through digital platforms, such as the "Biodiversity Barbados" website, which saw substantial engagement. Furthermore, Barbados participated in international efforts, including the endorsement of the Global Biodiversity Framework Early Action Support project, aligning national goals with global biodiversity targets.

In response to the increasing effects of the climate crisis, Barbados has undertaken significant mitigation and adaptation measures in 2023. The country, which ratified the UNFCCC in 1994 and the Kyoto Protocol in 2000, continued its efforts by signing a Non-Reimbursable Financing Agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank for US\$1.25 million to strengthen institutional and technical capacity in meeting Paris Agreement transparency requirements. This project focuses on improving the Greenhouse Gas Inventory, enhancing the Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system, and building capacity in the climate crisis transparency. By November 2023, Barbados had met the pre-conditions for the first disbursement of funds. Additionally, Barbados played a pivotal role in establishing the Loss and Damage Fund at COP28, which will aid developing countries in their recovery efforts from climate-related damages.

During the review period, the government sustained its drive to protect, secure, and support citizens' health and well-being. The budget for the Ministry of Health and Wellness primarily focused on Hospital

Services, Primary Health Care Services, and Care of the Elderly. Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, health officials in Barbados battled an outbreak of dengue fever, which began in October 2023 and extended into December of the same year. Additionally, 116 suspected cases of chikungunya were investigated, though none were confirmed. Zika virus surveillance identified 17 clinically suspected cases, but none were confirmed by lab testing. Additionally, Barbados' health sector engaged in multiple international initiatives, including a digital health transformation backed by €4.3 million from the EU.

The amalgamation of social services remained a key focus of the government in 2023. This effort aimed to improve efficiency in the delivery of essential services, particularly those related to healthcare, education, and social welfare. During 2023, the National Assistance Board (NAB) implemented a cadre of programmes and strategies aimed at maintaining the quality of life of older persons in Barbados. For the reporting period, there was a steady increase in demands for the NAB's Home Service, with the number of beneficiaries ranging from 1,188 persons in January to 1,363 persons in December 2023. The National Disabilities Unit (NDU) Call-A-Ride programme facilitated the commuting of 859 students and persons with disabilities to school. Phase 1 of the One-Family programme, which aimed at fostering the empowerment of vulnerable persons across Barbados, commenced in 2023, with over 2,000 assessments being conducted by social workers. By the end of December 2023, the Welfare Department spent \$28 million on individuals requiring monetary assistance, up from \$25.6 million disbursed in the previous year. Food continued to be the highest category of assistance-in-kind granted. Assistance-in-kind expenditure from the Welfare Department fell by 5 percent in 2023 compared to the previous year, with \$16,124,578 being spent in 2023, down from \$16,919,000 in 2022.

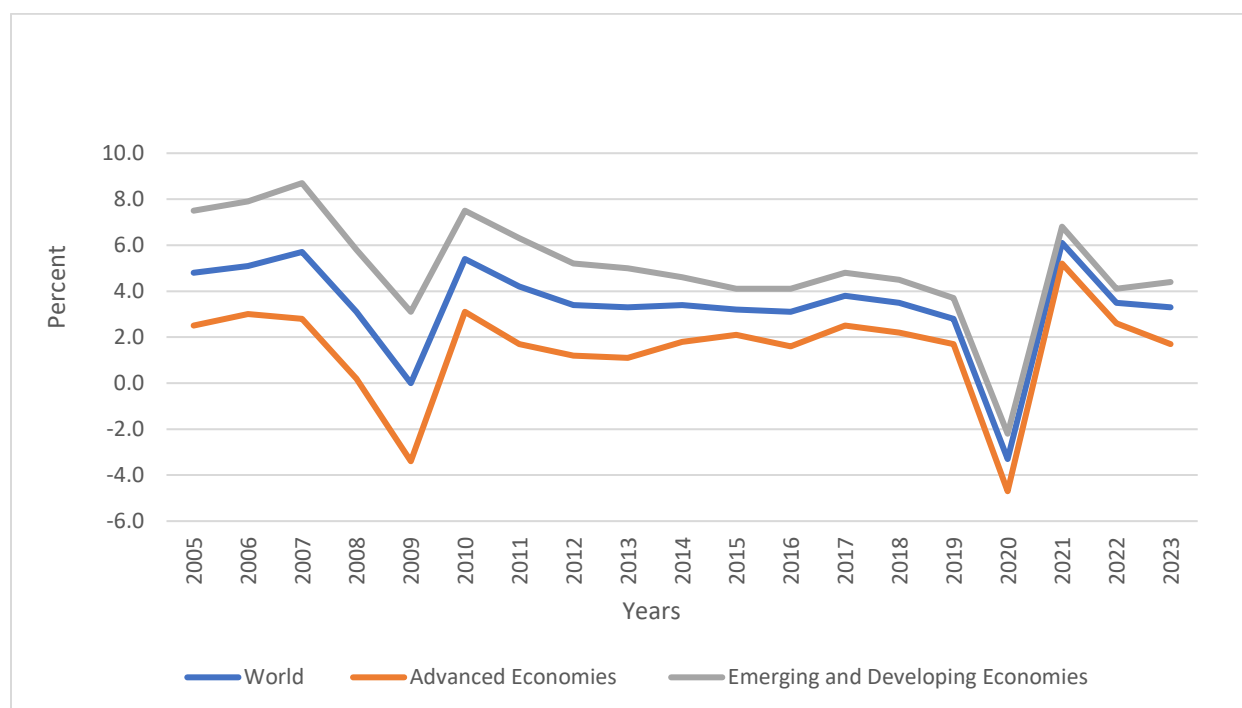
The resident population declined by 1,700 persons compared to the preceding year, reducing the estimated population to 265.6 thousand at the end of 2023. The death rate remained over 60 percent higher than the birth rate per 1,000 persons. Consequently, the population growth rate continued to decline by 0.64 percent during the review period, consistent with the previous year. The recently approved Barbados Population Policy aims to arrest the country's declining population through three key strategies: managed migration, granting citizenship to Barbadian descendants, and encouraging larger families in Barbadian households.

I. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

During 2023, the global economy remained resilient, albeit recovering slowly from the effects of the pandemic as well as the Russia-Ukraine war. Growth varied across the globe as economic activity is still below projections made before the pandemic, notably in emerging economies, while in some advanced economies, growth is excelling. Real GDP growth fell slightly from 3.5 percent in 2022 to 3.3 percent in 2023 globally and is also projected to fall in 2024. Real GDP in advanced economies stood at 1.7 percent at the end of 2023, falling from 2.6 percent the previous year. The emerging and developing markets saw some growth, rising from 4.1 percent in 2022 to 4.4 percent by the end of 2023. Monetary policies aimed at controlling high inflation rates were fairly successful as global inflation fell from 8.7 percent in 2022 to 6.8 percent in 2023.

THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY

FIGURE 1: GLOBAL GDP GROWTH: ACTUALS AND PROJECTIONS 2005 – 2023



SOURCE: IMF World Economic Outlook 2024

Advanced Economies

Recovery in advanced economies was slow. GDP in the U.S. exceeded pre-pandemic estimations and economic activity in Europe also recovered but still fell short of pre-pandemic projections, despite higher employment than in the U.S. Labour markets in advanced economies remained resilient as unemployment remained low and the early reopening of the economies increased private consumption. Japan's growth recovered as there was a significant boom in tourism and auto exports. In France, rising

energy prices and declining real wages stagnated private consumption and residential investment¹ while in Italy, high inflation eroded real income and private consumption and investment were subdued due to fiscal support being progressively withdrawn.²

TABLE 1: INDICATORS OF ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE IN ADVANCED ECONOMIES 2022-2023

	Real GDP (% change)		Unemployment Rate (Annual Avg.) (% change)		Consumer Price Index (% change)	
Country	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
United States	2.1	2.5	3.6	3.6	8.0	4.1
Japan	1.0	1.9	2.6	2.6	2.5	3.3
Germany	1.8	-0.3	3.1	3.0	8.7	6.0
France	2.5	0.9	7.3	7.4	5.9	5.7
Italy	3.7	0.9	8.1	7.7	8.7	5.9
U.K	4.1	0.1	3.7	4.0	9.1	7.3
Canada	3.4	1.1	5.3	5.4	6.8	3.9
SOURCE: IMF World Economic Outlook 2023						

Emerging and Developing Economies

Despite recovery, economic activity in emerging and developing economies have fallen short of pre-pandemic levels. China's property crisis coupled with the slowdown in 2022, resulted in a 4.2 percent decrease in output compared to predictions made before the pandemic while there were mild recoveries in other emerging and developing countries. High interest payments on debt and underperforming employment in these countries, especially those with little fiscal space, hindered recovery in output to pre-pandemic levels. Global energy markets disrupted by increased conflict in the middle east and Ukraine, had some adverse effects on prices and food security and the low demand for goods from advanced regions affected exports.

Regional Developments

Real GDP growth in tourism dependent nations fell from nine percent in 2022 to 3.2 percent in 2023. Suriname, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago recorded varying, yet minor positive growth improvements while all other countries experienced falling growth rates. Non-tourism dependent countries' growth rates fell from 17.1 percent to 13.6 percent and the commodity exporting

¹ <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/957fb483-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/957fb483-en>

² <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/da6b37c4-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/da6b37c4-en>

countries growth rates also fell from 25.4 percent to 19.3 percent. Guyana recorded a 24 percent drop in their real GDP growth rate falling from 62.3 percent in 2022 to 38.4 percent in 2023 though oil production has been booming and manufacturing and construction in Trinidad and Tobago grew at the expense of the energy sector. Most countries' GDP growth rates have surpassed 2019 levels this year and the few exceptions have only decreased slightly from 2019 levels. Tourism dependent nations may face challenges with economic downturns in their tourist source markets while the demand for commodity exporting countries exports may also be reduced.

The financial sector in the Caribbean has been liquid and resilient for most countries in 2023. The end of period inflation rate in the region fell both in the tourism dependent and non-tourism dependent nations as nations intensified efforts to combat rising global inflation. In tourism dependent countries, inflation fell from 7.4 percent in 2022 to 4.1 percent in 2023 while in non-tourism dependent countries it fell from 20.4 percent to 13 percent. Suriname record the largest fall in the inflation rate falling to 40 percent from 54.6 percent in 2022.

Debt continues to be challenging in the region despite most countries improving their debt-to-GDP ratios from last year's totals. Barbados and Suriname recorded over 100 percent debt-to-GDP ratios while only five countries are currently below the 60 percent debt target. With central banks across the globe increasing interest rates to combat rising inflation, the fallout for the Caribbean was that the cost of borrowing also rose resulting in rising debt. Unemployment, while decreasing in most countries, still has not been adequate as unemployment among the youth represented an average of 26 percent of the unemployed in the region and as high as 42 percent in some countries.³

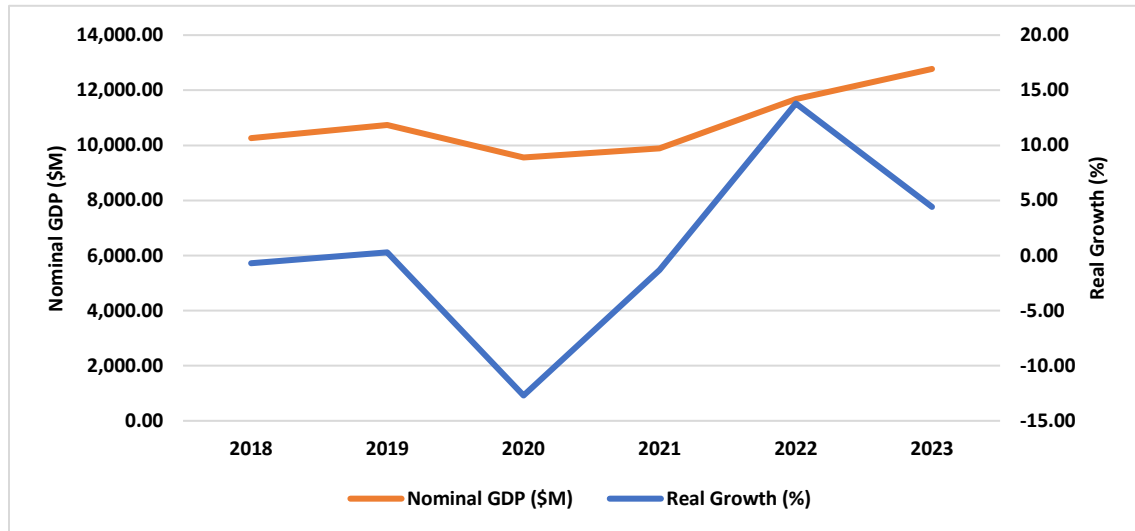
III. II. THE BARBADOS ECONOMY

Overview

Barbados' economy in 2023 demonstrated a strong recovery from the 2020 pandemic-induced downturn, although at a slower pace compared to the exceptional growth experienced in 2022. Nominal GDP reached \$13.441 billion, a significant increase from \$12.515 billion in 2022. This growth, while not as dramatic as the 17.8 percent surge in 2022, indicates improved business performance, increased consumer spending, and a general boost in economic confidence. Real growth settled at a respectable 4.4 percent, underscoring the economy's resilience amidst ongoing challenges.

³ <https://www.unicef.org/media/152386/file/Eastern-Caribbean-Area-2023-COAR.pdf>

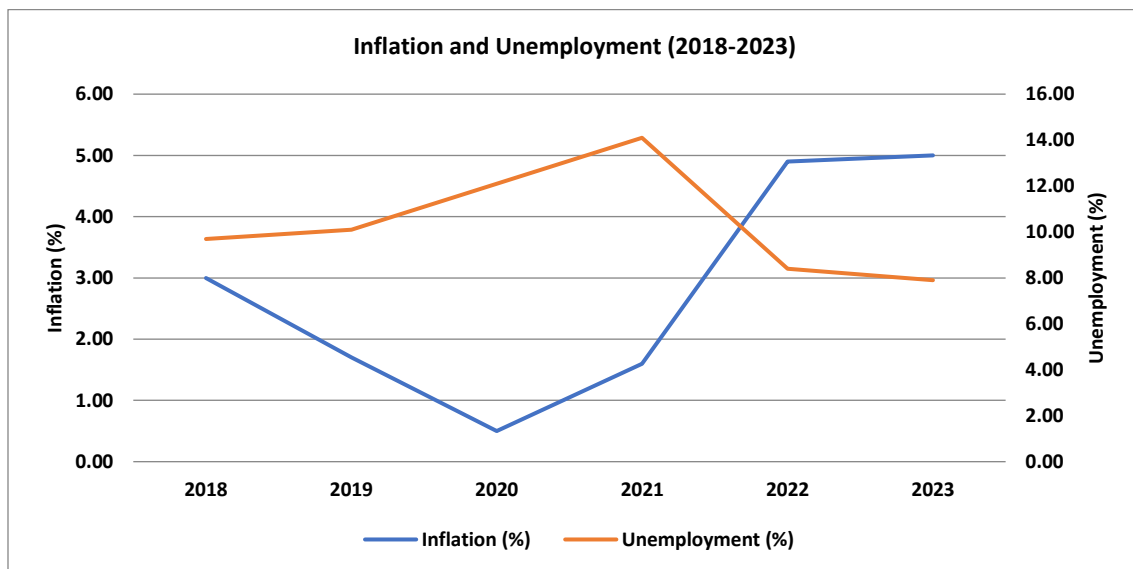
FIGURE 2: NOMINAL GDP AND REAL GROWTH (2018-2023)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

The tourism sector was a key driver of this recovery. Enhanced marketing efforts, improved air connectivity, and major events attracted a significant influx of visitors. Tourist arrivals increased by nearly 18 percent compared to 2022, totaling 636,540 visitors to the island. This not only boosted GDP but also contributed to a decline in unemployment from 8.4 percent in 2022 to 7.9 percent in 2023. Inflation remained a concern, hovering around 5 percent due to global factors. However, the increased gross international reserves acted as a buffer.

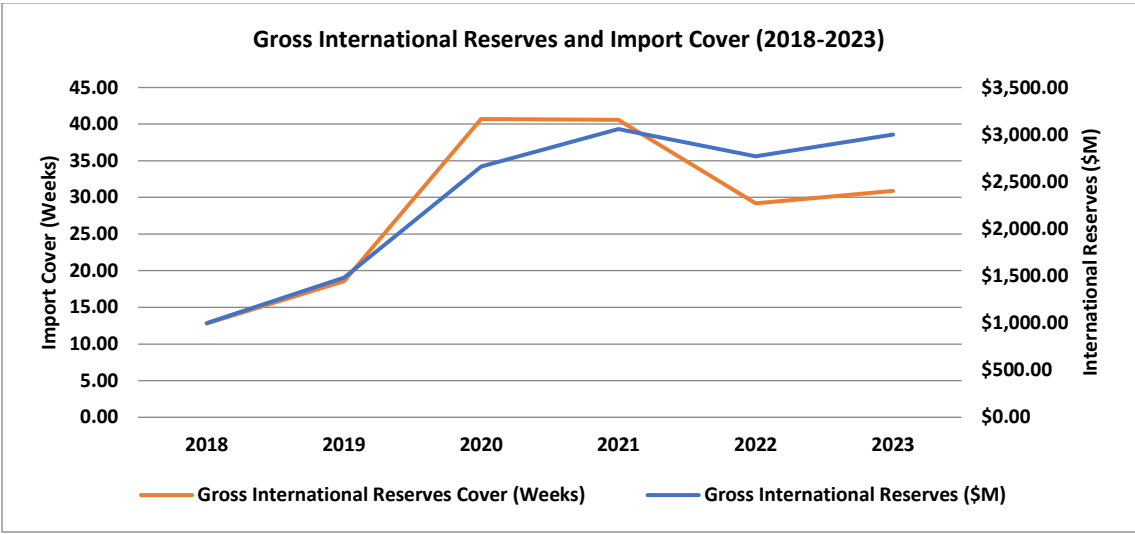
FIGURE 3: INFLATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT (2018-2023)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

The gross international reserves increased slightly from \$2,770.30 million in 2022 to \$2,999.50 million in 2023, while import cover remained stable at around 30 weeks. These factors indicate the country's ability to manage external financial obligations and provide a buffer against external shocks.

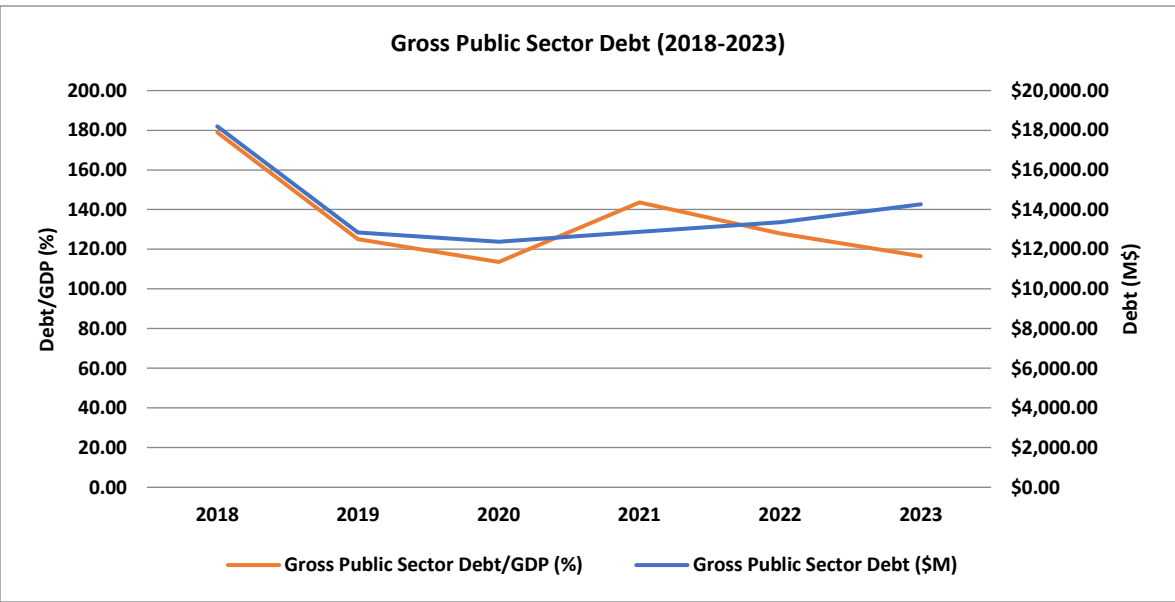
FIGURE 4: GROSS INTERNATIONAL RESERVES AND IMPORT COVER (2018-2023)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

The government demonstrated its ongoing commitment to fiscal prudence by managing public debt effectively. Despite a slight increase in gross public sector debt to \$14.261 billion, the debt-to-GDP ratio improved from 127.9 percent to 116.6 percent, suggesting a sustainable fiscal path.

FIGURE 5: GROSS PUBLIC SECTOR DEBT (2018-2023)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

Additionally, the government's fiscal year 2023/24 budget showed positive trends. Current expenditure increased by 4.9 percent, driven by higher interest payments, transfers, and subsidies. Total revenue increased by 1.9 percent, primarily due to improvements in tax revenue. The fiscal deficit narrowed from -2 percent of GDP to a projected -1.7 percent, and the primary balance improved significantly from 2.5 percent to a projected 3.7 percent. These improvements highlight the Government's successful efforts in controlling non-interest expenditures and boosting revenue.

While the overall economic outlook for 2023 was positive, challenges such as persistent inflation, the need for continued fiscal consolidation, and the reliance on the tourism sector, which is vulnerable to global events, remained. Despite these challenges, the government's commitment to fiscal consolidation and the continued strength of the tourism sector provides a solid foundation for sustained economic growth and stability.

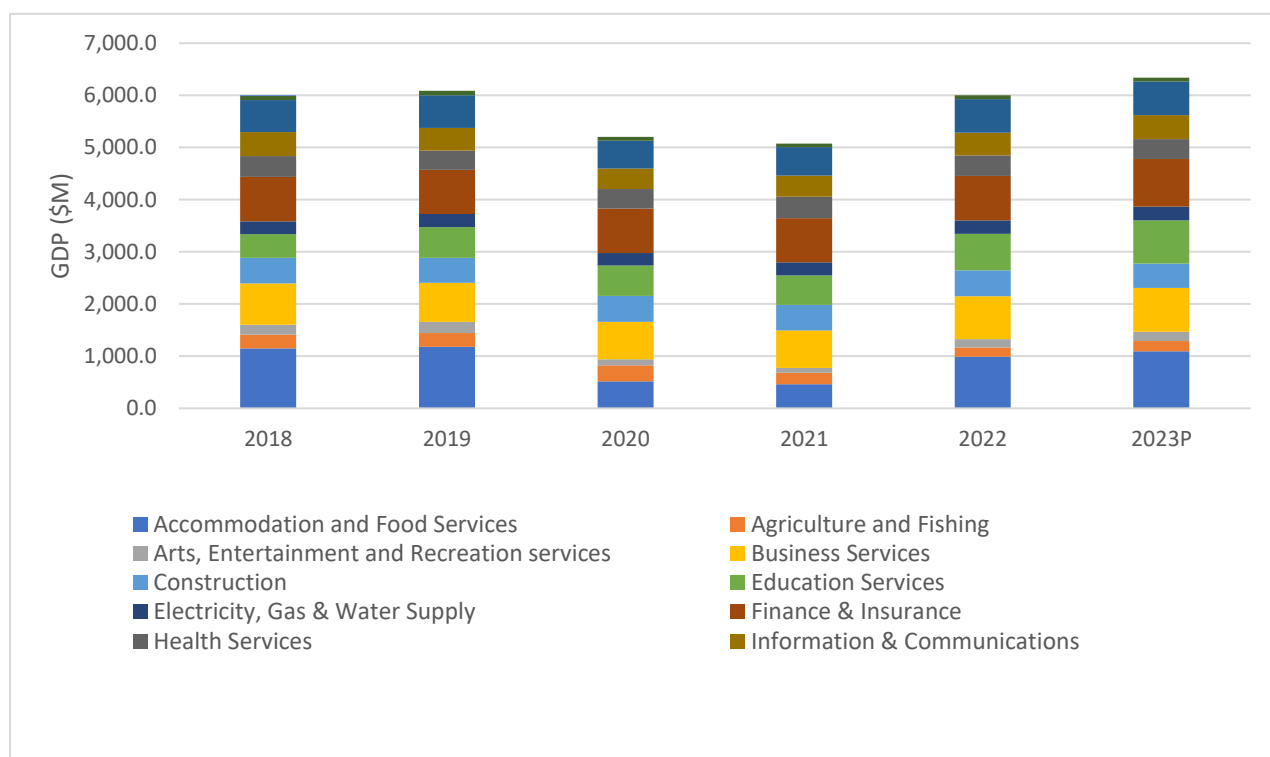
A. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Real Sector

In 2023, the economy witnessed a notable recovery, with the total real GDP increasing by 4.09 percent to reach \$11,035.6 million. This growth was driven by a strong rebound in various sectors, particularly in services and trade. Among the standout performers was the Accommodation and Food Services sector, which saw a remarkable recovery, growing by 10.7 percent to \$1,094.2 million. This improvement was largely attributed to the resurgence of tourism and increased consumer spending in restaurants and hotels, following the easing of travel restrictions and successful marketing campaigns aimed at attracting visitors, and the return of major events and festivals to the island.

Similarly, the Education Services sector experienced significant growth, rising by 17.9 percent to \$830.3 million. This expansion can be attributed to increased investments in educational infrastructure, enhanced government funding, and a focus on improving educational outcomes. In contrast, while the Business Services sector showed steady growth at 2.1 percent, reaching \$843.2 million, it reflected ongoing demand for professional and business support services amidst a recovering economic landscape. This stability underscores the sector's crucial role in supporting economic activities and fostering a favorable business environment.

FIGURE 6: GDP BY SELECT SECTORS AND ACTIVITY (\$M, CONSTANT PRICES)



Source: Barbados Statistical Service

The Real Estate sector continued its upward trajectory with a modest expansion of 1.1 percent, reaching \$1,210.0 million. This growth was driven by increased investment in property development and a steady demand for real estate services. Despite a challenging environment, the Wholesale and Retail Trade sector demonstrated resilience with a slight growth of 0.1 percent, totaling \$1,267.6 million. This modest increase was supported by higher consumer spending and improved retail performance.

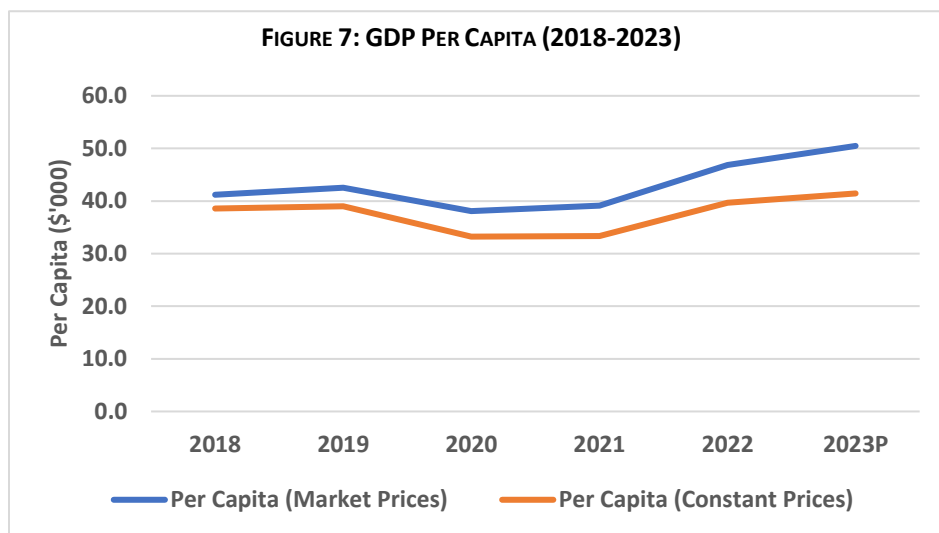
The Manufacturing sector, although showing a slight decrease of 0.1 percent to \$645.0 million, remained a key component of the economy. The sector continued to play a critical role, driven by steady demand for goods and improvements in production efficiency. In the Transportation and Storage sector, a significant rebound was observed, with a growth of 3.8 percent to \$665.5 million. This increase was attributed to a rise in transportation activities and logistical operations, which supported the overall movement of goods and services.

Other sectors such as Health Services, Information & Communications, and Public Administration displayed varied performance. Health Services experienced a decrease of 2.6 percent to \$384.5 million, while Information & Communications grew by 5.0 percent to \$457.1 million. In contrast, Public Administration, Defence & Social Security saw a notable growth of 6.2 percent to \$474.5 million, reflecting increased government spending and investments in social services.

Overall, the economic performance in 2023 demonstrated resilience and recovery, with significant contributions from various sectors leading to a robust growth in GDP. The diverse sectoral performance highlights the economy's capacity to adapt and recover, setting a positive trajectory for future growth.

Per Capita Income

In 2023, the per capita GDP at market prices, which represents the average income per person, was projected to increase from \$46.8 thousand in 2022 to \$50.5 thousand compared to 2022. This significant rise of approximately 7.9 percent reflects a strong boost in average income levels, indicating a robust economic recovery and improved living standards.



Source: Barbados Statistical Service

Similarly, the per capita GDP at constant prices, which accounts for inflation and represents real income growth, is expected to rise from \$39.7 thousand in 2022 to \$41.4 thousand in 2023. This real increase of about 4.3 percent highlights an enhancement in purchasing power and overall economic stability. This growth was driven by a recovery in tourism and agriculture, successful government policies aimed at economic stabilization and growth, and strategic efforts to attract foreign investment and improve the business environment.

B. BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Barbados' balance of payments significantly improved in 2023 compared to 2022. The current account deficit shrank from \$1272.9 million to \$1167.1 million, primarily driven by a substantial 12.3 percent increase in exports of goods and services, reaching \$4444.5 million. This surge was particularly evident in the tourism sector, reflecting a strong recovery and growing global demand for Barbadian offerings. While imports also rose to \$5042.4 million due to higher domestic consumption, ongoing infrastructure projects, and global inflation, the export growth outpaced it, resulting in a smaller deficit. The current account deficit as a percentage of GDP also improved, from -10.9 percent in 2022 to -9.1 percent in 2023.

TABLE 2: BALANCE OF PAYMENTS (\$MILLIONS)

Balance of Payments (\$Millions)						
	2018	2019	2020 (p)	2021 (p)	2022 (e)	2023 (e)
Current Account Balance	-447.3	-283.3	-564.7	-1101.4	-1272.9	-1167.1
<i>of which</i> Exports of Goods and Services	4211	4484.5	2780.7	2945.6	3957.8	4444.5
<i>of which</i> Imports of Goods and Services	4071.6	4142.4	3397.3	3920.7	4930.7	5042.4
Capital Account	50.9	-5.3	-4.5	0.5	15	-4.9
Financial Account	862.6	776.4	1621.6	1207.6	930.2	1338.2
Overall Balance	589.9	481.4	1177.3	442.8	-98.9	146.0

Source: Central Bank of Barbados

The capital account shifted from a \$15 million surplus in 2022 to a \$4.9 million deficit in 2023, indicating fluctuations in investment and financial assistance flows. In contrast, the financial account experienced a substantial 43.9 percent increase, with net inflows rising from \$930.2 million to \$1338.2 million, reflecting sustained confidence from international investors and financial institutions.

Overall, the balance of payments swung from a \$98.9 million deficit in 2022 to a \$146 million surplus in 2023, a remarkable 247.6 percent improvement. This turnaround underscores the strengthening of Barbados' external economic position, primarily fueled by the tourism recovery, increased foreign investment, and a narrower current account deficit.

Direction of Trade (Imports)

In 2023, the total value of imported goods saw a minor decrease to \$4007.7 million, down from \$4078.3 million in the previous year. This represents a decline from 34.9 percent to 31.4 percent of GDP.

A significant factor contributing to this overall decrease was the notable reduction in fuel imports, falling from \$1122.8 million in 2022 to \$1010.6 million in 2023. This can be attributed to several factors, including a more diversified mix of energy sources, and fluctuations in global fuel prices.

Conversely, the import of services experienced substantial growth, surging from \$852.4 million in 2022 to \$1034.8 million in 2023. This increase is indicative of a growing demand for international services as the economy continues to rebound and stabilize in the post-pandemic period.

Direction of Trade (Exports)

Barbados' exports in 2023 demonstrated resilience, with notable growth in services balancing a minor contraction in goods exports. While goods exports slightly decreased from \$1622.2 million in 2022 to \$1584.2 million in 2023, signifying a leveling off after a strong rebound from the pandemic, services

exports experienced significant expansion, rising from \$2335.6 million in 2022 to an estimated \$2860.3 million in 2023.

Travel services played a pivotal role in this growth, surging from \$1833.0 million in 2022 to \$2309.7 million in 2023 due to the revitalization of the tourism sector following eased travel restrictions. This surge, combined with increasing global demand for Barbadian services, propelled the services sector. Additionally, government policies aimed at promoting tourism, enhancing service quality, and diversifying exports have significantly contributed to this positive trend. Overall, the export performance reflects a blend of post-pandemic recovery, stabilization, and the effectiveness of targeted economic strategies focused on key industries like tourism.

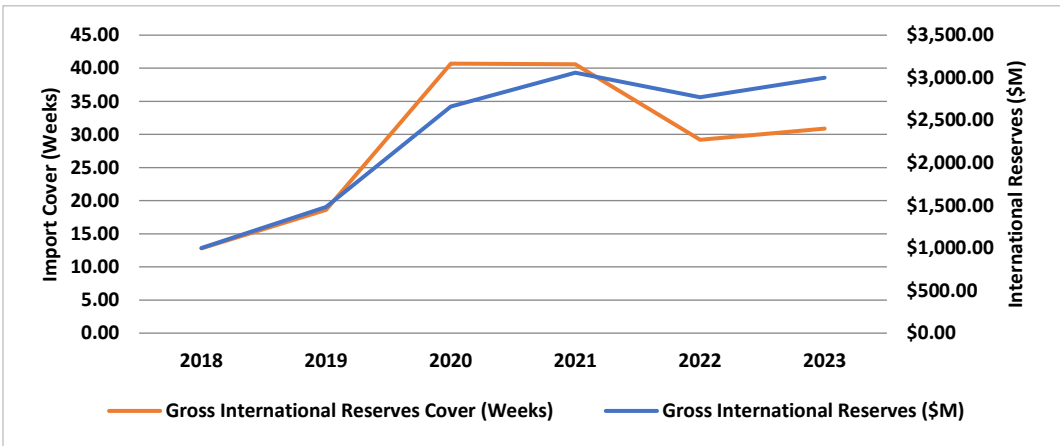
Gross International Reserves

Barbados' Gross International Reserves (GIR) saw a notable 8.3 percent increase in 2023, reaching \$2,997.4 million. This growth was mirrored in the Gross International Reserves Cover, which rose to 30.9 weeks, signifying the country's improved ability to manage financial risks and maintain economic stability.

The resurgence of the tourism sector, a key driver of foreign exchange earnings, significantly contributed to this increase. Prudent fiscal and monetary policies implemented by the government played a crucial role in managing expenses and fostering reserve accumulation. Additionally, policy-based loans further bolstered the GIR.

Collectively, these factors led to a substantial rise in the GIR, marking the second-highest year-end reserve position in Barbados' history. This achievement highlights the country's economic resilience and its capacity to effectively address external economic challenges.

FIGURE 8: GROSS INTERNATIONAL RESERVES AND IMPORT COVER (2018-2023)



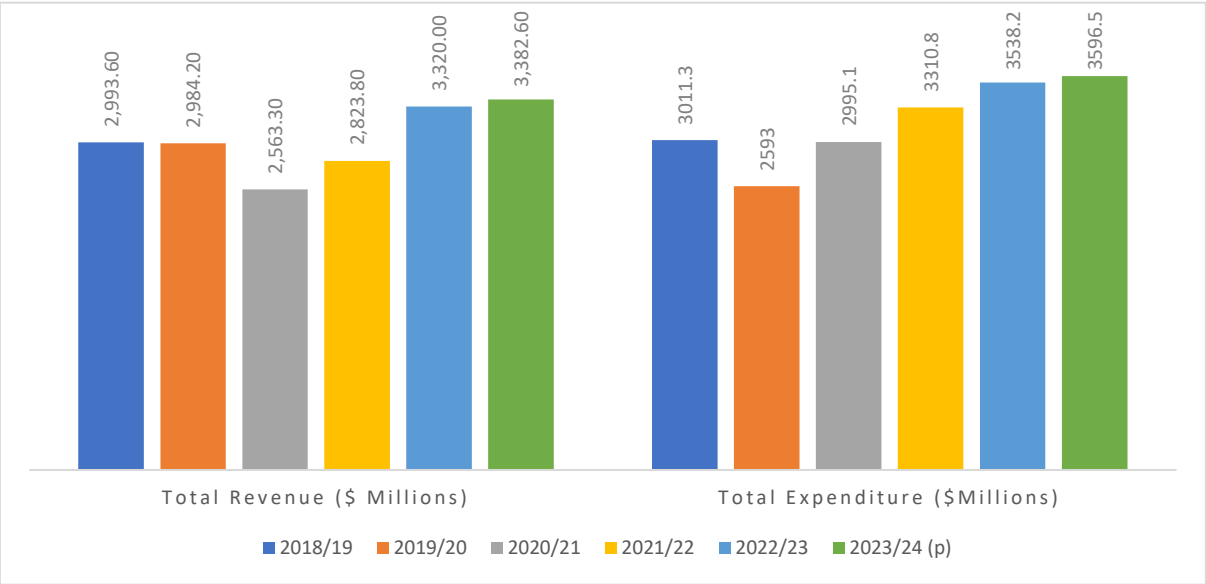
Source: Central Bank of Barbados

C. FISCAL DEVELOPMENTS AND PUBLIC FINANCES

Fiscal Developments

The fiscal performance in 2023/2024 demonstrated a positive trend towards economic recovery and stability. The government's commitment to fiscal prudence, improved revenue collection, and controlled spending significantly contributed to this progress.

FIGURE 9: PUBLIC REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (\$M)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

The fiscal deficit narrowed considerably, decreasing by 15 percent from 2 percent of GDP in 2022/23 to 1.7 percent in 2023/24. This improvement was primarily due to enhanced revenue collection and a cautious approach to expenditure. The primary balance, a key indicator of fiscal sustainability, saw a remarkable increase of 48 percent, rising from 2.5 percent of GDP in 2022/23 to 3.7 percent in 2023/24. This achievement highlights the government's success in controlling non-interest expenditures and boosting revenue.

While revenue as a percentage of GDP experienced a slight decline of 4.4 percent, falling from 27.2 percent in 2022/23 to 26 percent in 2023/24, the government's effective expenditure management, despite rising global interest rates, ensured overall fiscal health remained strong. Expenditure as a percentage of GDP decreased by 5.1 percent, from 29.2 percent in 2022/23 to 27.7 percent in 2023/24. Notably, non-interest expenditures saw a significant reduction of 9.7 percent, decreasing from 24.7 percent of GDP in 2022/23 to 22.3 percent in 2023/24. These reductions underscore the government's commitment to prudent fiscal management.

Capital expenditure, while important for long-term economic growth, decreased by 28.2 percent, from 3.9 percent of GDP in 2022/23 to 2.8 percent in 2023/24. This reduction was attributed to the completion of major projects.

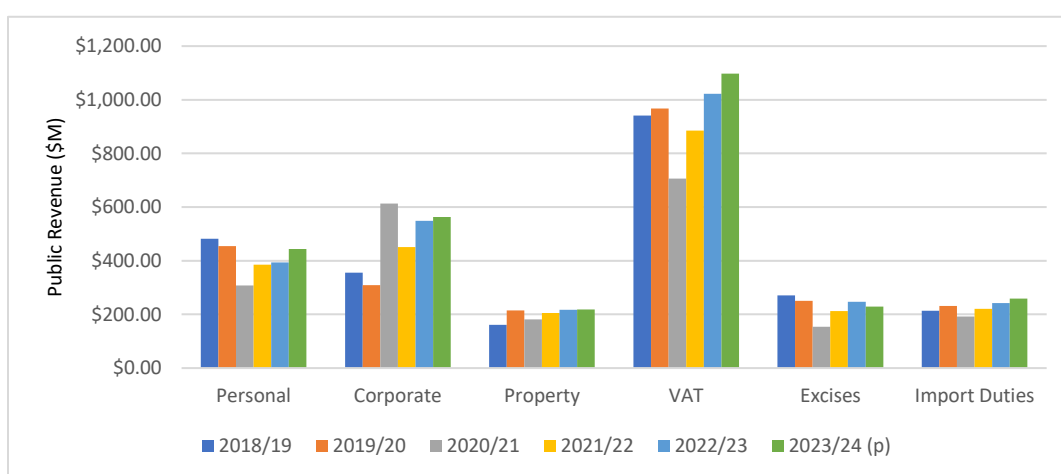
PUBLIC FINANCES

Current Revenue

The government's continued focus on revenue enhancement and fiscal stability in 2023 yielded a 1.9 percent increase in total revenue, reaching \$3,382.60 million in 2023/24. This growth was primarily driven by a 3.1 percent increase in tax revenue, offsetting challenges in non-tax revenue and grants.

Tax revenue experienced mixed performance, with direct taxes declining marginally due to fluctuations in individual and corporate tax contributions and the phasing out of pandemic-related levies. However, personal income taxes increased by 12.7 percent, likely due to improved employment rates and higher personal incomes, while corporate income taxes rose by 2.6 percent, reflecting better corporate earnings and compliance. Property taxes and financial institutions asset tax remained relatively stable, while other direct taxes saw a significant increase due to various smaller revenue streams.

FIGURE 10: SELECT CATEGORIES OF PUBLIC REVENUE (\$M)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

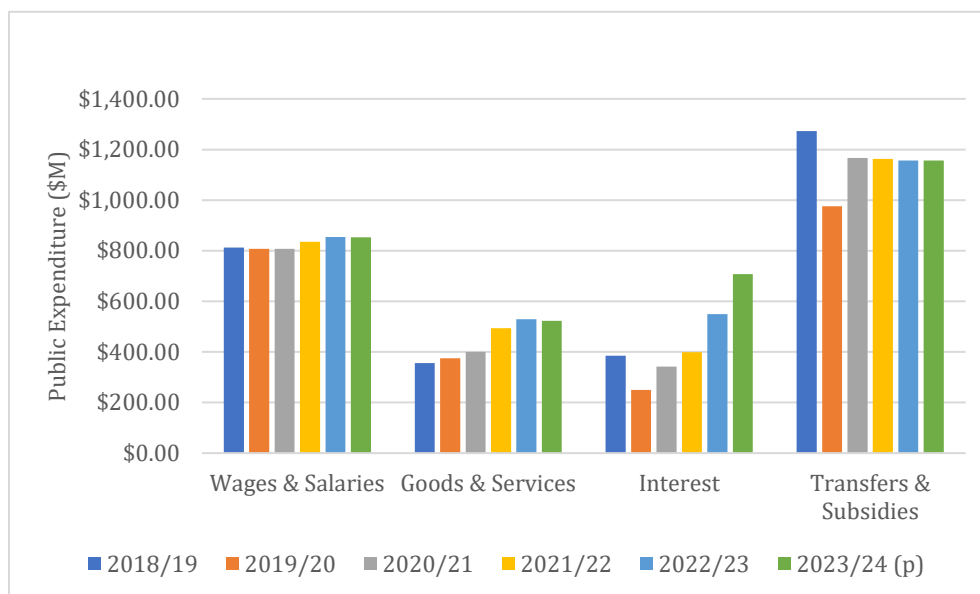
Indirect taxes increased by 5.7 percent, driven by growth in Value Added Tax (VAT) and Import Duties, which rose by 7.3 percent and 6.9 percent respectively due to higher consumption, and increased import levels. Stamp duties and excise taxes decreased due to reduced transactions and lower consumption. Other indirect taxes increased significantly, driven by various sources including fuel taxes and room rate/shared accommodation taxes.

Non-tax revenue and grants experienced a decline, with non-tax revenue falling by 8.2 percent due to lower fees or other non-tax revenue sources, despite a 7.1 percent increase in foreign exchange fees from higher transactions. Grants experienced a substantial decline as external grant support reduced, and post office revenue decreased slightly.

Expenditure

In fiscal year 2023/24, the government strategically prioritized essential services and debt management while navigating global economic challenges. The 4.9 percent rise in current expenditure compared to 2022/23 was primarily fueled by a significant 28.8 percent increase in interest payments, reflecting higher global interest rates and the country's debt obligations. Wages remained relatively stable, demonstrating efficient management of public sector payroll, while goods and services saw a minor decrease of 1.2 percent, showcasing ongoing efforts to optimize spending.

FIGURE 11: SELECT CATEGORIES OF PUBLIC EXPENDITURE (\$M)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

Transfers and subsidies experienced a marginal increase from \$1,155.90 million to \$1,156.80 million as efforts towards SOE reform continued. Grants to individuals saw a considerable 12.9 percent decline, while grants to public institutions experienced a 13.8 percent rise. Subsidies and subscriptions/contributions also saw minor reductions.

Capital expenditure experienced the most substantial decrease of 22.4 percent due to the completion of major projects or the strategic reallocation of resources to other priority areas. This significant reduction reflects the government's evolving focus and its commitment to adapt spending in response to changing circumstances.

Overall, the 2023/24 fiscal year revealed that the government is actively balancing necessary spending with debt management amid rising global interest rates and shifting priorities. The expenditure strategy highlights a nuanced approach, demonstrating careful consideration of fiscal responsibility, and adaptation to prevailing economic conditions.

Financing

In fiscal year 2023, the government strategically shifted its financing approach, reducing domestic borrowing while increasing foreign funding. Total financing decreased 46.8 percent to \$283.1 million, reflecting improved fiscal discipline and a concerted effort to reduce reliance on financing to cover fiscal operations.

TABLE 3: GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS (\$M)

Category	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 (p)
Financing	450.2	40.5	-176.2	491.5	531.7	283.1
Domestic Financing (Net)	643.8	-272.3	-274.9	-340.1	107	-240
Central Bank	92.8	-166.4	164.7	-66.6	331.6	-132.6
Commercial Banks	257.9	82.8	-86.3	106.6	-24.5	99.9
National Insurance Board	3.1	8.9	-85.2	-207.9	15.3	-60.2
Private Non-Bank	-57.2	-119.6	-217.7	-34.9	-47.1	-136.8
Other	347.3	-77.9	-50.4	-137.3	-168.3	-10.4
Foreign Financing (Net)	-193.6	312.8	98.7	831.6	424.7	523.2
Capital Markets	0	0	0	0	0	146.5
Project Funds	92.8	57.1	64.1	51.2	91.4	94.7
Policy Loans	0	350	150	968.1	496.6	483.6
Amortization	-286.4	-94.3	-115.4	-187.7	-163.3	-201.7

Source: Central Bank of Barbados

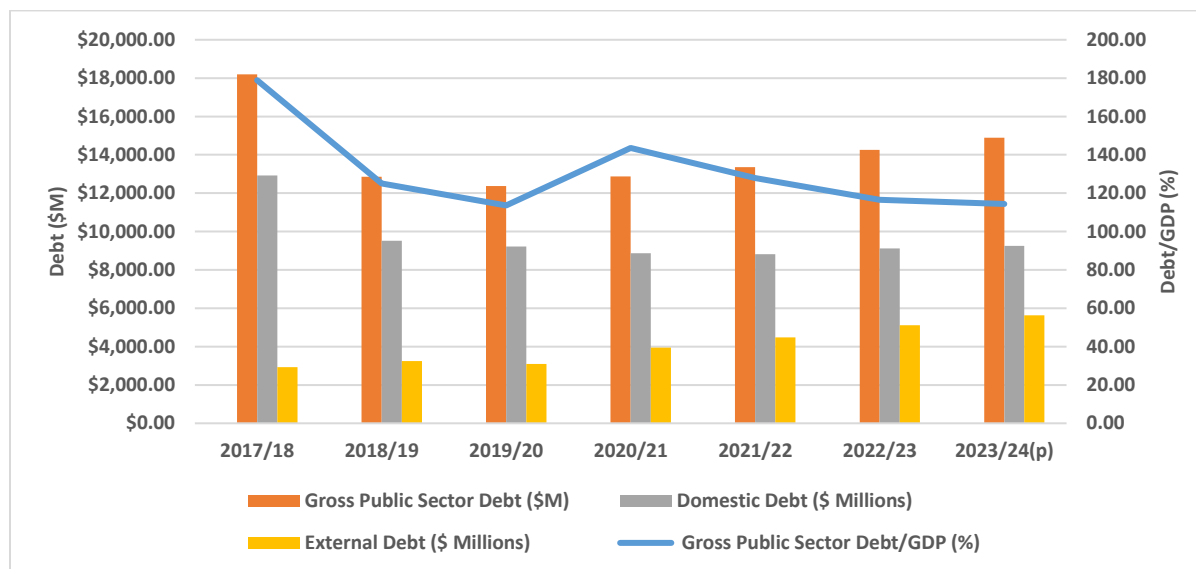
Domestically, there was a notable shift towards net repayment, totaling \$240 million. This was driven by substantial net repayments to the Central Bank (\$132.6 million) and National Insurance Board (\$60.2 million), demonstrating more conservative fiscal management of these funds. However, commercial banks increased net financing to \$99.9 million, suggesting renewed confidence in the government's economic policies. Private non-bank financing also saw a significant net repayment of \$136.8 million.

Foreign financing, on the other hand, rose 23.2 percent to \$523.2 million. Notably, the government tapped into capital markets, securing \$146.5 million. Project funds also saw a slight increase from \$91.4 million in 2022/23 to \$94.7 million in 2023/24, indicating continued support for development initiatives from international partners.

National Debt

In fiscal year 2023/24, notable progress was made in managing the national debt, with a focus on stabilizing debt levels and ensuring sustainable fiscal policies. The gross public sector debt-to-GDP ratio decreased, from 116.3 percent to 114.1 percent and 116.6 percent to 114.3 percent, respectively. This improvement signals enhanced debt sustainability and was primarily attributed to economic growth outpacing debt accumulation and ongoing fiscal consolidation efforts. Additionally, the significant reduction in other public sector debt, primarily guaranteed contingent liabilities, from \$36.2 million to \$26.3 million, further reduced financial risks for the government.

FIGURE 12: NATIONAL DEBT (2017/18-2023/24)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

However, the total debt burden continued to increase, albeit at a slower pace compared to previous years. Gross central government debt rose by 4.56 percent, from \$14,224.80 million to \$14,873.10 million, and gross public sector debt increased by 4.48 percent, from \$14,261.00 million to \$14,899.40 million. This increase was primarily driven by a substantial 10.11 percent rise in external debt, from \$5,106.80 million to \$5,623.20 million, due to increased borrowing from multilateral and bilateral sources for funding infrastructure projects, climate resilience and social programmes. In contrast, domestic debt experienced only a marginal increase of 1.45 percent, from \$9,117.90 million to \$9,250.00 million, reflecting renewed confidence in the government's fiscal discipline and economic policies.

Overall, the government's proactive approach to debt management, coupled with its commitment to fiscal consolidation and economic growth, provides a solid foundation for continued progress in reducing debt levels and ensuring long-term sustainability. The emphasis on strategic borrowing for development projects, such as the 10.11 percent increase in external debt (from \$5,106.80 million to \$5,623.20 million), and the prudent management of domestic debt further reinforce its commitment to a balanced and sustainable fiscal policy.

D. EMPLOYMENT, INFLATION AND LABOUR MARKET

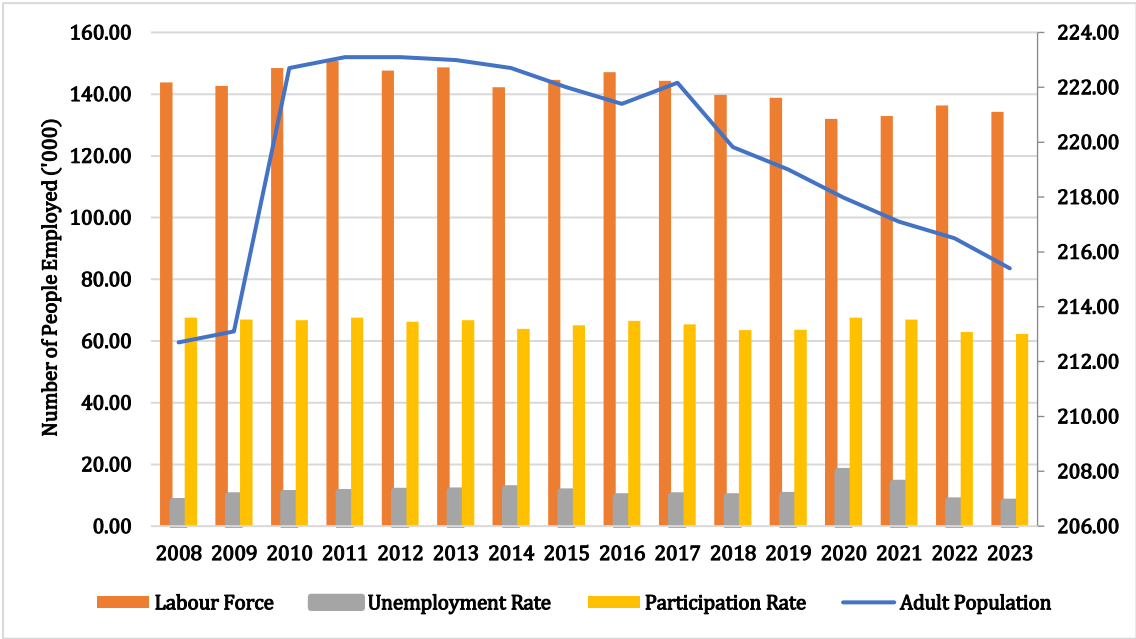
Employment and The Labour Market

The Barbadian labor market in 2023 presented a mixed picture, characterized by both progress and persistent challenges. The unemployment rate, which had significantly decreased from 14.1 percent in 2021 to 8.2 percent by the end of 2022, reflecting a strong post-pandemic recovery, experienced a slight

decline to 7.9 percent by the corresponding period in 2023. Employment rates increased slightly for both men (92.4 percent) and women (91.8 percent), with total employment reaching 123,600. Sectors such as construction, wholesale & retail trade, and tourism, vital to the Barbadian economy, were the main drivers of this employment growth, demonstrating the resilience of key industries in the face of global economic uncertainties.

However, despite the overall increase in employment, several underlying issues raised concerns about the long-term sustainability and inclusivity of the labor market. Notably, the labor force participation rate, which measures the percentage of the eligible workforce actively seeking employment, experienced a decline of 2 percentage points in 2022 and continued its downward trajectory in 2023. This trend, coupled with a steady contraction of the total labor force since 2015, resulting in the loss of over 8,200 individuals, raises questions about the availability of skilled labor to meet future demands. Factors such as early retirement, higher levels of informal employment, and discouraged workers have been identified as contributing to this decline. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic likely exacerbated these pre-existing trends, leading to shifts in individual priorities and career choices.

FIGURE 13: LABOUR MARKET AND POPULATION TRENDS 2008-2023



Source: Barbados Statistical Service

While the number of job seekers decreased overall, the labor market also experienced significant shifts in employment patterns. Additionally, sectors like construction, wholesale & retail trade, and tourism continued to perform well in 2023, others like manufacturing and administrative & support services faced declines. Additionally, there was a notable shift towards higher-paying jobs, with fewer low-wage earners and a substantial increase in those earning between \$200 and \$999 per week.

Moreover, specific events like layoffs from the national clean-up programme, restructuring at the Arawak Cement Plant, and the divestment of the Barbados Agricultural Management Company contributed to

the unemployment rate. The declining labor force participation rate, especially among women, and the decrease in employment across all age groups, particularly the 15-19 age group, raise concerns about the future workforce.

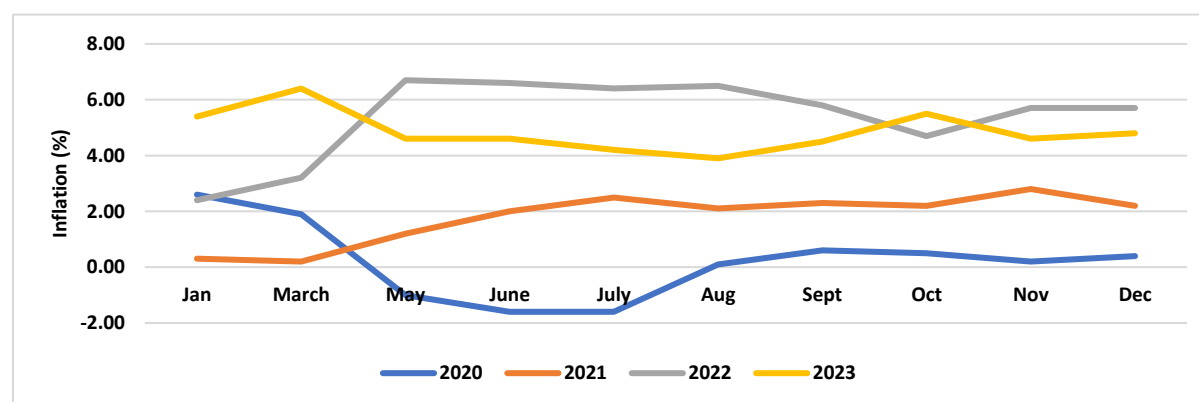
Despite these challenges, the unemployment rate remained below the average of 10.3 percent from 2001 to 2023, suggesting that the labor market has shown a degree of resilience and highlights the economy's ability to adapt and recover. However, the declining labor force participation rate, especially among women, the decrease in employment across all age groups, and the changing demographics of the workforce, including an aging population, necessitate policy measures to ensure a sustainable and inclusive labor market for the future.

Inflation

The year 2023 presented a challenging inflationary landscape, with a significant surge in prices during the early months. For instance, by March 2023, point-to-point inflation had reached 6.4 percent, a stark contrast to the 3.2 percent recorded in March 2022. This initial surge affected various sectors and household budgets.

However, a gradual deceleration in inflationary pressures became evident as the year progressed, with May through December registering a downward trend compared to the previous year. For example, by December 2023, inflation had moderated to 4.8 percent, down from the 5.7 percent seen in the same month of 2022. This moderation was attributed to a combination of factors, including adjustments in global supply chains, and shifts in global economic conditions.

FIGURE 14: POINT-TO-POINT INFLATION 2020-2023



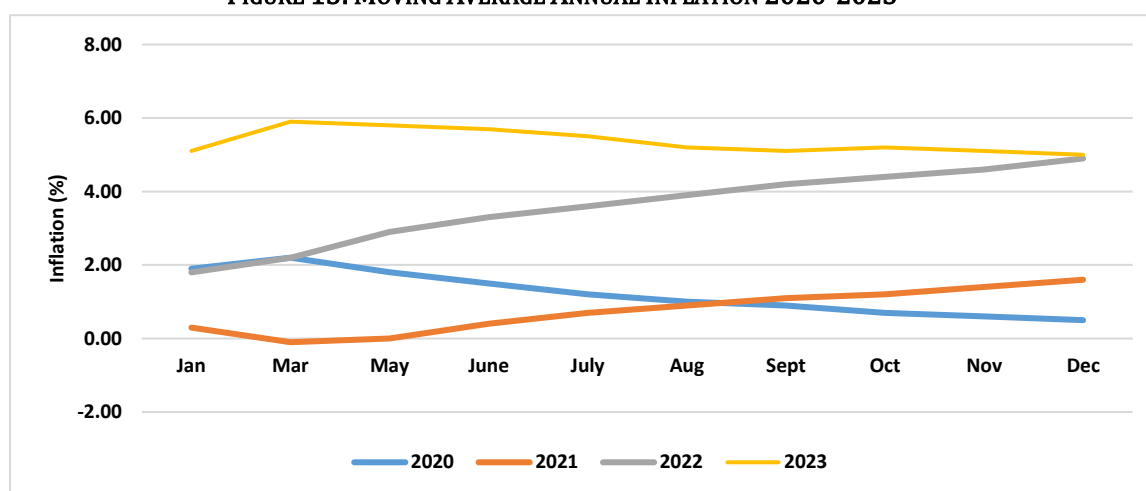
Source: Barbados Statistical Service

*Due to restrictions implemented during April 2020 and February 2021 to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection for these months was not possible. Consequently, the indices for April 2020 and February 2021 could not be calculated.

Despite this easing, the annual average inflation for 2023 (5.0 percent) remained slightly higher than that of 2022 (4.9 percent), reflecting the cumulative impact of the earlier price hikes. The initial inflationary surge and subsequent moderation highlight the complex interplay of global economic forces, such as

supply chain disruptions, rising energy costs, and geopolitical tensions, along with domestic factors like increased demand and supply constraints.

FIGURE 15: MOVING AVERAGE ANNUAL INFLATION 2020-2023



Source: Barbados Statistical Service

*Due to restrictions implemented during April 2020 and February 2021 to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection for these months was not possible. Consequently, the indices for April 2020 and February 2021 could not be calculated.

Overall, the 2023 inflation trends underscore the challenges faced by policymakers in managing price stability amidst a dynamic and evolving global economic landscape. The gradual easing of inflationary pressures towards the end of the year offers a glimmer of hope, but the cumulative impact of earlier price increases serves as a reminder of the persistent challenges in maintaining price stability.

E. SECTORAL PERFORMANCE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

I. TOURISM (ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRY)

GLOBAL SITUATION

In 2023, the easing of COVID-19 travel-related restrictions, re-opening of economies like China and pent-up demand from travelers proved to be the catalyst in reviving the international tourism industry from the significant losses experienced in the pandemic period. Based on statistics from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the international tourism industry in 2023 almost rivaled pre-pandemic levels, with over 1.286 billion tourists recorded in 2023, the highest registered since 2019 (1.5 billion tourists), indicating that the industry had recovered up to 88 percent of pre-pandemic levels.

Weighed against tourism arrivals in 2019, the Americas recovered by 90.4 percent, with strong demand from the United States, particularly for Caribbean locations, aided the region's recovery. Africa made a noteworthy recovery, with arrivals in 2023 reaching 96.1 percent of pre-pandemic levels. Europe saw a

94.3 percent recovery, driven by robust demand and US interest. South Asia experiencing a remarkable recovery of 87.0 percent, while the Caribbean surpassed pre-pandemic arrivals.

Despite an increase in fuel prices for the first half of the year, global supply-chain disruptions that were primarily driven by geopolitical tensions, and increased drought weather in the Panama Canal, improved travel connectivity, elevated demand and higher confidence levels among travelers, drove tourism spending in 2023; resulting in an increase in tourism export revenues by USD 400 billion from the previous year to USD 1.6 trillion in 2023 (almost 95 percent of the USD 1.7 trillion recorded in 2019).

Highly sought after cruise ship bargains predominantly by the budget conscious millennials and baby-boomer demographic, coupled with stringent health and safety protocols taken by the cruise industry, underpinned the convincing rebound for cruise tourism in 2023. A recent report by Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) 'State of the Cruise Industry' shows that the cruise industry is rebounding faster than international tourism (over-night) arrivals, where cruise ship passenger volumes in 2023 reached over 100 percent of 2019 levels.

When assessing countries' tourism sector contribution to GDP, the World Travel and Tourism reports that more than 34 countries have already exceeded pre-pandemic levels, with global tourism employment levels moving from an all-time low of 264 million persons employed in 2020 to 320 million persons employed in 2023 (a 95 percent recovery of the peak tourism sector employment levels observed in 2019).

LOCAL SITUATION

The tourism industry in Barbados mirrored the strong recovery seen globally since the COVID-19 pandemic, as the country's lifting of pandemic restrictions since September 2022, intensified promotional and airlift capacity initiatives in crucial source markets, the staging of major cultural and sporting events, and high demand from sun-seekers in the winter season, fueled the sector's growth in 2023.

Stay-over tourist arrivals from the country's four main source markets (U.S., U.K., CARICOM and Canada) were recorded at 586,135 visitors in 2023 compared to the estimated 628,591 persons documented in 2019, which indicates that Barbados' tourism industry had recovered up to 93 percent of pre-pandemic levels from its core markets. Similarly, there was a noticeable 51 percent increase in visitors from CARICOM to Barbados in 2023, as the increase regional airlift capacity to the island (due to the introduction and expansion of regional airline services) saw arrival numbers from the region move to 82 percent of levels seen in 2019.

Policies and initiatives undertaken by the Government of Barbados and its promotional arm for Tourism in the country, the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. (BTMI), proved invaluable to developing the sector's airlift capacity in 2023. The Government of Barbados strengthened partnerships and widened services with traditional air carriers from its main source markets and with budding markets in Latin America like Copa Airlines; marked new alliances with airlines from non-traditional markets like Suriname Airways and Norse Atlantic Airways; introduced a reduction in the Air Travel and Tourism Development fee for CARICOM travel; and signed new airline agreements with African and Asian governments, which resulted in a 30.69 percent increase in airlift capacity to the country within the period of review.

TABLE 4: ESTIMATED TOTAL SEATS BY MARKETS, 2018 -2023

MAJOR MARKETS	2018	2019	2020	2021 ^(P)	2022	2023	2022 vs 2023
United States	330,533	351,311	112,395	160,049	230,742	263,033	13.99%
Canada	120,158	129,704	51,928	28,237	95,044	114,250	20.21%
United Kingdom	292,242	313,676	124,696	256,010	282,552	312,892	10.74%
Europe	11,931	21,990	17,792	23,467	25,260	21,526	-14.78%
Caribbean	518,914	528,240	170,109	102,973	173,994	332,358	91.02%
Central & South America	6,528	11,232	2,466	-	9,280	23,528	153.53%
TOTAL	1,280,306	1,356,153	479,386	570,736	816,872	1,067,587	30.69%

Source: Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.

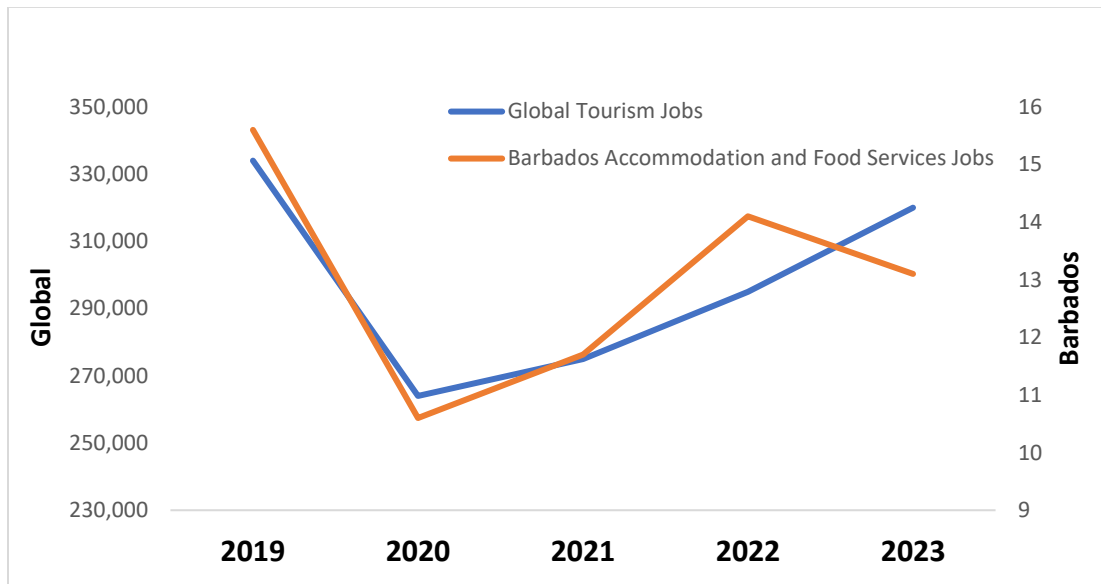
Apart from the strengthening of promotional and marketing initiatives with existing trade partners, there was a full resumption of highly coveted activities and events such as The Food and Rum Festival, cricket matches, and the Crop Over Festival, which played an integral part in attracting tourists. Moreover, the introduction of novel Barbadian online travel and destination companies like BookBarbados, along with increased shared accommodation options with American websites Airbnb, VRBO and more, facilitated the increase in the scope of travelers to the country, leading to a \$450 million surge in tourism inflows in 2023, compared to the previous year.

Globally, visitors have been travelling more and are staying longer in various destinations. This trend was also reflected in Barbados during 2023, where the length of stay increased in all categories from one (1) day to the 29-182 days' category, according to data received from the Barbados Statistical Service.

There were 6,951 registered bedrooms within the tourism industry in 2023, an increase from the 6,573 recorded in the previous year. The completion of tourism projects like the building of the Wyndham Grand Barbados Sam Lord's Castle and Ocean Blue, along with the introduction of more apartments and guesthouses led to an increase in the number of tourism establishments in Barbados for 2023, as the tally of tourism establishments moved from 155 establishments in 2022 to 201 establishments in 2023. Shared accommodation continued to be a budding sub-industry of the country's Tourism sector in 2023, as tax revenues from this industry almost doubled in 2023 when compared to the previous year, and over 1,200 properties were listed as vacation rentals in the period of review.

Employment levels in the Food and Accommodation industry slightly dipped from 14.1 thousand persons in 2022 to 13.1 thousand in 2023, a 7.1 percent decrease. Reasons for this decrease in direct tourism employment could be attributed to the increase in the number of retirees in Barbados in 2023, along with the fact that the hospitality industry world-wide has been suffering from staff shortages since the pandemic, as some hospitality workers have been switching to similar positions in less-seasonal sectors, and as a result, hotel workers might be asked to perform multiple roles out of necessity.

FIGURE 16: GLOBAL VS BARBADOS' TOURISM JOBS ('000)



Source: World Travel and Tourism Organization & Barbados Statistical Service

TABLE 5: STAY-OVER ARRIVALS BY MONTH, 2019, 2021- 2023

	2019	2021	2022	2023	2019 vs 2023		2022 vs 2023	
					Absolute Change	Percentage Change	Absolute Change	Percentage Change
January	69,496	3,547	48,848	70,590	1,094	1.57	21,742	44.51
February	68,609	1,880	54,607	64,995	(3,614)	(5.27)	10,388	19.02
March	70,669	1,769	60,728	63,732	(6,937)	(9.82)	3,004	4.95
April	63,364	1,865	47,059	45,196	(18,168)	(28.67)	(1,863)	(3.96)
May	50,717	3,362	33,949	42,765	(7,952)	(15.68)	8,816	25.97
June	50,160	6,448	32,763	36,670	(13,490)	(26.89)	3,907	11.93
July	60,248	11,524	39,377	46,141	(14,107)	(23.41)	6,764	17.18
August	50,757	15,620	34,329	47,430	(3,327)	(6.55)	13,101	38.16
September	36,861	17,209	28,847	33,972	(2,889)	(8.50)	5,125	17.77
October	48,876	18,504	34,797	43,310	(5,566)	(12.85)	8,513	24.46
November	66,277	23,749	53,955	64,900	(1,377)	(2.12)	10,945	20.29
December	56,624	39,754	70,487	76,839	20,215	26.31	6,352	9.01
	692,658	145,231	539,746	636,540	(56,118)	(8.82)	96,794	17.93

Source: Barbados Statistical Service

TABLE 6: BARBADOS' PERFORMANCE BY MAJOR SOURCE MARKETS 2019, 2021-2023

	2019	2021	2022	2023	2019 vs 2023		2022 vs 2023	
					Absolute Change	Percentage Change	Absolute Change	Percentage Change
U.S.A	219,770	44,804	148,326	176,614	(43,156)	(19.64)	28,288	19.07
Canada	81,577	17,316	55,759	77,140	(4,437)	(5.44)	21,381	38.35
U.K	226,992	53,639	234,510	243,857	16,865	7.43	9,347	3.99
Other Europe	37,759	8,959	26,606	28,306	(9,453)	(25.04)	1,700	6.39
CARICOM	100,252	13,908	58,435	88,524	(11,728)	(11.70)	30,089	51.49
Other Caribbean	2,546	2,815			269	10.57
Rest of the World	26,308	6,207	13,564	19,284	(7,024)	(26.70)	5,720	42.17
	692,658	144,833	539,746	636,540	(56,118)	(8.82)	96,794	17.93

Source: Barbados Statistical Service

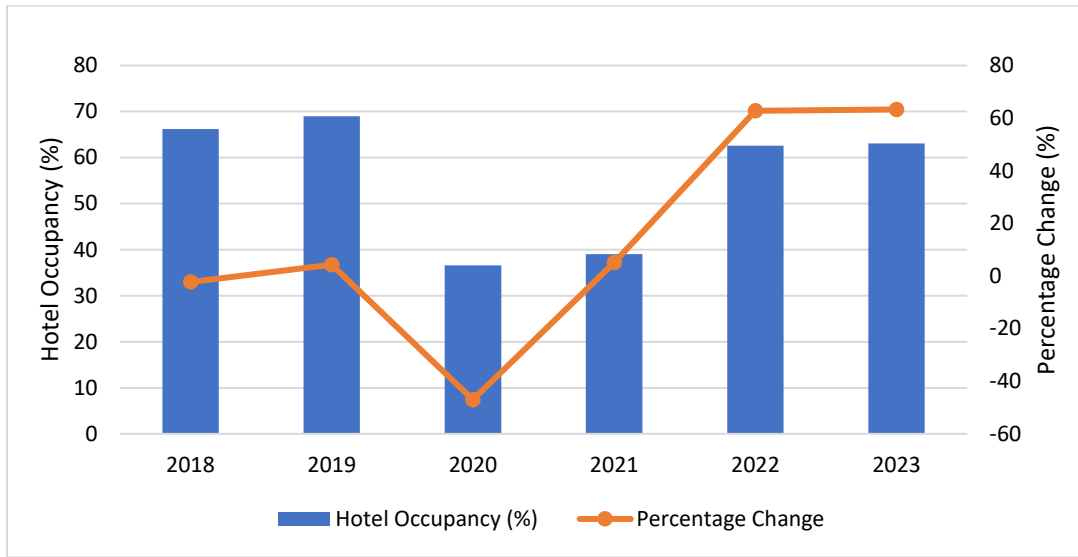
Stay-over arrivals increased significantly from all of Barbados' major markets in 2023 compared to the previous year. Intra-regional travel played a significant role on the island's hospitality sector, with Barbados experiencing a 51 percent increase in visitors from CARICOM countries in the period of review. This regional demand was supported by a 60 percent expansion in seating capacity, due to the introduction of airline services from Inter Caribbean, new non-stop services from Caribbean Airlines (between Barbados, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and St. Lucia) and government's reduction in the Air Travel and Tourism Development fee for CARICOM travel. supported

Over forty-thousand more tourists arrived in Barbados from key extra-regional source markets like Canada and USA in 2023. This influx was highly attributed to creative promotional campaigns in feeder cities in North America that was buoyed by increased airline services from major airlines. Tourist arrivals from the USA have moved from 67 percent of pre-pandemic levels in 2022, to 80 percent in 2023. The rebound of tourist arrivals from Canada was more convincing, as arrivals from that country shifted from 68 percent of pre-pandemic levels in 2022, to 95 percent in 2023, marking a sound resumption of tourism activity from North America.

The surge of tourist arrivals the U.K. observed in 2022, was sustained in the following year, as U.K. tourist arrivals increased by 4 percent from 2022, moving from 234,510 tourists in 2022 to 243,857 tourists in 2023. U.K. tourist arrivals in 2023 also surpassed pre-COVID-19 levels by 7 percent, signifying an important phase of development of the Barbados' hospitality industry since the pandemic.

Hotel Performance

According to a recent STR Global Report, the accommodation sub-sector saw significant improvements in its main performance indicators in 2023. Since the pandemic in 2020, hotel occupancy almost increased two-fold in the period of review, as an increase in arrivals saw hotel occupancy rates inflate from 39 percent in 2021 to 63.1 percent in 2023.

FIGURE 17: HOTEL OCCUPANCY BY YEAR, 2018 - 2023

Source: STR Global Ltd.

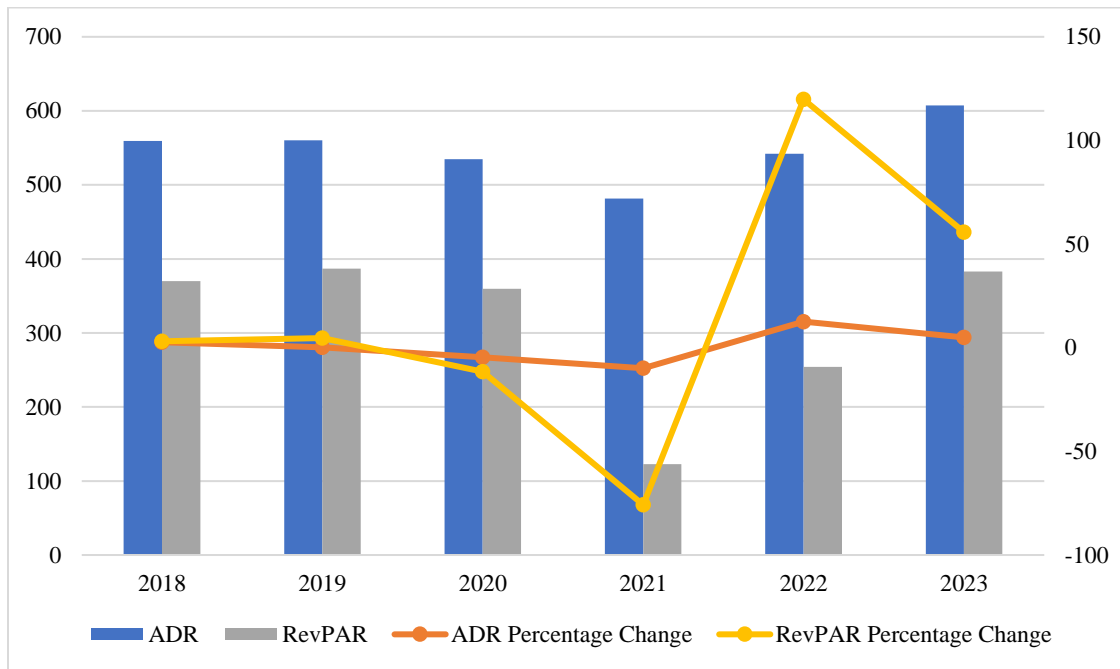
The Average Daily Rate (ADR) which measures the average rate paid for rooms sold, was BDS \$607.39 in 2023, above the average rates paid in 2019 and 26 percent higher than the rates observed following the pandemic in 2021, corroborating the increased purchasing power and consumer spending of tourists. Similarly, the revenue estimate gained for each available room, known as the Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR) increased to BDS \$383.08 in 2023, almost matching 2019's level of \$386.66.

TABLE 7: HOTEL PERFORMANCE BY YEAR, 2018 TO 2023

Year	ADR		RevPAR	
	BDS\$	Percentage Change	BDS\$	Percentage Change
2018	559.28	2.7	370.21	0.4
2019	560.38	0.2	386.66	4.4
2020	534.63	-4.6	359.70	-7.0
2021	481.65	-9.9	122.60	-65.9
2022	542.15	12.6	254.10	107.2
2023	607.39	4.9	383.08	50.8

Source: STR Global Ltd.

FIGURE 18: HOTEL PERFORMANCE BY YEAR, 2018 - 2023

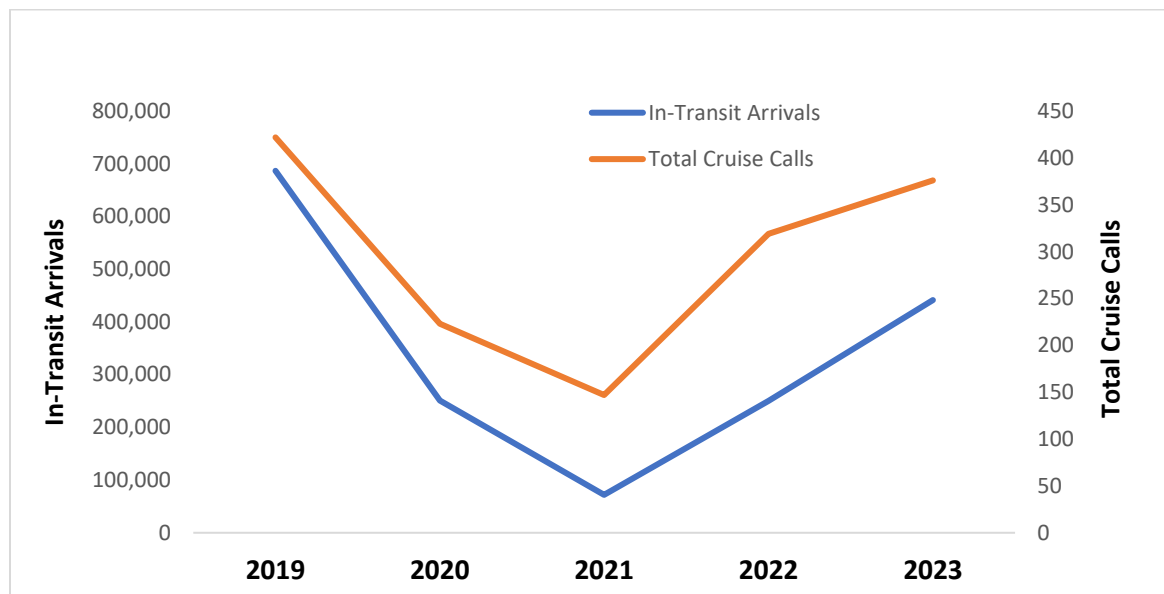


Source: STR Global Ltd

Cruise Passenger Arrivals

The revival of the cruise industry in 2023 has played a pivotal role in energizing related sectors, including transportation and tourist attractions. Notably, the introduction of additional cruise visits and new homeporting agreements have propelled in-transit cruise arrivals by an impressive 76.3 percent from the previous year (moving from 250,527 cruise passengers in 2022 to 441,677 passengers in 2023). The cruise industry in Barbados has now recovered an estimated 64 percent of the passenger levels observed in 2019, almost doubling its recovery efforts from last year (36.5 percent).

FIGURE 19: IN-TRANSIT ARRIVALS AND TOTAL CRUISE CALLS IN BARBADOS



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

During the year under review, 376 vessels called at the Bridgetown Port, a 17.8 percent increase from the 319 vessels that homeported in 2022. Although this increase might not be comparable to the growth cruise arrival numbers within the period, the number of vessels in 2023 have now rebounded to 90 percent of pre-pandemic levels, closely mirroring the performance observed in the cruise industry globally.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

12-Month Welcome Stamp Barbados

The Barbados Welcome Stamp is a special 12-month visa for non-nationals who are resident and employed in a country other than Barbados. The stamp allows non-nationals to reside in Barbados for up to 12 months, and travel to and from the island freely during that period. During the period, June, 2020 to December 2023, the Barbados Welcome Stamp (12 month visa) Programme made significant contributions to:

- Increased visitor arrivals among the long stay visitors and loyal visitors;
- Improved perception of Barbados' key brand attributes); and
- Increased spend on island.

To date, applications were received from 4,937 individuals, applying for themselves and or their spouses and dependents, for a total of 8,359 persons. Of the 4,937 applications received, 2,965 of these applications, equivalent to 5,337 persons, were approved for the visas. Forty-one percent (41 percent), or 1,207 of these applications were from family units while 59 percent or 1,758 were single applicants.

Barbados Employment and Sustainable Transformation (BEST) Programme

The BEST programme was established by the Government of Barbados to stimulate the transformation of the tourism and direct tourism related service sectors and to protect employment in the sectors as a result of the devastation caused by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic globally. Given that tourism is the country's main source of foreign exchange and generator of employment, the Government of Barbados therefore pledged BDS \$300 million to assist in supporting the tourism sector, by investing in companies through grants and preferential shares, to fund the re-engagement of workers and to enable companies to survive. The programme has two (2) major components:

- *Employee Re-engagement Component:*
 - During the period October 2020 – December 2023, 103 applications were received by the Approvals Committee. These applications consisted of hotels, attractions, travel agencies, car rentals, restaurants, watersports, general, retail, destination management, nightclubs and sports businesses. Eighty-six (86) of these applications were approved; with 50 of these approvals being disbursed. As a result of this programme, approximately 2,481 employees were re-engaged in the tourism sector.
- *Transformational Investment Component:*
 - During the period October 2020 – December 2023, 39 applications were received. Twenty-eight of these applications were approved with 18 of these approvals being disbursed.

II. INDUSTRY AND MANUFACTURING

The manufacturing sector experienced one (1) percent growth in 2023 compared to the previous year, with overall output (GDP, at constant prices) rising to BDS\$ 497.5 million from BDS\$ 492.8 million in 2022. This performance was largely driven by increases in specific categories, including "food," which saw a 2.6 percent increase, and "rum and other beverages," which grew by 3.5 percent during the same period. Additionally, chemicals production increased by 1.4 percent. However, the cessation of a critical component for cement production led to a substantial decline of 19.7 percent in non-metallic mineral products.

Domestic exports for the review period declined by 5.63 percent to BDS\$473.6 million, compared to BDS\$501.9 million reported in 2022, as indicated by the Central Bank of Barbados. This decrease was primarily driven by a significant reduction in exports of "construction materials," which fell by 19.7 percent.

Special Technical Assistance Programme

Export Barbados (BIDC) has strategically prioritized three key pillars—Bio-Economy, Design Economy, and Ocean Economy—as part of its ongoing initiative to foster sustainable industrial development. These pillars aim to direct investments and strategies in critical economic sectors, emphasizing export-driven growth. Additionally, they seek to establish a robust framework for industrial policies that balance sustainability with competitiveness in global markets.

Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC) disbursed BDS \$652.6 thousand under its Special Technical Assistance Programme (STAP) in 2023, a decrease of 58.1 percent below the BDS

\$1,557.7 thousand disbursed in 2022. During 2023, 111 businesses benefited from the programme representing a significant increase from eighty-three (83) in 2022.

The category of Marketing received the largest sum of assistance, with BDS \$217.9 thousand, disbursed in 2023, under the STAP, a decrease of 21.5 percent in comparison to the BDS \$277.4 thousand provided in 2022. Additional information on the areas of assistance is outlined in the table below.

TABLE 8: STAP DISBURSEMENTS BDS\$ FOR 2022 AND 2023

Assistance	2022	2023P	% Change
Training	52,401.45	57,924.96	10.54
Productivity Enhancement			
Marketing	277,442.68	217,941.07	-21.45
Equipment, Systems & Process Upgrades	1,078,218.05	216,173.02	-79.95
Product Design	NA	15,259.11	
Market Research	16,373.20	13,333.83	-18.55
Professional Services	133,309.37	131,970.76	-1
TOTAL	1,557,744.75	652,604.75	-58.11

P- Provisional

Source: Barbados Investment & Development Corporation

III. AGRICULTURE AND FISHING

In 2023, the Real Gross Domestic Product for the Agriculture and Fishing Industry was estimated at \$196.5 million, representing an increase of 9.4 percent over the \$179.7 million recorded in the previous year. The performance of the sector was mainly attributed to expansions recorded in the sugar industry (62.9 percent) as well as the vegetable (26.5 percent) and root crop (10.1 percent) subsectors. The improvements in these subsectors, offset the declines observed in Livestock and Dairy sub-industry (1.8 percent) and Fishing sub-industry (2.6 percent) over the period.

SUGAR PRODUCTION

The 2023 sugar crop yielded approximately 109,493.7 tonnes of canes. This represented an increase of 14.1 percent or 13,538.7 tonnes more canes produced compared to the 2022 crop (95,955 tonnes). The amount of sugar produced during the period under review was approximately 7,230.7 tonnes, a significant increase of 62.9 percent or 2,791.7 tonnes of sugar over 2022. There was also an increase of approximately 9 percent in the production of molasses or 623.31 tonnes more than in 2022. Over the

review period, the Government of Barbados pursued the privatization of the Barbados Sugar Industry. Under this transition process, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC) was closed and replaced by two (2) new private sector companies, inclusive of the Barbados Energy and Sugar Company (BESCO) and the Agricultural Business Company (ABC).

The BESCO will be charged with the responsibility for manufacturing sugar, molasses, and renewable energy. The BESCO's capital structure is distributed among three parties including the private sector (55 per cent), sugar workers (20 per cent) and the Government (25 per cent). The Government has invested assets equivalent to \$13.5million in BESCO.

The Agricultural Business Company will be responsible for growing sugarcane and non-sugar crops. It is also intended that the ABC will form a subsidiary company ABC Energy which will partner with Emera Caribbean Renewable Ltd (ECRL) to establish a photovoltaic project for electricity generation. The Government has invested assets the equivalent of \$6.7 million in ABC.

The closure of the BAMC resulted in the following financial implications:

- The cost of severance for the 376 active permanent BAMC workers was calculated at \$10,361,960.47 according to the Severance Payment Act of Barbados.
- The estimated pension obligation for BAMC as at October 2023 stood at \$2,728,274.00.
- Other outstanding liabilities for BAMC, as at December 2023, stood at \$16,542,387.54.
- Government has agreed to take on the debt for molasses storage tank from BAMC totaling \$20,087,107.00.

As a result of the privatization of the sugar industry, the Government of Barbados is expected to save annually approximately \$23 million in expenditure, inclusive of \$16 million in cane payments (price support) and \$7 million in subvention payments to BAMC.

COTTON PRODUCTION

A total of 9.3 hectares of cotton was planted within the 2022/2023 cotton season, indicating a large decline of 88.2 percent (or 69.6 hectares), from the 2021/2022 cotton season (78.9 hectares). The 2022/2023 cotton crop harvest yielded 7,299.91 kilograms of seed cotton which was delivered to the ginnery, representing, a falloff of 35.5 percent (or 4,481.44 kilograms) from the previous season. There were 10 running bales recorded during the review period, which was unchanged from last year's harvest. This decline in cotton production could be attributed to the very high rainfall levels in September to December 2023, which resulted in the crop being inundate with standing water for long periods. Also, land preparation during the raining season led to the crop being planted late as the soil became very heavy, sticky, and hard to work with as it started to absorb the water.

LIVESTOCK AND DAIRY PRODUCTION

Table 9: Livestock and Dairy Production ('000 kgs) 2019-2023

Year	2019	2020	2021(R)	2022(R)	2023(P)	% Change over 2022
Pork	2,840.3	2,869.2	2,634.0	2,539.4	2,450.1	-3.5%
Beef	172.5	182.3	161.2	201.2	189.3	-5.9%
Veal	0.4	43.6	0.6	0.3	0.0	-100.0%
Mutton	92.2	98.7	65.4	84.6	90.9	7.4%
Chicken	16,232.0	11,964.9	13,183.4	15,536.3	15,527.5	-0.1%
Turkey	397.6	141.5	298.1	134.7	161.1	19.5%
Eggs	3,749.9	3,471.5	2,605.7	3,099.4	2,907.5	-6.2%
Milk	4,657.4	3,978.0	4,340.7	4,039.4	3,837.8	-5.0%
Total	28,142.1	22,749.6	23,289.1	25,635.3	25,164.1	-1.8%

SOURCE: Agricultural Planning Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security

P- Provisional Estimates

R- Revised Estimates

Overall livestock production decreased marginally by 1.8 per cent in 2023 to stand at 25,164.1 thousand kilogrammes. The fall in overall output was mainly attributed to declines recorded in the majority of commodities inclusive of eggs (6.2 percent), beef (5.9 percent), milk (5.0 percent) and pork (3.5 percent) in comparison to the previous period. There was no veal production recorded for 2023.

With regards to the poultry sector, the production of chicken remained largely unchanged from the previous period with approximately 15,527.5 thousand kilogrammes recorded in 2023. This was a very favourable performance for sector which was impacted by numerous issues inclusive of a high mortality rate of chicks due to high temperatures, shortage in eggs and rising cost of inputs over the period. There was also a sizeable increase (19.5 percent) in turkey production with 161.1 thousand kilogrammes registered in 2023 over the 134.7 thousand kilogrammes in output recorded in 2022.

VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

There was a sizeable increase in overall vegetable crop production in 2023, with output expanding to 13,584.4 thousand kilogrammes from 10,738.0 thousand kilogrammes in 2022. Improvements in output were recorded for the majority of crops within the review period. Bananas (609.6 percent) and chives (289.4 percent) recorded high increases in production, rebounding from 2022, where both commodities registered the lowest output levels across a five-year period.

However, there were also noticeable declines in production, observed in several commodities such as squash (37.1 percent), hot peppers (37.0 percent), beets (36.8 percent), lettuce (27.5 percent), okras (18.4 percent) and pumpkin (18.1 percent).

Table 10: Select Vegetable Production 2019-2023 ('000 kgs)

Vegetable	2019(R)	2020(R)	2021(R)	2022(R)	2023	% Change over 2022
Beans (String)	441.9	592.0	188.7	168.1	161.1	-4.2%
Beet	78.3	331.6	115.7	122.6	77.5	-36.8%
Cabbage	607.4	594.3	290.6	311.9	345.7	10.8%
Carrot	485.8	314.0	257.9	340.4	318.7	-6.4%
Cauliflower	11.3	7.4	0.0	0.3	0.6	72.7%
Corn	177.9	143.8	57.5	51.2	100.7	96.7%
Cucumber	1,772.9	1,904.5	1,157.8	1,245.6	1,129.9	-9.3%
Egg Plant	210.3	346.1	178.3	209.1	147.6	-29.4%
Lettuce	1,225.9	1,857.2	1,059.8	979.7	710.0	-27.5%
Peas	10.5	33.9	29.0	43.9	73.6	67.6%
Melons	1,534.5	1,330.1	1,235.9	1,963.7	1,877.2	-4.4%
Okras	1,231.5	1,219.6	891.8	673.6	549.5	-18.4%
Peppers (Hot)	830.9	896.6	383.3	226.1	142.5	-37.0%
Peppers (Sweet)	659.6	657.9	460.5	474.5	462.1	-2.6%
Pumpkins	478.4	905.7	392.8	505.7	414.1	-18.1%
Squash	1,106.9	1,085.1	1,082.3	970.3	609.9	-37.1%
Tomato	1,327.1	1,684.9	1,063.6	906.0	1,026.5	13.3%
Bonavise	8.7	4.6	6.2	0.9	8.1	765.6%
Chive	3,340.1	3,790.9	1,049.5	504.2	1,963.5	289.4%
Thyme	171.0	238.5	62.9	66.8	384.8	476.2%
Marjoram	455.6	693.2	155.8	6.3	65.7	939.4%
Parsley	393.3	1,157.4	332.4	24.0	63.1	163.1%
Spinach	84.5	116.1	60.3	27.6	52.7	90.8%
Dill	0.1	4.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	-100.0%
Basil	0.3	0.4	1.8	1.0	1.0	-6.9%
Paw Paw	2,531.4	776.6	60.4	72.9	175.7	141.2%
Squash (finger)	37.4	68.0	8.6	16.6	33.9	104.5%
Chinese Cabbage	384.7	360.9	124.6	224.3	293.1	30.7%
Runcifers	10.5	17.6	9.7	9.6	11.1	16.4%
Bananas	654.3	1,630.8	1,429.4	258.8	1,836.6	609.6%
Plantain	64.5	293.7	739.4	265.4	429.2	61.7%
Figs	0.0	27.2	0.0	0.1	11.2	7928.6%
Zucchini	307.6	103.8	101.5	66.8	107.5	61.0%
Total	10,674.2	12,288.4	7,498.3	10,738.0	13,584.4	26.5%

Source: Agricultural Planning Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security
R – Revised Estimates
P – Provisional Estimates

TABLE 11: ROOT CROP PRODUCTION ('000 KGS) 2019-2023

Year	2019 (R)	2020(R)	2021(R)	2022 (R)	2023	% Change over 2022
Cassava	675.7	1,551.00	1,213.90	560.4	805.35	43.71%
Eddoes	193.7	263.1	201.1	287.6	250.35	-12.95%
Sweet Potato	4,159.60	3,544.30	3,413.90	2,543.50	3,407.61	33.97%
Yam	241.7	395.6	580.6	989	671.18	-32.14%
Onion	1,309.50	1,327.70	1,402.00	1,486.50	1,327.32	-10.71%
Peanut	3	15.7	8.9	8.3	4.67	-43.73%
Total	6,583.20	7,097.40	6,820.40	5,875.30	6,466.48	10.06%

SOURCE: Agricultural Planning Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security

P- Provisional Estimates

R- Revised Estimates

ROOT CROP PRODUCTION

During the period of review, root crop production was estimated to have rebounded to 6, 446.5 thousand kilogrammes from 5,875.3 thousand kilogrammes in 2022; however, it remained slightly below the average output across the period 2019 to 2023 (6,568.6 thousand kilogrammes). This increase in overall output was driven by the significant uptick in production of cassava (43.1 percent) and sweet potato (34.0 percent), over the previous period.

Yam production was estimated at 671.1 thousand kilogrammes in 2023 in comparison to 989 thousand kilogrammes recorded in 2022; representing, a decline of 31.1 percent. Another root crop commodity that recorded a drastic decline was peanuts (43.7 percent), while eddoes and onions recorded moderate declines of 13.0 percent and 10.7 percent respectively.

LIVESTOCK AND DAIRY IMPORTS

Livestock and Dairy imports recorded an overall decline of 6.5 percent for 2023 to stand at 10,474.9 thousand kilogrammes. Milk and Poultry imports declined by 21.9 percent and 21.2 percent respectively, while Beef imports fell marginally by 1.9 percent.

Table Eggs imports skyrocketed in 2023 (729.4 percent) compared to 130.6 thousand kilogrammes recorded in 2022. The rise in imports was driven by climatic conditions, as the extreme heat experienced in 2023 led to a high mortality rate for birds, where in one instance a major egg producer lost 50,000 birds at their farm. The overall impact on the sub-sector resulted in the need to import eggs to supplement the local supply.

Pork import recorded a moderate increase of 9.0 percent in 2023, while changes in Mutton imports remained negligible across 2022 to 2023.

TABLE 12: LIVESTOCK AND DAIRY IMPORTS ('000 KGS) 2019-2023

Year	2019	2020	2021(R)	2022(R)	2023(P)	% Change over 2022
Pork	2,740.7	2,152.3	2,783.0	2,676.9	2,917.1	9.0%
Beef	2,221.2	1,993.2	1,921.8	2,490.4	2,444.0	-1.9%
Mutton	1,086.0	1,007.7	1,002.5	1,175.4	1,183.0	0.6%
Poultry	1,766.0	1,581.7	1,057.6	1,762.9	1,389.2	-21.2%
Table Eggs	22.5	0.0	19.1	15.8	130.6	729.4%
All Milk	2,830.9	2,874.4	3,212.0	3,085.8	2,411.0	-21.9%
Total	10,667.4	9,609.3	9,996.1	11,207.2	10,474.9	-6.5%

SOURCE: Agricultural Planning Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security

P- Provisional Estimates

R- Revised Estimates

VEGETABLE IMPORTS

Selected Vegetable imports recorded a negligible growth of 0.32 percent for 2023 over 2022, with increases recorded for most commodities. Cucumber and Okras import grew substantially over the period, however, the actual volumes imported stood at 14,674 kilogrammes and 435 kilogrammes respectively, low in comparison to the other commodities. Significant growth in vegetable imports for 2023 were recorded for Tomato, Zucchini, Squash, and Peas which rose by 58.0 percent, 46.8 percent, 42.6 percent, and 24.4 percent respectively.

Some commodities recorded significant decreases in imports for the year under review, specifically Egg Plant (66.1 percent), Paw Paw (62.0 percent) and Plantain (30.8 percent) respectively.

TABLE 13: VEGETABLE IMPORTS ('000 KGS) 2019-2023

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change over 2022
Beans (String)	0.19	0.67	0.36	2.38	2.09	-12.2%
Beets	48.68	69.31	72.58	97.26	74.04	-23.9%
Cabbage	448.35	473.08	477.48	580.82	598.95	3.1%
Carrot	624.69	553.77	554.78	506.73	540.67	6.7%
Cauliflower	906.20	59.20	73.45	79.58	94.33	18.5%
Corn	46.74	46.00	43.14	41.19	47.19	14.6%
Cucumber	3.18	14.51	3.69	3.19	14.67	359.9%
Egg plant	0.43	0.40	0.94	7.58	2.57	-66.1%
Lettuce	640.30	465.91	424.15	508.94	519.05	2.0%
Peas	2.30	1.16	1.48	3.60	4.48	24.4%
Melons	494.13	465.81	277.53	397.33	455.94	14.8%
Okras	0.00	0.00	0.80	0.17	0.44	158.8%
Peppers (Hot)	2.86	6.04	0.00	19.32	14.27	-26.1%
Peppers (Sweet)	300.34	273.22	252.34	252.55	293.52	16.2%
Pumpkins	197.28	199.84	122.86	141.69	160.40	13.2%
Squash	1.74	16.49	17.82	24.46	34.89	42.6%
Tomato	107.21	271.74	213.73	286.74	453.13	58.0%
Spinach	34.21	11.16	16.65	27.99	31.40	12.2%
Paw Paw	41.69	41.81	31.26	18.65	7.09	-62.0%
Bananas	2,734.93	2,048.42	2,053.36	2,551.96	2,559.50	0.3%
Plantain	1,383.99	1,362.46	1,336.63	1,164.97	806.25	-30.8%
Figs	2.12	1.80	2.20	5.16	4.87	-5.6%
Zucchini	89.65	64.84	56.47	51.59	75.72	46.8%
Total	8,111.21	6,447.63	6,033.70	6,773.85	6,795.46	0.3%

SOURCE: Agricultural Planning Unit, Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Nutritional Security

ROOT CROP IMPORTS

During 2023, total root crops imports were estimated at 2,482.2 thousand kilogrammes, representing an uptick of 7.0 percent over 2,319.4 thousand kilogrammes recorded in 2022. Moderate increases were recorded in the imports of Onion and Peanuts at 13.2 percent and 8.2 percent respectively. There was also substantial growth in Sweet Potato (480.3 percent), with approximately 31.5 thousand kilogrammes recorded.

TABLE 14: ROOT CROP IMPORTS ('000 KGS) 2019-2023

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	% Change over 2022
Cassava	4.77	3.98	0.77	2.23	0.49	-78.03%
Eddoes	150.67	176.03	147.7	195.28	118.52	-39.31%
Sweet Potato	23.37	30.72	4.35	5.43	31.51	480.29%
Yam	56.11	128.16	74.09	111	78.81	-29.00%
Onion	1,696.31	1,780.36	1,540.23	1,664.64	1884.32	13.20%
Peanut	384.33	395.53	370.22	340.78	368.58	8.16%
Total	2,315.56	2,514.78	2,137.36	2,319.36	2,482.23	7.02%

SOURCE: Agricultural Planning Unit, Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

During the period of review, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security continued to pursue programmes and policies to create the enabling environment for the development of the agricultural sector. These programmes included: 1) the Farmer's Empowerment and Enfranchisement Programme (FEED Programmes), 2) the Lears Urban Land Lease and Food Security Project, and 3) the Agricultural Incentive scheme.

Farmer's Empowerment and Enfranchisement Drive (FEED Programme)

In 2023, the FEED Programme continued to provide support to either new or experienced farmers seeking to establish a farming enterprise in various designated districts across the island. One hundred and seven persons were trained during 2023 bringing the total to 969 persons. A total of 290 individuals have been placed since the programme's launch in 2019. Additionally, 2,000 applications from persons wishing to be part of the programme were received by December 31st 2023.

During the period of review, the FEED farmers across the various farming districts continued to receive support through the provision of inputs ranging from planting materials (seeds, seedlings and cuttings), drip lines, head pipe, irrigation fittings, water storage tanks and support bases to improve farming activities.

Throughout the year, farmers' meetings and training workshops were executed among the various farming districts on a variety of critical and pertinent topics such as weed management, irrigation installation, post harvesting techniques, among others.

Lears Urban Land Lease and Food Security Project

Under the Lears Urban Land Lease and Food Security Project, 31 farmers were allocated in the commercial section of the Lears farming district to pursue farming on a commercial scale. Farmers were provided with planting material to commence crop production.

As it relates to household food security, 42 gardeners were allocated allotment gardens (5,000 square feet plots) for crop production.

In 2023, the farmers and gardeners benefited from an adequate water source through the established 21-million-gallon catchment which provides irrigation water to the farming district by capturing surface runoff from the surrounding landscape.

Phase 2 of the project sought to establish a 22-acre livestock section with a focus on small ruminant production, predominantly the Barbados Blackbelly sheep breed. However, this area can no longer be established for this purpose since the location earmarked for this venture is now designated as a Zone 'A' restricted area by BWA. Fruit tree production and pasture establishment for livestock will now be the focus for this zone.

The Agricultural Incentive Scheme.

Under the year of review, the Agriculture Incentive Scheme processed 436 rebates, a total of \$416,000 was recorded as given in rebates. In Duty Free Concession, the total number of applications recorded were 1080, and a total of approximately \$27 million was given in duty free concession.

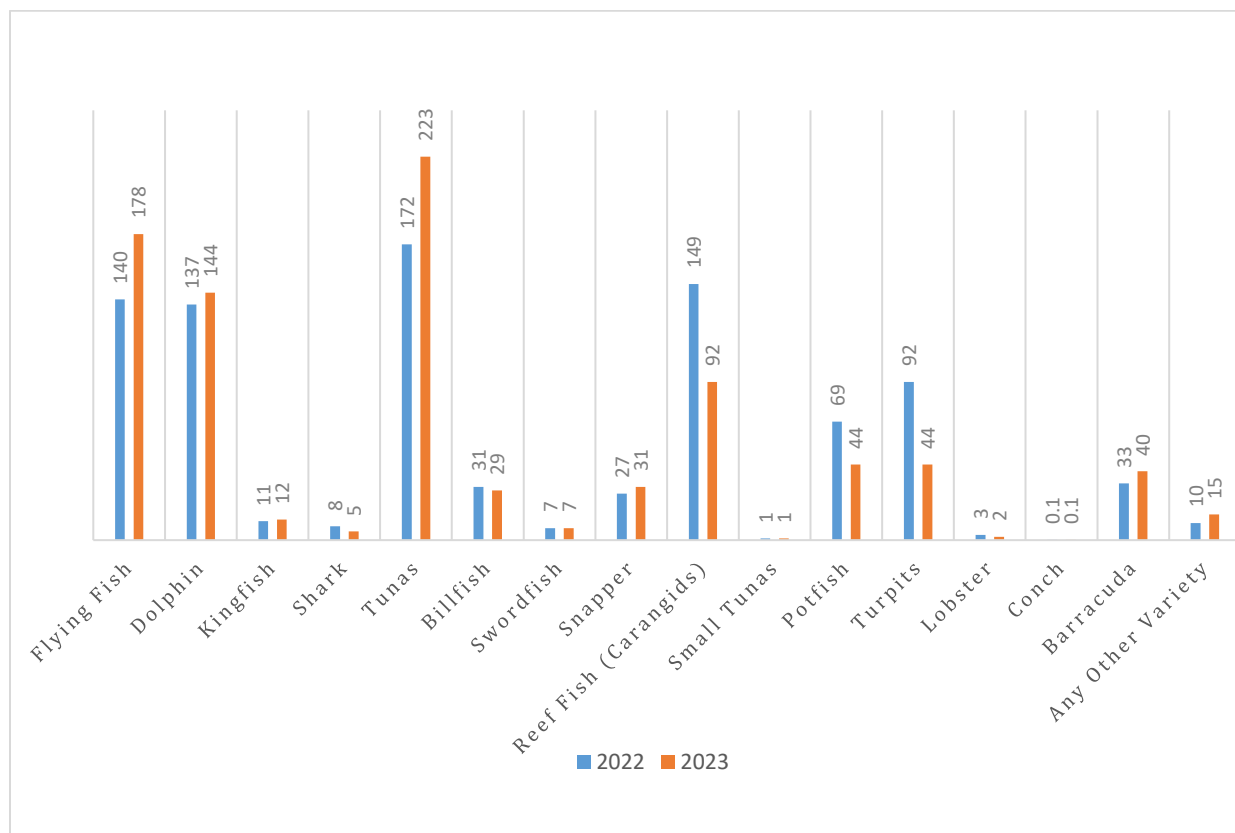
FISHERIES

OVERVIEW

The presence of Sargassum influxes continued to negatively impact the island's flying fish fishery in 2023. The presence of the algal mats prevents setting the nets as well as reducing the effectiveness of screeleers in aggregating the fish within the fishing range of the boat. The reduced concentration of flying fish also reduces the numbers of predatory species such as dolphinfish within the fishing range of fishing vessels, thereby reducing the catches of these species as well.

Conversely, the Sargassum mats have continued to draw the carangid species known locally as amberfish into the fishing range of the island's fleet and the resulting increased landings of these fish has somewhat mitigated the losses, both to fisherfolk and to the island's supply of fish, from the diminished catches of the traditional keystone flying fish and dolphinfish.

FIGURE 20: FISH LANDINGS BY TYPE (TONNES) BY 2022 AND 2023



SOURCE: Fisheries Division, Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy

In 2023 an estimated total of 890.1 tonnes of finfish was landed at Barbados, 2.6 percent less than the total fish catch for Barbados in 2022 (867.1 tonnes).

FLYING-FISH

The estimated total landings of flying fish in 2023 was 178 tonnes, a 27.1 percent increase over the catch reported in 2022 (140 tonnes). This value ranks as the third lowest catch ever recorded for the island since nylon gillnets were used and fish catches routinely collected. The lowest flying fish catch was reported in 2019 and stood at 124 tonnes.

DOLPHINFISH AND KINGFISH

The total catch of dolphinfish also recorded a moderate increase (5.1 percent) in 2023 (144 tonnes) over the catch reported for 2022 (137 tonnes). Even with this improvement, the 2023 landings for dolphin still ranks as the third lowest catch ever recorded for the island since fish catches routinely collected. The lowest dolphinfish catch was 121 tonne reported for 2021.

Similarly, the 2023 catch of kingfish (12 tonnes) recorded a favorable increase (9. 1 percent) over the landings observed in 2022 (11 tonnes). However, the 2023 king fish catch was less than half the average annual landings recorded over the period 1997 through 2023 (24.7 t) and now ranks as the 9th lowest catch of this species on record.

HIGHLY MIGRATORY LARGE PELAGICS

Annual landings of tunas in 2023 (172 tonnes) was higher than the landings of this species group reported for 2022 (171 tonnes) and well above the average landings of this group for the period 1997 through 2023 (177 tonnes). The deployment of anchored Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) has resulted in the landings of tunas and other large pelagics by smaller vessels at landing sites that typically focused primarily on reef fish and coastal pelagics. Landings of billfish (29 tonnes) and swordfish (7 tonnes) were slightly less than the landings for these respective groups in 2022 (31 tonnes, and 7 tonnes, respectively).

The total landings of sharks likewise decreased in 2023 (5 tonnes) compared to the landings reported for this species group in 2022 (8 tonnes). The landings of shark reported in 2023 ranked as the lowest value for the period 1987-2023 but notably equals the successive annual landings for the group reported from 2019 to 2021.

REEF FISH

Landings of snappers in 2023 (31 tonnes) increased slightly from the 27 tonnes landed in 2022 and was higher than the mean landings for this group for the period 1997 through 2023 (21 tonnes). In 2023, total landings of Carangids (the aggregate grouping of species of jacks and johns including the popular almaco jack, commonly referred to as amber fish (94 tonnes), was noticeably lower than the record catch of this aggregate group of species (149 tonnes) reported in 2022. Nevertheless, driven by the abundance of the almaco jack in the area, the landings of the Carangid group still surpassed the historic typical landings for the group and the landings in 2023 now rank as the 24th highest over the last 27 years (1997

through 2023) of recorded landings. The previous maximum catch reported over the period 1997-2023 (inclusive) was 129 t in 2021. In 2023, the almaco jack contributed around 88 percent of the total carangid landings.

BARRACUDA

Landings of barracuda have traditionally been reported included in the aggregate Any Other Variety (AOV) group. Always a popular species, especially in the restaurant industry, barracuda has become even more particularly commercially important in recent years. As such, from this year the species will be reported separately. In this context, landings of barracuda (40 tonnes) reported a significant increase (21.2 percent) compared to landings of the species reported in 2022 (33 tonnes).

SEA EGG FISHERY

After consultations with fisher divers, it was agreed that local sea-egg stock abundance was still much too low to open the fishery and as such it remained closed through 2023.

LIONFISH

A small fishery for lionfish still exists in Barbados but accurate disaggregated records of landings of this species are not routinely collected at the markets and the other landing sites. Landings are presently included in the aggregate AOV category. However, in 2023, just over one (1) tonne of lionfish was reportedly landed in Barbados which is around the mean annual total landings for this invasive species between the period 2019 to 2023.

SPORT FISHING

Development of the sport fishing industry advanced significantly in 2023, with two (2) major Billfish tournaments and four (4) Goggle eye and Kingfish tournaments successfully hosted by the Barbados Game Fishing Association. Data collection of landings from charter trips at ports where sport fishing vessels are berthed is intended to begin in 2024. Potential areas of research include the economic valuation of the sub-sector and the contribution of sport fishing to the Tourism sector.

FISHING FLEET

The numbers of fishing vessels by type passing inspection and registered are presented in the table below.

TABLE 15: FISHING FLEET BY TYPE 2023

Year	2023(P)
Moses	720
Day-boats	182
Ice boats	180
Long-liners	49
Total	1,131

SOURCE: Fisheries Division, Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy

POLICY AND PROGRAMMES

Improvements to Data Collection Programme

From November 1st 2023, the data collection program was greatly expanded in a number of ways *inter alia*. This included an increase in the data collection staff complement, with the addition of five (5) data collectors assigned to a number of tertiary landing sites that were previously unmonitored as well as visiting other significant landing sites to augment collection of not only fish catches (species composition and respective quantities) but also detailed fishing trip information (fishing locations, fishing on anchored FADs, and fisheries economic information such as trip costs and fishing revenues. Scaled pictures of fish landed will be used for accurate identification of species and quantities of the fish. This method will be particularly useful for the identification of shark and billfish species landed, as the data collectors still need to be trained in this area.

This information is reported directly by the data collectors at the landing sites in a digital format on tablets using the KoboToolbox platform adapted from FAD fishery log book used by Dominica. Data analysis is currently performed primarily in Excel, but the development of a fisheries information system to facilitate automated monthly and annual reports is being finalized and will be launched in the 4th quarter of 2024. It is anticipated that the data coverage of landing sites will be significantly approved, resulting in more accurate data to promote evidence-based decision making.

IV. INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES

A key driver for the advancement of a socio-economic system, regardless of its size, is its ability to engage in competitive trade and commercial activity on a global scale. By accessing and penetrating larger

markets through trade and being exposed to stronger competition, technical knowledge, and technologies available in developed countries, smaller economies such as Barbados can boost productivity, innovation, and diversity – ultimately leading to growth.

During the period, the MEB continued to pursue initiatives to create the policy framework and environment which allows the global business sector to contribute to the economic and social development of Barbados through the attraction of reputable business of substance and investment.

New Company Formation and Entities Licensed

There were four (4) new Corporate and Trust Service Providers (CTSP) licensed in 2023, representing a slight decrease from five (5) licensed for 2022. Renewals for CTSP remained constant with 109 licensed for both 2023 and 2022. This steady growth resulted from changes that were made to the Companies Act Cap.308 requiring Companies incorporated under the Companies Act Cap. 308 with an annual revenue in excess of BBDD \$1 million, Limited Partnerships as described in Section 4A (1) of the Financial Services Commission (FSC) or under the Financial Institution Act (FIA) legislation to engage the services of a CTSP.

In 2023, 284 new Foreign Currency Permits (FCPs) were issued in comparison with 259 FCPs in 2022. In addition, 2,241 FCPs were renewed compared to 2,043 FCPs in 2022. Also, three (3) new Trusts were registered under the Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2018-49 in 2023, representing a significant decrease from seventeen (17) in 2022. One (1) Private Trust Company (PTC) was renewed in 2023, remaining constant with the previous year, while no new PTCs were recorded.

Legal And Regulatory Reform

The key pieces of legislation that continued to be developed, implemented/augmented over the review period included the Amendment of Economic Substance Guidelines to incorporate the guidelines issued by the Forum on Harmful Tax Practices (FHTP)

Bilateral Investment Agreements/Treaties and Research

The negotiation of Double Taxation Agreements (DTAs) continues to play an integral role in the Government's strategic plan for enhancing Barbados' position as a global business centre. These are agreements that mitigate the effect of double taxation and contribute to Barbados' attractiveness as a jurisdiction where businesses of substance are encouraged to grow. Additionally, Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) are also recognized as important instruments of economic policy for Barbados given their use, not only to protect and promote investment, but also to send a positive signal, and constitute a competitive and judicial surety to both real and potential investors.

Additionally, negotiations with the United Arab Emirates in Dubai concluded with an initial Agreement which was signed during the 2023 COP 28 Meetings and is to be ratified by Cabinet. Over the review period, the Barbados Model Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) was drafted by the Barbados Treaty Negotiation Team to ensure both investor attraction and arbitration safeguards were successfully reviewed and amended.

V. ENERGY AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION

Crude oil and natural gas production diminished in a sustained way during the Financial Year (FY) 2022/23⁴ and FY2023/24⁵. There was a sizable decline of 15.8 percent recorded in natural gas production, which stood at approximately 262,199 mcf in FY2023/24 compared to 311,243 mcf produced in FY 2022-2023. Oil production saw a negligible increase of 0.3 percent in the same period.

The decline was a direct result of natural and mechanical declines in the Woodbourne field with no new wells having been added. In the FY2023-2024, there was a combination of factors which impacted the sector, inclusive of: the recompletion of one well; production of shut-in temporarily abandoned wells which had recharged; and additional work performed under the enhanced recovery and cementation work. The oil production from the well was significant but the volume of associated gas was small, which was also the case in the temporarily abandoned wells. This explained the decline in the gas stream observed.

TABLE 16 OIL AND NATURAL GAS PRODUCTION FOR FY2022/23 TO FY2023/24

Product	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	% Change over FY
Oil (bbl)	139,982	140,361	0.3%
Gas (mcf)	311,243	262,199	-15.8%

Source: Barbados National Oil Co. Limited

OIL AND GAS SALES AND CONSUMPTION

During FY 2023/24 crude oil sales increased marginally by 0.3 percent to 140,121 bbls from 139,725 bbls in FY2023/24. There was also an uptick in gas sales (3.8 percent) observed in response to the increased appetite for travel and tourism, following the ending of the pandemic. In FY 2023/24 gas sales stood at 603,329 mcf almost returning to pre-pandemic levels.

TABLE 17: OIL AND NATURAL GAS SALES FOR FY2022/23 TO FY2023/24

Product	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	% Change over FY2022/23
Oil (bbl)	139,725	140,121	0.3%
Sales Gas (mcf)	581,403	603,329	3.8%
Field Gas (mcf)	215,736	157,108	-27.2%
LNG (mcf)	365,667	446,221	22.0%

SOURCE: Barbados National Oil Co. Limited

A comparison of the relative contributions of gasified LNG and field gas to Sales during the two financial years shows significant changes. Sales of LNG increased by 22.0 percent over the period from 365,667 to 446,221 mcf. In contrast field gas sales decreased by 27.2 percent across the two financial years. During the period of review, there was a recorded global increase in the cost of Liquefied Natural Gas which was heavily influenced by the war in Russia and Ukraine and the weighted average cost of gas continued to be impacted greatly.

⁴ FY 2022-2023: April 1 2022 – March 31 2023

⁵ FY 2023-2024: April 1 2023 – March 31 2024

ELECTRICITY

The annual sales of electricity in 2023 totaled 974 million kWh. This represented a slight increase (4 percent) over the 937 million kWh of annual sales recorded for 2022. Of the total sales of electricity for 2023 it was estimated that 13 percent of electricity were sales from renewable energy sources.

The largest category of energy consumers was the Commercial, Services and Public Sector which accounted for 38 percent of electricity or 373million KWh. This sector was followed by the domestic sector accounting for 37 percent of total sales or 364 million kWh. Industrial users accounted for approximately 23 percent of electricity consumption with 223 million KWh. These were followed by Agriculture, Fishing and Mining, then Streetlights and lastly construction each consuming less than 1 percent.

The Barbados Light & Power Company (BLPC) achieved record reliability in 2023 with a 10 percent improvement in intensity (a measure that considers the product of the average interruption duration and frequency rates) compared to 2022 — which was their previous best-performing year.

The BLPC, with \$517 million USD of assets and approximately 134,000 customers, owns 243 MW of generating capacity, of which 96 percent is oil-fired and 4 percent is solar. The company owns approximately 188 kilometers of transmission facilities and 3,839 kilometers of distribution facilities. Their approved regulated return on rate base for 2023 was 10 percent.

Electricity Rate Review 2023 Update:

In 2021, the BLPC submitted a general rate review application to their regulator the Fair Trading Commission (FTC). In September 2022, the FTC granted BLPC interim rate relief, allowing an increase in base rates of approximately \$1 million USD per month. On February 15, 2023, the FTC issued a decision on the application which included the following significant items: an allowed regulatory ROE of 11.75 percent; an equity capital structure of 55 percent; a directive to update the major components of rate base to September 16, 2022; and a directive to establish regulatory liabilities related to the self-insurance fund of \$50 million USD, prior year benefits recognized on remeasurement of deferred income taxes of \$5 million USD, and accumulated depreciation of \$16 million USD.

On March 7, 2023, the BLPC filed a Motion for Review and Variation and applied for a stay of the FTC's decision, which was subsequently granted. On November 20, 2023, the FTC issued their decision dismissing the Motion. Interim rates continue to be in effect through to a date to be determined in a final decision and order.

On December 1, 2023, BLPC appealed certain aspects of the FTC's February 15, 2023 and November 20, 2023, decisions to the Supreme Court of Barbados in the High Court of Justice and requested that they be stayed. On December 11, 2023, the Court granted the stay. The BLPC's position is that the FTC made errors of law and jurisdiction in their decisions and believes the success of the appeal is probable, and as a result, the adjustments to BLPC's final rates and rate base, including any adjustments to regulatory assets and liabilities, were not recorded in the reporting period.

FUEL IMPORTS

For 2023, the fuel import bill was estimated at \$811,929,242 which represented an increase of \$40,434,242 when compared with the figure of \$771,495,000 for 2022. The estimated increase in the import bill can be attributed to a significant degree to increases in petroleum prices and volume consumed for electricity generation.

With respect to the major fuels, gasoline imported during 2023 stood at 687,453 barrels, rendering a decrease in imported volume of 5.2 percent when compared with gasoline imports for the year 2022 which were 725,106 barrels. Likewise, the imports of diesel for 2023 were estimated to be 460,139 barrels, indicating a decrease of 2.4 percent as compared with diesel imports of 471,252 registered during the previous year 2022.

LOCAL RETAIL PRICES

The policy of monthly price adjustment for the major fuels; gasoline, diesel, kerosene and LPG continued for the majority of 2023. The monthly process of price adjustments is intended to ensure that the retail prices of the products are reflective of their imported prices. In the case of gasoline, the average retail price for 2023 was \$4.16 per litre or \$0.08 lower than the average retail price for 2022, which was \$4.24 per litre.

With respect to diesel prices, the average retail price for 2023 was \$3.54 per litre which was \$0.23 higher than the average retail price for the same period in 2022 of \$3.77 per litre. The average retail price for kerosene during 2023 was \$1.95 per litre or \$0.21 lower than the average retail price for 2022 of \$2.16 per litre. The adjustments seen in the retail prices were mostly from variances in the CIF prices.

The retail prices for LPG were adjusted in a similar fashion. During 2023, the average retail price of the 100lb cylinder was recorded at \$155.452 which was \$12.24, below the average retail price for the year 2022 of \$167.69. Regarding the 25lb cylinder, the average retail price was \$43.96 for 2023, a decrease of \$3.66 when compared with 2022 of \$47.02. The average retail price for the 22lb cylinder for 2023 was \$38.58, representing a decrease of \$2.96 when compared to that of 2022 which was \$41.54. The average retail price for the 20lb cylinder during 2023 was \$35.39 showing a decline of \$2.38 when compared to the average price for 2022 which was recorded at \$37.77.

During 2023, the elements in the price structure of refined petroleum products experienced changes throughout the year but retail prices and the rate of VAT charges were frozen for the months of September through December.

KEY POLICIES AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Integrated Resource and Resilience Plan (IRRP)

During 2023, the Ministry of Energy and Business (MEB) with funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the assistance of its consultant Mott MacDonald updated the Integrated Resource and Resilience Plan (IRRP) which was initially undertaken in 2021. The IRRP is an integrated assessment of demand and supply-side options, to assist the MEB in optimizing energy resources and services while limiting the cost to consumers.

As the Barbados National Energy Policy (BNEP) 2019-2030 references the government's aim to achieve an efficient, diversified and modern sustainable energy sector for Barbados, the update focused on revising the existing IRRP model with more recent data to ascertain capital and operational costs as well as the capacities, i.e. MW and MWh of technologies and the annuities to satisfy the BNEP.

The approach undertaken was to update the IRRP and reflect the multicriteria approach which was established in the BNEP. Moreover, the update comprised analyses of recently completed studies and consideration was given to similar transformational efforts being undertaken by all stakeholders.

The planning horizon for the updated IRRP was 2024 to 2033 addressing the short and medium term to consider the immediate needs of the electricity system such as grid stability as well as the existing pipeline of prospective projects.

Control of Inefficient Lighting Act 2021

The Project Monitoring and Coordination Team (PMCT) continued to oversee the execution of the Barbados National Energy Policy (BNEP) 2019-2030, with specific responsibility for project management; monitoring and evaluation; procurement; administrative support; technical support; financial management; public education and communication.

During 2023 the PMCT continued to sensitize the public to the enactment of the Control of Inefficient Lighting Act and to the commencement of a phased prohibition on inefficient lighting from January 01, 2022, in Barbados. The phase out plan is geared to reducing the cost of energy in Barbados while increasing energy security and mitigating the negative effects of energy consumption on the local and global environments. Energy efficient lighting will play a significant role in achieving Barbados' energy

efficiency potential as energy efficient lighting technologies are among the most viable energy efficiency interventions available with the shortest payback periods.

The phase-out plan commenced on January 01, 2022, and during 2023 the third and fourth phases commenced. The third phase commenced on January 01, 2023, with a prohibition on the manufacture, sale and distribution of any electrical lamp that emits less than 25 lumens per watt and a prohibition on the importation of any electrical lamp that emits less than 40 lumens per watt. The fourth phase commenced on July 01, 2023, with a prohibition on the manufacture, sale and distribution of any electrical lamp that emits less than 40 lumens per watt and a prohibition on the importation of any electrical lamp that emits less than 55 lumens per watt.

Barbados Offshore Petroleum Programme

In December 2022, the Cabinet of Barbados approved amendments to the offshore legislation to help boost the island's competitiveness and accelerate licensing activities in the offshore oil and gas sector. One of the critical legislative amendments included the establishment of a new fast-track licensing process where Barbados could enter into partnerships with other sovereign states (state-to-state partnerships) to undertake accelerated offshore exploration and production activities.

The fast-track licensing process was deemed necessary in the context of the rapid changes being experienced across the energy landscape due to the Global Energy Transition and worldwide climate change commitments.

During the August 2023 CARICOM-UAE Conference which was held in Barbados, representatives from the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) signaled their interest in exploring available opportunities in the Barbados Offshore Petroleum Programme. In October 2023, a delegation of officers from the Ministry, led by Minister Cummins, attended and spoke at the 2023 Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC) hosted by ADNOC, which is arguably the largest petroleum conference in the world. During this event, the Barbados delegation was able to participate in a number of bilateral meetings with UAE officials. Consequently, a Draft Energy Cooperation Agreement between the Government of Barbados and the Government of the United Arab Emirates was prepared at the end of 2023.

In December 2023, in conjunction with international oil & gas services company Halliburton, the NRD hosted a 5-day workshop entitled "Offshore Well Technology & Completions", which exposed stakeholder entities to the technical, logistical, environmental, and health & safety aspects of offshore drilling and well completions.

VI. TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Transport underpins and shapes broader social, economic and environmental outcomes across the nation. Delivering and maintaining a transport system that enables Barbadians to enjoy a stable network that provides adequate connectivity and accessibility is central to the reconstruction effort of the Ministry of Transport and Works (MTW).

During the review period, road deterioration, potholes, road safety issues, transport and transportation challenges, water scarcity, financing and climate crisis issues continued to impact the national transport system. In response, the MTW and its key infrastructure stakeholder agencies have sought to support affected communities and to restore the network to adequate levels of service and public safety. For 2023, an estimated BDS\$ 46,261,257.00 was invested in road and drainage solutions across the island in line with building climate resilient infrastructure across the network. Additionally, as the Government of Barbados advanced the implementing of its Net-Zero 2030 climate policy agenda, efforts to green the

transport sector are progressing, and renewable transport options are gradually increasing their share in the energy matrix.

As part of the country's Public Capital Works programme, the Ministry of Transport and Works also pursued the implementation of the following projects in 2023:

- *Electronic Vehicle Registration(EVR) Project (valued at BDS\$9.2 million)-* The EVR uses radio frequency identification (RFID) technology to electronically identify vehicles and validate the identity, status, and authenticity of vehicle data. This unique electronic identification code is established for each vehicle via a tamper-resistant windshield sticker tag, and each unique code is linked to a record in the centralized owner/vehicle-based database. The EVR programme has completed all 4 phases and has gone live. Three (3) registration centers have been completed and are fully functional. The fourth is due to be erected in the Barbados Port Authority during 2024. The legal framework will soon be completed to provide an automated means to screen vehicle registration compliance 24/7. By the end of December 2023, the total number of vehicles tagged by the EVR system stood at 17,318 vehicles compared to 2,2391 vehicles recorded in 2022.
- *National Signage and Street Infrastructure Project (valued at BDS\$3.5 million) –* To date a street audit has been completed under this project and work is presently being undertaken to procure the services of the sign makers to fabricate the signs for erection across Barbados.

BARBADOS TRANSPORT BOARD

During the review period, the Barbados Transport Board (BTB)'s upgraded bus fleet boasted the largest collection of electric buses in the Caribbean with the addition of ten (10) vehicles to stand at a total of 59 electric air-conditioned vehicles equipped with Wi-Fi, crisscrossing the island. Despite these positive developments, the bus fleet complement continued to decline in the period, falling from 144 vehicles in 2022 to 126 vehicles and currently includes a number of older vehicles that are heading for retirement.

TABLE 18: BARBADOS TRANSPORT BOARD BUS FLEET 2019-2023

YEAR	MAKE	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1997	CAIO	28	6	2	-	-
1997	HINO	19	8	8	8	7
1997	MARCOPOLO	30	10	3	3	-
2000	HINO	14	6	6	6	3
2000	MARCOPOLO	43	18	19	19	12
2000	BUSCCAR	44	9	7	7	-
2004	MARCOPOLO	25	18	15	15	13
2004	MARCOPOLO SENIOR	5	1	1	1	1
2006	MARCOPOLO	60	53	35	35	31
2006	MERCEDES SPRINTER	3	1	1	1	-
2020	ELECTRIC BYD	-	33	49	49	59
TOTAL FLEET		271	163	146	144	126

Source: Barbados Transport Board

In 2023 total passenger ridership recorded by the Barbados Transport Board increased by 5.6 percent over the previous year to stand at 9,034,568 persons, the highest level of passenger ridership observed over the past five years. The categories of General Passenger Rides-Manual Tickets (4,579,826 persons), Pensioner Ridership (2,267,881 persons) and Student Ridership (2,121,760 persons), accounted for 99.5 percent of the passenger ridership recorded in 2023.

Additionally, there were notable year-on-year increases occurred in the passenger ridership for the categories of General Passenger Travel Cards (852.4 percent), Disabled Passengers (41.4 percent) and Student ridership (36.7 percent).

TABLE 19: BARBADOS TRANSPORT BOARD RIDERSHIP CALENDAR YEARS 2019- 2023

YEAR	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
General Passenger Rides (Manual Tickets)	3,864,091	3,566,898	3,690,954	4,756,170	4,579,826
General Passenger Travel Card rides	41,989	13,375	393	2,702	25,733
Student Ridership	1,583,066	1,101,024	366,490	1,551,928	2,121,760
Pensioner Ridership	1,373,059	1,584,883	1,965,995	2,205,801	2,267,881
Employee	2,709	5,246	7,145	8,698	6,631
Police	21,277	20,393	24,327	22,195	20,648
Disabled passengers	22,727	5,489	4,743	8,547	12,089
Total Passenger Ridership	6,908,918	6,297,308	6,060,047	8,556,041	9,034,568

Source: Barbados Transport Board

BARBADOS TRANSPORT AUTHORITY (BTB)

In 2023, the Barbados Transport Authority (BTA) continued to execute their functions of planning of a transport system, regulating the number of buses and route taxis, and supervising the business of the terminals. The Authority has full facility management at the Constitution River Terminal (CRT), the Cheapside Terminal (CT) and the western side of the Speightstown Terminal (ST).

During the period of review, there were 384 public service vehicles recorded which serviced 121 different routes throughout the various terminals. The majority of the public service vehicles (155 vehicles) operated out of the Constitutional River Bus Terminal, which catered to 46 bus routes. Followed by the Speightstown Bus Terminal, where 123 vehicles operated and catered to 27 buses routes, the fewest among the three terminals.

TABLE 20: OPERATIONS AT THE BUS TERMINALS IN 2023

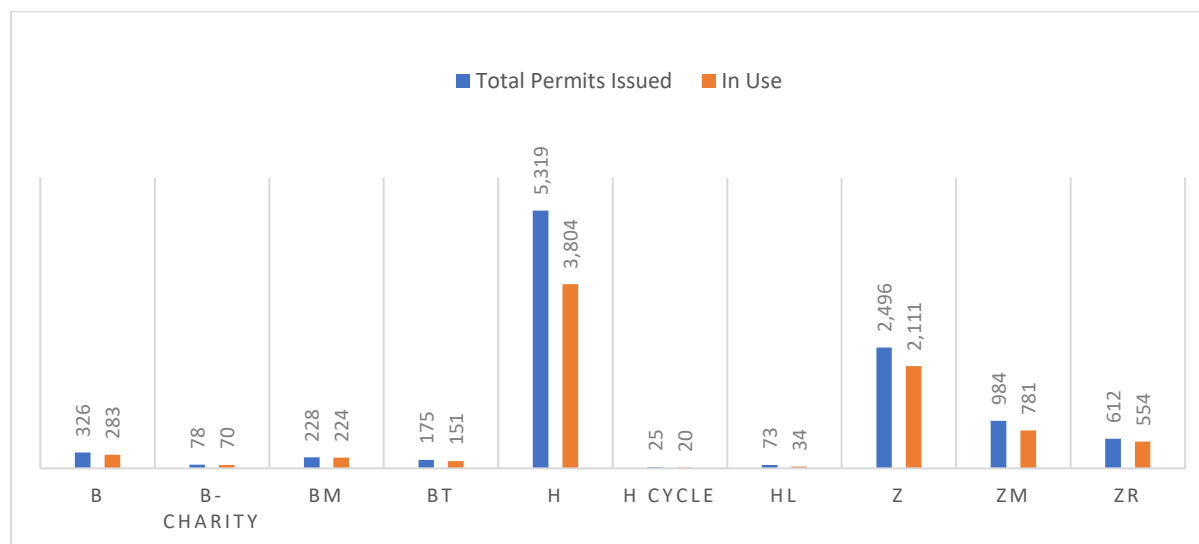
Operations	Constitution River	Cheapside	Speightstown	TOTAL
Routes	46	48	27	121
Public Service Vehicles	155	106	123	384

Source: Barbados Revenue Authority

VEHICLES FOR HIRE BY CATEGORY

In 2023, there were 10,316 registered Vehicles for Hire, representing an increase of 6.7 percent over the 9,669 registered Vehicles for Hire recorded in the 2022. Of the 10,316 permits issued to registered vehicles, only 8,032 of the permits were in use in 2023. The “H” Vehicles accounted for approximately 51.6 percent of the permits issued. Followed by the “Z” Vehicles and “ZM” Vehicles which accounted for 24.2 percent (or 2,496 permits) and 9.5 percent (or 984 permits) respectively of the total permits issued to Vehicle for Hire.

FIGURE 21: TOTAL PERMITS ISSUED & IN USE BY CATEGORY OF HIRED VEHICLE IN 2023



Source: Barbados Transport Authority

DRIVING TESTS

In 2023, there were 7,065 driving tests conducted, representing a slight fall off (6.5 percent) from the previous period, where 7,555 driving tests were recorded. The pass rate stood at 70.7 percent in 2023, accounting for 4,996 persons. In comparison in 2022, 5,385 persons received a passing grade, resulting in a pass rate of 71.3 percent.

VEHICLE ACCIDENT CLAIMS

FIGURE 22: VEHICLE ACCIDENT CLAIMS FROM THE PERIOD 2021-2023

Parish	2021		2022		2023	
	Payments	Claims	Payments	Claims	Payments	Claims
St. George	\$3,577.30	9	\$145.00	1	\$3,082.57	9
Christ Church	\$7,717.23	11	\$3,584.79	10	\$8,115.94	23
St. James	\$320.00	2	\$324.13	2	\$4,385.15	16
St. Michael	\$4,343.83	11	\$4,666.34	14	\$11,164.27	15
St. Philip	\$1,660.55	3	\$1,224.34	3	\$895.00	2
St. Joseph	\$1,712.49	1	\$0.00	0	\$363.51	1
St. Thomas	\$2,171.58	5	\$494.38	1	\$733.85	2
St. Peter	\$181.90	1	\$506.76	2	\$384.65	1
St. Lucy	\$286.00	1	\$0.00	0	\$232.06	1
St. John	\$1,893.46	6	\$633.99	1	\$0.00	0

St. Andrew	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	0	\$441.41	1
TOTAL	\$23,864.34	50	\$11,579.73	34	\$29,798.41	71

Source: MTW Legal Unit

In 2023 the MTW continued to provide compensation to owners whose vehicles were damaged due to negligence caused by the Ministry's roads. During the period of review, the number of the vehicle claims stood at the 71, more than doubling the 34 vehicle claims recorded in the 2022. As a result, the compensation paid to affected motorist skyrocketed by 157.3 percent from BDS\$11,579.73 in 2022 to BDS\$29,798.41 in 2023. The parishes of Christ Church (23 claims), St. James (16 claims) and St. Michael (15 claims) accounted for the majority of the claims. Consequently, the highest level of compensation was paid to affected motorist from incidents which occurred in those parishes totaling \$23,665.36 or 79.4 percent of the total compensation distributed during the review period.

ROAD ACCIDENTS

According to the statistics provided by the Barbados Police Force, there were 6,989 road accidents registered in 2023. This represented a negligible decline of 0.71 percent over the 7,001 road accidents recorded from a comparable period in 2022. Four thousand, nine hundred and sixty-one (4,961) road accidents, or 70.98 percent of the total accidents reported in 2023, recorded no serious injury, similar to the number of incidents reported in 2022 (4,922 road accidents). However, a total of 106 road accidents reported in 2023 resulted in serious or fatal injuries, representing an increase of 49.3 percent or 35 such additional incidents over the previous year. This also represents the highest number of reported accidents which resulted in either fatal or serious injury across the last three years.

TABLE 21: # ROAD ACCIDENTS DATA BY TYPE OF INJURY FOR THE PERIOD 2021-2023

2021						2022					2023				
Month	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Without	Total	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Without	Total	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Without	Total
Jan	0	6	135	344	485	2	4	155	346	507	2	12	163	412	589
Feb	1	2	52	171	226	2	5	155	384	546	2	4	187	414	607
Mar	2	6	116	378	502	0	5	200	407	612	1	8	179	482	670
April	0	4	107	305	416	0	4	178	390	572	0	4	154	399	557
May	1	2	145	344	492	2	6	161	414	583	1	8	156	390	555
June	1	4	147	326	478	0	4	169	408	581	4	10	140	389	543
July	2	2	147	371	522	0	5	181	390	576	1	5	152	369	527
Aug	4	9	152	352	517	0	5	148	367	520	1	9	145	435	590
Sep	0	7	119	370	496	0	4	147	436	587	1	3	154	432	590
Oct	0	8	145	367	520	1	8	161	449	619	2	5	151	335	493
Nov	2	7	152	422	583	1	8	154	440	603	2	13	165	408	588
Dec	1	10	183	418	612	1	4	199	491	695	1	9	194	475	679
Total	14	67	1,600	4,168	5,849	9	62	2,008	4,922	7,001	18	88	1,922	4,961	6,989

Source: Barbados Police Service

VII. CONSTRUCTION

In 2023 the construction industry recorded a moderate decline in real value output in comparison to the previous period, falling from BDS\$ 491.1 million in 2022 to BDS\$463.3 million. Notwithstanding the ongoing progress in the implementation of the Government's Capital Road Work programme, the performance of the sector was subdued due to a fall in the refurbishment/construction of commercial enterprises, rising construction costs and stagnant activity in the construction of private dwellings.

An estimated 1,975 private dwellings were completed in 2023, unchanged from the previous year. The majority of the construction of private dwellings once again occurred in the parishes of Christ Church (569), St. Michael (423), St. Philip (259) and St. James (283); accounting for over 70 per cent of the completed private dwellings.

The refurbishment or construction of commercial enterprises declined by 4.6 per cent, where the number of properties completed fell from 2,068 properties to 1,974 properties observed in 2023.

TABLE 22: NO. OF PRIVATE DWELLING UNITS COMPLETIONS AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY COMPLETIONS /REFURBISHMENTS BY PARISH IN 2022 AND 2023

Year	2022		2023	
	No. of Private Dwelling Completions ¹	No. of Commercial Property Completions or Refurbishments ²	No. of Private Dwelling Completions ¹	No. of Commercial Property Completions or Refurbishments ²
Parish				
Christ Church	518	589	569	443
St. Andrew	31	14	34	10
St. George	171	148	173	179
St. James	206	176	183	283
St. John	85	32	64	32
St. Joseph	35	31	32	20
St. Lucy	67	17	71	39
St. Michael	414	798	423	697
St. Peter	75	79	66	85
St. Philip	274	121	259	122
St. Thomas	99	63	101	64
Total	1,975	2,068	1,975	1,974

SOURCE: Government Electrical Engineering Department, Ministry of Transport and Works

NB: 1- Estimates are based on no. of residential inspections conducted by Government Electrical Engineering Department

2- Estimates are based on no. of Commercial inspections conducted by Government Electrical Engineering Department

Public Housing Programme

Tenancies Programme

The Tenancies Programme was created in 1980. The programme which is implemented through the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance (MHLM) was instituted to give legal title to lots rented by long standing tenants; to provide essential services in tenancies lacking water, electricity and proper access to lots; and to contribute to the general improvement of houses and their surroundings.

For the reporting period January 1st, 2023 to December 31st, 2023 a total of 78 lots were surveyed for qualified tenants with financial assistance from the Government in the amount of \$ 426,230.51. Additionally, an estimated twelve to fifteen individuals have initiated the process to purchase their lots.

The Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance processed approximately \$297,977.00 in subsidies for 10 qualified tenants who paid their share of the purchase price for the lot. The rise in lot valuations in recent years has significantly increased the costs being paid by Government to assist qualified tenants in purchasing their lot.

Housing Relocation

Airport Relocation Project

The Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport and the National Housing Corporation (NHC) have continued efforts to coordinate the relocation of residents impacted by the Grantley Adams International Airport (GAIA) Expansion Project. This project includes the relocation of 75 households to land developed at Fairy Valley, Lead Vale and Pilgrim Place B, all in Christ Church.

Previously, 64 houses were constructed and are occupied and six (6) property owners opted to receive compensation. To date, three (3) households are still to be relocated due to legal issues which are still in the process of being resolved.

White Hill to Farmers Phase II, St. Thomas

The “White Hill to Farmers Phase II, St. Thomas” project involves the relocation of residents in White Hill, St. Andrew whose property have been severely impacted suffered from soil erosion. Under this programme five (5) houses are to be constructed at Farmers, St. Thomas, four (4) of which are to be constructed at Lots 92, 94, 117 & 122 Farmers, St. Thomas. As at December 31, 2023 contracts were awarded by the NHC to two (2) private contractors for these houses. Work has commenced on two (2) houses. The contract for one (1) of the builders was recently terminated for non-performance. New contracts are to be awarded.

The other house is to be constructed through the Building Unit of the MHLM at Lot 126 Farmers, St. Thomas. The Ministry was awaiting consent from the client to start work on the lot. Consent has since been received and an assessment of the work previously undertaken by the client on the lot was done to determine the appropriate course of action regarding construction of the house.

Rock Hall, St. Thomas

The “Rock Hall, St. Thomas” project is being undertaken as a joint effort by the Division of Culture, the Ministry of Transport and Works and Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance to support the erection of a monument to commemorate the first Free Village in Barbados.

A social survey was conducted by the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance to gather information from the residents to be affected by the erection of the monument. The area investigated consisted of five (5) structures, four (4) occupied units and one dilapidated slave hut.

For the period in review, the MHLM was requested by the Division of Culture to acquire two (2) parcels of land from the Diocesan Trustees; the first parcel of land is for road improvement. The second parcel of land at Lot A Rock Hall, St. Thomas will be utilized to relocate two households.

Rock Hall, St. Philip (Illegal Settlement)

In 2023, work also continued on the “Rock Hal, St. Philip” project, which involves the relocation of occupants from the unsafe, illegal settlement at Rock Hall, St. Philip to Parish Land, Christ Church (40 lots), Lower Burney, St. Michael (30 lots) and Parish Land Extension, St. Philip (22 lots).

During the review period, 24 houses were completed for the relocation of residents from Rock Hall, St. Philip, with 20 houses at Parish Land Extension, St. Philip and four (4) at Lead Vale, Christ Church. Three (3) individuals were relocated to Lead Vale, Christ Church. The remaining property at Lead Vale, Christ Church is still awaiting water connection before it can be occupied. The Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance is awaiting the completion of the roadworks at Parish Land Extension, St. Philip so that persons identified can be relocated.

East West

The East West Emergency Housing Project consists of the construction of 150 housing units using a light gauge steel frame. To support this initiative 150 prefabricated steel frame housing units were purchased from China. The project aims to facilitate the replacement of houses impacted by Hurricane Elsa Relief Project and will consist of 74, two- and three-bedroom single units, 9 quadruplexes (36 units) and 20 duplexes (40 units). The 74 single units were intended to replace individual houses that were destroyed, and the 76 quad and duplex units were to be used for families whose homes, for various reasons, could not be rebuilt.

However, as the project progressed, several challenges became apparent; primarily, increased labour costs and a steep learning curve for local contractors being trained to install the units as well as the increasing costs of building materials. Consequently, only 23 units have been utilized for the Hurricane Elsa Relief Project. Whilst these families have received the houses for free, it is anticipated that the use of photo voltaic panels on the roofs will allow government to recover some of the cost to construct these units.

The 12 quad units constructed at Haggatt Hall will be offered for rent to families who are in government paid for accommodation and who, for various reasons were not allowed to rebuild on their rented house spots. Sixteen quad units at Whitepark Road will be used to support the urban upgrading project to be undertaken at Greenfield. Families will be temporarily relocated to these units while works are occurring

at Greenfield. All other units will be made available for either outright sale or rent-to-own at the following locations:

- Bullens, St. James (36): 28 singles, 8 quads
- Coconut Hall, St. Lucy (10): 2 singles, 8 duplexes
- River Crescent, St. Philip (14): 8 singles, 6 duplexes
- Sargeants Village, Christ Church (16): 16 duplexes
- Todd's, St. George (23): 13 singles, 10 duplexes

10,000 Housing Solutions Project

During the review period, the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance continued to advance the implementation of the 10,000 Housing Solutions Project, a home ownership programme catering to all economic classes. The project aims to reduce the cost of land and housing for ordinary Barbadians, ensure the efficient utilization of vacant serviced lots, address unplanned ad-hoc development and squatting, in addition to facilitating the provision of 10,000 housing solutions during the period of 2022 to 2027.

This initiative is being pursued through the Home Ownership Providing Energy Inc. (HOPE Inc.) with support of the Joint Venture Programme of the National Housing Corporation. The required acreage for the programme has been identified as 1,753.68 acres, which is expected to provide approximately 16,960 housing solution (single detached, duplexes, high rises etc.). Over the first two years of the programme, the Ministry has encountered some challenges in the provision of infrastructure at green sites and with the construction of houses, which has impacted the delivery of housing solutions. Seven hundred and twenty-seven (727) solutions were completed and provided to homeowners in Year one. During the period in review, 392 solutions were targeted for Year Two.

Sewage System Refurbishment Programme

The National Housing Corporation (NHC) has been tasked with conducting critical repair works to unsafe and unsanitary sewage systems in ten (10) specified housing estates. A Plan of Action has been prepared and it outlines the process to be adopted by the NHC in renovating its wells and septic tanks (sewage systems) in order to enhance public safety.

As of December 31, 2023, a total of \$9,323,822.07 had been spent to conduct remedial works on **358** sewage systems for this programme. Currently, there is an ongoing program to geographically tag all sewer systems belonging to the Corporation in various estates. This will allow the Corporation to accurately map all systems and better plan the maintenance of the systems.

Electrical Upgrade Programme

The National Housing Corporation had committed, as a condition of the Sale of Terrace Units Programme and the 20 year Transfer Programme, to undertake an upgrade to the electrical frame work of its Terrace units, to bring them in line with current standards and the NEC code (currently 2015) of single phase three wire 230MHZ.

Under this initiative 2,687 units were identified as requiring upgrades at a cost of approximately \$21,691,127.36 and was projected to be executed over a four-year period.

The upgrade proposed to utilize an external surface raceway system to accommodate feeder cables into individual units; the internal work would consist of a surface raceway (trunking system) and the replacement of all interior receptacles.

As at December 31, 2023, 2 137 (or 80 per cent units) have been upgraded at a cost of approx. \$17,630,139.60 and are in the process of being transitioned to the new system by the Barbados Light and Power. Additionally, another 144 are at varying stages of completion.

General Workers Loan Fund

During the period under review there were no new disbursements under the General Workers Loans programme. At present there are three hundred and fifty-six loan accounts (356) with outstanding balances totaling \$8,849,042.79. These accounts are categorized as follows:

TABLE 23: STATUS OF THE GENERAL'S FUNDS LOANS PROGRAMMES

NO. OF LOANS	TYPE OF LOAN	OUTSTANDING AMOUNT
128	Legal Mortgage	\$4,067,541.24
140	Chattel Mortgage	\$4,139,104.79
24	Promissory Note	\$252,408.24
64	Five Thousand	\$389,988.52
SOURCE: Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance		

Housing Every Last Person (H.E.L.P) Programme

During the period of review, the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance continued to advance the implementation of the Housing Every Last Person (H.E.L.P) Programme. The aim of this programme is to provide affordable homes at prices ranging from \$99,000.00 to \$150,000.00 for a completed house; and sell land only at prices ranging from \$17,500.00 to \$35,000.00. By the end of 2023, six (6) sales were completed at a value of \$976,255.37.

TABLE 24: SALES UNDER THE HOUSING EVERY LAST PERSON (H.E.L.P) PROGRAMME IN 2023

PROJECT	LOCATION	HOUSES/LOTS	SALES COMPLETED FOR PERIOD	AMOUNT RECEIVED	REALISATION	STATUS
Rices (Properties Only)	St. Philip	10 Properties	2	\$488,642.83	\$2,260,733.49	2 properties to be reallocated. Two (2) sales completed for the period. Five (5) sales in progress.
Deanstown Heights Phase II	St. James	68 Lots	1	\$150,112.54	\$6,510,472.62	All lots allocated in this phase. One (1) sale completed for the period. 47 Sales completed to date, and 21 sales in progress.
Parish Land (Single Mothers)	St . Philip	20 Properties	2	\$225,000.00	\$2,480,937.15	One property to be reallocated. 3 properties being used for temporary accommodation. Two (2) sales completed for the period and 14 sales completed to date
Parish Land	St. Philip	102 Properties	1	\$112,500.00	\$14,996.197.67	4 properties to be reallocated. One (1) sale completed for the period, and 106 sales completed to date.
TOTAL			6	\$976,255.37		

SOURCE: Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance

Free Transfer Of Terrace Units 20-Year Programme

Under the Free Transfer of Terrace Units 20-Year Programme, 3,092 tenants have received offer letters under the programme and 2,999 have accepted the offers made by the NHC. Thus far, 504 units have been conveyed. However, it must be noted that since May 2018, the Corporation has not issued letters to tenants informing them that they have qualified but that notwithstanding, some tenants have reached the 20-year milestone and have declined to pay any further rents.

As of December 1, 2023, there were an additional 200 individuals who had reached the 20-year mark. No additional engineering assessments were conducted during the review period due to ongoing programme evaluation.

Hurricane Elsa Programme

Within the Hurricane Elsa Programme, the National Housing Corporation (NHC) was responsible for approximately 62 per cent of the approximately 1,491 repairs and rebuilds projects undertaken by the government and would have in addition provided materials to 217 households. For the period January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, one hundred and eighteen (118) rebuilds, and one hundred and eighty-three (183) repairs were completed.

Public Capital Works Programme

In 2023, the Ministry of Transport, Works and Water Resources (MTWW) continued to pursue the implementation of several road rehabilitation initiatives. The Ministry also remained firmly focused on investing in climate-resilient infrastructure, which will reduce capital and output losses in the event of natural disasters and contain any adverse impact on drainage and road networks. For 2023, an estimated BDS\$ 46,261,257.00 was invested in road and drainage solutions across the island in line with building climate resilient infrastructure across the network.

In 2023 the MTW capital works programme incorporated a total of five (5) projects a valued at BDS\$394.0 million, inclusive of the CAF - Sector Wide Approach Programme (SWAP) to support the Land Transportation Sector in Barbados (BDS\$100.0 million); the COMPLANT Scotland District Road and Bridge Rehabilitation (BDS\$230.7 million); the IDB Road Rehabilitation and Improving Connectivity of Road Infrastructure (BDS\$50.6 million); the Electronic Vehicle Registration (BDS\$ 9.2 million); and the National Signage and Street Infrastructure (BDS\$3.5 million).

Of the projects implemented under the Public Capital Works programme, the following initiatives provided for the rehabilitation and expansion of the country's road network:

- *CAF - Sector Wide Approach Programme (SWAP) to support the Land Transportation Sector in Barbados.* During the review period, this programme aimed to rehabilitate sections of the road network with the intention of lowering logistic costs. The programme completed two (2) roads, while three (3) roads were in progress at the end of December 2023. A Total expenditure of BDS \$4,859,307.36 was recorded.
- *COMPLANT Scotland District Road and Bridge Rehabilitation.* The aim of this project is to improve the road infrastructure mainly in the Scotland district through major repairs to the road network, constructing new culverts and bridges, improving the drainage and introducing road safety measures. Two sample roads namely, Shorey Village, St. Andrew and Vaughn Road #2, St. Joseph were pursued in 2023. By the end of the period an expenditure of BDS \$4,008,728.07 related to the consultancy services rendered was recorded.
- *IDB Road Rehabilitation and Improving Connectivity of Road Infrastructure* – In 2023, the IDB funded programme facilitated the completion of 17.55 km of the 31km of key segments of the primary road network, inclusive of drainage, construction of sidewalks, bridges and culverts and safety features in 2023. In total, seven (7) roads were completed at a cost of BDS \$23,425,206.

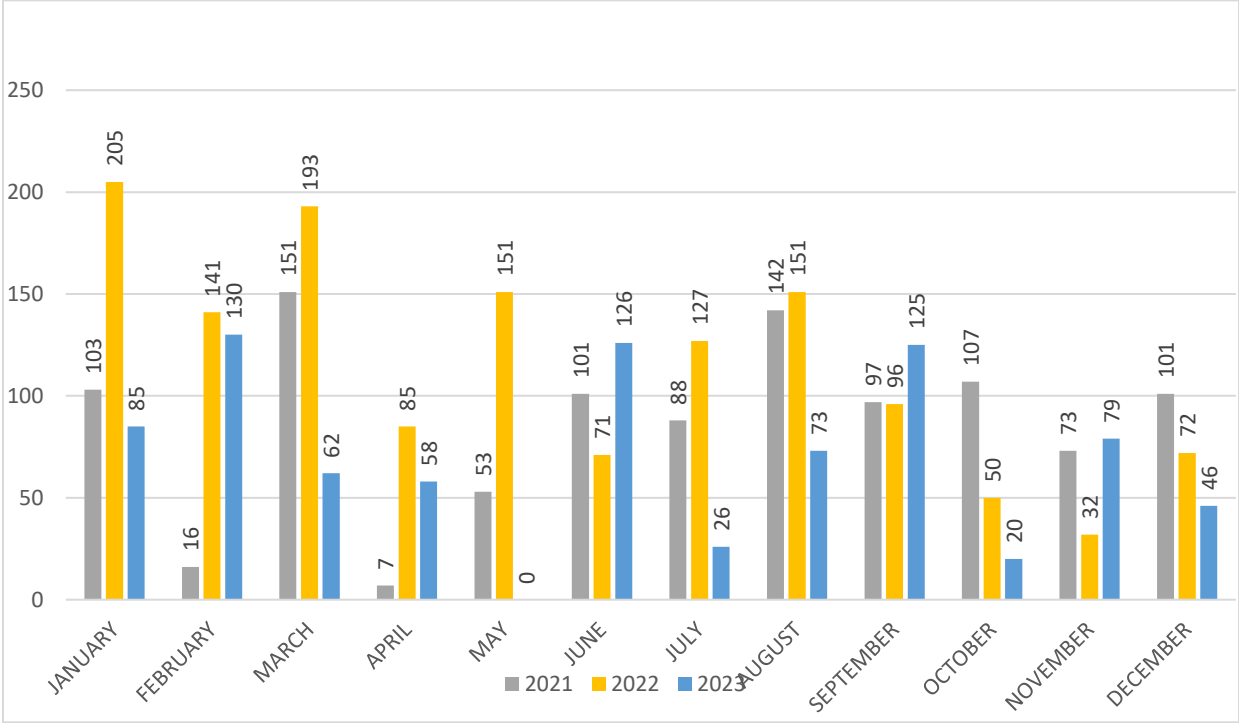
In addition to the above, the MTW continued to implement activities related to highway construction, residential roads, tenantry roads as well as road maintenance. As it relates to Highway construction and maintenance programme, ten (10) roads (2.48 km) were completed at a cost of BDS \$2,430,937.68 in 2023. Eleven (11) roads were completed at a cost of BDS \$1,085,165.01 as part of the Residential Road Construction & Maintenance Services sub programme. While in the Tenantry Roads programme in 2023, nine (9) roads were completed with eight (8) roads recorded as being sand and sealed.

Reinforcement/Patching Programme

From January to December 2023, the Ministry of Transport and Works continued the Asphalt patching programme which facilitates the filling of potholes through the thirteen depots located across the island. During the period of review, the MTW completed 830 road patching operations across the island compared to a total of 1, 376 roads were patched in 2022. Month by month analysis reveals a majority

of the roads were patched in the first (277) and third (224) quarters of the calendar year. Issues with supply chain delivery of bitumen by the supplier resulted in low patching figures in May, July and October.

FIGURE 23: NUMBER OF ROAD PATCHED FROM 2021 TO 2023 BY MONTH



SOURCE: MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS

Table 25: Roads completed by the end of December 2023

No.	Road	Description
Sector Wide Approach Programme (SWAP) to support the Land Transportation Sector in Barbados - CAF		
1	Passage Road to Waterford, St. Michael	Mill & Pave a 1800 m long x 4.87 m wide road
2	Harbour Road to BPI Cargo Gate St. Michael	Resurface
Roads in progress		
3	Fustic Village, St. Lucy	Mill & Pave a 580 m long x 4.8 m wide road
4	Rock Dundo Road, St. James	Rehabilitate a 2.0 km. long x 4.8 m wide road
5	Yorkshire Road, Christ Church	Mill & Pave a 3.0 km. long x 6.0 m wide road
Road Rehabilitation and Improving Connectivity of Road Infrastructure - IDB		
6	Carmichael Road (Boarded Hall Roundabout to Turnpike Junction),	Reconstruct a 1.6 km highway in road length and 6.0 m in road width.
7	Long Bay/ Bel Air Road (Sam Lord's Castle to Crane Roundabout)	Mill and Pave a 2.2 km highway in road length and 6.0 m in road width
8	Highway 6 Searles (Henry Forde Roundabout to Searles Roundabout)	Mill and pave a 1.4 km highway in road length and 5.0 m in road width.
9	Highway 6 (Searles to Six Roads)	Mill and pave a 6.0 km. long highway
10	Belle Road (Lears Roundabout to ABC Highway)	Reconstruct a 1.85 km road in length and 5.4 m in road width
11	Lears Road (Canewood to Lears Roundabout)	Reconstruct a 1.60 km road in length and 5.4 m in road width
12	Ermie Bourne Highway Phase 2 (Barclays Park to Belleplaine)	Mill and pave a 2.9 km highway in road length and 6.0 m in road width.
Scotland District Road and Bridge Rehabilitation – COMPLANT (Roads in progress)		
13	Vaughn Road #2, St. Joseph	Rehabilitation of a 400 m. road in length and 4.5m in road width
14	White Hill Road, St. Andrew Phase 1	Rehabilitation of Phase 1 of a 3.0 km. road in length and 4.87m in road width
Highway Construction and Maintenance		
15	Jordan Road, St. James	Mill & pave a 210 m long x 4.5 m wide road
16	Lowlands, St. Lucy	Rehabilitate a 610 m long x 4.8 m wide road
17	Peterses, St. Lucy	Mill & pave a 425 m long x 4.7 m wide road
18	Melvins Avenue, St. Michael	Mill & pave a 335 m long x 4.7 m wide road
19	2 nd . Ave. Fairfield, St. Michael	Mill & pave a 120 m long x 4.5 m wide road
20	Cumberbatch Road, St. Michael	Mill & pave a 210 m long x 4.0 m wide road
21	Appleby Gardens, St. James	Mill & pave a 1.8 km long x 5.5 m wide road
22	Richmond Road, St. Joseph	Mill & pave a 750 m long x 5.0 m wide road
23	Welchman Hall St. Thomas	Mill & pave a 140 m long x 4.0 m wide road
24	Highway 7, Berts Bar to Hastings Rocks Christ Church	Mill & Pave a 1.1 km. long x 6.0m wide road
Residential Construction and Maintenance Services Programme		
25	1 st . Ave East Terrace, St. Michael	Mill & Pave a 265 m long x 4.8 m wide road
26	St. Anns Road, Pine, St. Michael	Mill & Pave a 150m long x 3.65 m wide road
27	Regent Hill, Pine, St. Michael	Mill & Pave a 360m long x 4.87m wide road
28	Stratford Hill, Pine, St. Michael	Mill & Pave a 326m long x 4.87m wide road
29	Lascelles, Pine, St. Michael	Mill & Pave a 305m long x 4.87m wide road
30	Unity Lane, Gall Hill, Christ Church	Mill & Pave a 416m long x 4.87m wide road
31	Harmony Cottage, St. George	Mill & Pave a 260m long x 4.6m wide road
32	Eastlyn, St. George	Mill & pave a 812 m long x 4.0 m- 5.5 m wide road
33	Marigold Drive, Wanstead, St. James	Mill & pave a 280 m. long x 5.0 m wide road
34	2 nd . Sion Hill, St. James	Mill & pave a 75 m. long x 4.6 m wide road
35	Brathwaite Gap, St. James	Mill & pave a 330 m. long x 5.0m wide road
Tenantry Road Programme		
36	Sion Hill Tenantry, St. James	Mill & pave
37	CH Best, St. Martins, St. Philip	Sand-sealed
38	Breedys Land, Christ Church	Sand-sealed
39	Inch Marlow, Christ Church	Sand-sealed
40	Best Road, Newbury, St. George	Sand-sealed
41	Holders Hill, St. James	Sand-sealed
42	Edgecliff, St. John	Sand-sealed
43	Well Road, St. Lucy	Sand-sealed
44	Date Tree Hill, St. Peter	Sand-sealed

SOURCE: Ministry of Transport and Works

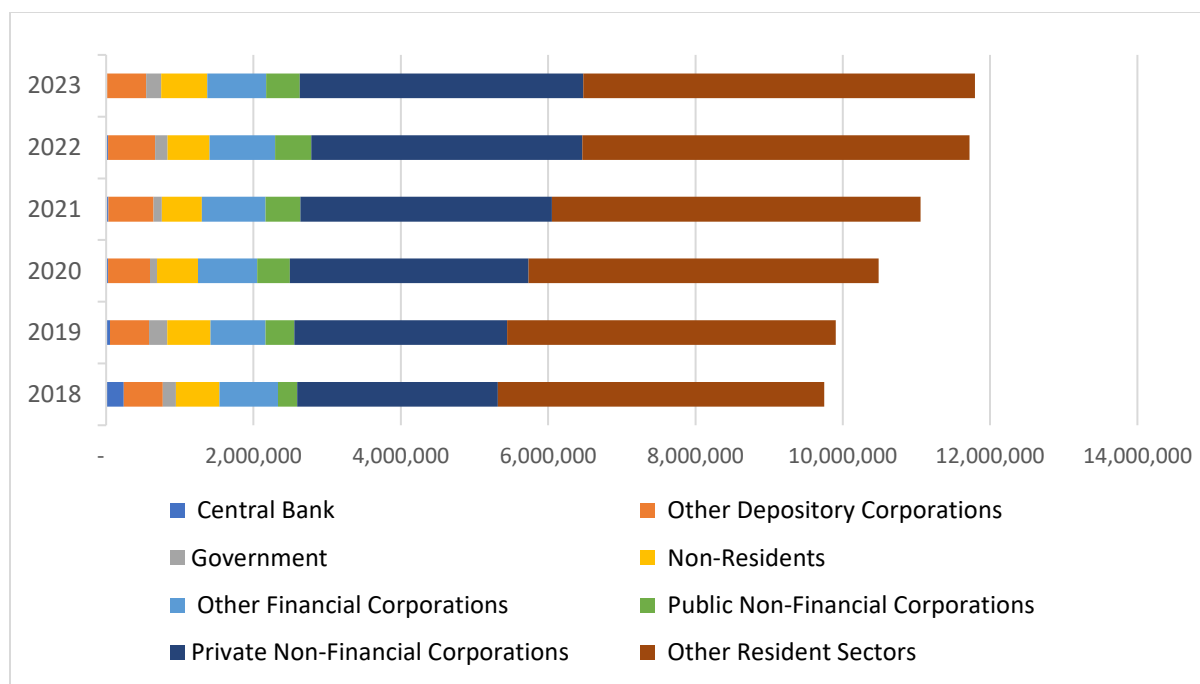
F. MONEY, BANKING AND CAPITAL MARKETS

A. Commercial Banks

The real economic growth that moved in tandem with financial prudence by banks in 2023, translated into steady financial soundness within Barbados' financial sector for the period of review. Modest credit growth due to an increase in business activity, led to higher bank profits and a fair improvement in the banks' ability to cover potential losses, as the Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) increased from 17.6 percent in 2022 to 20.4 percent in 2023.

Despite liquidity being above par in the sector, an increase in drawdowns by borrowers of \$43.8 million in 2023 caused a slight decline in banks' liquidity, where the liquid asset ratio decreased from 32 percent in 2022 to 30.4 percent in 2023. Nevertheless, the liquidity of the banking system in 2023 remained higher than pre-pandemic levels; additionally, positive movement of other financial stability indicators such as an increase in banks' CAR, and a reduction in Non-Performing Loans (NPL) (which decreased from 5.9 percent in 2022 to 5 percent in 2023) is indicative of a healthy financial sector.

FIGURE 24: COMMERCIAL BANKS' TOTAL DEPOSIT LIABILITIES ('000)



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

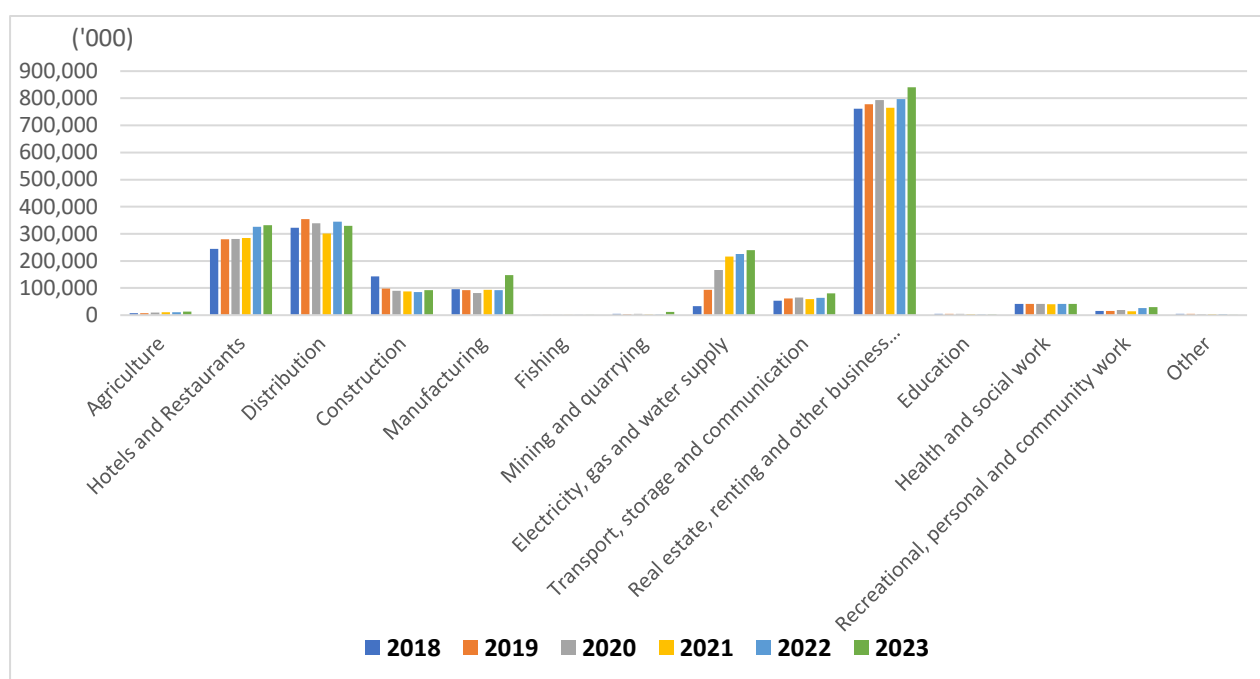
Total deposit liabilities in commercial banks marginally increased by 0.6 percent from the previous year, moving from \$11.72 billion at the end of 2022 to \$11.79 billion by December 2023. The marginal uptick in bank deposits was spurred by deposit growth from Government (20 percent), Non-Residents (10 percent), Private Non-Financial Corporations (5 percent) and Other Resident Sectors (1 percent), as positive inflows from Tourism, Government and other sectors increased the volume of cash in savings and chequing accounts by these stakeholders at banks. However, a decline in deposits from the Central Bank (47 percent), and Other Financial and Depository Corporations (27 percent) largely offset growth of commercial bank deposits for 2023.

Total loans and advances in commercial banks increased to \$6.4 billion in 2023, up by 2.8 percent from the previous year, a second consecutive year of positive movement in total loans after a noticeable four-year trend of decline in loans and advances from 2018.

Commercial banks continued to be fairly prudent with their lending portfolio, as 46 percent of total loans in 2023 were disbursed to mortgages, mainly for residential purposes, followed by mortgages for the accommodation and real estate sectors.

Similarly, total loans to private non-financial corporations grew by 6 percent in 2023, moving from 2.08 billion in 2022 to 2.21 billion in 2023. Higher credit demand from an expansionary environment influenced this outturn, as financing was primarily directed to the real estate sector, which also increased by 6 percent from the previous year. Additionally, growth in loans to manufacturing (2 percent) and hotels and restaurants (59 percent), along with steady financing to the distribution sector, typifies an increase in investor appetite that moved in correlation with the rebounding tourism and traded sectors.

FIGURE 25: COMMERCIAL BANKS' LOANS & ADVANCES TO PRIVATE NON-FINANCIAL CORPORATIONS BY SECTOR 2018-2023



Source: Central Bank of Barbados

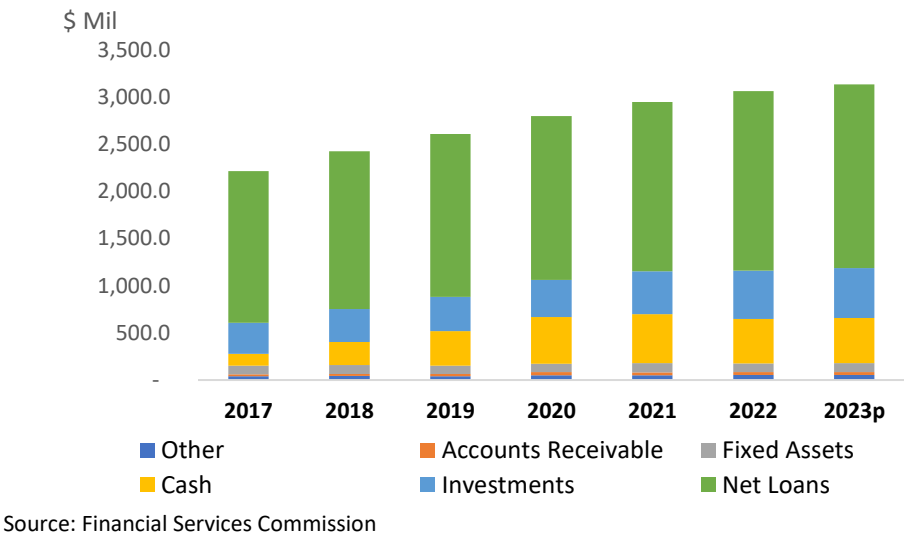
Lending for infrastructural and capital upgrades to the private sector and utilities led to a rise in loans in the construction and utilities sectors, which increased by 8 percent and 6 percent respectively within the period of review. An improvement in the credit and economic environment saw a decrease in the value of overdrafts from commercial banks by 2 percent and a boost in credit card activity and mortgages demanded, with both increasing by over 5 percent respectively from the previous year.

NON-BANK FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The Credit Union Movement

At the end of 2023, there were 27 credit unions operating within the sector, two less than the previous year. Despite the marginal decline in the number of operating credit unions, the Barbadian market remains highly drawn to the co-operative financial sector for savings and loan products, as the sector recorded a 1.6 percent increase in membership, with approximately 239,000 members being registered at the end of the review period⁶.

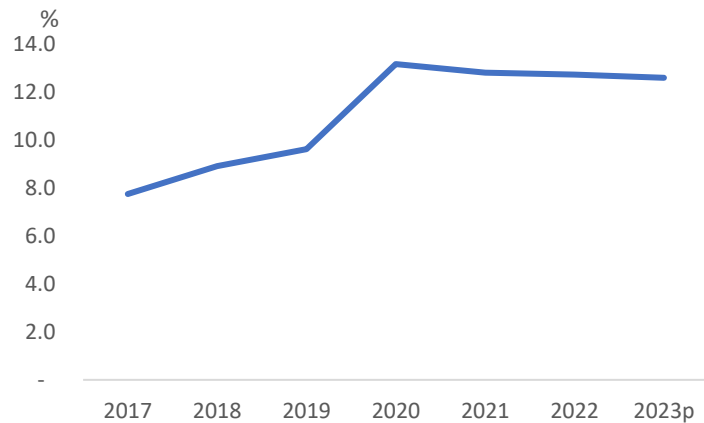
FIGURE 26: CREDIT UNIONS’ ASSET COMPOSITION



Moreover, total assets in the sector rose by 2.2 percent or \$68.9 million, to an estimated \$3,131.8 million as at December 2023, with growth being detected in all the various asset classes. The expansion in the asset base was largely driven by loans to members, which increased by 41.7 million or 2.2 percent and remained the largest asset class for credit unions. The sector’s investments increased by \$16.4 million or 3.2 percent over the year, while fixed assets registered the highest percentage increase (4.07 percent) from the previous year.

FIGURE 27: CREDIT UNIONS’ NON-PERFORMING LOANS

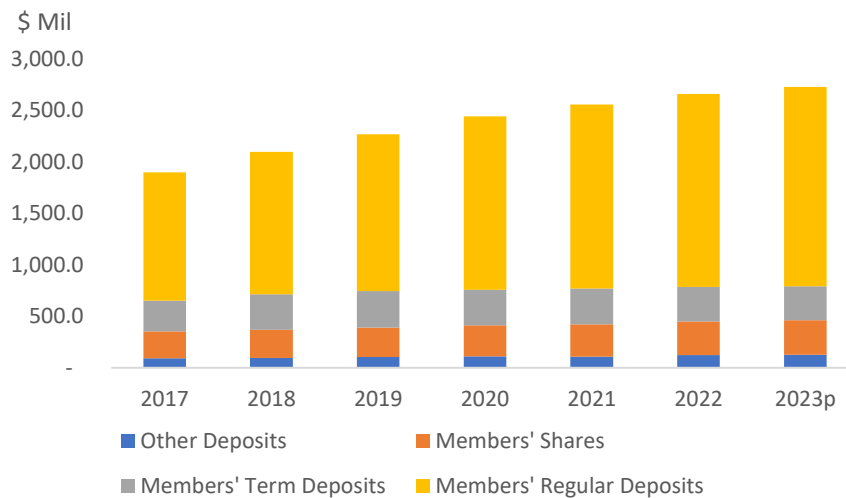
⁶ It is common practice within the movement for individuals to hold membership in multiple credit unions. Consequently, it should be noted that some individuals may be recorded on more than one occasion.



Source: Financial Services Commission

The stock of non-performing loans (NPLs) rose by \$1.7 million or 0.7 percent to reach an estimated \$253.9 million. The rise in NPLs was attributable to 10.3 percent increase in loans in arrears for up to 3-6 months. Despite this, the sector's credit quality remained on a stable path, as evidenced by the NPL ratio, which stood at 12.6 percent at year-end, in comparison to the 12.7 percent recorded in 2022.

FIGURE 28: CREDIT UNIONS' MEMBER SAVINGS



Source: Financial Services Commission

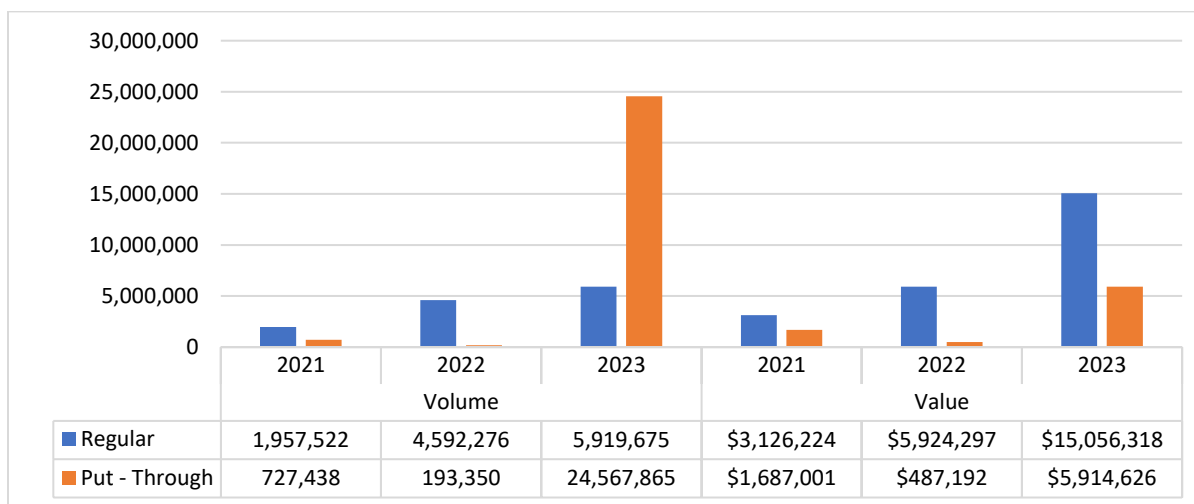
Members' savings amounted to \$2,726.6 million, growing by \$69.2 million or 2.6 percent from the previous year, reflecting the high interest amongst the populace to attain financial services from a non-banking institution. Members' regular deposits were instrumental in this growth, expanding by \$61.9 million or 3.3 percent to reach an estimated \$1,935.3 million at year-end. This preferred deposit type represented more than 70 percent of total deposits held within the sector. Term Deposits on the other hand contracted by \$5.3 million or 1.6 percent over the last year to reach an estimated \$329.7 million at the end of the period, suggesting that more working-class citizens might be desirous of having cash accessible rather than having withdrawals restricted to a later date.

Overall, the credit union sector continued to sustain appropriate levels of deposit liabilities, assets, a stable NPL ratio, and capital; despite a slight decline in the capital-to-asset ratio, which marginally fell by 0.1 percent from the previous year to 11.1 percent. The sector currently constitutes 10.9 percent of Barbados' total financial system assets and is 32.9 percent when calculated as a measure against gross domestic product (GDP). These indicators illustrate a sound financial environment for the sector and bodes well for the outlook of the credit union movement and the country's financial sector.

Barbados Stock Exchange

There was an improvement of securities traded on the Barbados Stock Exchange Inc. (BSE) for 2023. According to the BSE, both The Regular and Put-Through markets recorded increases in the trading from the previous year, which induced an overall surge of the volume and value securities traded by 537 percent and 227 percent respectively.

FIGURE 29: TRADING ACTIVITY BY MARKET 2021-2023



Source: Barbados Stock Exchange

A steady positive trend was observed in the Regular market, as the traded volume and value expanded for two years consecutively, as the volume increased by 135 percent in 2022 and 29 percent in 2023, while the value of trades rose by 90 percent in 2022 and 154 percent in 2023. The Put-Through market, while sporadic in the last two years, inflated significantly from the previous year, as the volume and value of shares traded in this market climbed by 12606 percent and 1114 percent respectively in 2023.

The exponential increase in the overall traded activity was predominantly due to a large single transaction conducted (from the Put-Through market) to conclude an offer made by Eppley Fund Managers Limited to the Shareholders of Eppley Caribbean Property Fund SCC. which resulted in 24,335,503 shares trading at BBD \$0.21 per share. Nevertheless, even if this transaction was excluded, the overall activity in terms of volume would be 29 percent with a corresponding increase of 147 percent in traded value, which is indicative of a budding stock market.

TABLE 26: INDEX AND MARKET CAPITALIZATION YEAR ON YEAR 2021-2023

Index	Change (%)				
	31-Dec-21	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-23	'21 vs '22	'22 vs '23
Local	2,359.82	2,515.44	2,749.12	6.59%	9.29%
Cross Listed	1,140.86	803.79	798.6	-29.55%	-0.65%
Composite	578.56	610.28	665.73	5.48%	9.09%
Market Capitalization	31-Dec-21	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-23	'21 vs '22	'22 vs '23
Local	4,743,415,518	4,873,144,661	5,317,375,132	2.73%	9.12%
Cross Listed	145,674,503	102,634,309	101,972,152	-29.55%	-0.65%
Composite	4,889,090,021	4,975,778,970	5,419,347,284	1.77%	8.91%

Source: Barbados Stock Exchange

Following up on positive returns from 2022, both the Local and Composite Market Indices recorded increases of 9.29 percent and 9.09 percent respectively, while the Cross-Listed Index recorded a decrease of -0.65 percent due to a marginal decline in the price of One Caribbean Media Limited. Similarly, the Local and Composite market capitalization mirrored their indices upward movement, expanding by 9.12 percent and 8.91 percent respectively, as the Cross-listed market capitalization fell by the same percentage as its index (-0.65 percent).

G. COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

The Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) continued its monitoring of trade for those commodities subjected to its licensing regime (import and export licensing). Approximately 10,111 applications were processed for importation through this regime, however, there were no applications for export licenses. In keeping with its designate mandate as per the Liquor Licences Act 2022, a total of 2,306 liquor licences were approved.

During 2023 the Department continued its price monitoring in the form of surveys. DCCA's Trading Standards Inspectors collected data relating to prices of various food and non-food commodities from supermarket outlets primarily. All surveys were completed monthly.

TABLE 27: PRICE MONITORING SURVEYS 2023

Basket	Surveys Completed	Number of outlets
Basket of Basic Consumer Goods	12	9
Hurricane Survey	2	9
Reduced Mark-up	17	18

Source: Ministry of Energy and Business

Goods imported for commercial purposes which are found to be non-compliant with the requirements of the mandatory national standards, are placed on detention by Trading Standards Inspectors. Where there is no threat to consumer health or safety and a method for compliance can be easily attained, these

goods are released from detention. In 2023, 13 commodities were placed on detention and subsequently released and no commodities were deemed a threat to consumers.

There has been increasing global interest in nutrition labelling as a tool through which governments can guide consumers to make informed food purchases and healthier eating choices. This interest comes as countries contend with an emerging epidemic of diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and low population compliance with dietary recommendations.

The Regional Technical Sub-Committee was tasked with the responsibility of developing a regional standard whose focus has been Front of package Labelling (FOPL), an instrument designed to combat the high prevalence of NCDs in the region. The draft Pre-packaged Food Labelling standard has the FOPL information in the Informative Annex, which means that it is a guide and that should the standard be adopted by Barbados, the FOPL model may be used.

Fair Trading Commission

Consumer protection plays an important and pivotal role in fostering trust and ensuring healthy markets for consumers. As consumers were safeguarded from misleading and deceptive practices, the Consumer Protection Division (CPD) not only protected individuals but contributed to the overall integrity and resilience of the broader economy and social fabric. By thoroughly addressing and resolving consumer queries and complaints, the Commission has not only been able to rectify individual issues, but also unveil patterns of misconduct, which support the implementation of preventive measures. In the past year, the Commission successfully resolved 1,654 complaints or queries. This represented 99 percent of all matters received by the Division during 2023 and all were resolved in four months or less. This demonstrated the Division's commitment to swift and effective resolution and provided tangible relief to affected consumers as the Commission acquired \$96,782.88 on behalf of consumers.

H. PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (PSIP)

During 2023, Government's Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) continued with the major investments concentrated in the areas of Infrastructure, Energy, Roads, and Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building.

Major Projects Completed

Public Sector Smart Energy (PSSE) Programme

The objective of this Programme was to promote and implement the use of Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) measures through the creation of the Public Sector Smart Energy (PSSE) Program. Ultimately, the Program will help to reduce Barbados' fossil fuel dependency, promote sustainable energy and therefore contribute to the country's competitiveness.

The Programme's specific objectives were to: (i) install RE systems in government buildings in the Program and retrofit these buildings and public lights with EE technologies; (ii) implement the RE pilot project and studies; and (iii) assist with capacity building, institutional strengthening, and public awareness in the energy sector.

The programme comprised of three (3) components:

Component 1: Retrofitting of government buildings with RE and EE technologies and public lights with EE technologies. This component included: (i) the retrofit of public lights with EE technologies; (ii) the retrofit of at least twelve (12) government buildings with EE technologies, and (iii) the installation of solar PV systems on government buildings.

Component II: A pilot project and studies for encouraging the use of renewable Energy (RE). This component included (i) a fleet of government electric vehicles powered by RE sources; and (ii) studies culminating in the preparation of a business prospectus to facilitate the construction and operation of an ocean power plant.

Component III: Capacity Building, Institutional Strengthening and Public Awareness.

This component included (i) capacity building and training to upgrade professional and technical skills; (ii) upgrade of capacity within the Government of Barbados (GOB) in all sectors related to sustainable energy; (iii) public awareness campaigns at all levels to promote sustainable energy, e.g. schools, government, media, conventions, conferences and workshops.

This subcomponent will allow the GOB to implement an awareness and education programme to promote RE and EE throughout the country, including schools, universities, labour unions, and broader civil society; (iv) a Project Execution Unit (PEU) for the Programme including a Project Manager, a Project Accountant, a Procurement Specialist and a Project Assistant as well as software for data collection; and (v) monitoring and evaluation of the Programme, including the data collection and analysis of the impact, outcomes and output indicators of the results matrix using the methodologies explained in the Monitoring and Evaluation arrangements. At the end of the programme on February 15, 2023, approximately US\$ 17,000,000 was disbursed by the IDB.

Road Rehabilitation and Improving Connectivity of Road Infrastructure

The objective of the programme was to improve the quality of road infrastructure and its connectivity in order to enhance Barbados' Tourism competitiveness and growth. Specifically, the programme aimed to rehabilitate sections of the road network to achieve a lower logistic cost, particularly transportation costs and travel times and to improve safety; and (ii) to provide a framework for institutional strengthening to improve transport sector planning capacity, road investment's sustainability, and financial mechanisms for rehabilitation and regular maintenance interventions undertaken by the Ministry of Transport and Works.

The programme comprised three components:

Component 1- Civil works was divided into sample and global roads and included the rehabilitation of approximately 37 km (originally 31 km) of key segments of the primary road network, including drainage, construction of sidewalks, bridges and culverts and safety features. Five (5) Sample Roads and nine (9) Global roads were rehabilitated.

Component 2: Institutional strengthening consisted of a consultancy, entitled "Prioritization of Interventions for MTW" in which the consultant; (a) reviewed the existing institution framework, organizational structures, processes, procedures and relations, and carried out a detailed diagnostic study in the area of; (i) transport planning and asset management systems, (ii) technical standards, quality control and assurance, (iii) gender parity in employment within MTW and (iv) road safety to analyzed

operations functions, support, administrative, planning, designing and engineering functions for the Ministry's lab.

The consultancy also prepared a detail prioritized Action Plan in aforementioned areas with the goals of: (i) processing and system modernization, (ii) technical knowledge development, (iii) technological improvements, (iv) identification of HR training needs, (v) preparation of a detailed budget, and (vi) preparation of timeline estimates for activities in the plan.

Component 3: Implementation support included financing the implementation and the supervising consultants for the civil works as well as audits, programme evaluations and performance and completion reports. It also included financing studies outside of the sample roads, whose construction was financed under Component 1. This included designs, feasibility analysis, environmental and social assessments, road designs and highway safety audits. At the end of the IDB programme on August 31, 2023, approximately US\$25,000,000 was disbursed by IDB.

New Agreements Signed in 2023

In 2023, the Government of Barbados signed four (4) new loan Agreements valued at US\$320 million. There were three (3) new loans Agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) totalling US\$220 million, and one new loan agreement with the World Bank for US\$100 million.

These loans were for the Skills for the Future II: Digital Transformation for Inclusive and Quality Education, Programme to Strengthen Public Policy and Fiscal Management in Response to the Health and Economic Crisis Caused by COVID-19 in Barbados II, Programme to Strengthen Social Services in Barbados, under the Barbados Green and Resilient Recovery Development Policy Loan.

Skills for the Future II: Digital Transformation for Inclusive and Quality Education

On March 6, 2023, the Government of Barbados and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) signed a Loan Agreement for US\$20,000,000 to finance the Skills for the Future II: Digital Transformation for Inclusive and Quality Education. The project will be implemented over a period of five (5) years.

The general objective of the Project is to improve the quality and equity of education by supporting the transformation of the education system. The specific objectives are to: (i) improve the quality of instruction by promoting student-centred classroom instruction approaches around relevant skills for the 21st century; (ii) promote a more inclusive education system; (iii) create a sustainable, safe and accessible learning environment by upgrading physical and technological school infrastructure; and (iv) strengthen sector management. The Project comprise four (4) components:

Component 1: Curriculum Reform and Development which will improve the quality of instruction by introducing and integrating four (4) new subject areas into secondary education curriculum aligned with Barbados' current and future skills for labour markets needs and with the country's growth strategy: (i) Computer Science (inclusive of coding and robotics, animation, digital literacy and gaming); (ii) Climate Crisis, Blue and Green Economy; (iii) Sustainable Agricultural Science; and (iv) Financial Technology (Fintech). These new subject areas will complement current METVT efforts using its own resources to update the existing curriculum in core subject areas of primary and secondary education (English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Civics) and other areas.

Component 2: Includes Education - This component promotes a more Inclusive Education (IE) system by providing technical assistance for: (i) the development of an IE policy; and (ii) the implementation of a set of special needs services in five randomly selected primary schools. It includes: (i) the development and administration of a screening instrument to identify Special Needs (SN) students and their disabilities; (ii) based on screening results, development of Individualized Education Plans (IEP) to guide education services for these students; (iii) Pro-D for the teachers in the selected primary schools in using more inclusive teaching approach and working with IEPs; (iv) capacity building and training of faculty at the Erdiston Teachers' Training College for SN education; (v) provision of assistive technologies (high and low tech) for the selected schools to provide comprehensive services aligned with students IEPs; and (vi) supply of furniture to the five schools.

Component 3: Physical and Digital Upgrade for Sustainable infrastructure with a Resiliency Focus -This component will improve the quality and sustainability of the physical and digital infrastructure by upgrading ten (10) primary schools prioritized by the METVT, to meet sustainable and resilient best practice standards, and build code requirements:

Component 4: - Improved sector management - This component will improve sector management by providing technical assistance to the METVT for the continued implementation of its Open EM IS covering twelve (12) public Nurseries, sixty-eight (68) primary and twenty-one (21) secondary schools.

World Bank- International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) Barbados Green and Resilient Recovery Development Policy Loan

The Government of Barbados and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) signed a Development Policy Loan for US\$100,000,000 on February 8, 2023 to finance the Barbados Green and Resilient Recovery Development Policy Loan. The development objective of the development policy loan (DPL) was to support the Government of Barbados' strategic reforms to promote low carbon economic development and resilience to the deepening global crises, including the climate crisis.

The DPL supported two (2) core pillars reflective of the Government's priorities for resilient recovery, specifically: (i) Pillar A: Green and Blue Resilient Recovery; and (ii) Pillar B: Low Carbon and Resilient Infrastructure. There were eight (8) prior actions under Pillars A and B and the World Bank confirmed that all the policy actions were fulfilled. Consequently, the US\$100 million was fully disbursed when the loan was declared effective in March 2023 having met all of the prior conditions.

INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (IDB)

Programme to Strengthen Public Policy and Fiscal Management in Response to the Health and Economic Crisis Caused by COVID-19 in Barbados II

The Government of Barbados and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) signed a Policy Based Loan for US\$100,000,000 on February 28, 2023 to finance the Programme to Strengthen Public Policy and Fiscal Management in Response to the Health and Economic Crisis Caused by COVID-19 in Barbados II.

The specific development objectives were to: (i) promote the availability and timely execution of public resources to respond to the health crisis caused by COVID-19; (ii) strengthen the countercyclical effect of fiscal policy through the temporary introduction of measures to protect the income of vulnerable

households and increase liquidity for businesses during the health and economic crisis; and (iii) promote economic and fiscal recovery during the post-pandemic period.

The PBL has four (4) components; *component 1* - Maintains a macroeconomic framework conducive to 'Strengthening public policy and fiscal management to respond to the health crisis caused by COVID-19. *Component 3* - Strengthening public policy and fiscal management to respond to the economic crisis. *Component 4* - Economic and fiscal strengthening for the post-pandemic period. The Government fulfilled all the policy conditions and submitted the associated means of verification to the Bank and the US\$100 million was fully disbursed in March 2023.

Programme to Strengthen Social Services in Barbados

The Government of Barbados and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) signed a Policy Based Loan for US\$100,000,000 on December 7, 2023 to finance the programme to Strengthen Social Services in Barbados. The general objective of the loan was to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of social policies and sustainability of social security in Barbados.

The specific objectives were to: (i) improve the administrative efficiency of contributory and non-contributory social protection; (ii) strengthen the institutional and normative framework to improve coverage and quality of policies to promote gender equality, including persons with disabilities (PWD) and the protection of vulnerable groups; and (iii) strengthen the long run sustainability of social security.

The loan had four (4) components - *Component I*. Macroeconomic stability; *Component II* - Improve the administrative efficiency of contributory and non-contributory social protection; *Component III* - Strengthen the institutional and normative framework to improve coverage and quality of policies to promote gender equality, including persons with disabilities (PWD), and the protection of vulnerable groups; *Component IV* - Strengthen the long-term sustainability of social security. The Government fulfilled all the policy conditions under the aforementioned four (4) components and submitted the associated means of verification to the Bank and the US\$100 million was fully disbursed in December 2023.

IV. III. THE EMERGING ECONOMY

A. THE ENVIRONMENTAL SECTOR

Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy

The Ministry of Environment and National Beautification (MENB) promotes and facilitates the sustainable use of our resources by encouraging the involvement of all citizens and integration of environmental and maritime considerations into all aspects of national development.

BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT SECTION

The goal of the Biodiversity Conservation and Management Section is to undertake effective management of the biodiversity and land resources of Barbados, particularly in degraded areas, and to contribute to their conservation, effective management, and increased awareness of the importance of local biodiversity and ecosystems, and their contribution to local development.

The Biodiversity Programme aims to contribute to the conservation of local biodiversity by defining the guiding principles, vision, long-term aims and policies for the management of biodiversity in Barbados; increasing the awareness of the Barbadian public of the importance of local biodiversity, its conservation and management, and the development and implementation of a programme of action to facilitate effective management of the biodiversity resources of Barbados.

The programme further aims to contribute to national development through the conservation of Barbados' biodiversity resources and the enhancement of their management through:

1. the management of local plant and animal species through the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) policy document which was laid in Parliament;
2. the execution of public awareness programmes aimed at raising the awareness of the general public of the importance of biodiversity;
3. the implementation of various biodiversity related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to which Barbados is a Party; including the administration of the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Act CAP. 262, which provides for the implementation of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Barbados and the issuance of import, export and re-export permits; and
4. the development, management and execution of externally funded projects, which help Barbados to meet its international obligations and achieve national objectives articulated in various national policies.

In 2023, efforts towards the effective conservation, management, and sustainable utilization of Barbados' biodiversity resources, continued through the implementation of programmes, projects and public awareness activities.

Policy Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Support and Guidance

The Biodiversity Section, as the primary entity responsible for conservation and management of biodiversity in Barbados, provides technical and advisory support on issues related to Biodiversity. The Section contributed to the following:

1. Graeme Hall Swamp Inter-Ministerial Technical Advisory Committee
2. Draft Fisheries Management Policy Committee
3. National Tree Planting Programme Steering Committee
4. National Clean and Green Programme Steering Committee
5. National Botanical Gardens Development Steering Committee
6. Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Development
7. National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan
8. National Invasive Species Policy
9. Lionfish Assessment Report and Management Plan Review
10. National Wetlands Inventory
11. Strategic Plan for the Long Pond Conservation Area
12. Monitoring Plan for the Critically Endangered Hawksbill Turtle at Bath
13. Invasive Mongoose Control Manual

Efforts towards the implementation of the NBSAP continued through the development of projects.

In 2023, the CEO of the GEF approved the project Reducing the threats to endangered reptiles from habitat loss and Invasive Alien Species (IAS) through enhanced biodiversity governance and strengthened bio-security in Barbados or the Conserving Barbados' Endemic Reptiles. Through the CBER project, Barbados will develop policy recommendations and a draft National Biodiversity Conservation Bill. To support the operationalization of the proposed legislative and regulatory framework, capacity building workshops were held for stakeholders across relevant agencies.

Barbados in 2023, endorsed the UNDP implemented Global Biodiversity Framework Early Action Support project. The Kungming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was adopted during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 15) following a four-year consultation process and represents a significant step towards global biodiversity conservation.

This framework provides a pathway to reach the global vision of a world living in harmony with nature by 2050 by setting out 4 goals for 2050 and 23 targets for 2030. The GBF supports the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals and builds on previous Strategic Plans. In adopting the GBF, Barbados has committed to setting national targets to implement it. Through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded Global Biodiversity Framework Early Action Support project, Barbados mobilized funding and support to conduct a rapid review and develop a policy coherence plan to align the 2020 NBSAP document with the new Global Biodiversity Framework targets.

Preventing Costs of Invasive Alien Species Project

In 2023 the Biodiversity Section continued implementation of the Preventing Costs of Invasive Alien Species in Barbados and the OECS Countries project of the Convention on Biological Diversity, assisted by finances from the GEF.

The goal of the Invasive Alien Species project is the prevention, early detection, control and management of frameworks for invasive alien species (IAS) that emphasize a risk management approach by focusing on the highest risk invasion pathways of Barbados and OECS countries.

Through this project, the Biodiversity Section commenced a review of the legal frameworks related to biosecurity and protection against invasive alien species which may harm local biological resources and human health. Through this process, it has commenced the development of the National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan along with the National Invasive Species Policy, which would inform the strengthening of biosecurity legislation nationally.

Resource Protection and Management

Preventing Costs of Invasive Alien Species Project

Engagement in the Invasive Alien Species project further seeks to protect our biodiversity resources, namely the critically endangered Barbados leaf-toed gecko and the critically endangered hawksbill sea turtle from invasive species, through the implementation of habitat enhancement, predator exclusion and predator eradication in key habitats for the species. This project also lays the groundwork for ground-breaking captive breeding programmes, a first of this nature for the Caribbean region.

The project further contributes to enhanced management of the lionfish through assessment of existing strategies and testing of new strategies for eradication or control. Through this component, the project

contributes to the management of reef fish stocks and preservation of the ecology of coral reefs. This component also identified invasive coral species on local reefs.

The Wetlands for the Future Project

The Wetlands for the Future Fund supports the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. The US administered fund gives priority to projects in the Caribbean and Central American countries. The fund is available to support activities in the area of training and capacity building, documentation, wetlands management and tools and research.

The Ministry of Environment and National Beautification received funding of \$20,000 USD to prepare Barbados' Wetland's Inventory as required under the Convention and to identify the preliminary elements of a management plan for the Long Pond Site. The National Wetland Inventory and a Strategic Plan for the Long Pond Conservation Area were subsequently completed and delivered in April 2023.

Biodiversity Enabling Activities Project

Barbados continued implementation of the GEF funded Biodiversity Enabling Activities project. The project was approved by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which is the implementing agency for the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project has three (3) objectives: the assessment of the capacity required to implement an efficient access and benefit sharing system; the assessment of the capacity required to implement an efficient system to mitigate against the establishment of alien invasive biological diversity; and the development of a clearing house mechanism which is an internet-based information repository.

Under this project, the Section commenced development of conservation and recreational area plans, including garbage management strategy, as well as broader ecosystems conservation and restoration plans for Turner's Hall Woods and key Gully Ecosystems.

Regulatory Monitoring and Enforcement

Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

The International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Act, CAP 262 was passed in Parliament on February 7, 2006 and provides for the implementation of the provisions of CITES in Barbados.

The Act provides for the issuance of permits, and in 2023, 54 permits for international trade of endangered species were issued. Of this total, 37 were export permits, 14 were import permits and 3 were re-export permits. The international trade of endangered species as it relates to income generation is an important economic activity for a number of persons and companies in Barbados. However, to prevent negative impacts on global populations trade is regulated.

TABLE 28: NUMBER OF CITES PERMITS ISSUED BY CATEGORY FOR 2023

Imports	Exports	Re-exports
14	37	3

CITES Scientific Authority

The Fourth Schedule of the Act (121/1) provides for the constitution of a Scientific Authority of not less than 5 or more than 12 members appointed by the Minister by instrument in writing.

Quarterly meetings of the CITES Scientific Authority were convened in 2023, to discuss issues important to the convention.

Biosafety Clearing House (BCH)

The Biosafety Clearing House of the Cartagena Protocol for Biosafety (CPB) is the only clearing house of its kind where effective participation is a regulatory requirement for compliance in the parent convention. As Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Government of Barbados is obligated to ensure the effective participation in the BCH.

As National Focal Point to the CPB, the Section hosted a ‘Technical and Regulatory Training Workshop’ to enhance Barbados’ capacity to effectively update, utilize and maintain its records on the BCH. Preparations are currently underway for a follow-up workshop targeting BCH users, such as farmers and importers.

Education, Communication and Public Demonstration Initiatives

Unlike in previous years, the focus of the section’s public education programme was the building out of its website “Biodiversity Barbados” – biodiversity.gov.bb and social media. Focus was shifted towards digital awareness raising, with attention paid to maintaining the increased production of articles and resources. Additionally, a redesign of the layout and the introduction of photographic and informational resources were undertaken.

The shift in public awareness medium saw a seven-fold increase in the number of people engaged through the Public Awareness and Education programme.

Website

1. This Section continued to administer the “Biodiversity Barbados” website through 2023
2. The website recorded an average of 4,000 monthly active users, contributing towards 48,000 unique visits to the website in 2023, with users performing over 1 million page views
3. Twenty-three articles and features were prepared for the website during the period
4. The development of a high-resolution photographic database of Barbados’ biodiversity and ecosystems was continued
5. Three reports were shared to the public via the Biodiversity Clearing House
6. The public was engaged through website comments.

Social Media

1. The Section continued to administer the “Biodiversity Barbados” social media pages in 2023 through the consultant social media manager
2. The consultant submitted vision boards for posts to be reviewed, ensuring Section input
3. Over 110 posts were made to both the Instagram and the Facebook page, educating the public about activities undertaken and inspiring a sense of pride in the island’s biodiversity

Virtual Art Exhibition

With the advent of Covid-19, the Biodiversity Conservation and Management Section was forced to look for innovative ways to share its messages on the importance of Biodiversity utilizing the website.

Noting the success of the previous virtual art exhibition, the Ministry once again worked with artists in Barbados to highlight biodiversity and the environment. In 2023, the theme for the exhibition was “Building a Shared Future for All Life”.

Preventing Costs of Invasive Alien Species Project

Through the Invasive Alien Species project, community outreach was carried out in the Bath and Welches communities through the Bath IAS Management pilot, and Gemswick through the Barbados Leaf-Toed Gecko Bio-Secure Site pilot. Several communities abutting gullies including, *inter alia*, Jackson, Belle, Canewood, Green Hill and Bibby’s Lane were also engaged through the Gullies pilot. Informational brochures were designed and circulated during door-to-door outreach efforts and posted to the Section’s Clearing House Mechanism for access to a wider audience.

Infrastructure Development Projects

Preventing Costs of Invasive Alien Species

Through the Invasive Alien Species project, the Cabinet of Barbados agreed to the use of lands at Paragon for the establishment of a biosecure area for the conservation of the gecko. This project includes the construction of pest-proof fencing at the site, as well as the fabrication of artificial rocky substrate as part of the habitat augmentation process.

Also, through the Invasive Alien Species project, the Section has commenced the process of identifying methods of strengthening the biosecurity of Plant Quarantine and Veterinary Services offices at the Ports of Entry.

Environmental Enhancement and Maintenance

National Clean and Green Project

This Section continued to play an integral role on the ‘National Clean and Green’ project steering committee, providing technical guidance as required, supporting public outreach and community engagement efforts, and assisting in the implementation of the monitoring programme.

Gullies

A Consultant Field Officer within the Section was awarded a NOAA-CERMES Climate Resilience Enhancement Programme Research Fellowship, activities for which included biodiversity and risk assessments within gully ecosystems. The Section conducted clean-up activities to remove solid waste and invasive alien species in several gully ecosystems. This included Jackson and The Whim with

assistance from the National Conservation Commission, among other clean-up activities in various sites in collaboration with Clean Up Barbados operated by the Future Centre Trust.

Preventing Costs of Invasive Alien Species

Through the Invasive Alien Species project section policies and projects were developed to increase Barbados' resilience to the impacts of invasive organisms. During the period, a consultant was engaged to augment habitat within the proposed bio-secure area, designated by Cabinet for the exclusive use in the conservation of the leaf-toed gecko, guided by the Habitat Augmentation Guidelines. Habitats were subsequently created, and the consultant is awaiting the start of the 2024 wet season to transplant vegetation to improve survivorship post-planting.

National Governance Processes, Partnerships and Cooperation Arrangements

The shared responsibility for the management of Biodiversity and ecosystems in Barbados has led to the section working with the University of the West Indies, the National Conservation Commission, Coastal Zone Management Unit, Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Unit, Plant Quarantine Division, Veterinary Services Department, Royal Barbados Police Force, Barbados Defence Force, NGOs, and individuals.

Working Group on Biodiversity

1. The Working Group on Biodiversity is convened by Cabinet to assist in the implementation of the Biodiversity Conservation and Management work programme by providing necessary technical and scientific advice on biodiversity research, project development and implementation and biodiversity policy development. The Working Group comprises representatives from the Government of Barbados, Statutory Bodies, the University of the West Indies, NGOs and private citizens. Quarterly meetings of the Working Group on Biodiversity were convened face to face and considered:
 - a. biodiversity research proposals
 - b. proposals for the export of local species
 - c. project reports and activities
 - d. the development of various project concepts.

Extra-National Governance Processes, Partnerships and Cooperation Arrangements

Partnerships with regional and international organizations such as the Wild Isle Trust (formerly the Barbados Sea Turtle Project), UNEP, UNDP, CARICOM, CAB International, IUCN, Flora and Fauna (formerly Flora & Fauna International, and BIOPAMA were forged and resulted in funding opportunities and capacity building through training.

Multilateral Environmental Agreements

One focus of the Biodiversity Conservation and Management Section is the servicing of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and meeting international commitments through the development and execution of projects aligned with national priorities.

As the national focal point, the Biodiversity Conservation and Management Section is responsible for critical duties including the preparation of national reports, the development of national strategies and action plans, the setting of national targets related to biodiversity and land management, and the implementation of national work programmes to meet these targets. The section also facilitates communication between the Ministry and the various Secretariats; disseminate information; respond to various requests, collaborate with other stakeholder groups; monitor, and promote and/or facilitate national implementation of these MEAs including:

1. the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
2. the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB);
3. the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
4. the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean Region (SPAW); and
5. the Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNCCD).

Membership in the MEAs commits Barbados to implement national activities and provides an opportunity to source grant funding.

The Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an international environmental treaty that has as its objectives, the conservation of biodiversity or all living organisms; the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of biodiversity.

Barbados ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in December 1993. The country is therefore bound by the provisions of the Convention and has the responsibility for ensuring that the provisions of the Convention are met, in accordance with the particular conditions within the country and with the financial, technical and other resources available.

Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region (SPAW)

Adopted as the second protocol to the Cartagena Convention, Barbados has been a Party to the Protocol since October 2002 and Participated in the 10th meeting of the SPAW STAC virtually and the 12th meeting of the SPAW COP in Aruba.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNCDD)

The Convention is the principle international instrument addressing the global problem of land degradation and drought. Parties to the Convention are currently working on setting Land Degradation Neutrality Targets. Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) has been defined as a state whereby the amount and quality of land resources, necessary to support ecosystem functions and services and enhance food security, remains stable or increases within specified temporal and spatial scales and ecosystems.

In 2023, a project financed through external funding from the Global Mechanism was completed to develop Barbados' Land Degradation Neutrality Targets Setting Programme (LDN-TSP). This is one of the aforementioned requirements for Barbados under the UNCCD and it allowed Barbados to formalize its commitment to sustainable land management, through integrated spatial planning and complementing existing documents, such as the revised Physical Development Plan (2017) and the Roofs to Reefs programme.

No monies were disbursed to Barbados. The process was managed entirely by the UNCCD Secretariat. However, US \$30,000 was made available to Barbados to convene workshops and to support communication and public awareness in support of the project.

The Convention's five strategic objectives are:

1. To improve the condition of affected ecosystems, combat desertification/ land degradation, promote sustainable land management and contribute to land degradation neutrality.
2. To improve the living conditions of affected populations.
3. To mitigate, adapt to, and manage the effects of drought in order to enhance resilience of vulnerable populations and ecosystems.
4. To generate global environmental benefits through effective implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
5. To mobilize substantial and additional financial and non-financial resources to support the implementation of the Convention by building effective partnerships at global and national level.

Preventing Costs of Invasive Alien Species Project

In 2023 the Biodiversity Section continued the implementation of the Invasive Alien Species Project of the Convention on Biological Diversity, assisted by finances from the GEF.

The goal of the Invasive Alien Species Project is the prevention, early detection, control and management of frameworks for invasive alien species (IAS) that emphasize a risk management approach by focusing on the highest risk invasion pathways of Barbados and OECS countries. The project grants Barbados access to US\$1.25 million under its STAR allocation from the GEF. Barbados was able to embark on activities for the recovery of the critically endangered, endemic Barbados leaf-toed gecko. Other activities focused on the protection of critically endangered migratory marine turtles and control of the invasive lionfish.

The Preventing Costs of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) Project developed policies and projects to increase Barbados' resilience to the impacts of invasive organisms.

Biodiversity Enabling Activities Project

Barbados continued implementation of the GEF funded Biodiversity Enabling Activities project. This project was approved by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which is the implementing agency for the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project has three (3) objectives: the assessment of the capacity required to implement an efficient access and benefit sharing system; the assessment of the

capacity required to implement an efficient system to mitigate against the establishment of alien invasive biological diversity; and the development of a Clearing House Mechanism which is an internet-based information repository. During the period, a draft Taxonomic Assessment, a draft Invasive Alien Species Assessment, and a draft Ecosystems Management Report were received and reviewed.

The Wetlands for the Future Project

The Wetlands for the Future Fund supports the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. The US administered fund is giving priority to projects in the Caribbean and Central American countries. The fund is available to support activities in the area of training and capacity building, documentation, wetlands management and tools and research.

The Ministry of Environment and National Beautification received funding of \$20,000 USD to prepare Barbados' Wetlands Inventory as required under the Convention and to identify the preliminary elements of a management plan for the Long Pond Site. The National Wetland Inventory and a Strategic Plan for the Long Pond Conservation Area were completed and delivered in April 2023. These documents will serve as valuable enabling activities for follow-up work and development of a larger national wetlands-focused project.

Project Development

In 2023, the Section developed various broad concepts for biodiversity and ecosystem-related projects. These were collated and subsequently approved by the Cabinet of Ministers.

Effective Conservation and Management of Key Wetland Ecosystems and Development of the Long Pond Conservation Area

Work commenced in December 2023 to commit funds from the GEF-8 STAR allocation. Discussions were initiated with WIRRED, Ramsar, Conservation International and UNEP on the further development of a project. This project concept involved institutional review and strengthening of the policy related to wetland conservation, filling gaps in knowledge highlighted by the National Wetlands Inventory, community engagement to ensure wise-use, and development of cost recovery mechanisms for sustainability of benefits post-project. A partnership with Ramsar and Conservation International as the executing agency was explored and the Ministry liaised with WIRRED to partner in the development and application of project.

TABLE 29: PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Name	Value			Status
	Grant Funding	GOB Contribution		
	Cash (USD)	Cash (USD)	In-Kind (USD)	
IAS	1,250,000	30,000	1,697,412	In-Progress
CBER	863,241	80,000	4,322,256	In-Progress
BEA	286,800	10,000	57,000	In-Progress

UNCCD 7th National Report	100,000		80,000	In-Progress
Wetlands for the Future	20,000	32,000	30,000	Completed
LDN	Technical support			Completed

Source: Ministry of Environment and National Beautification

PROJECT MANAGEMENT COORDINATION UNIT

The Project Management Coordination Unit (PMCU) developed the integrated Solid Waste Management Policy to properly manage all solid wastes with a focus on waste minimization. This policy was also developed due to the need to change from a linear economy, where the ultimate fate of waste is disposal, to a circular economy, where more emphasis is placed on reuse and recycling. The Cabinet accepted the policy and drafting instructions were prepared for legislation to regulate waste generators, transporters, processors and disposers. To this end, work continued on the National Recycling Programme for Barbados with a focus on plastics, in the initial stage. Work on recycling initiatives will extend to other wastes in a phased manner.

The PMCU entered into a partnership with Common Seas on the Plastics Drawdown Project. This project first sought to understand the full scale of the island's plastic pollution problem in order to identify the most suitable policies to address it. The Country Report was presented to the MENB in May 2023 and the Technical Report was presented in June 2023. These documents outlined the leakages of plastic items and the most appropriate policies to reduce the leakage and tackle plastic pollution. A key stakeholder workshop was executed in September 2023 that brought together stakeholders from the Government of Barbados, Private sector, NGOs and Academia. It discussed the current situation with respect to plastics pollution in a collaborative way and narrowed down the most relevant issues and recommended policies. Coming out of this workshop a National Action Plan was prepared. The strategies proposed are in-keeping with circular economy principles and would result in decreased generation of plastic waste and ultimately the need to dispose of this waste to landfill.

The PMCU completed the final requirement for the Adaptation Measures to Counter the Effects of Climate Change (AMCECC) project with the completion of the close-out Audit. The Audit was accepted by USAID in August 2023.

The PMCU will continue with its education and outreach programme to sensitize the various publics about responsible waste management in order to raise awareness and change negative behaviours such as littering and indiscriminate dumping.

POLICY RESEARCH PLANNING AND INFORMATION UNIT

Climate Crisis

Barbados engaged in adaptation and mitigation to address the adverse impacts of climate crisis related issues through its ratification of the UNFCCC in 1994 and the Kyoto Protocol in 2000 and subsequently, the MENB was designated the National Focal Point of the Convention. In 2023 as a response to the prevailing increasing effects of the climate crisis, Barbados undertook the following:

- On May 24, 2023, Hon. Mia Amor. Mottley, S.C., M.P. signed a Non-Reimbursable Financing Agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank in the amount of US\$1.25 million for the "Strengthening Institutional and Technical Capacity for Barbados to meet the Transparency requirements of the Paris Agreement" project. It is envisaged that this project will contribute to strengthening the country's transparency framework through the design and implementation of a fully functional and harmonized domestic Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system for the effective implementation of the country's nationally determined contributions (NDC) and other transparency-related activities. The project's sub-components are:
 - Sub-component 1 - Improvement of Barbados' Greenhouse Gas Inventory;
 - Sub-component 2 - Improvement of the Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system and strengthening Barbados transparency framework for compliance with the Paris Agreement; and
 - Sub-component 3 - Knowledge management and capacity building on transparency of climate crisis action as established by the Paris Agreement.
- Pre-conditions for first disbursement of funds for the "Strengthening Institutional and Technical Capacity for Barbados to meet the Transparency requirements of the Paris Agreement" project were met by the deadline of November 24, 2023.
- In its capacity as the Focal Point, the Ministry coordinated the delegation to the 28th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP28) and Associated Meetings in November - December 2023. A key achievement was Barbados' role in establishing the Loss and Damage Fund. This fund once operationalized, will aid developing countries susceptible to the adverse effects of the climate crisis in their recovery efforts in response to the economic and non-economic loss and damage incurred as a result of extreme weather events and slow onset events.

In addition, the ministry also provided support and participated in the following climate crisis related events in 2023:

- The European Climate Stocktake Event on October 27, 2023.

- World Children’s Day event hosted by the UNICEF on November 20, 2023, under the theme “The Climate Crisis as Child Right’s Crisis”.
- Commenced Barbados’ re-engagement in the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (60th Session). The IPCC provides the science base for monitoring the global climate and hence enables global policy making re the planet and human well-being.

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established in 1994 under the joint auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank (WB) in order to assist with the protection of the global environment, as well as to promote environmentally sound and sustainable economic development. The GEF serves as the financial mechanism for the following four Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to which Barbados is a Party:

- a) the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
- b) the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
- c) the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; and
- d) the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

In its role as the GEF Operational Focal Point for Barbados, in 2023 the MENB:

- Issued a letter of endorsement for the "Accelerating Transition to Climate Resilient Agri-Food Systems (BATCRAS)" project on July 17, 2023. US\$1 million from Barbados' Global Environment Facility (GEF) System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) was allocated to this project. The project aimed to accelerate the transition to climate-resilient and low-emission agri-food systems and strengthen the adaptive capacity of farmers in Barbados. It will also support climate-resilient and low-emission food production, including increasing the climate-responsiveness of decision-making.
- Engaged at the Ministerial level in the Seventh Global Environment Facility Assembly, Vancouver, Canada, August 2023. A major outcome was the ratification of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund which is a new source of funding for the protection of species and ecosystems globally.
- Also issued was a letter of endorsement for the CSIDS-SOILCARE Phase 2: Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Multi-country Soil Management Initiative for Integrated Landscape Restoration and Climate-Resilient Food Systems" project, on October 13, 2023. US\$1.5 million from Barbados' GEF STAR was allocated to this project, and it is anticipated that the project will contribute to the improvement of livelihoods, increase climate resilience of food systems and effectively restore lands in the Caribbean by applying principles of sustainable soil and land management.

Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol (MP)

Since October 1992, Barbados has been a Party to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone. In 1994, the National Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) and Hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) Management Programme, Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy (MENB) was established to develop,

manage and implement Montreal Protocol compliance related activities. The Programme and its projects are largely supported by the funding approved by the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol (MLF), and implementation assistance is typically provided through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and/or the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

To sustain compliance with Barbados' obligations under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, the following activities were completed in 2023:

- Seventy-two (72) requests for permission to import Montreal Protocol controlled chemicals were assessed, and 100 percent responses were communicated to the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) and applicants within two working days over the period January 1, 2023, to December 31
- Stakeholder Consultations were convened related to:
 - Licensing and Certification in the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Sector consultations, and the associated technical report was finalized in April 2023.
 - Close out of the Hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) Phase-out Management Plan (HPMP) Stage II Preparation Project.
 - Preparation of the Ozone Depleting Substances Phase-out Policy to inform the drafting of legislation to manage the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (RAC) sector
 - The adjustment to the import and export licensing process for refrigerants and other Montreal Protocol controlled chemicals

From inception, execution of the Barbados Country Programme under the Montreal Protocol was supported by an Institutional Strengthening Project (ISP) as its core component. In 2023, the following ISP related matters were undertaken:

- Small Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) for Institutional Strengthening Project (ISP) Phase VIII in the amount of US\$149,760.00 was prepared and signed with the United Nations Environment Programme in August 2023.
- Small Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) for the First Tranche of the Hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) Phase-out Management Plan (HPMP) Stage II Implementation Project in the amount of US\$36,000.00 was prepared and signed with the United Nations Environment Programme in September 2023.

Also, for the reporting period the following activities took place under the ODS and HFC Management Programme:

- The 2022 ODS and HFC consumption reports were submitted to the Multilateral Fund (MLF) Secretariat and the Ozone Secretariat by May 1, 2023, and September 1, 2023, deadlines respectively.
- A Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign for the Ozone Programme was implemented between June and December 2023. Approximately 110 radio and 33 television advertisements were aired sharing key messages related to the work of the Programme.

- A statement by the Minister of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy was published in the three local newspapers in observance of World Ozone Day on September 16th, 2023.
- Ministerial participation in the Bureau of the 34th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer (MOP34) as the Vice-Presidential representative for the Latin America and Caribbean States on October 21, 2023.
- The Honourable Adrian Forde, M.P. Minister, MENB was selected by consensus by representatives of the Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC) to serve as the Vice-Presidential representative for the GRULAC on the Bureau of the 35th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.
- Technical and Ministerial participation in the 35th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer (MOP35) held in Nairobi, Kenya on October 23-27, 2023.
- Electronic Application forms to request permission from the ODS and HFC Management Programme to import and export refrigerants and other Montreal Protocol controlled chemicals was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology (MIST) and Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) and launched on November 1, 2023.
- A draft Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) Phase-out Policy was prepared and a stakeholder consultation to present the draft was convened on November 17, 2023.

Green Economy Policy and Programme Support

- On June 16, 2023, the GEF approved the implementation of the SIDS Blue – Green Economy Knowledge Transfer Hub. The project will be executed at the University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus in collaboration with the MENB. Its objective will be to enhance knowledge uptake and application within academia and communities of policy and technical practice in SIDS by implementing a systematic approach for extraction and translation of green-blue knowledge elements generated by GEF projects.
 - The Ministry enabled the UN Partnership for Action on Green Economy, the ILO, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to work with the NCC, SSA and Barbados Community College to develop an Environment Services Technician Programme for “workers on the environment frontline” in Solid Waste Management and Green Space Development.
- The Green Business partnership pilot initiative was rolled out for the Wildey Business district with the support the Ministry of the Environment, UN PAGE, the ILO, the Barbados Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Ashley Lashley Foundation. The pilot programme sought to provide support for the ‘greening’ or environmental sustainability of businesses within the Wildey area, with a focus on youth involvement.

- With the support of UN PAGE and UNEP, the PRPI collaborated with UWI Cave Hill to commence a comprehensive trade and policy assessment of the Environmental Goods and Services Sector's contribution to the "Greening", Growth and Development of Barbados.
- Specifically, the assessment will address, inter alia:
 - The extent to which Barbados engages in the use of Environmental Goods and Services (EGS) to prevent environmental degradation and enhance the sustainability of economic growth and development.
 - Developing an updatable register (database) of participants in the EGS sector and the types of goods and services readily available and accessible domestically.
 - Identifying the sub-sectors within the standard international trade classification of goods which may be applied to the EGS sector for the domestic economy. This is required in order to assess the value and volume of imports and exports of EGS.
 - Undertaking a micro-economic assessment of the EGS sector with regard to production and costs for input into a trade-based framework for comparative cost. The aim is to examine the extent to which the sector is or can become internationally cost-competitive in order to have a positive impact on contributing to the reduction of the unfavourable trade imbalance of the country while enhancing the "greening" of the economy.
 - Assessing the Usage Gains from international trade in EGS on the environmental sustainability and economic development of Barbados. The purpose is to examine how the country's participation in international trade in EGS affects the greater availability and lower prices of EGS due to the reduction (or removal) of trade barriers and the increase in competitive pressures through international trade.
 - Participated in meetings related to plastic pollution, environmental governance and the XXIII Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean and lobbied for resource deployment for the Caribbean SIDS Programme. Additionally, the Government of Barbados through the Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy will serve on several intersessional bodies such as the Executive Committee of the Regional Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Regional Environmental Information Network of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.
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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The mission of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) is to promote sustainable practices through control, regulation and enforcement to enable future generations to inherit an environment which is healthy, productive and enjoyable. The Department's goal is to ensure adequate protection of environmental resources and human health from harmful pollutants discharged to the environment from anthropogenic and other sources of environmental contaminants.

Specifically, the objectives of the Department are to:

Ensure proper building development in the interest of public health; monitor and control water quality; ensure proper disposal of solid waste; ensure adequate management and control of hazardous chemicals and the management, control and disposal of obsolete chemicals and chemical waste; protect marine resources from all sources of pollution through adequate monitoring and control of the discharge of pollutants into the marine environment; monitor airborne contaminants at established sites; monitor sound levels at established sites; monitor and control the prevalence of derelict buildings and derelict vehicles; assess the effects of noise in the community and institute corrective measures where necessary; ensure effective coordination and planning for emergency incidences such as oil or hazardous chemical spills; educate the public on all environmental matters; and fulfil obligations under various Multilateral Environmental Agreements to which Barbados is a Party or Signatory.

Report on Departmental Activities

Policy Development, Monitoring and Evaluation achievements/outcomes

During 2023, the Environmental Protection Department prepared, reviewed and provided comments on the following pieces of draft legislation and policy:

- The Marine Pollution Control (Discharge) Regulations 2023;
- Water Reuse Bill, 2023.
- Barbados Water Authority (Amendment) Bill 2023
- Barbados Water Authority (Water Protection Zones) Order, 2023
- The Draft Radiation Protection, Safety and Security Bill and Regulations; and
- The Draft Barbados National Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) Phase-out Policy.

Additionally, the Department participated in activities that contributed to the development of policy and legislation such as the Barbados Water Authority (Amendment) Act and the Barbados Water Authority (Water Protection Zones) Order. The EPD also coordinated the implementation of the project “Update of National Oil Spill Contingency plan and National Dispersant Use Policy for Barbados,” and updated the Ambient Air Quality Policy Paper and submitted it to the Ministry of Environmental and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy. There are severe and inadequate human resources within some sections which currently only have one employee that lead to implementation challenges.

Resource Protection and Monitoring of Air Quality

In 2023, continuous monitoring of the ambient air quality continued at the Treasury Building in Bridgetown; the D’Arcy Scott Roundabout in Warrens, St. Michael; the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology in Husbands, St. James; and the Environmental Protection Department in Dalkeith, St. Michael. This resulted in one hundred and sixty-one thousand, nine hundred and nineteen (161,919) data points being collected from the four sites.

Noise Monitoring

The Department continued activities related to the ongoing noise monitoring project at the semi-permanent noise monitoring station at the Christ Church Post Office and at the Treasury Building in Bridgetown. Twenty-one thousand seven hundred and sixteen (21,716) measurements of sound levels were recorded.

Groundwater Monitoring

Water quality monitoring of groundwater supply wells and springs was conducted on a monthly basis at twenty-one (21) drinking water supply wells; nine (9) agricultural supply wells; and six (6) springs. Two hundred and thirty-eight (238) groundwater samples were collected as part of the EPD/Barbados Water Authority sampling programme. The samples collected from drinking water supply sources were analysed for parameters such as chlorides, nitrates, total dissolved solids and faecal coliform and the

results compared to the World Health Organization (WHO) Drinking Water Quality Guidelines (“WHO guidelines”). The following were reported for specific areas across the country:

- Individual and average chloride results above the guideline value of 250 mg/L for taste and acceptability to the consumer.
- Seven (7) public supply wells exceeded the WHO guideline value for total dissolved solids of 600 mg/L.
- The nitrate guideline of 11.3 mg/l [Nitrate-N] was not exceeded at any public supply site.
- The faecal coliform guideline value of 0 CFU/100ml was exceeded at some locations. Water abstracted from public supply wells are chlorinated prior to distributed and a resampling and confirmation protocol is in place for the detection event above the adopted standard.

Beach Water Monitoring

During 2023, the monitoring of eighteen (18) west and south coast beaches was conducted on a weekly basis where one thousand eight hundred and thirty-five (1,835) samples were collected. The results of the analyses were compared to the proposed List of Prohibited Concentrations proposed for faecal coliform and enterococci under the Marine Pollution Control Act 392A. There were zero (0) failures of the USEPA geometric mean criteria for enterococci, and zero (0) failures of the USEPA geometric mean criteria for faecal coliform.

Widescreen Analysis

In 2023, Widescreen groundwater sampling was conducted at the Belle, Hampton, Benn Spring, Carlton, Molyneux, and Waterford public supply wells. The budgeted amount for the Widescreen programme, was \$134,000.00 for laboratory analysis.

Oil Spill Contingency Planning

During 2023, the department updated the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan and the Dispersant Policy for Barbados. An Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Stakeholder Questionnaire to the relevant stakeholders was prepared and a risk assessment session with stakeholders was conducted to determine the Gap Analysis, Risk Assessment, Readiness Evaluation Tool for Oil Spills (RETOS) Analysis, and an Updated National Oil Spill Contingency Plan for Barbados.

The Department also conducted a National Workshop on Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response including the use of RETOS with the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre – Caribe (RAC-REMPEITC).

Budget and Expenditure

Total expenditure spent on sample analysis and freight charges was \$148,657.50. Total expenditure for the abovementioned resource protection and monitoring programmes is presented in

Table 302.

Table 30: The Expenditure for the Programmes under Resource Protection and Monitoring.

Programme	Expenditure (\$)
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<i>Ambient Air Quality</i>	118,355.30
<i>Noise Pollution Control</i>	25,022.75
<i>Widescreen</i>	148,657.50
<i>TOTAL</i>	292,035.55

Source: Environmental Protection Department

Implementation Challenges

Some of the implementation challenges during 2023 included:

- Significant delays in receiving parts and consumables for the YSI probes and La Motte chlorine kits. This resulted in delays in starting the continuous monitoring at selected public supply wells. These delays have been attributed to global supply chain challenges.
- Cancellation of the widescreen sampling event planned for July due to the shipper having equipment issues.
- Delays in the transfer of funds to the overseas laboratory resulted in planned widescreen sampling dates being pushed back, which in turn affected the subsequent sampling dates.
- The procurement of specialized parts and services for air and noise monitoring equipment encountered difficulties as they are not locally available and were subject to supply chain issues resulting in items being out of stock. Furthermore, slow payment processing times caused delays in receiving parts or services. Shipping and customs processing times have also exacerbated wait times.
- The lack of accurate, reference method equipment impairs the Environmental Protection Department to produce air quality data of high quality.

The Department has been operating on a skeleton staff with three of the four posts in the Air and Noise Pollution Control Section remaining vacant. This has severely impacted the execution of the work plan. Additionally, bottlenecks within the system have caused lengthy delays in reaching and implementing resolutions, as multiple approvals are necessary.

Regulatory Monitoring and Enforcement

Achievements/Outcomes

Building Development Applications

The Department received one thousand six hundred and ninety-three (1,693) building development applications in 2023, and processed one-thousand one hundred and eighty-nine (1,189) applications, including those received prior to 2023. Table 3113 shows the distribution of processed applications by the decision made.

Table 31: The Building Development Applications processed in 2023

Type of Application	Decision					Total
	Approved	Refused	Approved with Conditions	Withdrawn	Acknowledged	

Residential	349	163	307	10	67	896
Commercial	10	30	27	2	189	258
Residential/Commercial	3	7	8	0	4	22
Agriculture	0	0	1	0	8	9
Industrial	0	1	1	0	1	3
Commercial/Agriculture	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	362	201	344	12	270	1189

Source: Environmental Protection Department

Complaints and Investigations

A total of fifty-eight (58) complaints were received by the Department during 2023, the classification of these complaints is shown in the table below.

Table 32: Complaints received by EPD in 2023

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number of Complaints</i>
<i>Air</i>	35
<i>Marine</i>	10
<i>Noise</i>	13
<i>Solid Waste and Hazardous Materials</i>	0
<i>Water Quality</i>	0
<i>Total</i>	58

Source: Environmental Protection Department

Eleven (11) complaints were investigated; ten (10) were related to marine pollution complaints and one (1) related to noise pollution. Investigations of complaints are affected and outstanding due to human resource challenges and other technical issues associated with maintenance of monitoring equipment.

Applications Processed

Fifteen (15) applications were processed and approval granted for the removal of asbestos and twenty-six (26) applications for fiberglass containing materials which were disposed at the government approved disposal facility at Rock Hall, St. Philip.

Derelict Structures and Vehicles Removed

Forty-seven (47) derelict structures were demolished and three hundred and thirty-five (335) vehicles were removed during the year 2023.

Expenditure

For 2023, the Department spent one hundred and seventy-two thousand and seventy-seven dollars and fifty cents (\$172,077.50) to demolish forty-seven (47) derelict buildings and one hundred and thirteen thousand five hundred dollars (\$113,500.00) was spent in the removal of six hundred and ninety-one (691) vehicles as part of the Derelict Buildings and Vehicles programme.

Implementation Challenges

The EPD experienced several challenges during the year that contributed to the high number of unprocessed applications:

- A reduction of the staff available to process development applications with no replacement, and the vacant posts of Draughtsman Technician and Buildings Development Inspectors further compounded the challenges with processing applications.
- Limitations in existing legislation to control environmental pollution and the absence of the appropriate legislative tools to address new pollution matters.

Education, Communication and Public Demonstration and Initiatives

Achievements/Outcomes

The Environmental Protection Department's education, communication and public demonstration initiatives undertaken during 2023 included:

- Updating the department's website.
- Prepared and distributed Issue 22 of the "EnviroFocus" Newsletter electronically via the Data Processing Department and the EPD's Website.
- The department hosted five (5) interns as part of the 2023 Summer Internship Programme for six (6) weeks.
- Maintenance for the website and development of the Air Quality Index.
- Airing of environmental tips on radio and television.
- Delivery of presentations to students and schools.

Budget and Expenditure

The budgeted amount for the internship programme was \$6,000.00 and expenditure was \$3,250.00. Expenditure for the website maintenance was \$8,460.00 and for the airing of environmental tips was \$28,291.45.

National Governance Processes, Partnerships and Cooperation Arrangements

Achievements/Outcomes

Consultation Files

In 2023, the EPD received one hundred and nine (109) consultation files from the Planning and Development Department and commented on sixty-nine (69) consultation files.

Pesticide Import Applications

During 2023, the EPD received twenty-four (24) applications from the Pesticides Control Board (PCB) for the importation of pesticides which were vetted and recommendations were submitted to the Pesticides Control Board (PCB).

Radioactive Materials Import Applications

All of the thirty-four (34) applications submitted for the importation of radioactive materials in 2023 were approved.

Advisory Committees and Boards

The Department was represented on the advisory committees listed below:

- Planning and Priorities Committee
- Pesticide Control Board;
- Planning and Development Board;
- Plumbing Code Technical Committee;
- Sub Committee of the South Coast Sewage Plant Upgrade;
- Emergency Management Advisory Council (EMAC);
- the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Health and Safety (NACOSH);
- the Gas Cylinders Committee;
- AMR Inter-Collaborative Task Force;
- Environmental Impact Assessment Committee; and
- National Oil Spill Response Committee.

Extra-National Governance Processes, Partnerships and Cooperation Arrangements

Achievements/Outcomes

The Global Atmospheric Passive Sampling (GAPS) Network

The Global Atmospheric Passive Sampling (GAPS) Network, which is coordinated by Environment Canada, seeks to monitor persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and priority air pollutants at monitoring locations across the globe. Barbados as part of the GAPS network, facilitated the deployment, retrieval, and shipping of samples.

Basel Convention

In order to fulfil Barbados' obligations under the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the following activities were conducted in 2023:

- The Annual Report for 2021 was submitted to the Technical Secretariat on February 15, 2023.
- Compiled responses for questionnaires related to national reporting and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) were submitted to the Secretariat.

Cartagena Convention

- Attended the Extraordinary Bureau Meeting Cartagena LBS and SPAW Protocol Bureau members.
- Attended the continuation of the IGM 20/ COP 17.

Chemical Weapons Convention

The EPD conducted the following activities in 2023 to meet Barbados' obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC):

- Hosted and facilitated the OPCW Online Self-Assessment Tool (OSAT) Workshop for Caribbean States at the Barbados Fire Academy, Arch Hall, St. Thomas, on January 25 and 26, 2023;
- Prepared and submitted Barbados' Annual Report under Article X of the CWC.
- Participated in the OPCW 24th Regional National Authorities Meeting, Brasilia, Brazil from July 4 to 6, 2023;
- Hosted and participated in the OPCW Sub-Regional Forum on the Implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, Bridgetown, Barbados October 3-5, 2023; and
- Represented Barbados at the 25th Annual Meeting of National Authorities to the Chemical Weapons Convention, November 22-25, 2022 in The Hague, The Netherlands.

International Atomic Energy Agency

To meet Barbados' obligations under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the following activities were completed in 2023:

- Undertook activities under the project RLA9087: Building Capacity and Sustaining the National Regulatory Bodies
- Barbados, through the EPD, signed-on to the project RLA2022016 – Improving radiation safety in IAEA_CARICOM Member States. This project is a continuation of previously approved projects RLA 9081: Strengthening Cradle-to-Grave Control of Radioactive Sources and RLA 9082: Establishing and Strengthening Sustainable National Regulatory Infrastructures for the Control of Radiation Sources, and complements the existing project RLA9087.
- Participated in IAEA Regional Workshop to Promote the Universalization of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, Santo Domingo, May 9-12, 2023.
- Participated in the IAEA School of Drafting Regulations Workshop, Vienna Austria, June 5-16, 2023.
- Participated in the IAEA Barbados Committee Meeting
- Reviewed the Regulatory Infrastructure Development Project Workplan and participated in Virtual Information Meeting for National Focal Points on July 18, 2023.
- Represented Barbados at the Technical Meeting of the Points of Contact for Integrated Nuclear Security Sustainability Plans (INSSP), Vienna Austria, October 23 to 25, 2023.

GEF: Global Monitoring Project (GMP II)

The objectives of the GEF funded project entitled "Supporting the Implementation of the Global Monitoring Plan of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Latin America and the Caribbean" include strengthening national monitoring capacity and building regional analytical capacity for POPs, and participated in the Final Meeting of the UNEP/GEF project held in Mexico from June 8 to 9, 2023.

GEF Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in Small Island Developing States (ISLANDS)

The objectives of the activities conducted under the regional GEF funded project *Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development in Small Island Developing States (ISLANDS)* is to seek to address the sound management of chemicals and waste in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Integrating, Water, Land and Ecosystems Management (IWECO)

The Environmental Protection Department continued activities as part of the five-year project *Integrating, Water, Land and Ecosystems Management (IWECO)* during 2023. The EPD participated in several activities and meetings associated with the IWECO such as:

- Hedgerow Rehabilitation Project
- Marine Pollution Control Strategy
- Regional Environmental Monitoring Data Portal (REMDAP)

CREW+

Activities under the GEF funded CREW+: An Integrated Approach to Water and Wastewater Management (IWWM) Using Innovative Solutions and Promoting Financing Mechanisms in the Wider Caribbean Region continued in 2023.

The Development of International Legally Binding Instrument for Plastic Pollution

The Environmental Protection Department took part in several activities related to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) sessions to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, which could include both binding and voluntary approaches, based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the full life cycle of plastics.

Budget Allocations and Expenditure for 2023

Expenditure of approximately, \$30,000.00 BDS was spent for both the National and Extra-National Partnerships, and agreements related primarily to the funding of members of the delegation who participated in the sessions of the INC.

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT UNIT

Coastal Planning

Planning and Development Department:

- The CZMU continued to routinely receive and assess all applications to develop lands within the coastal zone management area via the E-Planning System.

The CZMU actively participated in all pre-application consultations and virtual platform meetings.

- Routine assessment continued with fifty-five (55) applications received from the Director, Planning and Development for assessment to develop coastal lands.
 - Application No.: 1239/08/2016A – Construction of a new berth and extension of the container park. Retention of existing berth and ancillary structures at the Bridgetown Port.
 - Application No.: 1179/08/2019B – Demolition of buildings and erection of buildings and structures for retail, restaurant, office, residential, recreational, light industrial, medical and heritage tourism purposes at the Pierhead, Cavan's Lane, Bridgetown, St. Michael.

- Application No.: 1173/08/2019 C - Erection of a hotel and ancillary facilities at Lot P and Q, Six Mens, St. Peter
- Application No.: 0847/06/2023 A - Erection of a new commercial boat haul out, boat storage and boat repair facility at Lot 3 and 4, Spring Garden, St. Michael.
- Application No.: 0381/03/2024 A – Erection of a new waste-to-energy facility to replace the existing incinerator in the Barbados Port, which will provide up to 1 MW of energy through the incineration of waste from ships and emissions control at the Bridgetown Port, University Row, Bridgetown, St. Michael.

Coordinate the CZMU's Public Education Outreach Programme:

The CZMU's public education outreach programme continued its work plan during the reporting period as follows:

- Guest lecture for visiting students and their professors from foreign Universities (e.g., McGill University).
- Guest lecture and coastal field trip for the students of the Barbados Community College.
- Delivered "Tsunami Ready" presentations at Deacons Primary School, Gordon Greenidge Primary School and the Arthur Smith Primary School as part of Exercise Caribe Wave 24.
- Delivered a virtual Power Point presentation on careers in Integrated Coastal Zone Management at the national career showcase.
- Delivered a Power Point presentation at the Alexandra School on careers in Integrated Coastal Zone Management.
- The annual CZMU Calendar and a Newsletter were also published.

Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme :

- The Christ Church West and St. James Central constituencies completed their tsunami ready recognition process. As part of the recognition programme, major outputs were: the installation of the Tsunami inundation and evacuation map signs, an updated National Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and communication equipment for the representatives of the District Emergency Organizations within the project area.
- Mr. Fabian Hinds (Coastal Planner) was elected as Chair of the regional Task Team Tsunami Ready at the meeting of UNESCO IOC in Nicaragua.

Student Internship Programme and Committee Membership:

The Summer Internship Programme 2023 hosted six interns and membership on the following committees continued:

- Environmental Impact Assessment Committee

- Barbados World Heritage Committee
- National Oil Spill Committee
- Technical Standing Committee on Coastal Hazards

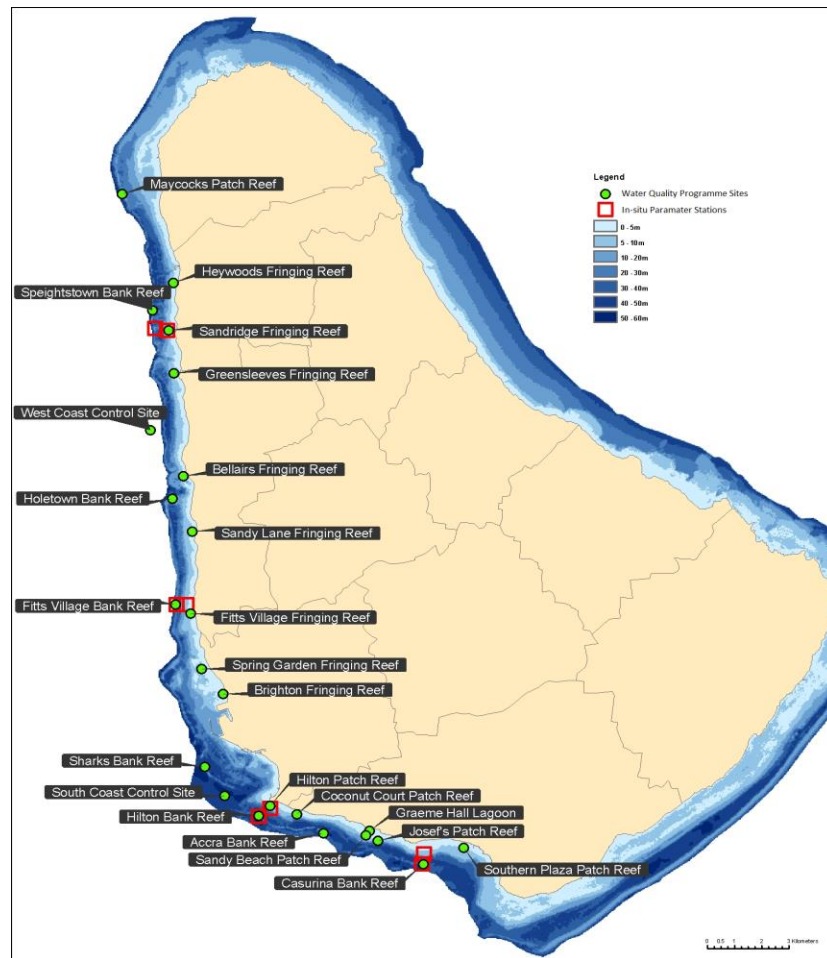
Marine and Research

Water Quality Monitoring

The health of corals hinges on the state of their immediate environment. Ongoing water Quality monitoring programmes targeted parameters in reef habitats which may affect the health of corals. There are two distinct programmes:

- The water quality monitoring programme
- In-situ parameter stations (see Figure below for locations).

FIGURE 30: MAP SHOWING LOCATIONS OF WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAMME SITES AND IN-SITU PARAMETER STATIONS



Source: Coastal Zone Management Unit

Water Quality Monitoring Programme

This programme is part of a long-running monitoring regime aimed at detecting stressors at a number of offshore (10) and nearshore (14) sites on the West and South Coasts of Barbados. Monitoring events occur every three (3) months and measure parameters using a multi-parameter probe as well as through laboratory analysis of collected water samples. There were four monitoring events between March 2023 and March 2024.

In-situ parameter stations

Temperature loggers are deployed at eight (8) sites along the South and West coasts of Barbados with four (4) allocated to each coast. For each bank reef (offshore) site, a corresponding shallow fringing reef (inshore) site was selected. Temperature loggers sit on stakes on the reef substrate recording temperatures once an hour over a 5-month deployment period. Loggers are subsequently recovered, data downloaded and loggers redeployed.

Mooring Buoy Programme

To prevent occurrences of reef damage from vessel anchors, the Marine Section of the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU) carried out its Mooring Buoy Programme. The programme provided moorings for vessels obviating the need for use of anchors. This programme was ongoing for more than a decade and at present comprises thirty-three (33) buoys (17 moorings on the South coast and 16 moorings on the West coast). As part of the programme, additional moorings are installed as the need arises and

existing moorings are inspected on a monthly basis as part of their ongoing maintenance to ensure that they remain functional and available for use by vessels.

Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease Monitoring

During the 2023-2024 period, Barbados' coral reefs were affected by the Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease. The CZMU mobilized to apply treatments to affected corals and monitor the efficacy of the approach. Additionally, a comprehensive survey was conducted at twelve (12) locations within the pool of forty-seven (47) sites under the Coral Reef Monitoring Programme.

Conferences and Workshops

Coral Rescue Exchange: In-Situ Coral Rescue Approaches Roatan, Honduras

MPAConnect, an initiative of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coral Reef Conservation Programme hosted a training workshop on Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease Management and Response funded by the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) and MPAConnect. The main objective of the exchange was to facilitate training and professional exchange of experience relating to stony coral rescue with a focus on assisted sexual fertilization of coral species affected by stony coral tissue loss disease.

Coastal Engineering

Quarterly Beach Profile Monitoring

The CZMU completed the quarterly (March, June, September and December) beach profile monitoring at fifty-five (55) sites around the coastline of Barbados.

Oceanographic Equipment Retrieval/Deployment

The oceanographic equipment was retrieved quarterly where the oceanographic information downloaded and the equipment redeployed. This information is used in the calibration of numerical and physical models and the design of coastal engineering structures.

Coastal infrastructure Site Maintenance

During the reporting period the landscaping maintenance at the following sites were undertaken:

- Richard Haynes Boardwalk (Undertaken under the Coastal Infrastructure Programme)
- Welches Beach Improvement Project (Undertaken under the Coastal Infrastructure Programme)
- Hometown Beach Improvement Project (Undertaken under the Coastal Infrastructure Programme)
- Hometown Waterfront Improvement Project (Undertaken under the Coastal Risk Assessment Management Programme)

Structural maintenance was also undertaken on the Richard Haynes Boardwalk where three sections of the boardwalk decking were repaired.

B. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SECTOR

During the period under review, as part of the continuous efforts to advance the Science and Innovation Sector as an integral component of national development, the Ministry of Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology focused on the several initiatives inclusive of the Science and Technology Summer Camp, Digital Ambassadors Project and a Science and Technology Festival.

Science And Technology Summer Camp

As technology advances at an accelerated pace, it is increasingly essential for young children to acquire proficiency in Science and Technology (S&T). To this end during the period of review a five-week S&T summer camp was conducted for children aged 6 to 11, aimed at providing an engaging and enjoyable environment for learning about Science and Technology. The camp which engaged approximately 70 children also focused on cultivating vital skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Throughout the duration of the camp, the children engaged in the exploration of various scientific concepts and the application of technological skills. The objective was to inspire young minds and foster a sustained interest in science and technology. Expert facilitators guided the children through diverse hands-on activities and experiments, encompassing coding, biology, physics and engineering.

Digital Ambassadors Project

In 2023, approximately 140 students from the University of the West Indies participated in the Digital Ambassador's give-back program. The beneficiaries were trained in three key areas of interpersonal and digital skills: 1) Soft skills; 2) ICT Literacy (information communication technology); and 3) Cybersecurity. Participants from this program were adequately equipped to engage in collaborative projects or initiatives when required.

S & T Festival

In 2023, the fourth Science and Technology Festival was held by the Ministry of Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology (MIST), in collaboration with the Faculty of Science and Technology at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus, and various private and non-governmental organizations. The event served as a platform for showcasing innovative ideas and projects, facilitating engagement with experts, and stimulating growth in innovation, technology, and entrepreneurship through a range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical (STEM) exhibits. The national science festival, the largest of its kind in Barbados emphasizes the importance of supporting technology, science, innovation and entrepreneurship in building a successful knowledge-based society and a thriving economy. At its core, the 3-day event sought to:

- To showcase to the Barbadian society, particularly the youth, the compelling advancements and impressive achievements in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).
- Identify key strategies and initiatives required to advance the agenda.
- Establish a national consensus on the essential role of STEM in driving socio-economic development.

The S&T Festival also featured: 1) a Science and Technology debate competition for secondary school students; 2) technology-based demonstrations, discussions, and presentations; and 3) various hands-on STEM activities and experiments.

C. THE RENEWABLE ENERGY SECTOR

Over the reporting period, the development of the Renewable Energy sector continued to be advanced. Of the totaled 974 million kWh sales of electricity reported in 2023, 13 percent (97.8 MW) was generated by renewable energy (RE) sources. Distributed RE generators, primarily rooftop photovoltaic (PV) systems, contributed 126.4 million kWh (13 percent) while 15.01 million kWh (2 percent) was generated from the utility owned 10MW solar PV plant in 2023.

During 2023 renewable energy connections were constrained by the technical limits of the grid and the degree to which storage can be added. However, as at September 2023, the Division of Energy was in possession of applications to license PV installations which exceeded the planned requirement of 340 MW for solar. The challenge continued to exist for the utility to add additional variable renewable energy where there is limited regulatory and licensing arrangements for energy storage systems.

KEY POLICIES AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Energy Transition and Investment Plan (ETIP)

During the reporting year, the Division of Energy substantially completed work on the Energy Transition and Investment Plan (ETIP). This was prepared by the Energy Transition Planning team of Sustainable Energy for All in close co-operation with the Division and other key government agencies and local stakeholders.

The objective of the study was to assess the least cost optimized energy transition pathway for the whole economy in all sectors. The intention is to account for the total energy systems costs for various scenarios compared to business as usual to achieve net-zero emissions from energy supply and use.

The study highlighted various technology pathways associated with an accelerated net-zero transition and the investment needs and cost benefits of the same throughout the period of 2020 – 2040. By using a multi-criteria analysis and through the provision of other evidence, the ETIP is intended to provide a policy roadmap which will increase Barbados' economic development while addressing climate change goals with the energy transition.

At the end of 2023, work was substantially completed and the draft of the ETIP was being subjected to a final review ahead of presentation to the Cabinet for approval. The work and findings were brought into alignment with timelines defined in the IRRP, but final results showed that the more feasible timeline for NZE was set at 2035.

Renewable Energy and Storage Hosting Capacity Study (Hosting Capacity Study)

The Ministry of Energy and Business (MEB) executed a Renewable Energy and Storage Hosting Capacity Study (Hosting Capacity Study). The study was expected to recommend guidelines and operational procedures which can be utilized to identify the quantity of solar photovoltaic (pv) generation which can be integrated onto the grid to facilitate independent power producers (IPPs) who were applying for licences.

It was anticipated that the proposed guidelines would provide a framework for the efficient integration of systems onto the grid thereby promoting grid reliability and improving power quality.

As the study was an initial step to providing the MEB with an improved understanding of the technical capacity of the grid as well as the performance of the interconnected systems, additional work is being undertaken to complete the study.

Development of an Energy Storage Framework for Barbados

The Cabinet in 2022 agreed to the recommendations of the consultancy which aimed to create a framework and workplan for developing an Energy Storage Policy for Barbados which satisfied the tenets of the Barbados National Energy Policy and aligned with the new utility license and licensing regimes.

As such, the Energy Storage Framework for Barbados consultancy commenced in 2023 and highlighted a systematic approach to the successful implementation and integration of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) into the existing energy system.

The proposed immediate actions focus on regulatory adjustments and stakeholder engagement with a view to foster a transparent and efficient environment to facilitate energy storage investments.

The focus of the framework was to address the regulatory, technical and financial aspects of efficiently integrating BESS into the renewable energy sub-sector and its effect on enhancing grid stability.

Project Monitoring and Coordination Team (PMCT)

The Project Monitoring and Coordination Team (PMCT) continued to oversee the execution of the Barbados National Energy Policy (BNEP) 2019-2030, with specific responsibility for project management; monitoring and evaluation; procurement; administrative support; technical support; financial management; public education and communication.

During 2023, the PMCT concluded the consultancy to "Implement a Change Management Strategy for the Barbados National Energy Policy 2019 - 2030". The final report included a Change Management Framework (CMF), with detailed principles methodologies, tools, and templates. The consultancy included the sensitization of various groups within ministries via capacity building and sensitization training sessions, according to key change management roles required for effective change management: primary sponsors, people managers, change agents/influencers and train-the-trainers, along with general (open) sensitization sessions. The Train-the-Trainer strategy was purposefully included to ensure, that post consultancy, there is continuing awareness cascaded across the stakeholder agencies.

Stakeholder engagement continued throughout 2023 to enhance communication and collaboration and to track progress with BNEP's implementation. Additionally, the PMCT in its mission to move the country from a fossil fuel-based economy to one completely based on renewable energy sources by 2030 hosted eight (8) change management training workshops. These workshops sensitized a total of 77 persons across 11 agencies (both private and public sector) who were trained in change management principles, methodologies, tools and planning, underpinned by the Change Management Framework for BNEP.

During 2023 the PMCT with the support of the IDB concluded the consultancy to develop a "Competitive Procurement Framework for Procurement of Utility Scale Renewable Energy and Storage in Barbados" which delivered a competitive procurement framework for utility scale RE and Storage inclusive of recommendations for procurement procedures and protocols (auction design and roadmap for auction implementation), roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, evaluation of bids and power purchase agreement.

On December 03, 2023, The Government of Barbados acting through the Division of Energy, Ministry of Energy and Business and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) signed a Transaction Advisory Services Agreement (TASA). The Transaction Advisory Services Agreement (TASA) will govern the relationship between the Government of Barbados (GOB) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) acting through its advisory operations arm, IFC Public Private Partnerships Transaction Advisory (IFC Advisory) towards the development of a utility-scale onshore wind farm at Lamberts and Castle , The TASA outlines the services to be provided by the IFC to assist the GOB in achieving the objective of identifying the private sector participant (PSP) to design, finance, build, operate and maintain the wind farm at Lamberts and Castle. As lead transaction advisor, IFC Advisory will undertake this work over the course of twenty-four to thirty months.

Sustainable Energy Framework (Sefb)

Public Sector Smart Energy Program PSSEP

The objective of the Public Sector Smart Energy Programme (PSSEP) was to support the promotion and implementation of renewable energy generation and energy efficiency technologies in the public sector in an effort to reduce Barbados' fossil fuel dependency; promote sustainable energy and therefore contribute to the country's competitiveness.

The Program was completed in February 2023 and sought to promote and implement the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures that are viable in the public sector. Ultimately, the Program sought to reduce Barbados' fossil fuel dependency, promote sustainable energy, and therefore contribute to the country's competitiveness.

The specific objectives of the Program were to: (i) install renewable energy systems in government buildings and retrofit these buildings and public lights with energy efficient technologies; (ii) implement the renewable energy pilot project; and (iii) assist with capacity building, institutional strengthening and public awareness in the energy sector.

Component 1 of the Programme sought to retrofit government buildings with renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, and public lights with energy efficient technologies. This included (i) the retrofit of public lights with energy efficient technologies, the project attained 88 percent or 25,792 LEDs changed, 3 percent more than planned; (ii) the retrofit of at least 12 government-owned buildings with energy efficient technologies, the project retrofitted 15 government buildings; and (iii) the installation of solar photovoltaic systems on 13 government-owned buildings. The resulting energy savings from energy efficient interventions was 15,227 MWh. Additionally, the project capitalized on cost savings and attained 3.494 MW of installed photovoltaics on 22 buildings, resulting in 11,531 MWh of electricity generated by the end of the programme.

Regarding Component 2, the project conducted pilot projects and studies for encouraging renewable energy use. This included: (i) a fleet of government electric vehicles powered by renewable energy sources which will be used to promote low carbon transportation technologies in Barbados, in the original project plan, eight (8) electrical vehicles were to be procured. At the end of the project, ten (10) electric vehicles were procured, including two (2) electric buses. These ten (10) electric vehicles were also outfitted with data loggers and a vehicle wrap to promote project financiers and the use of electric vehicles. These electric vehicles resulted in fuel savings of approximately 955 barrels of oil equivalent. Additionally, an electric vehicle study was undertaken to assess the performance of the electric vehicles procured under the programme and also to provide a strategy for deploying e-mobility across the public service; and (ii) studies culminating in a business prospectus to facilitate the construction and operation of an ocean power plant, under the project, two ocean energy bodies of work were undertaken, firstly Geographic Information Systems to prepare a marine spatial map of the ocean space around Barbados and 'Locational Guidance' report which identified areas suitable for installation of selected ocean energy technologies including fixed and floating offshore wind, and Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC). Secondly, an ocean energy study to undertake a wide range of technical and environmental studies to investigate the feasibility and facilitate the construction of a large-scale Ocean Energy power plant or array in Barbados.

Both studies were completed and detailed an action plan for ocean energy in Barbados. These bodies of work were also supported by a Marine Technical Specialist to help with the procurement and contract management of these consultancies.

Capacity building, institutional strengthening, and public awareness activities were the focus areas under Component 3. This component sought to (i) conduct capacity building and training to upgrade professional and technical skills, with thirty-six (36) people earmarked for training. This target was surpassed with over 462 people being trained in energy-related matters. A Capacity Development Strategy Plan including comprehensive training programs for the sector was completed. Twenty-seven (27) workshops were conducted, ranging from Introductory workshops on Sustainable Energy Education to Energy System Analysis and Modelling.

Additionally, a Communications and Engagement Strategy for Public Awareness for Sustainable Energy Use in Barbados was developed which brought awareness of the Barbados National Energy Policy and the 2030 goals of a 100 per cent carbon neutrality.

The Sustainable Energy Investment Programme (Smart Fund II)

The Sustainable Energy Investment Programme (Smart Fund II) was conceptualized to encompass the activities and lessons learnt from the Energy Smart Fund I Programme which was implemented over the period February 7, 2011, to June 7, 2017.

The general objective of the programme is to further reduce Barbados' dependency on imported fossil fuels through the increased use of Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) technologies. Specifically, the Programme will engage a three-pronged approach targeted at the residential, business/private and public sector that encourages the use of alternative sources of renewable energy; promotes energy conservation, reduces the oil import bill and preserves the environment.

The BBD \$90,926,284.00 project is financed by a BBD loan from the Inter-American Development Bank of \$60,750,000.00 and grant resources from the European Union to the tune of BBD \$30,176,284.00, the programme is expected to be implemented over six years.

The specific objective of the Sustainable Energy Investment Programme II is to: (i) reduce electricity consumption by implementing RE and EE measures; (ii) reduce Green House Gases (GHG) emissions from liquid fossil fuels used for power generation and transport; and (iii) increase institutional capacity for the management of RE and EE programs. The program is structured as follows:

Component I: Technical Assistance and Loan Facility for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the form of a package of financing instruments aimed at providing funding and capacity building for energy users to design and develop renewable energy and efficiency projects. This will also include a pilot project for SMEs and small hoteliers;

Component II: Promoting Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Investment Programme within the public sector with the retrofit of approximately one hundred (100) buildings; and

Component III: Capacity Building and Institutional Support aimed at enabling the successful implementation of the programme.

Although the Loan Agreement was signed in February 2020, the Non-Reimbursable Agreement was only signed on February 18, 2021, for the grant funds from the European Union. The overall Programme is 45 percent completed as it is in the implementation phase.

As part of the activities under Component 3, Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening, 46 persons from the Ministry of Energy and Business (MEB), Fair Trading Commission (FTC), Government Electrical Engineering Department (GEED) and Town and Country Development Planning Office (TCDPO) received training in Energy Efficiency Certification, Renewable Energy Certification and PVSyst Applications during the period September 2023 to September 2024.

Under Complementary Studies, this activity seeks to implement comprehensive studies on sustainable energy and energy transition that are complementary to the implementation of the Barbados National Energy Policy (BNEP). The three (3) areas of study are Development of a National Energy Efficiency (EE) Action Plan for Barbados; Implementation of a plan for deployment of electric mobility and other low emissions transport; and financial institutions operating in Barbados on innovative financial model schemes for EE/RE projects.

The interventions prescribed under Components 1 and 2 of the Programme have necessitated that the Programme be environmentally and socially responsible in the removal and disposal of inefficient technologies. As such, an Environmental and Social Specialist was procured during the period 2022 to 2024, to help manage the process. The individual consultant was responsible for the successful preparation and implementation of all environmental, social, and health-related actions under the Programme. Particularly, for the implementation of the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and the Comprehensive Waste Disposal Strategy (CWDS). This consultancy is to be completed by September 2024.

D. CREATIVE ECONOMY AND CULTURE

Culture and the cultural industries are pivotal in the transformation, strengthening, growth, and diversification of Barbados' economy, while also enhancing social cohesion. The cultural industries and heritage economy provide Barbados with a distinctive and robust competitive advantage in the global market.

In 2023, the Cultural Policy and Research Section emphasized the crucial role of culture and cultural industries in transforming and diversifying Barbados' economy while enhancing social cohesion. The establishment of a framework for the cultural industries, creative economy, and heritage economy involved mapping these sectors to assess their economic contributions and gather demographic data. Strategies for disaster risk management were also developed to protect cultural heritage.

Several initiatives were launched to preserve tangible and intangible heritage, safeguard intellectual property rights, and facilitate access to external markets through cultural cooperation agreements, all aimed at generating employment in the cultural sector. Notably, a project supported by the UNESCO International Fund for Cultural Diversity commenced, consisting of five phases, the first phase which was completed in 2023, focused on training in cultural sector mapping, including data collection, survey tool development and preliminary database establishment.

Additionally, the Cultural Policy and Research Section aimed to strengthen Barbados' creative economy by facilitating market access in Africa and the Americas through three memoranda of understanding (MOUs). These agreements were established with the Republic of Ghana, the International African American Museum, and the Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor Commission in South Carolina. The MOUs promote the exchange of information and expertise in film, visual arts, fashion, genealogy, and cultural heritage, while also supporting tourism through promotion, marketing, and investment planning.

BARBADOS NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

During the period under review, the Barbados National Register of Historic Places continued to document buildings, sites, objects, and structures of cultural and historical significance through the Barbados National Register of Historic Places. This initiative was based on the premise that local communities would be actively involved in the process, encouraging them to identify places they considered to be of heritage importance. The Register also promoted the use of best practices in marketing heritage sites, enabling the country to explore development opportunities that could generate economic benefits where feasible.

NATIONAL INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

The Barbados National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage serves as a comprehensive catalog of cultural elements reflective of the nation's social and economic evolution. It includes practices from diverse communities, including immigrant, indigenous, and minority groups. A key component of this initiative is the digitization program led by the ROAD Project (Reclaiming Our Atlantic Destiny), which aims to provide an uncensored narrative of Barbados' history. This effort includes digitizing vital historical documents, such as transatlantic slave records and colonial archives, enhancing accessibility to important information. Given that Barbados possesses the second-largest collection of British

transatlantic slave records, this initiative holds significant implications for both local and global historical contexts.

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

In response to the climate crisis, Barbados has enacted disaster risk management strategies to safeguard its cultural heritage. The Cultural Policy and Research Section has trained policymakers, archivists, and conservators to develop emergency plans for heritage assets, essential for the heritage economy and national identity. This initiative also includes training for security and emergency services on cultural asset preservation. Funded by the UNESCO 1954 Convention, the project "Strengthening and Protecting Barbados' Cultural Property" focuses on digitizing and conserving slavery records while developing contingency plans. With the first two phases completed in 2023, the project aims to establish Barbados as a Centre of Excellence for paper conservation in the Caribbean.

BARBADOS' HERITAGE SUPPORTING CLIMATE ACTION

The Cultural Policy and Research Section is advancing a project focused on adaptive reuse to enhance the heritage sector's contribution to reducing Barbados' ecological footprint while supporting the economy and national identity. A notable example is the restoration of a former slave hospital at Grantley Adams Secondary School, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Heritage Foundation. The restored facility will serve as a training center for performing arts, benefiting both students and local residents.

PROJECTS EXECUTED

Accelerate to Export

In its first phase, the project facilitated participation in the NY NOW Summer Trade Market from August 13-16, where artisans showcased their products under the Rising Artisan Banner. Each artisan used a 5x10 booth, engaging over 10,000 attendees and averaging 26 retailer interactions per day. The four artisans generated 40 serious leads, some of which were converted into orders. The initiative successfully exposed four artisan businesses to global retailers, achieving 100 per cent gender participation and focusing on micro enterprises.

Host International Buyers in Barbados

During the Buyers Trip in November 2023, a symposium was attended by 68 creative industries MSMEs. Five international buyers, along with local experts from Export Barbados, Sagicor Bank, and Price whirl, provided insights to 49 participating companies. Additionally, 20 artisan businesses were introduced to retail buyers.

Distribution Programme- Music - Digital Distribution (TuneCore) Workshop

The third-year workshop, featuring representatives from Warner Chappell Music and Believe Music, focused on collective artist projects, providing key knowledge for promoting music through digital distribution to generate sales. The initiative employed 18 individuals, including two photographers, two

videographers, a graphic artist, a social media expert, three sound technicians, four set design and stage personnel, and three experts, along with two volunteers.

Fashion Cluster & Accra Fashion Week

The Fashion Cluster participated in Accra Fashion Week, showcasing designs aimed at distribution. Three designers sold items during the event, and two received orders directly linked to the showcases. Additionally, designers were invited to stock their items in stores in Angola and Ghana. The mission to Ghana facilitated exploration of bilateral engagements and significant research with the Association of Ghana Industries, Association of Ghana Apparel Manufacturers, Joyce Abalo College of Creative Design, Design Institute Africa, Export Ghana, and the Shippers Association of Ghana.

Distribution Programme- Music - Calypso Forward

The Calypso Forward initiative focused on artists and repertoire (A&R) for five musicians, encompassing talent scouting and creative development. Completed deliverables included electronic press kits (EPKs), cover art, and lyric videos, alongside the successful launch of their EPs. Payments for digital distribution through TuneCore were processed, employing over 25 Barbadian service providers to support the five local artists involved.

E. MICRO, SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISE SECTOR

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector remains a critical component of the Barbadian economy especially with regards to the development of the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Several initiatives through various Business Support Organizations (BSOs) such as the Student Entrepreneurial Empowerment Programme (SEED) of the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus and Export Barbados (BIDC), have played an integral role in entrepreneurial development as part of a wider network of BSO's called Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) Barbados.

The Small Business Association was responsible for starting six businesses which created and retained seven jobs and formalised three businesses over the period. The Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) contributed to the formalization of six businesses, created 25 jobs, provided three grants with a value of \$7,500 and funded \$40,000 to the Barbados Youth Business Trust. The Enterprise Growth Fund Limited contributed to the sector's performance by establishing one new company, creating 36 jobs, retaining 24 of them and providing nine grants amounting to \$837,765.46. They also provided 28 loans totaling \$5,164,107. These contributions highlight the impact that MSMEs have on not only the economy as a whole, but especially with startups and entrepreneurs.

FundAccess approved loans totaling \$1,378,249.36 to twenty-seven (27) clients. Ten (10) were new businesses and seventeen (17) were expansions. Also approved for this period, were eight (8) refinanced loans totaling \$858,159.94. A total of forty-three (43) job opportunities were created.

The Barbados Trust Fund Limited (BTL) has put together custom equipment packages at reduced rates for participants, with bonus supplies provided and a manageable repayment structure for the participants. Loan funding is also provided through the BTFL. It has also partnered with many other private sector organizations such as FundAccess to allow more funding to clients who require more funding in excess of \$10,000 as well as the entity Equip4You in executing the community-based project,

“Be Your Own Boss.” This project is aimed at equipping individuals within communities with sector-specific knowledge and expertise in the areas of landscaping, general maintenance, and auto valet services. Equip4You is an established supplier of commercial and industrial equipment, and their knowledge and expertise come from the internal training and usage of the products they provide.

TABLE 33: BTFL LOAN DISBURSEMENT 2023

Sector	Applicants	Loan Value	%	Male	Loan Value	Female	Loan Value
Agriculture	44	\$238,586.86	11.7	25	\$136,831.37	19	\$101,755.49
Culture	4	\$20,173.84	1.0	2	\$12,993.82	2	\$7,180.02
Manufacturing	55	\$314,021.78	13.3	19	\$111,399.21	36	\$202,622.57
Retail	108	\$615,650.64	25.1	29	\$151,205.10	79	\$464,445.54
Services	188	\$1,025,231.66	47.2	81	\$436,105.33	107	\$589,126.33
Tourism	6	\$38,318.44	1.7	4	\$20,000.00	2	\$18,318.44
TOTAL	405	2,251,983.22	100	160	\$868,534.83	245	\$1,383,448.39

Source: Barbados Trust Fund Limited

The total number of employment opportunities due to loan disbursements amounted to 684 with services contributing 366, retail 156, manufacturing 79 and agriculture 67. Tourism and culture rounded up the figures with 11 and five respectively.

Cooperatives

There are currently 41 registered co-operatives and 32 friendly societies with approximately \$14 million in assets and total membership of 1,500. Training continued with business clusters proposed by BTFL with the objective of having them transitioning to co-operatives in the business market. This initiative brings various businesses together to work under the co-operative umbrella and to have access to the benefits which are inherent with co-operatives. The clusters comprise of wine and spirit, beauty products and consumables among others. One cluster has already been transformed into the Unified Trust Co-operative Society Limited. This transformative measure with the BTFL will be an ongoing process.

Co-operatives were encouraged to use all available platforms to promote their goods and services as well as to improve product quality, labelling and branding. Innovative members of Emerging Brands and the Unified Trust Co-ops are examples of co-ops that are constantly striving to improve product quality and service delivery. Apart from one small business of the Emerging Brands transitioning from a producer of pepper sauce brand in the domestic market to becoming an exporter to the U.K market, other co-operatives have utilized the International Food and Science Centre of Export Barbados in Newton Christ Church, to position themselves for large scale production of their products in the domestic market or to be an exporter.

V. IV. SPECIAL FEATURE- GREEN CLIMATE FUND

Green Climate Fund's Assistance to Barbados' National Development Strategies and Plans

What is the GCF? - The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was developed out of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It was established in 2011 as a mechanism for developing countries to access climate finance for mitigation and adaptation projects and programmes. GCF funded

projects and programmes should be focused within six (6) investment criteria: Impact Potential; Paradigm Shift Potential; Sustainable Development Potential; Country Ownership; Efficiency and Effectiveness; and Needs of the Recipient.

Mitigation, projects and programmes submitted to the GCF should result in reduced emissions from energy generation and access; transport; forests and land use; buildings and cities, and industries and appliances.

Adaptation, projects and programmes submitted to the GCF should result in increased resilience and strengthened capacity in the areas of health, food and water security; livelihoods of people and communities; ecosystem and ecosystem services; and infrastructure and built environments. These submitted projects and programmes can also contain benefits for both mitigation and adaptation purposes.

Objectives of the GCF- The recently announced “50by30 vision” for the GCF by its Executive Director, Ms. Mafalda Duarte, aims to enable the GCF to efficiently manage US\$50 billion by 2030 through undertaking the following:

- Enhancing support for the most vulnerable people and communities;
- Mobilising private sector participation and investments;
- Reinventing the partnership model including the accreditation process;
- Expediting project review and approvals; and
- Pivoting operations to prioritise broad-scale, system-transforming programmes over isolated projects.

There are currently two hundred and forty-three (243) projects and programmes, valued at US\$51.9 billion (including GCF financing and co-financing) which were approved by the Board of the GCF. Of this amount, the GCF has committed US\$13.5 billion to approved projects and programmes; while US\$11.2 billion has been utilised in projects and programmes under implementation.

Countries can access funds from the GCF through Accredited Entities (AEs) and Delivery Partners, which can include institutions in the public sector, private sector, civil society and multilateral organizations. They can access GCF funding for proposals through two (2) of their funding windows; (i) the Project Preparation Facility (PPF) and (ii) the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme.

Accredited Entities (AEs)

Accredited Entities partner with the GCF to implement projects. They are guided by the GCF’s investment framework and the priorities of the Governments of developing countries. They also convert concepts and ideas into actions, and work alongside countries to carry out a range of activities that include the development of funding proposals and the management and monitoring of projects and programmes.

Direct Access Entities (DAEs)

Direct access modality is designed to help developing countries exercise ownership of climate crisis funding and better integrate it with their national climate crisis action plans.

The GCF board has taken several decisions to foster direct access which includes prioritizing national direct access entities for accreditation, commissioning and analysis of measures to facilitate increasing the amount of direct access proposals in the GCF pipeline, and making support available for DAEs. In order for direct access to work, National Designated Authorities (NDAs)/Focal Points (FPs) should nominate regional, national, or sub-national institutions for accreditation to the GCF.

DAEs can be public, private or non-governmental entities once they pass a vetting process, receive GCF Board approval of accreditation and enter relevant legal agreements it can submit funding proposals for GCF backed projects and programmes.

National Designated Authorities (NDAs)/Focal Points (FPs)

National Designated Authorities (NDAs) are government institutions that serve as the interface between each country and the GCF. They provide broad strategic oversight of the GCF's activities in the country and they communicate the country's priorities for financing low-emission and climate resilient development.

Funding Proposals

A standard funding proposal can be classified according to four (4) categories:

- i) Micro – up to a maximum of US\$10.0 million in total project costs;
- ii) Small – within a range of above US\$10.0 million and a maximum of US\$50.0 million in total project costs;
- iii) Medium – within a range of above US\$50.0 million and a maximum of US\$250.0 million in total project costs; and
- iv) Large – greater than US\$250.0 million in total project costs.

Project Preparation Facility

The Project Preparation Facility targets direct access accreditation entities in moving innovative project ideas from concept to formal submissions. Under the GCF's Project Preparation Facility (PPF), countries, through AEs, can access financing up to a maximum of US\$1.5 million.

Simplified Approval Process

The Simplified Approval Process was adopted by the GCF's Board in 2017, and it simplifies and streamlines the approval of certain small-scale projects. It also reduces the documentation to be provided with funding proposals, and streamlines the review and approval process. Support for funding proposals can also be obtained under the GCF's Simplified Approval Process (SAP) up to a maximum value of US\$25 million.

Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme

The GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme were updated in 2023, and previously allowed countries to access up to US\$1 million per year for activities relating to Capacity Building; Strategic Frameworks; Pipeline Development; and Knowledge Sharing and Learning. Support for the objective of National Adaptation Plans (NAP) and Adaptation Planning Processes is limited to a maximum of US\$3 million per country.

Currently, and effective from 2024, the templates to access grant resources under the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme have changed, affecting the access of new readiness support that includes countries being able to access US\$4 million over the GCF's programming period 2024-2027, instead of utilising an annual allocation. In addition,

- i) Readiness Needs Assessments will have to be undertaken for all multi-year readiness proposals and any readiness proposal valued over US\$1 million; and
- ii) countries are strongly encouraged to have Climate Investment Planning Frameworks in place, which would guide the development of proposals for Readiness Support.

Projects in Barbados financed by the GCF - Barbados has four (4) approved national funding proposals with the GCF; and is part of one (1) approved regional funding proposal and two (2) international funding proposals. With respect to readiness, Barbados had three (3) approved national proposals, one (1) of which was cancelled; and is part of one (1) regional proposal. Barbados has also accessed support under the GCF's Project Preparation Facility (PPF), as part of one (1) regional project.

- *The Water Sector Resilience Nexus for Sustainability in Barbados (WSRN-S Barbados) project*, approved by the GCF Board in 2018 and launched in 2019, for which the GCF provided US\$27.2 million in grant funding.
- *The R's (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) for Climate Resilience Wastewater Systems in Barbados (3R-CReWS) project* was approved by the GCF Board in October 2022 and was launched in 2023. The AE for this project is the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC). This project is currently under implementation and during November 2023 Barbados' NDA office provided a no-objection letter to the GCF on the request of the CCCCC for an eight-month no-cost extension to the project (from April 2024 to December 2024), in order to complete activities. The GCF provided US\$39.4 million for this project, and the AE is the CCCCC. Implementation of this project has commenced.
- *The Blue Green Bank (BGB) proposal* was approved by the GCF Board during July 2023. This project, for which the AE is Pegasus Capital Advisors, is valued at US\$25.5 million, of which the GCF will provide US\$15.5 million in equity. Legislation for the operation of the BGB is currently being drafted.
- *The Roofs to Reefs Programme (R2RP) (BRB-RS-002)* is Barbados' sustainable development model for the next ten (10) years. The Roofs to Reefs Programme (R2RP) is a holistic, integrated national initiative for the resilient development of Barbados. The programme provides for a response at the individual, community and country levels, and presents an integrated public investment programme founded on principles of sustainable development and climate crisis resilience. The GCF approved readiness support in 2019 to assist in the development of the R2RP through, stakeholder engagement (e.g. workshops on R2RP); a Comprehensive Vulnerability and Technological Needs Assessment; and Feasibility Analysis which would assist in the development of at least four (4) concept notes. The value of this Grant Agreement Readiness Support between the Government of Barbados and the GCF which was signed during July 2023 is US\$624,527. The first disbursement for this project (valued at US\$208,175) was transferred and received on November 17, 2023. The process for the hiring of consultants under this project has commenced, and an interim progress report for BRB-RS-002 was submitted to the GCF.
- *The Barbados One Million Trees Food Security and Mitigation Initiative (BRB-RS-003)* was approved by the GCF in January 2022. This support will be provided to the Ministry of Environment and National Beautification (MENB) which will implement the initiative, assist

them in designing the tree planting programme, and engage with relevant stakeholders and develop a concept note for the programme. This readiness support is valued at US\$401,104. To date, the Readiness Support Grant Agreement was returned to the MENB for some adjustments and further information before the Legal Opinion is finalized by the Solicitor General's (SG's) Office.

- *Renewstable Barbados* is a private sector project which was approved by the GCF Board at its 37th Board meeting in October 2023. This project, for which the AE is the International Finance Corporation (IFC), is valued at US\$169 million, of which the GCF will provide US\$1 million in grant funding and US\$40 million in loan funding.
- *Scaling up the Deployment of Integrated Utilities Services (IUS)* to support Energy Sector Transformation in the Caribbean (Phase 1) is a PPF regional project which was approved in 2021, and Barbados is one of the participating countries. The completed funding proposal for this project should be submitted to the GCF by May 31, 2024.

Benefits of these projects to the Barbadian population

Apart from building resilience, and mitigation and adaptation capacities against the challenges of the climate crisis, these projects generate significant employment opportunities, and create avenues for the transfer of modern technological mechanisms and expert skills and knowledge in critical areas in the pursuit of finding solutions to the impacts of climate crisis events.

The Roofs to Reefs Programme (R2RP)-BRB-RS-002 is a sustainable development framework that aims to improve the social and environmental circumstances of Barbadians as they seek to adapt and mitigate against the effects of the climate crisis.

Its focuses on improving living conditions and making us more resilient to the impacts of the worsening climate crisis and related natural disasters while increasing our ability to recover quickly post-disaster. The Programme will improve the housing stock and access to water and sanitation, eradicating pit toilets (there are separate but related activities geared to reducing urban housing density), use solar and other green energy options to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and direct line electricity transmission, improve water quality, and reduce the volumes and impacts of waste (both solid and liquid).

These initiatives will lead to improvements in living conditions as well as the terrestrial and marine environments, including gullies and coral reefs. Trees and reef structures play critical roles in reducing the impacts of high intensity wind and wave events associated with tropical storms and hurricanes, thus leading to a more resilient environment and society.

The Water Sector Resilience Nexus for Sustainability in Barbados (WSRN-S Barbados) project aims to create a sustainable, resilient water supply for Barbados by implementing renewable energy solutions, increasing water capacity through rainwater harvesting and water storage, supporting adaptation funding, and raising awareness about climate crisis and the water cycle.

The Renewstable project primarily aims to provide Barbados with hydrogen power, along with solar PV.

The 3R CreWS project facilitates the enhancement of the health, wellbeing, and productivity of Barbadians through the use of carbon neutral and climate resilient water and energy management technologies and strategies that will ensure water is protected, managed, recycled, reused, and conserved.

The Blue Green Bank financing initiative is to assist the country in creating a financing mechanism to assist in funding climate crisis mitigation and adaptation projects and programmes, especially with private sector funding.

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The Scaling up of the Deployment of Integrated Utilities Services (IUS) to support Energy Sector Transformation in the Caribbean (Phase 1) is a PPF proposal such that when completed, it would seek to assist participating countries in reducing or avoiding greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and enhance climate resilience by increasing the uptake of distributed renewable energy (RE) technologies, energy efficiency (EE) measures, and other distributed energy resources (DERs) among the electric utilities' customers in the participating countries.

VI. V. SOCIAL SECTOR DEVELOPMENTS

A. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education Budget

Approved expenditure for the Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training (METVT) for the financial year 2023/2024 totalled \$587.4 million. This represents an increase of 3.1 percent when compared with \$569.5 million approved for the previous financial year and also represents 13.8 percent of the government's estimated total expenditure.

The government's investment in Basic Educational Development was demonstrated through a total allocation to this area of \$161.3 million, of which the majority - \$156.8 million – was allocated to Primary Education. The Education Sector Enhancement Programme (ESEP) received \$4.4 million, while Nursery Education was allocated \$61,498 for the third straight financial year.

Secondary Education received \$160.6 million, which represents a 6.0 percent increase when compared with the previous year's allocation. Tertiary Education was allocated \$185.4 million, representing a 2.8 percent increase over the previous year.

TABLE 34: APPROVED EDUCATION EXPENDITURE 2018/19 TO 2023/24

Programme	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Central Administration	20,619,512	14,311,625	15,727,208	16,217,958	15,256,853	19,155,893
Teacher Training	6,445,673	4,859,404	4,979,458	5,527,864	6,065,841	5,412,975
Primary Education	149,796,821	144,470,161	143,577,328	143,014,320	159,705,158	156,827,090
Nursery Education	279,857	313,250	131,498	61,498	61,498	61,498
Education Sector Enhancement Programme (ESEP)	7,480,019	4,831,291	9,375,597	2,707,276	6,843,893	4,435,233
Secondary Education	134,907,198	139,288,300	141,419,999	140,031,516	151,541,487	160,652,151
Tertiary Education	138,808,454	167,155,744	170,199,488	175,586,773	180,343,101	185,426,940
Special Services	36,305,534	33,280,352	31,460,599	27,861,375	29,842,601	34,882,945
Occupational Training	16,780,510	17,956,776	18,533,434	18,951,685	19,888,585	20,596,841
Total	511,423,578	526,466,903	535,404,609	533,283,665	569,549,017	587,451,566

Source: Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training

Economic Cost of Educating a Student

The two variables used to calculate this variable are student enrolments, as reported by institutions; and the actual public expenditure, as reported by the Finance Section of the METVT. It must be noted that variations in economic cost per student is affected by any increases or decreases in these variables.

The economic cost per student fluctuated over the academic years (2017-2018 to 2022-2023) covered for the post-secondary, non-tertiary, Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI); Barbados Community College (BCC) and Erdiston Teachers' Training College (ETTC) education levels; while the economic cost per student at the pre-primary and primary level and the secondary and post-secondary, non-tertiary levels increased gradually over time.

At the tertiary level, the University of the West Indies (UWI) had the highest economic cost per student for the review period. The decline to \$12,536.74 during the 2022-2023 academic year was due to an advance disbursement of funds to the previous year.

Enhancing Learning Outcomes – Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education

TABLE 35: ECONOMIC COST OF EDUCATING A STUDENT ACADEMIC YEARS 2017/18 TO 2022/23

	Expenditure per student by academic year (Bds\$)					
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Pre-primary and primary	5,017.74	5,400.77	5,550.65	5,852.14	7,678.53	8,414.98
Secondary and post-secondary; non-tertiary	5,857.00	6,299.88	6,480.00	6,367.93	6,991.91	7,330.13
Post-secondary; non-tertiary - SJPI	7,517.82	8,042.39	10,137.06	8,544.61	7,967.97	10,011.17
Tertiary - ETTC	12,878.27	9,265.18	7,634.43	10,959.91	11,766.45	10,933.20
Tertiary - BCC	7,746.31	7,050.63	6,043.86	6,616.92	6,876.89	9,371.24
Tertiary - UWI	22,979.61	20,777.30	18,040.18	16,012.39	19,638.74	12,536.74

Source: Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training

Notes: Actual public expenditure and student enrolments as reported by institutions for the academic years were used.

SJPI – Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology

ETTC – Erdiston Teachers' Training College

BCC – Barbados Community College

UWI – University of the West Indies

Coding and Robotics

The METVT sought to ensure that equal opportunities were provided to all students in every public educational institution to participate in this programme from nursery to tertiary educational levels. As a result, major procurement of robotics kits was undertaken at a cost of \$2.5 million. The Erdiston Teachers Training College (ETTC) also offered training to teachers. In addition, Innovation First LLC (Vex Robotics) also offered free online training and certification for all Barbadian teachers.

Student Councils/Governance

Student councils have been introduced at twenty-one (21) secondary schools. Consequently, the Barbados National Student Council was officially launched in April 2023. The rationale for these institutions was to create advocacy in schools for the relevance and inclusion of student voice. In addition, the student councils are responsible for the training of a cohort of sixty (60) young student leaders versed in 21st century skills.

During the period, the student councils participated in the National Convention 2023: The Way Forward. This initiative not only signified the journey to adopt the Barbados National Student Council Constitution, but also a commitment to fostering strong partnerships between student leaders and education authorities in Barbados, to create a positive impact on the educational landscape of the country.

Inclusive Education – Partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

During the year, the METVT continued to promote a more inclusive education system by providing technical assistance, through partnership with the IDB for:

- the development of an Inclusive Education policy; and
- the implementation of special needs services in five (5) randomly selected primary schools, which included:
 - the development and administration of a screening instrument to identify Special Needs students and their disabilities;
 - development of Individualized Education Plans to guide education services for these students, based on screening results;
 - Professional Development for the teachers in the selected primary schools in using more inclusive teaching approach and work with Individualised Education Plans;
 - capacity building and training of all faculty at the Erdiston Teachers' Training College for Special Needs education;
 - the provision of assistive technologies (high and low tech) for the selected schools to provide comprehensive services aligned with students' Individualized Education Plans; and
 - the supply of furniture to five (5) schools, at a value of \$368,900.

Screening Assessment

The provision of Special Needs Education continued to be a top priority of the METVT. To this end, the METVT assisted teachers and parents in identifying those factors that may inhibit students' academic performance and implementing workable intervention strategies to address such issues. In addition, to better cater to students with special needs, steps were taken to expand access to school programmes that are appropriate to their learning and developmental needs.

The METVT, in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Barbados West, conducted hearing screening of 1,657 Students in sixty-three (63) Primary Schools from March 2023 to July 2023. In addition, the METVT collaborated with the Ministry of Health and Wellness to conduct vision screening of 1,530 First Form students in Secondary Schools in October 2023.

Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC)

During the examination period of June 2023, at public and private secondary schools, 0.15 percent of subject entries were deferred and four percent of entries were not administered due to absence. These deferrals were noticeably less than those in 2021, during the COVID-19 Pandemic period. Sixty-eight (68) percent of the CSEC examinations sat by students resulted in passes at Grade I, II or III – a recovery to 2021 levels since the recorded decrease to sixty-one (61) percent in 2022.

Of the 4,814 students (2,193 males and 2,621 females), ninety-one (91) percent gained passes in at least one subject, while fifty-one (51) percent of students passed five or more in the year's sittings. The proportion of candidates with one or more passes were favourable when compared to eighty-eight percent in 2021 and eighty-four percent in 2022; while the rate of five (5) or more passes recovered from a decrease of forty-six (46) in 2022, following a rate of fifty-two (52) percent in 2021.

Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Certificate (CAPE)

The CAPE examinations, taken by students of public and private schools during 2023, resulted in 96 percent passes, at Grades I through V, for each of the Unit 1 and Unit 2 proficiency levels. 99.6 percent of the 1,198 public and private school students (466 males and 732 females) received at least one pass at either unit level.

Tertiary Education

Through the years, the government has provided significant portions of its resources to the area of Tertiary Education, in order to enable it to meet the human resource needs of the country. This has been achieved through the provision of scholarships, the payment of fees for our citizens at the University of the West Indies and the provision of training opportunities at the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic and Erdiston Teachers' Training College.

During the period under review, the Tertiary Section facilitated the entry of scholarship award winners to their selected universities. The number of persons awarded was as follows:

- Five (5) Barbados Scholarships;
- Twenty-five (25) Barbados Exhibitions;
- Two (2) Scholarships to Cuba;
- One (1) Errol Barrow Scholarship; and
- Three (3) Special Awards.

Enhanced Learning Outcomes – Post-Secondary, Technical and Vocational Education

Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI)

During the year, the SJPI successfully piloted four (4) major programmes, at a cost of \$200,000. These programmes included hairdressing; beauty therapy; air conditioning and refrigeration; and electrical installation. Sixty-four (64) participants completed these programmes.

Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB)

During the year, initiatives successfully implemented by the BVTB included the following:

- The development of a curriculum document for wooden boat building for the Fisheries Division, Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Blue and Green Economy;
- The facilitation of In-Plant training in Forklift Operation, in collaboration with Massy Limited;
- The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ann Hill School, to provide Skills Training opportunities and certification for students; and
- The delivery of new training course content for the following courses: Well Digging; Well Cleaning and Maintenance; Gabion Building; Painting, Taping and Pasting; and Textured Wall Coating. The courses in Well Digging; Well Cleaning and Maintenance; and Gabion Building were conducted in collaboration with the National Housing Corporation and the Soil Conservation Unit respectively.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council (TVET Council)

During the year, initiatives successfully implemented by the TVET Council included the following:

- The TVET Council expanded the level of competence-based training, assessment and certification, which resulted in twenty-three (23) assessors certified with the CVQ Assessment Level 4, and completed four assessor training workshops which resulted in seventy-one (71) persons being trained as assessors;
- The TVET Council completed an External Verifier Training Workshop, in which sixteen (16) persons were trained;
- Six (6) trainers certified with the CVQ Training and Development Level 4, completed two CBET Instructors Training Workshops, where twenty-five (25) persons received training; 189 persons received CVQ certification and thirty-eight (38) persons received NVQ certification; and

- The TVET Council hosted the Worldskills Barbados competition during June 2023. In addition, the Worldskills Barbados Juniors Future Skills Camp was conducted from August 28, 2023 to September 1, 2023. Participants were issued digital badges.

Physical Infrastructure Enhancement

Physical Infrastructure – Partnership with the IDB

The Ministry embarked on a special infrastructure project, in collaboration with the IDB, to improve the quality and sustainability of the physical conditions of ten (10) primary schools to meet sustainable and resilient best practice standards and building code requirements. The project included the following:

- a standardized package of rehabilitation works, with cost-effective measures to improve energy and water efficiency following the EDGE11 guidelines, and increase resilience and low carbon infrastructure. These investments included: photovoltaic panels; rainwater harvesting; water storage (roof upgrades and repair); accessibility for people with disabilities; green measures; and retrofit to local codes package for all the subsystems (electricity, water, sanitation, safety, and security); and
- upgrading of connectivity within schools.

This work was undertaken at a cost of \$696,864.

Primary Schools Maintenance Programme

Twenty (20) projects were awarded under this Programme for 2023. Fourteen (14) projects have been completed, while six (6) projects were nearing completion with only minor works to be completed for the reporting period. The schools under the Maintenance Programme 2023 received major repairs which included replacement of roof sheets, guttering and ceiling as required; upgrades to prefabricated units, bathrooms, timber floors and nutrition rooms; and the provision of additional classroom space. The awarded contracts totalled \$2,286,075.69.

There was also an increase in expenditure of \$43,080.52, resulting from approved variations for additional work required to address the structural concerns at four (4) schools.

Emergency Repairs

General and ad-hoc maintenance at the island's public nursery and primary schools continued during the reporting period, at a cost of \$1,022,451.46. These works were carried out to address critical structural and environmental issues ahead of the new school year, and included mould remediation, plumbing and electrical repairs.

Nine (9) schools also received termite treatments during the Christmas holiday, at a cost of \$50,709.21.

Disaster Preparedness Initiative

There were thirty (30) Category 1 and sixty (60) Category 2 shelters, consisting of both public and private institutions. During the period, the installation of 1000-gallon potable water tanks was completed at three (3) private shelters, at an estimated cost of \$90,000.00.

School Feeding Programme

In keeping with SDG 2 in terms of ending hunger and improving nutrition, the School Meals Department collaborated with the National Nutrition Centre to ensure that meals continue to meet the requirements of the National Schools Nutrition Policy; sensitised staff to the National Schools Nutrition Policy and their role in its implementation; and facilitated training in Food Safety and Sanitation, and in Health and Safety for forty-eight (48) new School Meals Assistants and Servers during the year.

Summer Nutrition Programme

The Summer Nutrition Programme is conducted for five (5) weeks during the schools' summer holidays, providing meals to children attending summer camps hosted by the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment and the National Sports Council, as well as to non-profit private camps who expressed their interest in participating in the programme. During the 2023 programme, meals were delivered to thirty-three (33) primary schools which were being used as camp sites, and collections were facilitated for thirty-nine (39) offsite locations. Meals were provided for approximately 5,700 children daily.

Education Transformation

Barbados strongly focuses on Education Transformation for sustainable development. Quality and equity are among the foundation elements focused on to secure maximum improvement in learning outcomes, as fundamental skills including literacy and numeracy can better facilitate progress. For citizens of Barbados to progress and prosper, the education system locally must create and maintain pathways and opportunities supported by appropriate infrastructure and institutions, resources availability and validation processes.

Consequently, the entire education system needs to be transformed, as this is central to equipping citizens for the future. While developmental and transformational needs of the nation are being met, innovations and improvements are necessary to facilitate greater efficacy, allowing Barbados' education system to remain relevant to trends locally, regionally, and internationally.

Against this backdrop, the METVT in conjunction with the Education Transformation Unit undertook several initiatives for the period under review, including the following:

- held a public lecture in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill entitled "The Journey to Transformation from Colonized Roots to Decolonized Fruits". This

lecture was conducted by an Educational Leadership Consultant, who also conducted three (3) one-day workshops with Principals, teacher educators and Education Officers entitled “Educational Leadership: The Journey to Decolonization”; and

- national consultations to discuss proposals for the revision of the Basic Education System with various stakeholders, which included the Chairman of Boards of Management, Principals of tertiary institutions, members of the various committees on education transformation, and the ministry’s staff. Consultations were also held with key stakeholders including the general public, students and parents.

The Barbados Construction Gateway Training Initiative

A cohort of students under the Barbados Construction Gateway Training Initiative Project concluded in August 2023, resulting in 315 successful graduates across three institutions: SJPI, BCC and the TVET Council. These graduates completed twenty (20) active programmes. Among the graduates, 241 were male, and seventy-four (74) were female.

The top five programmes in terms of graduate output were Plumbing, with forty-five (45) graduates; Electrical Assistant, with forty-two (42) graduates; Backhoe Operations, with thirty-eight (38) graduates; Skid Steer Operation, with twenty-seven (27) graduates; and Carpentry (Basic), with twenty-two (22) graduates.

Additionally, an extra BCC Cohort 4 course, focusing on Brick Laying & Plastering, continued into September 2023, with nine (9) students currently enrolled.

Barbados Accreditation Council

The Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC) has the responsibility of the implementation of the approved Barbados Qualifications and Credit Framework (BQCF) and Barbados Qualifications Register (BQR). It also conducts Quality Assurance (QA) activities such as registration and re-registration of tertiary educational providers, accreditation and re-accreditation of Institutions and Programmes of Study; recognition of qualifications and institutions and/or programmes of study, programme approval; and recognition of awarding bodies.

For the period under review, nineteen (19) tertiary educational providers were registered with the Barbados Accreditation Council (BAC). The BAC issued four hundred and sixty-six (466) Certificates of Recognition of CARICOM Skills Qualification to eligible CARICOM Nationals; verified one hundred and sixty-eight (168) Certificates of Recognition issued by other CARICOM Member States; evaluated sixty-seven (67) foreign qualifications to local awards; issued forty-four (44) Statements of Recognition of Institutions and/or Programmes; and completed twenty-three (23) Recognition and Verification of Qualifications.

Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity

The Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP) continued to offer a number of certificate courses, diplomas, seminars and short courses during 2023. A total of 1,435 students were enrolled in 2023. This was 816 persons less than the previous year's total enrolment of 2,251 persons. The overall student enrolment for 2023 consisted of 30 percent males and 70.0 percent females.

For 2023, the number of 45-hour certificate courses offered by BIMAP declined from 108 courses to eighty (80) courses. Twelve (12) seminars and short courses were conducted in 2023, a decline when compared to eighteen (18) seminars and short courses conducted during the previous year.

In addition, there was an increase in new students enrolling in the Diploma in Management Studies; Bachelor of Business Administration; and the International Technology Professional Certification (ACCA) programmes; as well as the Youth Empowerment Programme; Professional Development Programme and the partnership with the Barbados Youth Advanced Corps (BYAC). A decline was recorded in the number of new students enrolling in the Certificate in Management Studies programme, while no new enrolment was recorded in the Advanced Certificate Programme during 2023.

National Transformation Initiative

Learning Management System

During 2023, growth was recorded in enrolment for all of the courses offered under the National Transformation Initiative's (NTI) Learning Management System (LMS), with an average enrolment increase of 27.6 percent across courses. A total of 28,518 learners were enrolled in these courses at the end of 2023.

The breakdown of enrolments in the NTI's LMS at the end of 2023 is as follows: Citizenship, with 26,216 learners; followed by Online Safety Essentials, with 17,688 learners; Entrepreneurship, with 16,645 learners; Occupational Health and Safety, with 15,902 learners; Beginners Sign Language, with 15,786 learners; Core Skills, with 15,595 learners; Introduction to Coding with JAVA, with 15,473 learners; and Personal Financial Management, with 1,807 learners.

NTI-Coursera Partnership

The partnership between NTI and Coursera, which is now in its third year, provides Barbadians with access to a total of 2,186 global online courses across over twenty (20) different learning programmes. During 2023, the Generative AI Academy training track was added to this partnership, bringing the total available number of training tracks to seventeen (17).

A total of 47,046 enrolments have been recorded to date in courses under this partnership. Of this total, 20,706 are current members and 10,548 have enrolled in at least one course.

The main areas of skills development during 2023 continued to be business, data science and computer science. The proportion of business courses, which is the top area, continued to decline, from 45 percent in 2022 to 42.6 percent in 2023; while the proportion of data science courses continued to increase, from 27.7 percent in 2022 to 29.1 percent in 2023. The proportion of computer science courses also continued to increase, from 27.4 percent in 2022 to 28.3 percent in 2023.

Partnership with Barbados Youth Advance Corps (BYAC) – Technical Vocational Transitional Literacy Programme

This four-month programme was designed to help prepare learners to function more effectively in their Technical Vocational programme of choice and was delivered during April to July 2023, using a mixture of online and face to face sessions. Of the fifty-eight (58) participants who registered for this programme, thirty-seven (37) participants, or approximately 63.8 percent of learners, fulfilled all assessment criteria (i.e. they submitted and passed at least one in-class assignment, attended and participated in more than fifty (50) percent of the programme sessions, and completed three (3) mandatory NTI courses: Online Safety Essentials; Core Skills; and Citizenship) and completed the programme.

Other Partnerships

During the period under review, the NTI continued to facilitate and negotiate partnerships to complement the existing work being done by other institutions and to open new opportunities to expand NTI's reach, as well as to create opportunities for access to courses offered by both NTI and Coursera. Institutions and organizations with which the NTI partnered during 2023 included: The Barbados Community College; Erdiston Teacher's Training College; Export Barbados (BIDC); the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association; Coca Cola Growing Together; and Apply Job Work (AJW) Kenya.

As part of its outreach and skills development work during 2023, the NTI undertook the "Project Connect" initiative, which seeks to engage the population, either in small groups, or to engage with associations whose mandate is connected to the empowerment and enfranchisement of people, on the theme of personal transformation and thereafter to create a roadmap for meaningful engagement with NTI's course offerings. Throughout 2023, the NTI held sessions with seven (7) agencies from the public sector and non-governmental organizations under this programme. Notably, the NTI has partnered with the Government Industrial School to continue this programme and will continue engagement in this regard in 2024.

B. YOUTH, SPORTS AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Youth Development Programme

Community Projects

Community projects focus on enhancing the lives of young people at the community level by retraining and retooling with skills to generate income and impart life skills to address youth development challenges.

During the period, forty (40) community projects were designed and implemented in various communities across Barbados. These projects responded to the expressed and normative needs of young people and focussed on strategic goals such as: community empowerment; training of community leaders; entrepreneurship and employment creation; creating healthy lifestyles; sports development; and cultural activities.

Cultural Training Programme

The Cultural Training Programme provides hands-on skills development in Cultural Arts activities, including drumming, stilt walking, dance, drama, penny whistle, and voice training.

During the year, the Cultural Training Programme reached 670 young individuals across the island. The programme fostered a sense of community spirit and cohesion, and provided participants with the opportunity to showcase their cultural pride by actively participating in various cultural shows and competitions, thereby celebrating and preserving our rich cultural heritage.

Assistance to Youth Organizations

The Youth Development Programme provides assistance to youth organizations in order to build their capacity so that they can respond to the needs of their members. During the period, the Youth Development Programme provided support to approximately one hundred (100) persons and groups through, inter alia, educational training; provision of sporting equipment; and assistance to students with devices.

Youth Achieving Results Programme

This initiative targets young persons who are interested in the performing arts, but may not have the necessary qualifications to access other training institutions in the cultural arts. This programme is conducted over eight months.

During the period, thirty-four (34) persons graduated with skills in garment making; drapery and soft furnishing; jewellery making; pottery and leather craft.

Anti-Violence Campaign

This initiative was developed to provide psycho-educational interventions that promote behavioural change and strengthen protective factors to reduce the risk for young people and families in communities from engaging in violence. This objective was achieved through partnerships with other social development agencies. The campaign included: psycho-social sessions; the production of five (5) short films; and anti-violence messages.

This project reached over 2,500 persons across schools, community centres, blocks and churches. The psychosocial sessions have been integrated as part of the life skill sessions.

Barbados Youth Advance Corps

Since the start of the Barbados Youth Advance Corps (BYAC), six (6) cohorts of young people have enrolled in the two-year developmental training programme. A summary of the participants by cohort is

shown in the table below.

TABLE 36: BARBADOS YOUTH ADVANCE CORPS PARTICIPANTS BY COHORT 2019-2023

Cohort 6 Intake

This intake of trainees, consisting of 111 males and forty-seven (47) females, commenced the BYAC programme with a six-week pre-residential phase during August 2023, while the residential phase commenced during October 2023. The next phase for the trainees under Cohort 6 is expected to commence during January 2024.

Academic Programme

	Date Commenced	No. of Males	No. of Females	Total
Cohort 1	September 2019	118	74	192
Cohort 2	November 2019	108	56	164
Cohort 3	September 2020	90	36	126
Cohort 4	October 2021	70	37	107
Cohort 5	September 2022	122	61	183
Cohort 6	August 2023	111	47	158
		619	311	930

Source: Barbados Youth Advance Corps, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment

Sixty-two (62) trainees from Cohorts 3 and 4, consisting of thirty-eight (38) males and twenty-four (24) females, took City and Guilds examinations in June 2022 and 2023. Fifty-four (54) of these trainees, or eighty-seven (87) percent - thirty-five (35) males and nineteen (19) females – passed these examinations. Thirty-one (31) trainees from Cohorts 3 and 4, consisting of twenty-one (21) males and ten (10) females, were successful at the City and Guilds Mathematics examination, while twenty-six (26) trainees, consisting of fourteen (14) males and twelve (12) females, passed the English examination. The trainees obtained twenty-three (23) distinctions and twenty-two (22) merits.

Eighty-one (81) of the trainees from Cohorts 1 to 4, consisting of thirty-seven (37) males and forty-four (44) females, were entered for CSEC exams in June/July 2023. Forty-eight (48) of these trainees – thirty-two (32) males and sixteen (16) females – obtained passes in nine (9) subjects: English Language; Information Technology; Office Administration; Principles of Business; Social Studies; Electronic Document Preparation and Management; Physical Education and Sports; Human and Social Biology; and Theatre Arts.

Ten (10) trainees from the Cohort 3 intake, that were enrolled in the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP) Animation and Food Preparation courses, received three (3) or more unit certificates of the six (6) units for these courses. Three (3) of the trainees gained all six (6) of the unit certificates. In addition, nine (9) of the trainees were enrolled at BIMAP in a three (3) unit course,

consisting of Principles of Microsoft Office, Business Communications and Introduction to Social Media Marketing.

Three (3) male trainees were enrolled and subsequently passed the Barbados Vocational Training Board's Welding and Plumbing Certificate courses. These trainees were then placed in apprenticeship programmes.

Thirteen (13) trainees, who were enrolled in certificate courses in Electrical Wiring; Childcare and Nursery Attendant; and Motor Vehicle Engineering at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI), gained a grade point average (GPA) over 2.0. Two (2) of the trainees received GPAs of 4.0 in the Electrical Wiring and Childcare and Nursery Attendant courses. One (1) trainee, having successfully completed the certificate course in Motor Vehicle Engineering, moved on to the Diploma in this course of study.

Three (3) trainees successfully completed the course in Photovoltaic Design and Installation at the Barbados Community College.

Graduation Ceremony for Cohorts 3 and 4 trainees

The graduation ceremony for the trainees from Cohorts 3 and 4 took place during November 2023. A total of 168 young people from these two cohorts – 108 males and sixty (60) females – successfully completed the BYAC two-year developmental training programme. This represents seventy-two (72) percent of the total enrollees.

Cohort 5 Programme

Fifty-two (52) Cohort 5 trainees, consisting of thirty-three (33) males and nineteen (19) females, are currently engaged in technical and vocational training at the SJPI, BIMAP, Barbados Community College and the Barbados Vocational Training Board.

A total of eighty-two (82) Cohort 5 trainees are currently enrolled in the BYAC Academic Programme, pursuing either City and Guilds programmes or CSEC programme.

BYAC Work Experience Programme

The work experience programme for trainees in Cohorts 3 to 5 was facilitated during July to December 2023. During that period, thirty-eight (38) trainees – twenty-two (22) males and sixteen (16) females – were placed at public, private and third sector agencies.

During the reporting period, 124 trainees from Cohorts 3 to 5, comprising of eighty-eight (88) males and forty-six (46) females, were actively employed in various employment exercises in both the public and private sectors.

Hospitality Training

A total of twenty-three (23) trainees, comprising of eleven (11) males and twelve (12) females, participated in a ten-week hospitality training programme facilitated by Sandals Resorts. Fourteen (14) of the trainees subsequently gained employment at the company.

Job Start Plus Programme

Twenty-four (24) trainees – fourteen (14) males and ten (10) females – participated in the Job Start Plus Programme under the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and the Third Sector, between January and July 2023. Seven of the trainees, consisting of four males and three females, gained job placements during that period.

In addition, twenty-six (26) trainees, comprised of fourteen (14) males and twelve (12) females, registered for the Job Start Tourism Programme, which is a new initiative that will attach successful trainees to hotels across the island.

BYAC Partnership with Prince's Trust International

The BYAC continued its partnership with the Prince's Trust International programme during the year. This partnership provides trainees an opportunity to learn soft skills as well as life skills; and also provides an opportunity to achieve a UK qualification award.

During the reporting period, seventy-three (73) trainees received certificates of participation. Sixty-one (61) of those trainees have applied for the Prince's Trust UK qualification.

National Youth Parade

As part of the International Year of the Youth celebrations, the BYAC coordinated a National Youth Parade, which took place during September 2023. A total of 354 young people were on parade, with detachments from the BYAC, the Barbados Cadet Corps, Girl Guides Association of Barbados, Barbados Boy Scouts Association, the Barbados Fire Service and the Barbados Landship.

Participation in Independence Day Parade

The BYAC fielded three (3) detachments, including an all-female detachment, at the 2023 National Independence Day Parade. A total of 154 trainees participated in the Independence Day Parade, while over 200 BYAC trainees from Cohorts 3 to 6 participated in the route march following the parade.

C. POPULATION

As of December 31, 2023 the resident population of the island was estimated at 265.6 thousand persons; representing a decline of 0.6 percent (1,719 persons) from 2022, where the resident population was estimated at 267.3 thousand persons. In 2023, the total population comprised of approximately 128.3 thousand males and 137.3 thousand females, which accounted for 48.3 percent and 51.7 percent respectively of the overall population. This indicates that during the period of review, decreases occurred in both the male (823 persons) and female (896 persons) populations, which stood at 129.1 thousand males and 138.2 thousand females respectively in the previous year.

The population growth rate continued to decline at a rate 0.6 in 2023. Notwithstanding this, the birth rate increased to 8.4 per thousand in 2023 compared to 8.1 per thousand in 2022. The total number of live births increased by 2.9 percent (63 births) to 2,214 in 2023 from the 2,151 live births registered in 2022. A total of 1,192 male births and 1,022 female live births were recorded in 2023, in comparison to the 1,078 males and 1,073 females registered in the previous year.

The death rate also increased from 12.5 per thousand in 2022 to 12.6 per thousand in 2023. There was a total number of 3,360 deaths recorded in 2023, which comprised of 1,745 males and 1,615 females. In contrast the total deaths registered in 2022, stood at 3,338, inclusive of 1,731 male deaths and 1,607 female deaths.

TABLE 37: POPULATION INDICATORS 2000-2023

Year	Registered Births	Registered Deaths	Mid - Year Population ('000 persons)
2001	4,052	2,408	269.8R
2002	3,828	2,300	270.7R
2003	3,768	2,281R	271.6
2004	3,481R	2,432R	272.4R
2005	3,511	2,169	272.9R
2006	3,415	2,296	273.4

2007	3,536	2,209R	274.2
2008	3,546	2,477R	274.8
2009	3,548R	2,390R	275.3R
2010	3,443	2,307R	277.8R
2011	3,110	2,299R	278.0R
2012	3,175R	2,332R	278.3R
2013	3,023R	2,471R	278.5R
2014	2,936R	2,590R	278.4R
2015	2,877R	2,570R	278.1R
2016	2,546	2,584	277.7R
2017	2,573R	2,627R	276.9R
2018	2,415R	2,534R	276.3R
2019	2,591	2,644R	275.7R
2020	2,357R	2,714R	274.7R
2021	2,212R	2,954R	273.8R
2022	2,156R	3,338R	268.0R
2023	2,229R	3,360R	266.4R

Source: Barbados Statistical Service

D. HEALTH

Overview

During the period under review, the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MHW) continued to focus on advancing its commitment to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 – Good Health and Well-Being. This entailed improving policies and programmes to ensure the health and well-being of people across all age groups, including those challenges following the COVID-19 pandemic.

A central component of the MHW's strategy was combatting Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), including a renewed focus on mental health. The National Strategic Plan for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) for the years 2022-2027 and a draft Mental Health Plan for the years 2023-2030 were developed to provide guidance for policy and programmes related to NCDs and mental health. These plans called

for collaboration among government agencies, civil society, and the private sector in national prevention and control efforts for NCDs.

These initiatives also continued to be guided by the National Cancer Control Plan (NCCP), which targets the prevention and effective control of cancer. This plan was designed to address the epidemiological trends in Barbados and improve management outcomes for cancer patients with a collaborative approach from various sectors.

Health Budget

For the financial year 2023/2024, the MHW was allocated the sum of \$347.5 million. This represents a slight increase of \$4.2 million or 1.2 percent when compared with the previous financial year. The majority of funds were allocated to Hospital Services, Primary Health Care Services, and Care of the Elderly. However, the budget for Care of the Disabled declined sharply from \$3.4 million in financial year

2022/2023 to \$1.6 million in financial year 2023/2024 or 53.6 percent; while for financial year 2023/2024 there was no budgetary allocation for Covid-19 Prevention and Control.

TABLE 38: HEALTH BUDGET BY PROGRAMME 2021/22 TO 2023/24

Programme	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
Direction and Policy Formulation Services	15,715,936	21,847,731	31,672,223
Primary Health Care Services	44,916,433	54,743,173	59,889,115
Hospital Services	146,898,162	164,276,268	181,785,364
Care of the Disabled	3,332,635	3,432,650	1,591,242
Pharmaceutical Programme	22,972,862	24,210,852	25,138,189
Care of the Elderly	33,542,981	38,787,414	36,889,415
HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Project	6,621,843	5,917,519	5,763,448
Covid-19 Prevention and Control	0	26,343,082	0
Environmental Health Services	3,634,369	3,794,963	4,789,746
Total	277,635,221	343,353,652	347,518,742

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

Note: These figures are based on approved estimates of expenditure.

Health Financing

The MHW participated in the 15th Caribbean Conference on National Health Financing Initiatives in Colombia during October 2023. The Conference was co-hosted by The University of the West Indies, HEU, Centre for Health Economics (UWI-HEU) and the Hospital Internacional de Colombia-Fundación Cardiovascular de Colombia (HIC-FCV). The objectives of the Conference were: to present international, regional and national best practices and lessons with the governance of health financing programmes; review new trends and regional case studies in public-private partnerships in health and health financing matters; and address activities related to health financing resilience—anticipating and staying ahead of challenges and shocks.

The MHW had the opportunity to make a presentation on private-public collaboration for the provision of dialysis services in Barbados during the Conference.

Health Information Systems

The Ministry's request for technical support from the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) to conduct an assessment of Barbados' information systems for health (IS4H) resulted in the development of a short and medium-term work plan at the national level. A rapid IS4H Maturity Assessment was conducted by a team from the Department of Information and Evidence for Action Health using PAHO's IS4H Maturity Model Assessment Methodology and Tool. Findings of the Maturity Assessment were organized across the four strategic domains of the IS4H Framework: Data Management and Information Technologies; Management and Governance; Knowledge Management and Sharing; and Innovation.

Activities under the review period were developed based on key recommendations from this Report. A IS4H and Digital Transformation Meeting in Brazil and the virtual tour of Belize's Health Information System were instrumental in shaping Barbados' digital health strategies. These events highlighted the importance of managing diseases through digital platforms, enhancing primary care-based public health systems, and addressing health equity gaps. The insights from these international forums emphasised the need for robust health information systems and collaborative platform developments.

The Management Information Systems (MIS) Unit of the MHW ensured the efficient functioning of MHW's IT hardware, including the maintenance of 400 laptops/desktops and 150 mobile devices. They played a crucial role in the operation and development of the Electronic Patient Information System and ensured MedData was operational across nine (9) polyclinics. The MIS Unit's efforts extended to big data analytics and network infrastructure assessments, essential for enhancing network efficiency and identifying performance gaps. Additionally, they developed new cybersecurity policies and risk mitigation strategies, strengthening the Ministry's cybersecurity framework.

Parallel to these efforts, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) in Barbados, supported by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the European Union (EU), embarked on a digital transformation journey, as part of the Public Sector Modernization Programme. This initiative aimed to improve government effectiveness and economic competitiveness, with the EU contributing €4,381,650 for healthcare digital transformation. The Ministry of Industry, Innovation, Science, and Technology's (MIST) has oversight for the project, aligning with the IDB's policies, while the MIS Unit of the MHW played a supportive role.

The Psychiatric Hospital's IT section has been working on several projects to improve clinical activities. These include extensive IT system upgrades with the replacement of servers, switches, and fibre optic cables to address connectivity issues. The IT team is assisting seven (7) departments in transitioning from paper-based systems to digital processes. The seamless interface between Medical Records, Gatekeeper, and Outpatient Department is being facilitated to improve client experience. Moreover, the Hospital had an assessment for the trial of the Med-Data system in the Outpatients and Assessment Unit, with a plan developed to trial various aspects of the system in four (4) sections.

Barbados Drug Service

The Barbados Drug Service (BDS) was actively involved in various initiatives and developments to enhance pharmaceutical services and drug regulation in Barbados. One of the significant achievements was the successful tender for medicines and related items, leading to the formation of Maximum Price Contract 41, which is scheduled to operate from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2026. This contract marks a critical step in ensuring the affordability and availability of essential medicines.

Additionally, the BDS collaborated with Biopharma Excellence to develop the Barbados White Book, a vital document that outlines the necessary steps for establishing a National Drug Regulatory Authority. This Authority is envisioned to be responsible for regulating all medicinal products in Barbados, representing a major advancement in the country's healthcare regulatory framework. Other collaborators on this document included the Barbados Pharmaceutical Programme, the Ministry of Health and Wellness, the University of the West Indies, Invest Barbados and Export Barbados.

The BDS received significant donations from the Government of India, which included fifteen (15) thermal printers for implementing MedData in government pharmacies, a Trunarc Drug Analyser for the Drug Inspectorate to analyse suspected products at ports of entry, and a refrigerated truck (which is scheduled to be delivered in 2024). These donations enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the drug distribution and inspection processes.

However, challenges persisted, such as the unresolved request from Private Participating Pharmacies for an increase in dispensing fees and the ongoing negotiations to finalise a new contract with these pharmacies. These issues highlight the complexities of managing pharmaceutical services and the need for continued dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders.

Albert Cecil Graham Development Centre

In 2023, the Albert Cecil Graham Development Centre carried out a range of activities focused on providing comprehensive services to children with various developmental needs. The Centre continued to assess clients diagnosed with developmental delays, autism spectrum disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, intellectual or learning challenges, specific learning disabilities, communication disorders, and congenital syndromes. Furthermore, the Centre emphasised early detection, stimulation,

and intervention, offering physiotherapy, occupational and speech therapy, psychological and audiological evaluations. These therapeutic programmes were provided both individually and in group settings. Additionally, individual counselling and referrals to other agencies were facilitated through the Social Work Department.

The Centre also managed specific initiatives and services throughout the year. The provision of stimulation facilities through the Day Care, Education, and Workshop services catered to fifteen (15) children in each unit, focusing on functional academics, daily living skills, and skills training. The challenge of a significant waiting list for speech therapy was addressed through support from Scotia Bank, through the Variety Club, which sponsored a Rehabilitation Therapy Technician to offer speech therapy three days a week for fifteen weeks, starting in October 2023.

The Centre's activities also included the operation of a wheelchair workshop for customised seating and repairs and the hosting of the Healthy Hearing Programme, which involved cochlear implant surgeries and follow-up care. Additionally, the Centre served as a teaching facility for students from various educational institutions. On the infrastructure front, repairs and renovations were also undertaken on two (2) roofs and the Clydebank building, respectively to improve facilities.

Best-Dos Santos Laboratory

The Best-dos Santos Public Health Laboratory (BDSPHL) is engaged in a series of significant activities to enhance its capabilities and collaborations in various fields of public health. In September 2023, BDSPHL hosted a specialised training programme focused on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) genotyping for carbapenemases, conducted by Consultants from PAHO. Following this training, the Laboratory has now integrated AMR genotyping testing into its regular test services.

Complementing this, the BDSPHL enhanced its technological capacity by procuring new equipment for the advanced testing and identification of bacteria, utilising the Vitek 2 and MS Prime systems.

During the year, the BDSPHL was recognised as the National Influenza Centre (NIC) for Barbados, joining the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System.

Geriatric Hospital/St. Michael District Hospital

Construction on the new Geriatric Hospital Facility officially commenced in March 2023. The Barbados Tourism Investment (BTII) is carrying out the development of the new facility, which is expected to be completed by October 2024.

The key goals of service delivery for the facility will be to give patients the medical, nursing, and rehabilitation care they require to achieve maximum physical and mental capability; to uphold their dignity during the whole care process; and to enable them to live independently for as long as possible. When finished, the facility will have 408 beds available.

St. Lucy District Hospital

The St. Lucy District Hospital, renowned for its dedication to geriatric healthcare in Barbados, continued to excel in providing comprehensive, long-term care to its elderly residents. Emphasising a holistic approach, the hospital's multidisciplinary team, including nurses, ancillary staff, and medical support from the QEH, worked to meet the individual needs of their clients. During the year, the facility successfully managed thirteen (13) discharges to the Alternate Care of the Elderly Programme (ACEP) and facilitated the return of two (2) clients to their homes, demonstrating its commitment to client-centred healthcare.

Primary Healthcare Programme

Primary healthcare activities were focused on recovery and improvement following the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the main activities included the restoration and enhancement of services at all polyclinics and the Ladymeade Reference Unit, which were either trending towards or had surpassed pre-COVID attendance levels. This resurgence in healthcare service usage, particularly in areas like Community Mental Health, Speech Therapy, and Physiotherapy, occurred despite ongoing staffing challenges, including shortages in key areas such as nursing as well as the limited

availability of specialised professionals in physiotherapy and speech therapy. Notwithstanding, specialised consultancies in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Dermatology, and Psychiatry were available. There was an ongoing effort to enhance the resilience of Polyclinics in the face of natural disasters. This initiative included the use of the PAHO/WHO Smart Hospitals Toolkit, comprising the Hospital Safety Index and Green Checklist, to assess and improve the disaster resilience of health facilities. These measures aimed to strengthen the structural and operational capacity of Polyclinics, reduce their carbon footprint, and ensure sustainability during emergencies and disasters. Moreover, these activities aligned with the broader goal of strengthening primary healthcare as a fundamental component in achieving Universal Health Coverage and ensuring a diverse, resilient, and high-quality healthcare system.

Health Promotion

The Health Promotion Unit focused significantly on raising awareness on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) as one of the major public health challenges. They embarked on an eight-month campaign, collaborating with various stakeholders, including the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Barbados Government Information Service, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security, and a private production company. The campaign involved producing and disseminating various communication materials. These included infographics for social media, public service announcements for radio, and videos for television and social media platforms. Additionally, in observance of Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week, the HPU supported the Barbados Drug Service by facilitating the purchase of AMR promotional items, which were distributed in polyclinics to enhance awareness in different catchment areas.

Promoting Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) was another key area of focus. This effort was highlighted during World Hand Hygiene Day, where the Unit partnered with PAHO to share relevant communication materials on social media. This material emphasised the importance of hand hygiene in preventing food poisoning and associated outbreaks. During Infection Prevention and Control Week, the Unit aired an educational audio recording produced after completing training in Audiopedia. This recording, taking the form of a skit involving Barbadian children and their teacher discussing handwashing, was also shared at a UNICEF regional workshop focusing on IPC and building resilience in schools post-COVID.

Additionally, the Unit initiated the Creative Play: Active Spaces Project, funded by PAHO, to encourage physical activity in primary schools through the creation of colourful obstacle courses, recognising the importance of non-competitive physical activities for children's health.

Nutrition Programme

The National Nutrition Centre (NNC) of Barbados focused on a range of activities to enhance public health through improved nutrition. One of the key accomplishments was the provision of comprehensive community nutrition services across Barbados. This included individual nutrition counselling and group education within the polyclinic setting. During the review period, the NNC conducted a total of forty (40) presentations to in-clinic and community groups, addressing various health conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, cholesterol issues, and obesity. Additionally, the NNC offered significant technical support to various institutions, including District Hospitals, the Barbados Prison Service, Government Industrial Schools, and the School Meals Department. This support primarily involved assisting with menu revision to meet the dietary needs of different populations.

Another notable initiative was the support and implementation of nutrition policies. Following the launch of the Barbados School Nutrition Policy, the NNC played an instrumental role in school sensitisation to policy recommendations and provided technical assistance for other educational programmes. Bridging the gap between policy and public engagement, the NNC's efforts in school sensitisation and technical assistance were complemented by dynamic initiatives during National Nutrition Month, which included educational events, digital outreach, and hands-on learning opportunities for university students in

Nutrition and Dietetics. These activities reflect the NNC's commitment to improving the health and well-being of the Barbadian public through effective nutrition education and policy implementation.

Non-Communicable Diseases

The Ministry's efforts in addressing NCDs were extensive, with a strong focus on collaboration and policy implementation. In January 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) Technical Meeting on "Non-Communicable Diseases and Mental Health" was executed in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Wellness. Senior technical representatives from other Ministries of Health, academics, people with lived experience, leaders from business and civil society were in attendance at this Technical Meeting. Representatives from SIDS countries discussed the progress and challenges to meet the Sustainable Development Goal 3.4, related to NCDs and mental health, and key recommendations were provided for the subsequent development of a negotiated outcome document entitled "*2023 Bridgetown Declaration on NCDs and Mental Health*".

This technical meeting laid the groundwork for a high level ministerial meeting that took place during June 2023, which saw the convening of ministers from SIDS countries and partner organizations with objectives to: raise awareness; determine possible solutions to scale up multisector actions on NCDs and mental health, taking into consideration the impact of the climate crisis in SIDS countries; stimulate increased domestic action and international cooperation; and agree on country specific actions for NCDs and mental health that will operationalize commitments expressed in the outcome document and other relevant frameworks. The meeting consisted of both in-person and virtual sessions and was attended by approximately 260 people (with at least 130 in-person), from forty-four (44) countries and territories, representing forty (40) ministries of health, thirty-three (33) non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and persons with lived experience.

Additionally, the MHW continued its collaborative agreements for specialised healthcare services for the NCD Programme with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Barbados (HSFB) and the Barbados Diabetes Foundation (BDF). During 2023, the HSFB reported a total attendance of 701 clients (291 in Phase 2, 349 in Phase 3, and sixty-one (61) for stroke rehabilitation). Similarly, the Barbados Diabetes Foundation (BDF) experienced substantial patient engagement, with a total of 250 referrals (including both new and re-referrals) and a consistent number of public patients visiting each month, ranging from 144 to 203.

In addition to the launching of the Barbados School Nutrition Policy in February, progress was also seen in drafting a National Nutrition Policy in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, to address broader population nutrition issues. Consultations also commenced pertaining to the elimination of Industrially Produced Trans Fatty Acids (IP-TFAs) from the food supply by December 2024, in alignment with COSHOD/COTED and WHO guidelines, to combat cardiovascular diseases.

Psychiatric Hospital

As a part of the Community Mental Health Integration effort, the Barbados Drug Service pharmacies in the Polyclinics began dispensing pharmaceuticals directly to all clients accessing mental health services at any outpatient clinic or polyclinic. This initiative was complemented by extensive training programmes with 160 individuals trained in Psychological First Aid, funded by PAHO. These training efforts align with the Hospital's development of action plans for Suicide Prevention, Workplace Wellness, Maternal Mental Health, and Post Disaster Mental Health. These plans are set to be implemented following the approval of staff for the expanded community mental health programme.

Furthermore, in support of these initiatives, a Trainer of Trainers course in mental health gap (mhGAP) was conducted by PAHO. Seventeen (17) persons (doctors, nurses and pharmacists) from the polyclinics, QEH and Barbados Drug Service were trained. The aim of the training was to increase non-specialist care, including non-specialised health care, to address the unmet needs of people with priority Mental, Neurological and Substance use (MNS) conditions.

In 2023, the Hospital undertook several maintenance and renovation projects. The Maria Holder Memorial Trust completed renovation on two (2) buildings for Occupational & Recreational Therapy,

which were handed over during December 2023. The “A” Ward Bathroom in the Forensic Unit underwent renovations, and the old ‘E’ Ward Range was renovated to create offices for the Psychology and Social Work departments. Additionally, the D Ward Building Enclosure in the Female Psychogeriatric unit saw the completion of ground floor enclosure works, with a request for funding in the 2024-2025 financial year to complete these works.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) continued its path of improvement and development in several key areas. A notable financial achievement was the increase in funding from the Health Services Contribution. In the financial year 2022-2023, the contribution totalled \$87,577,991.66, which was a significant increase from the previous year. This upward trend continued into the first nine months of the 2023-2024 fiscal year, with a contribution of \$90,774,626.07, demonstrating the hospital's growing financial stability.

In terms of operational efficiency, the hospital made commendable progress in its Operating Theatre Utilisation. Between April 2022, and January 2023, a total of 3,991 elective surgeries were scheduled, with 3,108 (78 percent) being performed and 883 (22 percent) cancelled. This represented a significant effort in managing and executing surgical procedures across various specialities, such as Ophthalmology, Neurosurgery, and General Surgery.

Under the Transitional Community Care Programme, the QEH developed a new strategy for quicker patient enrolment which resulted in the reduction of the wait time from hospital discharge to the first post-discharge polyclinic visit. In addition, 413 persons were successfully discharged from the programme; while a new cohort of patients were onboarded, increasing the total from 687 to 2,000.

Notably, the QEH mobilised over \$700,000 in donations during the year, including for two (2) ambulances, which assisted in bringing the hospital’s fleet to nine (9) ambulances.

HIV/STI Programme

Barbados's HIV/STI Programme saw significant advancements, particularly through the Ladymeade Reference Unit (LRU), which remained pivotal in providing comprehensive HIV care and treatment. During 2023, the LRU recorded 112 new registrations, elevating the total to 2,801 since its beginning. A notable achievement was the transition to dolutegravir-based HIV treatment, aligning with WHO guidelines. The Combination HIV/STI Prevention strategy actively continued, incorporating HIV testing, condom programming, and both pre and post-exposure prophylaxis services across various locations, including the St Philip Polyclinic and the Barbados Family Planning Association (BFPA). Additionally, the STI Clinic at the Winston Scott Polyclinic, after resuming in 2022, catered to 1,411 individuals in 2023, focusing on complex STI cases. The successful first phase of the HIV Self Testing pilot project, completed at the LRU in April 2023, paved the way for the second phase’s initiation at the Eunice Gibson Polyclinic.

Surveillance Programme

SARS-Cov-2 (COVID-19)

In March 2020, the first two cases of COVID-19 were diagnosed in Barbados, and weekly numbers showed a first peak four weeks later with twenty-three (23) cases. Since that time, Barbados has experienced successive waves of cases as the population was exposed to new variants of the virus. The first wave was controlled with the use of facility isolation of cases and quarantining of contacts. Successive waves were fuelled by more infectious variants, and the volume of cases necessitated a change from attempted containment of the outbreak to mitigation of the negative impacts of severe illness and death. By May 2023, WHO had determined that although COVID-19 infections continued worldwide, the lower rate of hospitalisations and deaths warranted the discontinuation of the designation of Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). Countries were encouraged to regard the long-term management of COVID-19 disease as an ongoing health issue, integrating COVID-19 vaccination into regular immunisation schedules. Countries were also encouraged to maintain any capacity gains accrued through the management of the pandemic up to that point.

In Barbados, up to December 22, 2023, the cumulative total of laboratory confirmed cases was 110,298 from 812,248 tests. There were 648 deaths recorded due to COVID-19 infection.

Dengue Surveillance

Dengue fever is endemic in Barbados, which means that cases can occur throughout the year once conditions are favourable.

There were no confirmed cases of dengue fever in 2022. However, a dengue virus outbreak started in October 2023 and continued into December 2023. Actual numbers will likely be updated as samples forwarded from private laboratories are processed.

Chikungunya Surveillance

This disease was introduced to Barbados in 2014. During 2023, there were 116 suspected cases under investigation; however, no positive chikungunya cases were recorded. This was similar to 2022, where 167 suspected cases were investigated with no positive results.

Zika Surveillance

Up until the end of 2023, there were seventeen (17) clinically suspected cases of Zika Virus disease, with no probable or confirmed cases from laboratory testing. With test-negative or test-positive for other flaviviruses, suspected cases for 2022 were twenty-four (24) in total.

There have been no new reported suspected or confirmed cases of Zika Congenital Syndrome since 2016.

Leptospirosis Surveillance

There were two (2) confirmed cases for leptospirosis in 2023, with no recorded attributable deaths. The number of cases may be updated as there are still samples pending analysis at the Best-Dos Santos Public Health Laboratory. Eight (8) cases of leptospirosis were diagnosed in 2022.

Environmental Health Programme

Water Reuse and Quality

The Water Reuse Act of 2023, which facilitates the capture, collection, treatment, and reuse of wastewater for various purposes, initiated its licensing process in November 2023. Since then, seven (7) facilities have undergone inspection, with five (5) recommended for water reuse permits. This process involved detailed technical meetings between the ministry's technical team and operators of wastewater treatment facilities, as well as thorough site visits and inspections to ensure compliance with the legislation.

Climate Crisis

Efforts to combat the climate crisis had concentrated on creating initiatives that bolstered resilience in the health sector and laid the groundwork for a Health National Adaptation Plan (H-NAP). H-NAPs played a crucial role in connecting the health sector to broader national and international climate crisis strategies while also facilitating access to multilateral climate crisis funding. In this context, PAHO, utilising its technical support framework, had engaged a technical consultant to initiate a Vulnerability Assessment (VA) of the health sector. This VA was pivotal for the future direction of H-NAP activities, as they were steered by the indicators and findings from this assessment. To ensure a comprehensive and effective plan, meetings were conducted with the consultant team, during which feedback and insights on the proposed plan were exchanged.

The Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) is also working with the PAHO on the execution of the 11th European Development Fund/Caribbean Forum of African Caribbean and Pacific States (EDF/CARIFORUM), "Strengthening Climate Resilient Health Systems in the Caribbean" project. The goal of this project is to implement interventions within the health sector to reduce the impact of the climate crisis on Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS). One aspect of the project focuses on building

climate resilience into National Food and Water Safety/Sanitation Action plans. A meeting was held in September 2023 with a view to gathering information to prepare draft plans

E. LAW AND ORDER

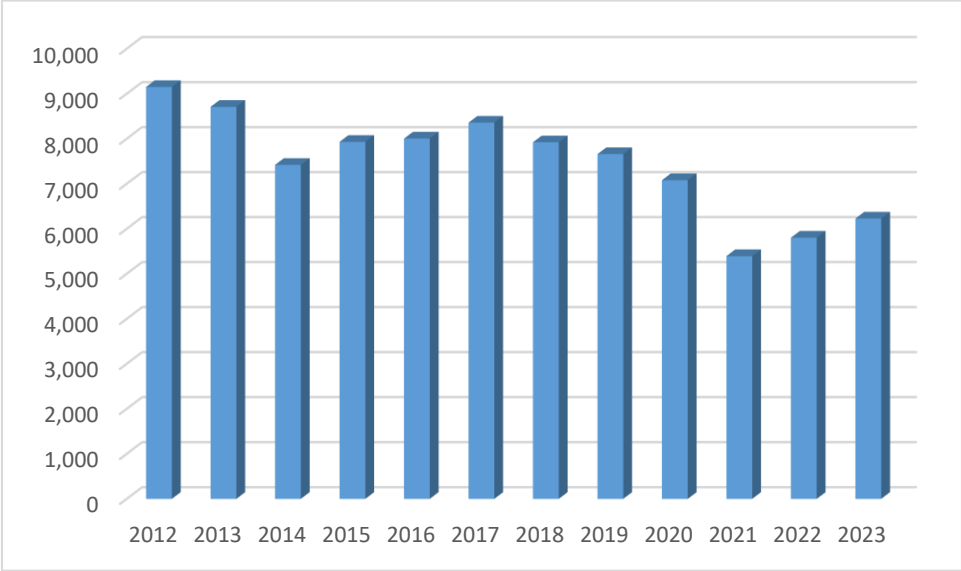
Total Reported Crimes

In 2023, there were 6,228 crimes reported in Barbados. This represents a 7.3 percent increase in crime for the period under review when compared to 5,803 crimes reported in 2022.

Several factors may have contributed to the recorded increase in crime since 2021 including: job losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which could bring about financial instability; changes in daily routines, such as remote work; and changes in socialising patterns. All of these could have resulted in altered opportunities for criminal activity or created new vulnerabilities.

FIGURE 31: TOTAL REPORTED CRIMES (OVERALL NO. OF CRIMES REPORTED)

2012-2023



Source: The Barbados Police Service

Major Crimes

Over the period 2019 to 2023, the highest number of major crimes continued to be recorded in the categories of residential burglary; commercial burglary; robbery; and serious bodily harm.

During 2023, there were declines in the number of reported cases of residential burglary; rape; kidnapping; murder; and endangering life. No cases of manslaughter were recorded during the year. However, for 2023, increases were recorded in the number of reported cases of robbery; assault with intent to rob; commercial burglary; aggravated burglary; and serious bodily harm.

TABLE 39: MAJOR CATEGORIES OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Murder	48	41	32	43	19
Manslaughter	0	0	1	0	0
Endangering Life	52	62	41	42	30
Robbery	202	193	102	123	170
Kidnapping	8	8	4	6	1
Aggravated Burglary	66	77	77	59	71
Assault with intent to Rob	14	7	7	13	14
Rape	58	39	51	41	40
Serious Bodily Harm	165	167	133	140	146
Commercial Burglary	280	246	182	118	165
Residential Burglary	916	570	428	518	445
	1,809	1,410	1,058	1,103	1,101

Source: The Barbados Police Service

Firearm Enabled Crimes

The major categories of firearm enabled crimes during the period 2019 to 2023 were (excluding the category of other crimes committed with use of firearms) robbery; endangering life; aggravated burglary; and murder, as seen in table 38.

During 2023, there were 201 reports of firearm enabled crime. This number represents a decline of 19.6 percent when compared with the previous year, when 250 reports were recorded.

Table 40: Firearm Enabled Crimes

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Murder	30	26	17	33	13
Robbery	88	111	54	54	69
Assault with Intent to Rob	7	2	5	5	3
Aggravated Burglary	43	41	46	32	37
Endangering Life	51	62	39	40	28
Other Crimes Committed with Use of Firearm	77	139	87	86	51
	296	381	248	250	201

Source: The Barbados Police Service

Drug Related Activity

The Barbados Police Service remained committed to its interdiction efforts, aimed at disrupting the flow of illegal drugs into communities. These efforts were characterised by ongoing adaptation to address evolving trends in drug trafficking. The primary goal of these efforts is to prevent the proliferation of illegal drugs within communities.

A total of 1,003 drug offences were recorded during 2023. This represented a decline of 199 offences, or 16.6 percent when compared with 2022, when 1,202 offences were recorded.

Cannabis remained the drug of choice within Barbados, as most drug offences recorded involve the possession, cultivation, importation, trafficking or supply of this illegal drug. During 2023, 828 cannabis-related offences were recorded, an increase of 24.7 percent when compared with 2022, when 1,091 cannabis-related offenses were recorded.

Meanwhile, 159 cocaine-related offences were recorded in 2023. This represented a significant increase of 50.0 percent when compared with 2022, when 106 cases were recorded.

F. SOCIAL SERVICES

MINISTRY OF PEOPLE EMPOWERMENT AND ELDER AFFAIRS

Key Accomplishments of the Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs for 2023

In the conduct of its operations during the year, the Ministry attained the following accomplishments:

- i. Approval by Cabinet of the National Policy on Ageing
- ii. Approval by Cabinet of the National Policy to Improve the Lives of Persons with Disabilities
- iii. Laying in Parliament of the Child Protection Bill.
- iv. Formal launch of the One Family Programme, to systematically improve the lives of one thousand vulnerable households, across Barbados.
- v. Execution of the 2023 edition of the National Senior Games, after a four-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- vi. Launch of the FLOW JUMP proposal, to introduce the Internet and digital technology to 1000 poor and vulnerable households, free of cost for a limited time and at discounted rates.
- vii. Submission to Barbados' Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Report on the issue of compliance and adherence to Human Rights, in the areas of Gender, Persons with Disabilities and protection of the Rights of the Child.
- viii. Preparation of Ministry's Disaster Preparedness Plan and the update of its Disaster Social Relief Guidebook, to ensure that the Ministry is well prepared to address the social-related aspects of a natural disaster.

Amalgamation of Social Service Agencies

The amalgamation of social services remained a key focus of the Ministry throughout 2023. The initiative aims to consolidate four major social service entities to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery. As part of this effort, the Ministry has reviewed current work processes to ensure they are more people-centred, fostering both transformation and empowerment of individuals. The agencies involved in the amalgamation are:

- i. The Welfare Department;
- ii. The National Assistance Board;
- iii. The National Disabilities Unit; and
- iv. The Child Care Board.

Major Activities Conducted under the Amalgamation Exercise

In recent times, several activities have been undertaken to advance the transformation of the aforementioned agencies, into one comprehensive new entity. The following outlines the major activities undertaken during the amalgamation:

- The SAGICOR Cave Hill University of the West Indies was contracted to conduct a Job Analysis exercise to determine the new entity's jobs and structure, with recommendations for human resources aligned with its vision, mission, goals, and strategic objectives.
- An ICT firm was contracted to design, test, and implement the PULSE Management Information System (MIS), which will digitalize the new entity's operations by facilitating information sharing, case management, and data collection on programme usage. The PULSE Management Information System will enhance the digital delivery of social services and improve service provision to clients.

THE ELDERLY

During 2023, the National Assistance Board (NAB) continued to execute its mandate to develop and implement a cadre of programmes and strategies aimed at maintaining the quality of life of older persons in Barbados. Total social spending from the NAB for the year, inclusive of capital works expenditure, amounted to \$14,932,916.

The Home Care Programme

For the reporting period, there has been a steady increase in demands for the service with the number of beneficiaries ranging from one thousand, one hundred and eighty-eight persons (1,188) to one thousand, three hundred and sixty-three (1,363) persons. Some highlights from this year's programme are:

- Similar to 2022, on average, more females (65.0 percent) than males (35.0 percent) requested and received the service.
- In 2023, there was a slight increase in the number of home care workers relative to home care recipients compared to the previous period. The average ratio of home care workers to recipients was 1:9.5 for the reporting period, up from 1:9 in 2022.
- The average approval rate for Home care applicants for the year was 66 percent.
- One hundred and sixty-eight (160) persons were deregistered from the programme for the year due to long-term institutionalization, improved health of the recipient, alternative

arrangements for caregiving, or poor housing conditions which presented health and safety risks to workers

Jorris Dunner Elderly Day Care Centre

For the reporting period January to December 2023, the facility was used to provide temporary accommodation for the residents of the Vauxhall Senior Citizens' Village as the latter was undergoing major capital works. As a result, the environment was a potential risk to the safety of residents and staff. Rent continued to be paid by residents. Total social expenditure for the Jorris Dunner Elderly Day Care Centre in 2023 amounted to \$392,219. Additionally, the expenditure for capital works for the year totaled \$58,908.68.

Lancaster House

The facility provides temporary accommodation at no cost primarily for elderly individuals and their families who are homeless as a result of fire, evictions, and natural disasters. Given the deterioration of the physical structure, major capital works were undertaken during the reporting period, hence there were no admissions to the facility. Capital works were completed in October 2023 at a cost of \$648,748.11.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The National Disabilities Unit (NDU) seeks to integrate Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in all aspects of social and economic life, while ensuring that their rights are not violated and that they function as equal members of the society. Twenty-five (25) persons participated in the technological service for the visually impaired initiative in 2023, and they attained skills in utilizing information technology. A further fifteen (15) persons who recently became visually impaired, benefitted from the services of the Adjustment to Blindness Officer, who (i) helped persons to adjust to their domestic and external environment and (ii) assisted them in the use of physical aids.

There were accessibility modifications involving the construction of ramps to the homes of PWDs. Sixteen (16) households benefitted from these services at a cost of \$232,448.69.

The Call-A-Ride programme facilitated the commuting of 859 students and PWDs with disabilities to school and to medical appointments. For the period, there was a total expenditure of just over thirty thousand, one hundred and fifty-three dollars and fifty cents (\$30,153.50) for this service. Additionally, the NDU provided transportation for 85 wheelchair users to medical appointments, primarily for dialysis treatments and dressing changes for amputees, using vehicles equipped to accommodate wheelchairs.

VULNERABLE LOW-INCOME CITIZENS

One Family Programme

During the period under review, the Ministry of People Empowerment launched the "One Family Programme" on October 13, 2023. This programme was established to support the Ministry's mandate of delivering people-centered social protection services, aimed at fostering the empowerment of vulnerable persons across Barbados.

The "One Family Programme" will be guided by the principle of "Each One, Reach One" and seeks to utilize existing social capital in communities, to support the government's initiative to provide for the social and economic development of vulnerable families. This initiative will also see the matching of recipient families with donor families, with the view of fostering the personal development and empowerment of recipient families.

During this period, phase 1 commenced with over two thousand (2,000) assessments being conducted by Social Workers using the Eligibility Scorecard approach. The dimensions of poverty assessed included characteristics such as household income below the poverty line, housing conditions, educational attainment of members, total number of persons in the household, the health conditions of household members and household access to basic amenities. It is this score which ranked a household's level of poverty and determined their eligibility into the programme.

Under Phase 2 of the programme, one thousand (1000) vulnerable families will be engaged through a targeted household intervention model, which is grounded on seven key pillars aimed at breaking the cycle of inter-generational poverty and empowering lives, through addressing its multi-dimensional nature. Each selected family will enter into a programme which is tailored to their specific needs, based upon the pillars of intervention outlined below:

- a. Personal Identification.
- b. Education and Human Resource Development;
- c. Health Promotion and access to health care
- d. Family Dynamics (family intervention: counselling and development)
- e. Improved Housing Conditions
- f. Employment
- g. Income and Social Benefits (Welfare and NIS support)

Welfare Department – Monetary Assistance

During the period under review, the Welfare Department received two thousand nine hundred eighty-five (2,985) new applications for monetary assistance. This represents a decrease of four hundred and ninety-two (492) from the previous year. The number of applications processed was two thousand nine hundred and fifty-one (2,951). These are inclusive of applications brought forward from the previous year.

By the end of December 2023, the number of recipients of monetary assistance was seven thousand, seven hundred and nine (7,709), an increase of six hundred and seventy (670) persons when compared to the same period in 2022. The total expenditure spent in respect of monetary assistance was \$28 million.

	2022	2023	Absolute Change	Percentage Change
No. of Recipients	7,039	7709	670	9%
Expenditure (\$ million)	\$25.6	\$28.0	\$2.4	9%
Ave. beneficiary spend (\$ million)	\$3,637	\$3,632	\$5	0.1%

Table 41: Welfare Department Comparison of Expenditure 2022 and 2023

Source: The Welfare Department, Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs

Welfare Department - Assistance-In-Kind

Food continued to be the highest category of assistance-in-kind granted. During the period under review, there were 7,416 new applications for food. Of this total, 5,345 applications were approved during this period.

Educational Assistance expenditure at the end of the year totaled \$1,042,460. The department serviced 2,840 families, compared to the previous year when 1,929 families were assisted. It should be noted that the grant was increased per child.

Assistance-in-kind expenditure fell by 5 percent (or \$794,422) in 2023 compared to the previous year, with \$16,124,578 being spent in 2023, down from \$16,919,000 in 2022. Services were maintained to offer assistance to those in need, with the ceiling being removed from electricity and water payments.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

The Child Care Board

The Child Care Board continued to deliver its social protection services via four (4) main programmatic areas, namely; Residential Care; Day Care; Foster Care and Adoption; and Child Abuse. The total cost of programme implementation in 2023 amounted to \$16,429,795.38, marking a 34.4 percent decrease from the 2022 figure of \$25,057,894.88.

Table 42: Child Care Board Programme Costs - 2022-2023

PROGRAMME	2022	2023
Residential Care	12,198,172.25	\$6,056,076.24
Government Day Care	7,492,721.03	\$9,051,045.09
Private Day Care	138,164.67	\$106,115.16
Foster Care and Adoption	374,136.29	\$325,806.92
Intake	4,414,897.41	\$432,714.48
Child Abuse	360,556.19	\$369,244.96
Psychological	79,247.04	\$83,235.87
TOTAL	25,057,894.88	\$16,429,795.38

Source: Child Care Board, Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs

Residential Care

During the period under review, there was an average of one hundred and three (103) residents in the Board's Homes, of which sixty-two (62) were male and forty (40) were female. Thirty-eight (38) children were assessed as needing Care and Protection, a 90 percent increase from the 20 new admissions in 2022. Despite this increase in new admissions, the programme managed to half its costs in 2023 compared to the previous year. Twenty-one (21) children were discharged during 2023, comparable to the 23 children discharged a year earlier.

Government Day Care

During the calendar year of December - January 2023, there was an increase in the attendance of children in Government Day nurseries when compared to the previous year. An average of six hundred and forty-five (645) children attended the fifteen (15) day nurseries, up from the 434 children who attended on average the previous year. Additionally, four hundred and fifty-six (456) children were admitted to the

day nurseries, while three hundred and seventy-nine (379) children were discharged from the government nurseries during the period under review.

Private Day Care

At the end of 2023, the Child Care Board was aware of eighty-two (82) centres, a decrease from the one hundred and five (105) nurseries registered in 2022. A total of thirty-six (36) cases, twenty-five (25) complaints and eleven (11) requests for information were recorded on Intake regarding Private Day Care Centres. Thirty (30) Private Day Care Centres were issued Certificates of Registration during the year 2023. Eighty (80) visits were conducted during the period. The month of February 2022 saw the highest number of visits, twelve (12) to centres in preparation for registration.

There was a significant increase in the number of visits over the corresponding period which registered forty-eight (48) for 2022. This was due to the relaxation of the COVID-19 protocols and a notable increase in applications for annual registration. In addition, there were other monitoring visits for various reasons including visits to a reported operation of an illegal daycare.

Foster Care and Adoption

During the review period, the Child Care Board received a total of seventy-five (75) enquiries regarding adoption and foster care, a slight increase from the sixty-nine 69 enquires in 2022. Of this total, sixty (60) were Adoption enquiries and fifteen (15) were for Foster Care.

At the conclusion of the year, there were seventeen (17) children in the Foster Care Programme and Child Care Officers were monitoring eleven (11) Adoption placements. Officers assigned to the Adoption and Foster Care team conducted one hundred and seventy-eight (178) supervisory visits with the children as stipulated by the legislation.

Child Abuse

For the calendar year January to December 2023, the Child Abuse section received a total of five hundred and fifty-five (555) child abuse cases, a reduction of two cases compared to the previous period in 2022. These referrals affected six hundred and sixty-three (663) children, compared to six hundred and seventy-one (671) in the corresponding period, reflecting a decrease of eight (8) children.

Family Services

The Family Services section continued to offer professional interventions, in responding to a range of individual and family problems. During the period January to December 2023, one hundred and twenty-five (125) Supreme Court Cases, three (3) Magistrate Court cases and sixteen (16) Counselling cases were referred for investigation by the Family Services Section and the subsequent provision of psychosocial reports, which are critical to the Courts' deliberation. Among the three areas investigated, Supreme Court Cases was the only category that registered an increase in cases from the previous year, rising by 81 percent since 2022.

Due to the complexities of some cases, the section forwarded thirteen (13) referrals to the consultant Psychologist, for in-depth counselling for clients.

The section received one hundred and eighty-eight (188) cases in 2023, marking a 50 percent increase from the previous year. These cases involved family problems, child access, and maintenance, with Court reports accounting for the heaviest in case load. Child support by non-custodial fathers by way of cash payments continued to be facilitated through the Accounts Section of the department.

Partnership for Peace

The Partnership for Peace Programme is a violence intervention initiative which was conceptualized by UN Women of the United Nations. The programme commenced in 2012 under the then Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Community Development and primarily targets young adult males. The programme is based on the premise that violence is intentional and that abusive behaviours are chosen methods for gaining control of persons and situation. It adopts a psycho-educational approach and aims to convey to participants that violence is unacceptable and that violent

habits can be broken. Ten (10) males were enrolled in the last programme which started November 2023 and concluded January 2024.

PROVISION FOR SOCIALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Homeless Men

The Clyde Gollop Shelter for Homeless Men operates on a 24-hour basis and provides temporary accommodation for men, who have been displaced due to factors including eviction, deportation, unemployment, poor family relations, incarceration, mental health and substance abuse issues. The Shelter has a maximum capacity of thirty-four (34) beds. However, due to environmental issues, the number was reduced to twenty-eight (28) persons.

Mirroring the previous period, twenty-two men were accommodated in the shelter in 2023. Most of these occupants, through social work intervention and support services, transitioned back to the community. The beneficiaries' ages ranged from forty-two (42) to eighty (81) years.

PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS

With the Barbados National HIV Strategic Plan 2020-2024: On the Fast-Track to End AIDS (NSP) as its guide, the Commission focused on working with vulnerable populations, with programming concentrated in the areas of prevention and support for people living with HIV and other priority groups. During 2023, the Commission provided temporary assistance to not only to people living with HIV (PLHIV), but to persons with disabilities and members of the lesbian gay bisexual transgender queer+ (LGBTQ+) communities, who either fell outside the ambit of the aforementioned agencies or the capacity of these agencies to render assistance.

The NHAC also provided additional supplemental support directly via its own efforts (e.g. food donation drives) and indirectly through strategic partnerships including its Civil Society Grant Scheme⁷: More specifically, the NHAC benefitted from the:

- Receipt of food donations via its Man Aware interventions, Crop Over intervention, schools and faith-based organizations and private individuals.
- Receipt of BDS \$3,000 in financial donations from partner agencies such as Chefette Restaurants Limited).
- Provision of psychosocial support via the Civil Society Grant projects:
 - BDS \$20,000 was spent by the Equals, on a combination of individual and group sessions for thirty-eight (38) persons.
 - BDS \$15,000 by GAIA Creative Arts Counselling, an art therapy empowerment project for five (5) male and eighteen (18) female inmates of Barbados Prison Service.
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Urban Development Commission

The Urban Development Commission (UDC) remained steadfast in its mandate to provide the services that would assist in the alleviation of poverty, to enhance sustainable quality of life and high standards of living within the urban population.

Capital Works Programme

During 2023, the UDC undertook 290 housing projects within its House Repair and Replacement, Maintenance, Pit Eradication and Roof Retrofitting Programmes. The total project expenditure for the

⁷ The Civil Society Grant Scheme is a small grants programme designed to financially facilitate the implementation of strategically aligned behaviour change interventions and research projects by civil society organizations (CSOs) and private sector agencies lacking the necessary funds to implement HIV programmes and projects.

period was \$6,105,774.52. Several projects that were identified for assistance under the Roof Retrofit Programme were transferred to the Hurricane Elsa Programme, as the roofs to these structures were further affected during the passing of Hurricane Elsa.

TABLE 31: CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMMES AND ASSOCIATED EXPENDITURE 2022 AND 2023

	Projects 2022	Projects 2023	Funds Disbursed 2022	Funds Disbursed 2023
Suck Wells	8	24	\$38,380.00	\$142,390.48
Septic Tanks	2	4	\$14,200.00	\$28,400.00
Ancillary Works	77	185	\$186,359.30	\$407,589.30
Repairs and Renovations	21	23	\$462,473.24	\$656,652.11
Replacement Houses	20	18	\$1,798,661.22	\$1,974,397.66
Roof Retrofitting	0	5	\$0.00	\$273,577.00
Waterborne Facilities	7	31	\$266,502.92	\$2,622,767.97
Completion of Houses	3	0	\$222,358.13	\$0.00
	138	290	\$2,988,934.81	\$6,105,774.52

Source: The Urban Development Commission

Hurricane Elsa Programme

The UDC was a part of the national response to provide structural intervention to those citizens impacted by Hurricane Elsa's passing in 2021. It should be noted that there continues to be several projects with encumbrances associated with the Hurricane Elsa Response Project, including twenty-three (23) persons impacted, who are still awaiting temporary accommodation before the UDC can intervene.

At the end of 2023, the cost of the programme was \$14,473,818.81 for 210 projects; while expenditure at the end of the period was \$12,870,991.59.

In addition, at December 31, 2023, twelve (12) repair projects were completed, at a cost of \$1,032,866.06; twenty-nine (29) rebuild projects were completed, at a cost of \$3,079,021.48; and two (2) rebuild projects, at a cost of \$157,169.15, were in progress.

Special Redevelopment Projects

Urban Renewal Project – Revitalisation of Bridgetown: Fairchild Street Market

The Fairchild Street Market Redevelopment Project continued during 2023, with Phase 1 in operation and Phase 2 fully completed and commissioned.

At the end of 2023, Phase 3 of the project, which involves the construction of a single storey structure, with a meat storage facility, as well as stalls for the vending of meat and fish, was ninety (90) percent completed. This building, when completed, will accommodate eight (8) individual stalls, for seven (7) butchers and one (1) fishmonger, along with a chiller and a freezer for the storage of carcasses. Expenditure for this period was \$2,020,774.00.

Murphy's Pasture Upgrade and Relocation Project

The objective of this project is to relocate households affected by recurrent flooding in Murphy's Pasture, Chapman Lane, St. Michael. Qualified households from the area are to be relocated to a parcel of land at Kensington New Road, St. Michael. Following the relocation of the residents, a community redevelopment and upgrade project is proposed for the vacated area.

During the period under review, the acquisition of the land was completed. Subsequently, preliminary works were conducted, and two (2) households have so far been identified for relocation.

To facilitate the relocation, four (4) DuraVilla Guyana Homes were proposed to be constructed at the Kensington New Road site. These DuraVilla Guyana structures were made available, and the temporary site services were installed to facilitate construction. The initial foundation works and erection of the DuraVilla Structures are proposed to be completed in 2024.

The proposed infrastructural budget for this project is \$508,077.86 and the expenditure for the initial site work completed during the reporting period was \$17,107.50.

Transfer of Title Programme

The Transfer of Title Programme, facilitated by the Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act, Cap 239B, aims to assist qualified tenants to obtain security of tenure through land ownership. The Act provides the legal framework for the transfer of title of lots to qualified tenants residing on tenancies and 'areas of land' across Barbados. This assistance is provided through government subsidies to aid in the purchase of lots. In many instances, land ownership improves the standard of living for many tenants.

As part of the programme's operations, the processing of Form 1 - Notices of Intent to Purchase remains an important first step. During the reporting period, ten (10) Form 1s were submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Maintenance, and seven (7) of these Form 1s were returned as having been stamped. The UDC's Board approved eighty-six (86) subsidies at a cost of \$1,659,796.72 during 2023. Of these, eighty-one (81) subsidies, totalling \$1,510,829.47, were disbursed, while five (5) subsidies, at a cost of \$148,967.25, were outstanding at the end of the period.

The outstanding commitments in the Transfer of Title Programme at the start of the period stood at \$2,763,311.88. Some progress was made in the clearance of the outstanding payments and there now remains an outstanding balance of \$1,252,482.41 in subsidies which were requested to be paid.

VI. FOREIGN POLICY, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND AID

A. RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Progress on Barbados' implementation achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Background of the SDGs

Barbados being one of the 193 Member States of the United Nations countries that adopted and signed on to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015 and came into force on January 1, 2016. This agreement envisions the creation of a better world free of poverty and underpinned by universal peace and where 'no one is left behind'.

Over the period leading up to 2030, these countries have agreed to mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle the climate crisis, while pledging to "Leave No One Behind," and fast-track progress for those furthest behind to be considered first.

Barbados is well on the way to achieving several SDGs based on the research and mapping of several implemented initiatives. It has achieved universal access to education and health services, free access to HIV/AIDS treatment, and 99 percent access to clean and safe drinking water and sanitation.

The SDGs are an agenda development framework that seeks to advance (i) People (ii) Prosperity (iii) Peace and (iv) Partnership along three of the fundamental sustainable development pillars of (a) economic, (b) social, and (c) environment.

The implementation and consequent achievement of the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underpins the objective of the 2030 Agenda and are designed to advance - People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership (5Ps). This is similar to the overarching visions and goals of several of the island states in the Caribbean including Barbados.

The alignment of the SDGs to national development plans and national sectoral policies is now commonplace across the Caribbean as part of a deliberate attempt to achieve the SDGs and to leave no one behind in the development space.

The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda embodies the notion that countries can best pursue development by addressing interrelated economic, social, and environmental challenges. This is more relevant today given the current global challenges that countries continue to face.

Progress of implementation of the SDGs

Barbados' implementation achievement of the SDGs has been satisfactory given the circumstances. In some cases, projects, programmes and initiatives being implemented are innovative and they push the development thrust of the country closer to achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Of the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), forty (40) targets are associated with people and twenty (50 percent) were implemented, twenty-one (21) targets are associated with prosperity and nine or 42.9 percent were implemented, twenty-four (24) targets are associated with planet and eight or 33.3 percent were implemented, nine targets are associated with peace and six or 66.7 percent were implemented, and one target was associated with partnership.

An overall assessment to determine the progress of achievement has stretched across ninety-five (95) targets of which 43 or (45.3 percent) were achieved. A fair progress of achievement was shown in 52 or (54.7 percent) of the targets. But there is an urgent need to accelerate implementation of the SDGs which has primarily been hindered by the resource capacity deficiencies facing the country.

To date, the major deficiencies are financial, technological, insufficient data availability to initiate transformation approaches, and the lack of skilled human resource capacities that has the potential to catalyze sustainable innovative development strategies.

Completing the implementation process of the SDGs

In order to complete the implementation process of the SDGs a method of localization of the SDGs should be undertaken where an approach of designing or adjusting national and sub-national government development plans, strategies and or policies to adapt the SDG targets to the local context and national priorities should be pursued.

A process of prioritization and strategic visioning, that extends to implementation, resourcing, data collection and monitoring, and reporting frameworks of programmes and projects. National and local multi-stakeholder ownership of the 2030 Agenda should be promoted in a way that targets respond to local priority needs and interests.

The localization of the SDG is a process led by the government but also involves extensive stakeholder engagement to ensure the alignment of national, local government and sectoral plans with the SDGs.

The Government has engaged in strategic efforts to modernize and digitally transform the public sector to enable greater use of digital channels by individuals and companies when accessing public services, to ensure greater efficiency in public sector administration, and to build the capacity of public sector skills to operate in a digital economy.

The digital transformation of the public sector through the use of digital technologies is key to reduce costs, speed-up and facilitate government transactions, and is expected to promote fiscal sustainability and greater efficiency in the public sector.

This will reduce the transactional costs associated with the provision of services to the public and private sectors by enabling online public sector transactions, reducing the number of hours that companies and individuals spend to access these services, eliminating multiple trips to undertake each transaction, and speeding up processing times by public officers.

Resource Mobilization to assist the implementation of the SDGs

Resource mobilization is critical to the process of implementing the SDGs as stipulated by the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The mobilization of financial, human, and technological resources, and

the availability and access to statistical data and other relevant information are fundamental to the success of the implementation process.

Finance mobilization

The absence of appropriate financial resource mobilization is a major impediment for the implementation of the SDGs, and even more so the achievement of the national sustainable development plan of Barbados. Barbados has therefore introduced, pioneered, and adopted several innovative forms of financing within its economy.

As far as development financing is concerned, Barbados is proving to be a best practice example for other Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and has also been bold enough to advocate for multilateral financial institutions to rethink their approaches to concessional financing.

Various financing initiatives and strategies are being proposed by Barbados and are strengthening the means of implementation of the SDGs, building resilient capacities, and revitalizing global partnerships that are bringing into the financing landscape several new ideas for consideration by development partners.

The IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF) is a financing architecture that help countries build resilience to external shocks such as natural catastrophes as a result of the climate crisis, and to ensure sustainable growth that contributes to their long-term balance of payments stability.

Statistical /Data Availability

There is also increased recognition of the role that official statistics play in the overall development of countries, and this is largely due to the data demands for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the SDGs.

The Barbados Statistical Service (BSS) is therefore key in supporting the monitoring and reporting of indicators for the SDGs, as well as supporting the development of the country's Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on the SDGs, and building the general statistical capacity of the country.

Skilled Human Resource Mobilization

Barbados has embarked on the reform of its social protection programmes to build a universal, shock responsive, social protection systems that are inclusive.

Government has deployed a range of services intended to provide individuals and families with the necessary tools, skills and opportunities to enable their personal development to foster social inclusion, improve family relationships in an effort to build an improved social community spirit, and strengthen community and family relations through holistic service delivery.

Building skilled human resource capacities across critical sectors would assist in strengthening and sustaining the human resilience of the country for future generations.

Technological Mobilization

Appropriate technological mechanisms are required to transform outdated systems and processes to more modern operating mechanisms so that they are more effective and efficient thus increasing productivity levels.

Technology mobilization can streamline processes, automate repetitive tasks, and enhance overall efficiency. Such modern technological mechanisms can transform businesses, governments, and economies, and create and sustain the necessary national growth and development of a country.

B. INTERNATIONAL TRADE POLICY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued in 2023 to pursue its mandate to seek out opportunities, regionally and internationally, bilaterally and within multilateral fora, to promote harmonious relations, to highlight the profile of Barbados as a democratic nation which respects the rule of law and adherence to human rights principles, and to facilitate the economic and social development of the country. Important engagements were held with partners in CARICOM, Cuba, Belize, United States of America, Canada, Colombia, Venezuela, France, Ireland, The Netherlands, United Kingdom, Ghana, Saudi Arabia, UAE, India, China, and at the United Nations, Organization of American States, and the Association of Caribbean States.

The Ministry engaged in meetings and worked towards the negotiation and signing of agreements with the goal of positively impacting critical areas of national development including health, education, business development, security, public sector modernization, capacity building, technical and economic cooperation, culture, sports, trade and investment and people-to-people exchanges.

CARICOM Heads of Government Conference

Barbados was successful in having the **Bridgetown Initiative for the Reform of the Global Financial Architecture** included on the agenda of the 44th Regular Meeting of the Conference held on 15-17 February 2023, in Nassau, The Bahamas. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Heads of Government agreed that: i) the time had come to work collectively for a restructuring of the global financial architecture to respond to the existential threats facing SIDS and other developing countries; and ii) the Bridgetown Initiative was a viable model to build on with respect to the reform of the global financial system.

CARICOM Relations

Belize

On July 5, 2023 Barbados and Belize signed a Memorandum of Understanding to collaborate on the Blue Economy sector in several areas including reef restoration, marine spatial planning, the development of shared knowledge, science and technology and to jointly build a maritime community with a shared future.

Jamaica

On May 18, 2023 Barbados and Jamaica signed a Memorandum of Understanding, to signal their agreement to strengthen the longstanding cooperation between the two countries in areas of tourism, air services, trade, investment, private sector business collaborations, the medicinal cannabis industry, education, technical and vocational training, arts, culture, sports, entertainment, youth affairs, health and community development.

The Bahamas

The Commonwealth of the Bahamas accredited H.E. David Comissiong to be the Non-Resident Ambassador of Barbados to the Bahamas on February 14, 2023. This was a step towards the strengthen bi-lateral cooperation and the establishment of the Joint Commission mechanism to allow the two countries to work closely together on issues pertaining to climate crisis adaptation, climate finance, the development of renewable energy, the development of the Blue or Ocean Economy, natural disaster preparation and response, educational linkages and sharing of capacities, cultural and artistic exchanges, development of tourism synergies and inter-regional travel modalities.

Cuba

With the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on February 14, 2023 between the Government of Barbados and the Republic of Cuba a mechanism on Education was established for: i) the teaching of summer courses in Spanish as a second language; ii) the exchange of English language teachers between Cuba and Barbados; and, iii) training of middle level student teachers between the ages of 11 and 14 years old in Spanish.

Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity (APEP)

Barbados accepted the invitation of the United States of America to engage with it and ten other member states – Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay – in a new framework for cooperation in the Americas, referred to as the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity, that aims to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and integration in the region.

Launched in January 2023, APEP members committed to bolstering regional competitiveness and resilience, strengthening the diversity, sustainability, and resilience of supply chains by expanding regional trade ties. Barbados will also work within the group to combat the climate crisis, and seek opportunities to address it through mitigation, adaptation, and resilience, as well as through clean and renewable energy and energy efficiency.

In November 2023, Prime Minister Mottley joined President Biden and the other Heads of Government of APEP in a meeting in Washington, DC. to reaffirm their collective commitment to shared values and identified the following five initial cross-cutting priorities that their collective work will drive and be focussed on: i) strengthening regional competitiveness and integration; ii) fostering shared prosperity and good governance; iii) building sustainable infrastructure; iv) protecting the climate and the environment; and, v) promoting healthy communities.

Engagement with U.S. Vice President

On June 8, 2023, Prime Minister Mottley led Barbados' delegation to engage with other Caribbean leaders with Vice President Kamala Harris of the United States of America. The meeting provided the opportunity for the participants to pursue shared prosperity and security, enhanced cooperation in the areas of security and firearms trafficking; the situation in Haiti; and the U.S.–Caribbean Partnership to Address the Climate Crisis 2030 (PACC 2030).

Barbados-Venezuela Air Services Agreement

During her first official visit to Venezuela, on 8 July 2023, the Honourable Mia Amor Mottley, S.C, M.P., witnessed the signing of an Air Services Agreement with Venezuela. This was followed by the inaugural direct Conviasa Flight from Venezuela to Barbados on 30 September 2023.

CARICOM-Canada Summit

Barbados participated in the CARICOM-Canada Summit, convened in Ottawa, Canada, October 17 – 19, 2023, which served to deepen collaboration in the climate crisis and resilience, develop mechanisms to improve the access to finance, global financial architecture reform, enhanced engagement in strengthening regional security, and increased trade and investment opportunities. The Summit also launched the CARICOM-Canada Strategic Partnership, a new framework for deepening cooperation through the establishment of a new permanent mechanism for structured high-level engagement and follow-up on joint actions.

It should be noted that the commitments made by the Government of Canada included a \$58.5 million initiative in partnership with the Caribbean Development Bank for renewable energy and grid modernization, a \$10 million Climate Smart Agriculture and Food Systems initiative with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, and a \$6 million contribution to the Caribbean Climate Smart Fund for clean energy. In the area of security, Canada committed \$3.2 million for the CARICOM firearms roadmap to combat the spread of illegal firearms in the Caribbean, and \$4.6 million for a justice initiative to address gender-based violence and protect the rights of women, youth, and children.

Mexico - Memorandum of Understanding

On 19 September 2023, Barbados and the United Mexican States signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at establishing a mechanism for consultations on matters of mutual interest. The signing of this MOU is expected to lead to the deepening of cooperation with Mexico in a wide range of areas, including agriculture and energy.

Visit of the Vice President of Colombia

Her Excellency Francia Marquez, Vice President of the Republic of Colombia, visited Barbados in July 2023 for the Reparations and Racial Healing Study Tour. Prime Minister Mottley and Vice President Marquez discussed how their nations could build a stronger connection, focusing on the fight for reparations, increased cultural exchanges, trade and diplomatic relations, tourism and climate justice.

France

Since 2023, Barbados and France have cultivated a deep and very visible rapport on the question of reforming the global financial architecture. In this vein, the Governments of Barbados and France co-hosted the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact in Paris, France, from June 22 to 23, 2023, under the joint stewardship of the Prime Minister of Barbados, the Hon. Mia Amor Mottley, S.C., M.P. and President of the French Republic, H.E. Emmanuel Macron. Key to the outcomes of this Summit was the Paris Pact for People and the Planet (4P), a declaration of ambition and call to action in addressing the dual challenge plaguing the countries of the world – eradicating poverty and preserving the planet.

Ireland

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Hon. Kerrie D. Symmonds, M.P., led a delegation comprising the Ambassador-designate of Barbados to Ireland, Mr. Cleviston Haynes, and senior officers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and representatives of Invest Barbados, Export Barbados and the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. to the inaugural Ireland – Latin America and the Caribbean Business and Economic Forum on November 21, 2023. Satisfying a core objective of Barbados' participation, representatives of Export Barbados met with Enterprise Ireland (EI), a government enterprise development agency which invests in and supports the development of Irish-owned companies on their journey to achieving greater scale and to become global leaders in their field. Further collaboration between Export Barbados and EI is anticipated in the future.

The Netherlands

The Ministry of Transport, Works and Water Resources identified the Netherlands as a viable partner for future technical and training collaboration in such areas as water resource management, wastewater management, distribution systems and water quality management. A delegation from Barbados, led by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport, Works and Water Resources (MTWW), the Hon. Santia J. O. Bradshaw, M.P., conducted a fact-finding Mission to the Netherlands from July 3 to 6, 2023.

The Barbados delegation comprised senior officers of the Ministry and the Barbados Water Authority, as well as the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrogeology. During the mission, the delegation engaged Dutch academia and technical experts alike, primarily with a view to gaining firsthand insight into water resource and wastewater management in the Netherlands and areas for bilateral cooperation and follow-up.

United Kingdom

The 11th UK-Caribbean Forum took place on May 18, 2023 in Kingston, Jamaica. The Forum's overarching theme was Strengthening the UK/Caribbean Partnership for a Sustainable, Prosperous and Resilient Future, focusing on three thematic areas: Sustainable and Economic Development; Security and Immigration; and Promotion of Common Values and Shared Interests. Against the backdrop of rapidly changing geopolitics, the 11th Forum provided an important opportunity for regional interface with the United Kingdom, particularly for building consensus on the Bridgetown Initiative and addressing national security challenges through regional cooperation. During this forum, a Memorandum of Understanding

was signed between CARICOM and the UK for the establishment of a consultation and cooperation mechanism, intended to both formalize and facilitate future UK cooperation with the CARICOM Secretariat and regional institutions.

Ghana

A delegation led by the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre and including the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of Ghana, Hon. Kwaku Ampratwum-Sarpong, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Ghana, Hon. Ibrahim Mohammed Awal and Minister of Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Hon. Bryan Acheampong visited Barbados from 24th – 30th May, 2023 as part of an Investment Promotion Mission to the Caribbean states of Bahamas, Guyana and Barbados. The visit concluded with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for Tourism and Cultural Cooperation between the Government of Ghana and the Government of Barbados, and the first Joint Tourism and Culture Committee was held on 15th June, 2023 via zoom.

The Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Creative Arts, Hon Mark Okraku- Mantey, and the Barbados Minister with the responsibility for Culture, Senator Dr. Shantal Munro –Knight, met and discussed key areas for cooperation in culture and tourism. Some of the areas identified in culture were exchanges in fashion, a pan-festival, cultural heritage (Barbados’ Road Project), twinning with Bridgetown Garrison and Ghana UNESCO project, copyright management and the promotion of Caribbean-Afro beats. In the area of tourism, Ghana requested the exchange of best practices with the focus on hospitality training. Barbados indicated its interest in investment in the hotel sector, the conclusion of an Air Service Agreement and a direct flight route between Barbados and the African continent.

Saudi Arabia

The historic CARICOM-Saudi Arabia Summit was held on 16 November, 2023 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where leaders from the Caribbean Community met. The Summit was co-chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and His Excellency Roosevelt Skerit, Prime Minister of Dominica. Key areas of cooperation were explored, including the climate crisis, renewable energy, investment, and cultural exchanges. At the Summit, leaders signed a joint statement reaffirming mutual interests and the friendship between the region and Saudi Arabia.

Barbados and Saudi Arabia signed an Air Services Agreement in the margins of the first CARICOM – Saudi Arabia Summit on 17th November, 2023. Senior Minister Symmonds signed on behalf of the Government of Barbados and H.E. Saleh bin Nasser AlJasser, Minister of Transport and Logistics Services of Saudi Arabia signed on behalf of Saudi Arabia.

On 29th October, 2023, by written confirmation, Saudi Arabia Port Authority (Mawani) expressed their commitment to sponsor the Barbados Forum with \$US200 000 through a contribution to Barbados’s UNCTAD Trust Fund.

United Arab Emirates

Barbados and the UAE signed a Bilateral Investment Treaty on December 4th, 2023.

India

Through a partnership between Export Barbados and the Government of India, a grant of US\$1 million in machinery for Agro-processing was provided by India in September 2023. The supplied machinery will be utilized towards setting up an SME enterprise, creating economic and employment opportunities.

China

The Hon Mia Amor Mottley S.C., M.P., paid an official visit to the People’s Republic of China, from June 24 to 27, 2023. Several instruments were signed including: i) Agreement between Bridgetown of Barbados and Hunan Province of the People’s Republic of China on the Establishment of a Friendship City/Province Relationship; ii) Agreement between the Barbados Government Information Service and The Xinhua News Agency of the People’s Republic of China on News Exchange and Cooperation; iii)

Agreement on Sending a Chinese Medical Team to Barbados between the Government of Barbados and the Government of the People's Republic of China; iv) Memorandum of Understanding on Strengthening Development Cooperation and Promoting the Implementation of the Global Development Initiative between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados and The China International Development Cooperation Agency; v) Memorandum of Understanding on Deepening Blue Economy Cooperation between Ministry of Environment and National Beautification, Green and Blue Economy and the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China; and, vi) Memorandum of Understanding between the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and China Media Group.

Hope Project/Food Security and Entrepreneurship Project

On April 6th 2023, the Ground-breaking ceremony for the Hope Project/Food Security and Entrepreneurship Project took place. The on-going Hope Agricultural Training Institute Project and the UWI Centre for Food Security and Entrepreneurship Project which are both funded by Chinese grant funds are aimed at development in the fields of agriculture and education.

6th Chinese Medical Team

On 9th September, 2023 the 6th Chinese Medical Team arrived from China aimed to provide medical aid for a one-year period. The team included experts in pediatrics, anesthesiology, nuclear medicine, acupuncture and other fields.

United Nations

Universal Periodic Review

The Government of Barbados completed its mandatory reporting to the international community on the human rights situation in the country in the context of the peer review process that all United Nations (UN) Member States undergo, on a quadrennial basis, under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the UN Human Rights Council. Barbados' National Report was submitted on March 6, 2023 and an in-person presentation and defence of the Report was successfully conducted on May 4, 2023 at the United Nations Offices in Geneva, Switzerland by a team led by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Hon. Kerrie D. Symmonds, M.P.

BBNJ Agreement

Inter-governmental negotiations on the Agreement on Marine Biodiversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) were completed, and a final draft text adopted, on June 19, 2023. Conclusion of the BBNJ Agreement brings to three the agreements implemented under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Barbados played a leading role during the negotiating process, having served as co-facilitator, along with Belize, for the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of CARICOM.

Organization of American States

Barbados participated in the 53rd General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), held at its headquarters in Washington, D.C. Notably, the General Assembly approved a resolution, sponsored by Barbados, on '*Enhanced Access to Climate Financing*'. The General Assembly also resolved to recognise the urgent need for the OAS to provide assistance to Haiti in the areas of security, democracy, promotion and protection of human rights and the holding of free and fair elections.

Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

Barbados gained support for the Bridgetown Initiative for the Reform of the Global Financial Architecture through widespread acceptance of a reference highlighting the Initiative's six-pronged approach in the approved Declaration of Antigua, Guatemala at the Ninth Summit of Heads of State and/or Government of the States, Countries and Territories of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) held in Antigua, Guatemala on 12 May 2023.

Barbados also assumed the positions of Chair and Vice Chair on the ACS Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism and Special Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction respectively at the Summit.

FOREIGN TRADE

During 2023, the Foreign Trade Division continued to engage in activities geared towards supporting efforts to returning the economy to a position of growth through the use of international trade policy and involvement in discussions at different levels.

Barbados, through efforts at the national and regional level, sought to build capacity and explore opportunities to trade in order to improve the trading environment.

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO):

Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

Fisheries subsidies were the subject of work in the WTO's Negotiating Group on Rules since 2001 with a negotiating mandate agreed in 2005 at the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Conference. That mandate was to strengthen fisheries disciplines, including through the prohibition of specific types of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing. The inclusion of appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least-developed Members is also a mandated integral part of the fisheries subsidies negotiations.

The text for the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies applies to the subsidies contributing to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing that result in stocks being overfished; and other subsidies. The Agreement's 12 Articles address Least Developed Country (LDC) Members; technical assistance and capacity building; notification and transparency requirements; institutional arrangements; dispute settlement; final provisions and measures for the termination of agreement if comprehensive disciplines are not adopted.

The Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies created an international standard of transparency by making it mandatory for WTO Member governments to avail publicly details of subsidies granted to their fleet, fishing operators and various fishing activities. This mandate will strengthen the notification of fisheries subsidies and facilitate more effective surveillance of the implementation of fisheries subsidies commitments.

Negotiations on Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD)

The Joint Initiative on Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) was launched by 70 members at the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11) in December 2017 and was driven by a need to address the trade barriers slowing down and restricting investment processes between countries.

Discussions on the Joint Initiative on Investment Facilitation for Development aim to facilitate foreign direct investment that would improve the transparency and predictability of investment measures; streamline and speed up administrative procedures and requirements; and enhance international cooperation, information sharing, the exchange of best practices, and relations with relevant stakeholders, including dispute prevention.

Formal negotiations were concluded successfully in July 2023. A core objective of the framework is to facilitate greater participation by developing and least-developed WTO Members in global investment flows. However, these negotiations do not address market access, investment protection or Investor-State Dispute Settlement.

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD)

UNCTAD Strategy to support Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

The ongoing work on the UNCTAD Strategy to support Small Island Developing States (SIDS), is a key outcome of UNCTAD 15 and the Bridgetown Covenant. It is envisioned that when formally adopted and adequately financed, the Strategy could transform how the institution and by extension the UN System supports efforts to diversify and grow our economies.

CARIFORUM/EUROPEAN UNION (EU) ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (EPA):

Five Year Review of the EPA

The Joint Declaration on the Signing of the EPA provides for reviews of the Agreement every five (5) years. The Joint Declaration sets out the objectives and scope of the review exercise. The purpose of the review is to “determine the impact of the Agreement, including the costs and consequences of implementation” with a view to amending “its provisions and adjust their application as necessary.” The Joint CARIFORUM-EU Council is tasked with the conduct of the reviews.

The Task Force developed an annotated outline of the structure of the Joint Report for the Second Five Year Review of the EPA. The outline addressed priorities raised by the Parties in the Task Force such as trade in goods, trade in services and investment, trade related issues, development cooperation and institutional and horizontal matters.

A summation of the areas in which this process is engaged are as follows:

- Implementation of the Tariff Cuts

Article 16 to the CARIFORUM-EU EPA requires the implementation of phased tariff reductions of customs duties on originating products of the EU Party in accordance with the Tariff Liberalization Schedule. CARIFORUM States have discussed the implementation of the tariff cuts; discussed challenges affecting the tariff cuts according to the Schedule and recommended actions to address the challenges

- Transposition of the HS

CARIFORUM States are to provide an update on the transposition of their EPA commitments to assist the CARIFORUM Directorate to better coordinate the delivery of the technical assistance.

- Implementation of Article 238 of the EPA

Article 238 of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA provides that any more favourable treatment and advantage granted by any Signatory CARIFORUM State to the EU Party shall also be enjoyed by each Signatory CARIFORUM State. CARIFORUM States have discussed issues relating to the implementation of Article 238 and have to agree on the implementation of the regional preference clause to the zero-rated items.

- Application of the Octroi De Mer – Way Forward

Goods originating in the CARIFORUM States exported to the French Overseas Departments face higher rates of duty due to the imposition of the Octroi de Mer tax on these goods. In response to the contention by CARIFORUM States that the application of the tax is unequal, discriminatory, and incompatible with provisions contained within the EPA, the EU maintains the tax is ‘grandfathered’ under certain provisions of the EPA. CARIFORUM States have discussed this issue and are to agree on the way forward.

CARIFORUM/UNITED KINGDOM (UK) ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (EPA):

The First Meeting of the Joint CARIFORUM-UK Council

The First Meeting of the Joint CARIFORUM-UK Council was held on December 19, 2023, and was chaired by Senator the Honourable Michael Halkitis, Minister of Economic Affairs in the Bahamas. The Honourable Greg Hands, Minister of State in the Department for Business and Trade, represented the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In preparation for the UK ceasing to be a party to the EU preferential trading agreements, CARIFORUM and the UK rolled over the provisions of the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) into the CARIFORUM-United Kingdom EPA in order that the preferential trade will continue between the two parties.

The meeting reviewed the reports and updates from the CARIFORUM Directorate and the United Kingdom highlighting the accomplishments and challenges regarding the implementation of the Agreement. Participants discussed the following areas:

- i. Institutional Framework;
- ii. Report of the CARIFORUM-UK Trade and Development Committee (TDC);

- iii. Strategic Direction of the CARIFORUM-UK EPA;
- iv. Development Cooperation; and
- v. Trade Policy Developments.

The key outcomes of the First Meeting of the Joint CARIFORUM-UK were:

- The strategic operation and implementation of the Agreement were exchanged on a number of areas related to trade in goods, trade in services and trade-related provisions.
- The importance of tariff compliance and the important role of the Agreement in removing barriers to trade and increasing trade and investment between the UK and CARIFORUM States. Ministers agreed on the need to continue engagement with the private sector and other stakeholders to access the benefits of the EPA.
- The importance of development cooperation between CARIFORUM and the UK as mechanism to support the ability of the CARIFORUM States to successfully implement the Agreement, and benefit from its provisions and achieve sustainable development. Ministers expressed their desire for early ratification of the EPA by all Parties.

CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM):

56th Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED)

The Fifty – Sixth (56th) Regular Meeting of the COTED was held in a hybrid format from 1-2 June 2023 at the CARICOM Secretariat in Georgetown, Guyana. The Honourable Keisel Peters, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, chaired the 56th Regular Meeting of the COTED.

Items which were pertinent to Barbados' interests, were:

- Approval of the Rules and Regulations for Administering Public Procurement in the Community - Barbados signed the Protocol and the Declaration of Intent to Provisionally Apply the Protocol on Public Procurement on 27 February 2019 and ratified it on 15 August 2019. However, the development of rules, guidelines, norms, and standards to give effect to the implementation of the Protocol and by extension the Community Public Procurement Regime, is still a work in progress.
- Consideration by Liquid Soap and Detergent Producing Member States on the Development of a Product Specific Rule of Origin (PSRO) for Liquid Soap/Liquid Detergents under Tariff Heading 3402 - In 2020, Jamaica initiated a Verification of Origin request on BEEP dishwashing liquid stating that three (3) of its components were classified under the same tariff head as the finished product, and therefore necessitates a change of the PSRO.
- Status Reports on Member States Implementation of the CARICOM Customs Harmonized Customs Bill and Regulations - At the 55th COTED Barbados was the sole Member State which reported that it had implemented the Harmonized Customs Bill and was working towards implementing the Harmonized Customs Regulations.
- Status Reports from Member States' Implementation of the CET At the 55th COTED, Barbados advised that work to implement the CET has commenced and should have been completed during mid-to-late 2023.
- Implementation of the 30/35 percent CET rate for Condensed Milk of Tariff Heading 0402.99.10 - At the 55th Meeting of the COTED, Barbados indicated it had commenced consultation with the

Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment towards the implementation of the 30/35 percent CET rate on extra-regional condensed milk.

- Negotiations on Expansion of Preferential Market Access under the Agreement on Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation between CARICOM and the Government of Colombia - At the 55th Meeting of the COTED, Barbados supported the option of adjusting the negotiation timelines as Barbados is still to finalize on additional areas for liberalization under the Trade, Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement between CARICOM and Colombia.

57th Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED)

The Fifty – Seventh (57th) Regular Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), was convened in person on 27 – 28 November 2023, at the CARICOM Secretariat in Georgetown, Guyana. The key outcomes of the 57th Regular Meeting of the COTED were:

- Decision to extend the completion date for the review of the CET and RoO to April 2024 to allow for the submission of the Revised CET and RoO to the Fifty – Eighth (58th) Regular Meeting of the COTED;
- Decision to object to the Suspension of the CET on 240,000 Lithium-Ion Batteries of HS Heading 8507.60, as requested by Jamaica, given Barbados’ indication of the ability for local manufacturer OnSolar to supply for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025;
- Decision for Barbados’ proposal for the adoption of the Electronic Certificate of Origin (eCoO) to be submitted for the consideration of the CARICOM Customs Committee to receive a presentation from Barbados on the proposed eCoO.
- On the matter of compliance with the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC), noting the report by Trinidad and Tobago that the Revised Beekeeping and Bee Products (Amendment) Regulations were to allow for the import and transshipment of regional honey; and
- On the matter of compliance with the RTC, noting the report by Barbados that it is applying the 30 percent CET rate for Condensed Milk of Tariff Heading 0402.99.10.

Revision of the CARICOM Common External Tariff (CET)

CARICOM has been seeking reforms to its CET in an attempt to advance the regional integration process. In this regard, a consultancy to review the CET was conducted to determine what changes were required to improve the current rules in the region.

The CET is a common feature in all Customs Unions. In CARICOM, however, the CET is not “common.” It should also be noted that the CET, as it currently stands in CARICOM, is affected by the List of Items Ineligible for Conditional Duty Exemption (the List of Ineligibles), the Suspension and Safeguard Mechanism, the List of Items Eligible for Conditional Duty Exemption, as well as Lists A, C and D.

The Eighth (8th) Meeting of the Sectoral Working Group (SWG) to review the CARICOM Common External Tariff (CET) was held in Georgetown, Guyana, from October 16 – 17, 2023. The purpose of the 8th Meeting of the SWG for the CARICOM CET was to finalize the working text of the general principles of the CET for consideration of the 57th COTED. Moreover, the 8th SWG sought to conclude and streamline the List of Ineligibles as well as Lists A, C and D.

The 8th SWG to review the CET was unable to conclude its recommendations to put forward to the 57th COTED because the majority of Member States were still at the stage of concluding their consultations on the aforementioned considerations.

To this end, the 57th COTED considered and agreed to the request for an extension to complete the review of the CET to 2024 to allow for the submission of the Revised CET to the COTED at its Fifty-Eighth

(58th) Regular Meeting. Barbados supports the position that the SWG to Review the CET should complete its work during 2024.

Revision of the CARICOM Revision of the Rules of Origin (RoO)

This included attempts to simplify rules, where necessary, as well as to introduce new concepts for consideration. Specifically, the purpose of the Meetings of the SWG to review the RoO is to give CARICOM Member States an opportunity to provide their positions on the following areas regarding the RoO which are outstanding:

- General Principles to Guide the Review of the Rules of Origin;
- Direct Consignment Rule;
- Cumulation;
- De Minimis/Value Tolerance Rules; and
- Consideration of Proposals for Changes to the Product Specific Rules of Origin.

The Tenth (10th) Meeting of the Special Working Group (SWG) to review the CARICOM RoO was held in Georgetown, Guyana, from October 18 – 20, 2023. Specifically, the purpose of the Meetings of the SWG was to give CARICOM Member States an opportunity to provide their positions on considerations to revise the RoO.

The 10th SWG to review the RoO was unable to conclude its recommendations to put forward to the 57th COTED and agreed to the request for an extension to complete the review of the RoO during 2024 to allow for the submission of the Revised RoO to the COTED at its 58th Regular Meeting.

Implementation of the CARICOM Interactive Marketplace and Suspension Procedure (CIMSuPro)

The CIMSuPro is an online portal that was approved by CARICOM Trade Ministers to promote intra-regional trade by creating an information platform that will serve two purposes:

- it will contain a 'Marketplace' feature that will allow regional buyers to find sellers of regionally produced goods.
- the CIMSuPro will facilitate the processing of requests for Suspension of the CET and help to make the system for review and approval more efficient.

However, this function was put on hold until the Marketplace function of the CIMSuPro is widely populated and utilized throughout the Member States.

In March 2023, the Secretariat advised of its outreach program in Member States aimed at advancing the work already done to make the CIMSuPro fully operational. This was rationalized by the lack of implementation progress of the CIMSuPro across all Member States.

The outreach was to be facilitated by personnel from the trade and public information Units of the Secretariat, and the web portal development officials of Suriname's Office of the Vice President, and would involve two-day visits to eight (8) Member States namely Suriname, Jamaica, Belize, Dominica (from which Montserrat, Antigua and Barbuda and St. Kitts and Nevis will connect remotely), Saint Lucia (from which Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines will connect remotely), Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

However, regrettably, due to a lack of adequate funding to permit the Secretariat to execute the outreach program, the activity was postponed indefinitely. During the Fifty – Seventh (57th) Regular Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), which was convened in person on 27 – 28 November 2023, at the CARICOM Secretariat in Georgetown, Guyana, an update was provided on the implementation of the CIMSuPro, by the Suriname Trade Minister.

It was revealed that due to funding being accessed from one of CARICOM's International Development Donors, the aforementioned outreach program will now be undertaken in 2024.

ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES (OACPS):

Barbados' Signature of the Samoa Agreement

The Cotonou Agreement, signed in June 2000 by the European Community (EC) and its Member States and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States, was a legally binding treaty aimed at promoting and expediting the economic, cultural and social development of the ACP States. It was in effect for a period of twenty years, and expired on February 28, 2020.

The overall objective of the Samoa Agreement is to strengthen political partnerships to generate mutually beneficial outcomes on common areas of interest to the OACPS and the EU. In accordance with Article 99 of the Agreement, it will be in force for the next twenty years.

Of significance, the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), Global Europe is the EU's new financing instrument which aims to finance the implementation of the Agreement on the basis of, the objectives, strategies and priorities of different countries and regions established at national, regional, continental and inter-regional levels.

While Barbados is not expected to benefit from a country multiannual indicative programme (MIP) in the programming process under the Americas and the Caribbean Regional Multiannual Indicative Programme for 2021-2027 Barbados would nevertheless receive financial support from the regional MIP. It was therefore a critical consideration within Barbados' signature onto the Samoa Agreement.

116th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers

Barbados participated at the 116th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers, which was held in Brussels, Belgium, from 18 – 20 July 2023. The Council of Ministers is the OACPS' main decision-making body and is also the supreme body responsible for implementing the guidelines laid down by the Summit. The Council is composed of a member of Governments from each Member of the OACPS or a government-designated representative.

A synopsis of some of the key outcomes, which were derived from the deliberations of the 116th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers, are as follows:

- European Union's Decision to Sign the Samoa Agreement - A key development that occurred during the convening of the 116th Session of the OACPS Council of Ministers was the official notification of the European Union's (EU's) decision to sign and provisionally apply the new OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement - which is to be called the Samoa Agreement.
- Resolution on Advancing the Bridgetown Initiative – Barbados called on OACPS Members and the Secretariat to support advocacy and engagement on advancing implementation of the Bridgetown 2.0 Initiative in relevant UN, and other multilateral and regional processes and future relevant meetings.
- OACPS Strategy for Resource Mobilisation - As part of implementing the provisions of the Revised Georgetown Agreement, the Secretariat commissioned the study for the formulation of the OACPS Strategy for mobilising resources in order to support the operations of the Secretariat as well as for the financing of development programmes in the Member States. The Council endorsed the Final Report of the OACPS Strategy for Resource Mobilisation.
- OACPS Multi-Country Programmes to be Funded Under the NDICI-Global Europe - The Council approved the OACPS Secretariat's Note on the Criteria and Modalities for identifying OACPS Multi-country programmes to be funded under the NDICI-Global Europe.
- EU List of Non-cooperative Tax Jurisdictions and that of Third Countries regarding AML/CTF - The Council approved the Reports and also exchanged views on the reasons justifying the proposed

change in the status and mandate of the Ad Hoc Ministerial Contact Group as established by the Decision of the Council of Ministers of 28 July 2020. Following this exchange of views, which highlighted the permanent nature of this issue, required a change in approach. The Ministerial Contact Group considered and adopted the draft decision establishing the Ministerial Working Group on International Tax Governance and AML/CFT.

- Critical Raw Materials - The Council mandated the Committee of Ambassadors and Secretary-General to prepare an OACPS position paper outlining options for an OACPS approach to the EU regulations on Critical Raw Materials and to submit concrete proposals and recommendations on issues of strategic interest to the Members of the OACPS.
- Resolution on Humanitarian and Security Situation in Haiti - The Council called on OACPS Member States and their partners to provide practical assistance to Haiti to help restore law and order, deliver humanitarian aid and re-establish democratic order through the holding of inclusive and transparent elections.

Representation on the OACPS Parliamentary Assemblies

The Government of Barbados appointed the Hon Edmund Hinkson, M.P as the representative on the OACPS Parliamentary Assemblies. These include the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Parliamentary Assembly and the OACPS- European Union Parliamentary Assembly. Representation also extends to the Parliamentary Assemblies under the CARIFORUM-EU and CARIFORUM-United Kingdom Economic Partnership Agreements.

The OACPS Parliamentary Assembly has three (3) standing Committees - Committee on Political Affairs; Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade; and Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment.

63rd Session of the OACPS Parliamentary Assembly

During 19 – 23 June 2023, the Parliamentary Representatives from the OACPS and the three (3) Standing Committees (Committee on Political Affairs; Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade; Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment) met.

Barbados currently serves on the Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade, the Bureau of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

The Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade focused on the following areas:

- Consideration of the amendments to the draft resolution on the EU list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes and the list of third countries with regard to combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT).
- Consideration of the draft agenda for the meeting of the ACP-EU JPA Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade, scheduled for June 25, 2023, with particular reference to the activities of the European Investment Bank (EIB) and other OACPS-EU financial instruments in the ACP countries in light of the post-Cotonou partnership agreement and the critical interim review of the EPAs.
- Exchange of views on the Neighbourhood, Development Cooperation and International Cooperation Instrument, “Europe in the World” (NDICI-Europe in the World).

43rd Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

During the Plenary of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly there were debates without resolution on:

- Hybrid threats (Cybersecurity)

- Reform of the UN Security Council

Two (2) urgent topics were discussed:

- The humanitarian and security situation in Haiti -
- The humanitarian situation in OACPS countries affected by terrorism.

Later in the plenary, there was a debate without resolution on the topic of “Critical raw materials, energy transition and climate change in the EU-ACP cooperation”.

The ACP-EU JPA adopted the Resolution on the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Resolution on the EU list of non-cooperative tax jurisdictions and the list of third countries regarding AML/CFT. The Rules of Procedure the new JPAs were also adopted by the ACP-EU JPA, and it should be noted that these new Rules of Procedure will now come into force given the the EU’s recent decision to sign and provisionally apply the new OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement - which is to be called the Samoa Agreement.

AMERICAS PARTNERSHIP AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY (APEP)

APEP Leaders’ Summit

Barbados participated in the APEP Leaders’ Summit on November 03, 2023 in Washington D.C., United States of America. The invitation to participate in the Leaders’ Summit was received from the President of the United States Joseph Biden, and Barbados was represented by the Hon. Mia Amor Mottley, S.C, M.P., Prime Minister of Barbados. Senior Minister Kerrie Symmonds and a delegation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

APEP is a White House initiative which was first introduced by US President Joseph Biden at the Summit of Americas held in Los Angeles in June 2022. This partnership of initially twelve countries, of which Barbados is the only CARICOM Member State and together with the Dominican Republic are the only two Caribbean countries, is a new framework for cooperation across the Americas. It was launched as a forum for deepening economic cooperation, focusing on five priorities:

- strengthening regional competitiveness;
- fostering shared prosperity and good governance;
- building sustainable infrastructure;
- protecting the climate and environment; and
- promoting healthy communities.

The partnership includes twelve APEP partners committed to working together to advance mutual interests by strengthening regional competitiveness and supply chain resiliency. It also seeks to promote shared prosperity, and inclusive and sustainable development and investment.

The leaders of Barbados, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru, the United States, and Uruguay share a vision of an Americas region which is more open, fair, inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous. The meeting discussed three key tracks for action within this partnership:

- The Foreign Affairs Track - the Foreign Affairs Track within the Americas Partnership aims to promote inclusive growth and tap into the potential of the people in the participating countries. It recognizes the connection between good governance and sustainable, responsible investment in each nation, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are both sustainable and widely distributed.
- The Trade Track - The Trade Track within the Americas Partnership aims to strengthen regional competitiveness by building on existing trade relationships and economic cooperation. Ministers

responsible for trade are urged to develop inclusive and sustainable approaches to trade and investment that support regional sustainable development and resilient supply chains for goods and services. This includes enhancing a predictable and transparent regulatory environment to facilitate trade flows and remove barriers to economic integration among participating countries.

- The Finance Track - The Finance Track within the Americas Partnership focuses on high-standard finance and investment initiatives crucial to the partnership's success. Finance and relevant Ministers are urged to expedite efforts to increase both the quality and quantity of financing for the Americas. This includes ongoing reforms in multilateral development banks, particularly at the World Bank Group and the Inter-American Development Bank Group, to better address national and cross-border development challenges.

C. OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE- UNDP

The UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (MSDCF) seeks to enhance prosperity, peace, and resilience across Barbados and nine Eastern Caribbean countries in keeping with the Leave-No-one Behind (LNOB) principle, and in alignment with national priorities. It governs development cooperation between the United Nations and the English and Dutch speaking Caribbean for the period January 2022 – December 2026.

The MSDCF seeks to engender transformation across four main pillars:

- (i) Resilience to climate change and sustainable natural resource management equality,
- (ii) Well-being and leave no one behind (LNOB),
- (iii) Economic resilience and shared prosperity, and
- (iv) Peace, safety, justice, and the rule of law.

In 2023, the UN Team in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean strengthened its partnership with key development stakeholders and national Governments to foster transformational change. The UN team specifically amplified efforts to boost fiscal resilience through enhanced diversification of the green, blue, and orange economies, expanded productive capacities and increased the integration of ICT.

In fact, digitalization and data-strengthening were a major thrust of the UN focus which resulted in significant gains across various national thematic priorities that included climate action, disaster risk reduction, the strengthening of health systems, educational transformation, women's economic empowerment, agricultural growth and enhanced social protection.

Notably, strides were made in ensuring that vulnerable and marginalized groups inclusive of persons with disabilities, elderly persons, members of the LGBTIQ community, migrants, youth, women, and girls were not only heard but were included in programming and policy efforts that sought to address their lived experiences and expressed priorities.

In this regard, a three-pronged strategy was employed that sought to bring about change at the individual, community, and national level, by strengthening the capacities of individuals, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and national policy makers to foster an enabling environment for sustainable growth and development.

The UN also continued its efforts to increase countries' access to development funding through various mechanisms, including resource mobilization. The Joint Programming modality continued to facilitate

nine (9) active programmes as a means of collectively bringing to bear the UN's comparative advantage to respond to the most pressing challenges facing Caribbean SIDS.

Among the areas focused on were:

- Blue Economy,
- Food Security and Livelihoods,
- Youth,
- Social Protection,
- Data,
- Women's Empowerment, and
- Migrations.

Progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) continued to enlighten the UN efforts of advocacy geared towards mainstreaming, localizing, and accelerating the global goals, reiterating the value of multilateralism, and demonstrating the value added of the UN Reform and the Regional Coordination (RC) System to Eastern Caribbean SIDS.

In 2023, the UN supported the Governments of Barbados and St. Kitts and Nevis to prepare for and successfully present their first Voluntary National Review (VNR) of SDG progress to the UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF). UN assistance included support towards the preparation of the final VNR Report, convening of national stakeholder consultations, participation in pre and post VNR media-sessions, and team preparation for presentation at the HLPF.

In Barbados, two critical reports were produced - a National SDG Mapping Report and a Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) Report.

The National SDG Mapping Report indicated that:

- forty-three (43) of ninety-five (95) SDG targets were expected to be met by 2030,
- fifty-two or 54.7 percent of the ninety-five (95) targets were showing fair progress, with need for implementation acceleration in some target areas,
- eighty-nine (89) national initiatives with cross cutting elements were supporting the (SDG) progress and the (RIA) Report,
- 92 percent of policy documents were fully or partially aligned to the (SDGs), and
- 48 percent of policy documents were aligned with gender and disability inclusion targets.

The UNDP continued to support Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in assisting them to be more resilient and better able to build capacity to fulfill their development objectives, and to portray a level of dedication and commitment to the international community.

VII. VII. ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR 2024

Governments' monetary tightening policies to combat inflation, higher borrowing costs, withdrawal of fiscal support, geo-fragmentation of trade, combined with long-term effects from the COVID-19 pandemic and moderate productivity growth, have influenced a fair outlook for the global economy. According to the IMF, global output is expected to expand by 3.2 percent in 2024.

After weathering the brunt of socio-economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2021, Barbados' economy has experienced two consecutive years of real GDP growth. According to the Central Bank of Barbados, the Barbadian economy is projected to expand by 4 percent

in 2024, predicated on continuous investments by both the public and private sectors. The recovery of the country's tourism sector post-COVID-19 buttressed growth in 2023 and is expected to remain the primary impetus for growth in 2024. Likewise, sustained interest from the country's main source markets following the pandemic, strengthened travel alliances, along with new cultural and sporting events, are anticipated to increase cruise passenger arrivals, attract a greater number of stay-over tourists, and stimulate economic activity across other sectors of the economy.

Traditionally, the Barbadian tourism sector is highly seasonal, with the bulk of tourism revenues and foreign exchange being earned throughout the winter period (between December and April); however, in the summer of 2024, Barbados will host the finals along with 8 other matches in the upcoming International Cricket Council (ICC) T20 World Cup to be played in the Caribbean and the USA. The country is poised to reap a share of the \$300 US million dollars expected to be generated from the event regionally⁸. The Barbados Hotel and Tourism Authority and the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. reported that hotels and airlines are already seeing a significant boost in summer bookings, with hotel bookings reaching over 50 percent capacity ahead of the event in June 2024⁹.

Supplemental efforts to implement structural reforms and promote investments on key areas such as infrastructure, tourism and the energy sector, as prescribed by the IMF-supported Barbados Economic Recovery and Transformation programme (BERT) 2022, are expected to support dynamic and inclusive growth in the country. Correspondingly, facilitative government programmes, initiatives and incentives for renewable energy investments and multilateral inflows to strengthen climate crisis resilience continues to be a priority for Barbados in 2024. Initiatives like the establishment of a Blue Green Bank, which has a capital base that exceeds \$80 million, is expected to be launched in the coming year. The Bank intends to provide up to \$500 million in financing for green affordable housing, hurricane resilient infrastructure, electrification of public and private transport, and investments aligned with the Paris Agreement on the climate crisis. Ultimately, the Blue Green Bank initiative seeks to accelerate Barbados' transition to a carbon neutral state by 2030, boost climate resilience, support workers, attract private sector investment, and sustain prudent management of public finances and debt levels.

Global headline inflation is projected to fall in 2024, with emerging and developing economies predicted to experience some sporadic movements in prices that, on average, will converge to pre-pandemic levels. The impact of downward pressure on prices will undoubtedly affect net-importing countries like Barbados. Inflation in the country is expected to remain contained in 2024, with the 12-month moving average inflation rate estimated to range between 3.5 and 4 percent by the end of the year, contingent on declining energy prices. However, geopolitical tensions from the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, conflicts in the Red Sea region, and congestion in the Panama Canal pose a heightened risk to shipping and energy costs, lead times, and ultimately, inflation estimates. Adding to inflationary risks, production costs of crops from the United States are expected to remain elevated in the coming year, while the threat of increased periods of heat in 2024 could mirror the disruption to domestic food crop production and escalated food prices experienced in the country in 2023. Domestic initiatives that offer rebates and incentives to support dairy farmers, along with a Water Augmentation Programme to enhance irrigation and crop yields, are a few key government initiatives that seek to bolster local production and food security of crucial agricultural commodities in the event of weather shocks, climate crisis and fragile supply-chains. Moreover, the introduction of regional trade agreements with countries like Suriname and Guyana, and a new ferry service for transportation of goods with Guyana and Trinidad, signals the government's intent to mitigate potential increases of food prices and cost of living for Barbadians in the medium term.

⁸ <https://www.caribbean-council.org/cricket-world-cup-to-generate-us300mn-for-the-caribbean/#:~:text=Scheduled%20for%20%20to%2029,economic%20impact%20for%20the%20Caribbean>

⁹ <https://barbadostoday.bb/2024/05/10/bhta-boost-in-bookings-ahead-of-t20-world-cup/>

Significant expansion in the tradable sector, namely tourism, international business, and manufacturing, led to a commendable external and international reserves position for Barbados in 2023, with the current account projected to be buoyant in 2024. The growing demand for electric and hybrid vehicles among Barbadian motorists, spurred by the government's reduction of import duties on these vehicles since 2022, continues to decrease the country's spending on imported oil. Additionally, ongoing foreign investment inflows for tourism and international business-related projects are predicted to positively impact net flows of foreign exchange in the coming period. Notwithstanding, steady to minimal growth in key source markets like the U.K. poses a downside risk that could potentially weigh on the vulnerability of Barbados' external balance.

Factors such as rising interest rates, disinflation, geopolitical conflicts, and economic growth will continue to shape the investment landscape, impact asset prices and financial sector development in 2024. In the midst of challenging correspondent banking relationships and risk-averse financial lending policies that could potentially impede on private sector investment, Barbados' consistent real sector growth continues to be an important attribute in safeguarding banking profitability, robust capital adequacy ratios, high liquidity and declining non-performing loans post COVID-19. Elevated credit demand exhibited in the country in 2023, and anticipated in the coming year, must be twinned with less stringent lending and mobilization of savings for the country to realize its private sector investment goals of 15 percent of GDP within the next few years (according to BERT (2022) programme).

Regarding fiscal management, the government's ongoing efforts to reform the National Insurance Scheme, address inefficiencies in State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), strengthen revenue administration, and increase debt financing through domestic bond schemes, have led to positive outlooks for 2024 from three of the most notable international rating agencies: Standard and Poor's Global Ratings, Moody's Ratings, and Fitch Ratings. Moreover, changes to the corporate tax structure, designed to comply with the OECD Inclusive Framework GloBE Rules, are anticipated to result in a net positive tax position in the medium term. Government's fiscal discipline was instrumental in achieving its primary balance target (\$378 million) at the end of December 2023, and pending any macro-economic shocks, estimates indicate that the end-of-year primary balance target of \$418 million would be realized by December 2024. The country's gross financing needs and debt service levels are expected to stay at manageable levels, where it is projected that Debt-to-GDP will decline by 7.8 percent to 106.9 percent¹⁰ in 2024, and the long-term target of 60 percent Debt to GDP should be achievable by the fiscal year of 2035/36.

Maintaining prudent fiscal management and surpluses is paramount to ensure the provision of timely government services, adequate social and capital spending, to ultimately thrust the country closer to the attainment of its economic, climate resilient and inclusive growth targets outlined in the BERT (2022) programme. Increasing the country's productive capacity in 2024 equally hinges on innovation, competitiveness, and investment from Barbados' private sector. To this end, the recently created Fiscal and Growth Councils must play a critical role in monitoring the implementation of government's fiscal strategy and execution of private sector development initiatives, to chart a path to sustainable economic recovery and transformation in a post-COVID-19 era.

¹⁰ According to the IMF Article IV Consultation, December 2023

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APPENDIX 1

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT BY INDUSTRY 2018 – 2023 (Millions \$'000)

GDP BY INDUSTRY (Constant Prices)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023P
Accommodation and Food Services	1,151.35	1,181.96	516.19	462.33	988.21	1,094.18
Agriculture and Fishing	259.00	264.94	307.24	219.14	179.69	196.53
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation services	190.48	211.88	118.84	91.14	158.45	176.11
Business Services	792.38	749.09	716.53	723.26	826.01	843.16
Construction	490.88	479.27	498.30	487.62	491.10	463.33
Education Services	454.23	587.12	581.76	563.86	704.29	830.34
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	249.07	248.62	238.12	251.59	254.14	260.51
Finance & Insurance	851.70	849.64	850.67	848.51	852.32	914.44
Health Services	399.53	370.26	376.65	407.64	394.64	384.54
Information & Communications	458.61	432.92	390.20	408.00	435.55	457.10
Manufacturing	612.40	627.67	537.33	545.82	645.32	645.04
Mining and Quarrying	80.67	83.49	70.85	65.27	74.43	76.42
Other Personal services	125.99	123.15	113.62	104.67	128.39	130.59
Public Administration, Defence & Social Security	429.80	397.68	395.97	400.01	446.91	474.47
Real Estate	1,145.57	1,158.17	1,170.91	1,183.79	1,196.81	1,209.98
Transportation and Storage	726.79	698.08	410.19	511.22	641.24	665.45
Wholesale & Retail Trade	1,177.67	1,179.52	1,106.85	1,103.57	1,265.74	1,267.57
Less FISIM Adjustment	285.27	292.60	332.79	324.73	320.51	337.75
Total Value Added at Basic Prices	9,310.86	9,350.87	8,067.44	8,052.69	9,362.72	9,752.03
Taxes less Subsidies on Products	1,239.02	1,267.86	952.71	944.46	1,238.88	1,283.58
Gross Domestic Product at Constant Prices	10,549.88	10,618.73	9,020.15	8,997.15	10,601.60	10,549.88
Gross Domestic Product Per Capita	38.58	39.00	33.23	33.35	39.68	38.58
GDP BY INDUSTRY (Market Prices)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023P
Accommodation and Food Services	1,300.12	1,417.21	701.49	589.10	1,236.75	1,556.39
Agriculture and Fishing	266.99	285.93	342.97	241.69	204.62	249.21
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation services	168.14	163.55	97.77	70.73	124.26	142.22
Business Services	811.33	823.19	819.35	831.52	966.66	1,007.43
Construction	503.96	506.79	515.04	549.08	651.24	628.11
Education Services	496.48	585.45	708.53	667.80	759.54	928.41
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	260.17	261.49	239.68	253.15	254.10	281.42
Finance & Insurance	847.88	873.33	851.11	798.50	799.47	842.64
Health Services	418.28	403.95	426.36	466.53	474.53	499.35
Information & Communications	479.02	485.02	454.78	480.74	517.18	548.36
Manufacturing	642.13	653.37	556.69	577.59	717.10	752.15
Mining and Quarrying	117.45	110.97	83.95	91.60	126.99	118.88
Other Personal services	137.67	137.67	126.61	118.19	150.87	161.32
Public Administration, Defence & Social Security	465.97	442.85	445.58	455.92	529.16	574.52
Real Estate	1,062.62	1,169.04	1,346.14	1,396.49	1,423.37	1,477.45
Transportation and Storage	764.21	792.15	492.61	561.11	776.54	848.48
Wholesale & Retail Trade	1,249.17	1,262.55	1,194.57	1,246.39	1,514.27	1,554.22
Less FISIM Adjustment	302.64	327.28	336.82	313.43	317.84	351.86
Total Value Added at Basic Prices	9,688.95	10,047.21	9,066.41	9,082.73	10,908.83	11,818.71
Taxes less Subsidies on Products	1,570.88	1,529.36	1,270.28	1,467.76	1,605.78	1,622.76
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	11,259.83	11,576.58	10,336.69	10,550.48	12,514.61	13,441.47
Gross Domestic Product Per Capita	41.17	42.52	38.08	39.10	46.83	50.47

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 2

DIRECTION OF TRADE –EXPORTS 2000 – 2023 (\$ M)

Year	Canada	CARICOM	Japan	Germany	United Kingdom	United States Of America	Venezuela	All Other Countries	Total Exports
2000	11.1	236.9	0.6	1.2	71.9	83.3	1.9	138.8	545.7
2001	14.3	216.2	0.4	1.2	60.6	73.5	2.4	150.1	518.7
2002	9.0	210.2	0.3	2.3	52.2	63.3	1.7	144.7	483.7
2003	7.8	201.5	0.2	2.3	55.0	67.3	0.0	165.4	499.5
2004	10.5	211.7	0.1	2.0	60.4	81.3	0.1	190.4	556.5
2005	13.0	268.3	0.1	2.9	60.5	91.9	0.4	275.6	712.7
2006	15.6	304.1	0.5	8.3	66.0	171.2	0.1	316.6	882.4
2007	17.9	326.9	0.1	6.5	94.4	170.2	0.4	333.4	949.8
2008	20.7	315.1	0.1	4.5	82.3	187.4	1.1	297.4	908.6
2009	20.1	282.5	0.2	4.7	65.6	169.7	0.9	268.4	812.1
2010	16.2	291.9	0.3	4.1	105.3	148.5	0.9	294.2	861.4
2011	15.1	389.9	0.0	4.8	110.1	137.0	0.7	359.3	1,016.9
2012	20.3	327.4	0.1	2.4	62.5	293.4	0.6	443.6	1,150.3
2013	23.8	330.8	0.3	4.5	17.3	165.5	0.5	392.5	935.2
2014	23.3	336.0	0.1	5.8	33.5	157.0	0.4	392.7	948.8
2015	17.4	311.1	0.6	2.2	28.1	310.3	0.1	296.0	965.8
2016	18.3	349.8	0.1	4.2	32.5	349.4	0.3	331.8	1086.4
2017	17.3	323.5	0.1	2.9	28.2	246.1	0.4	348.6	970.8
2018	25.3	338.9	0.0	1.4	16.9	202.8	0.3	329.9	915.5
2019	30.6	339.8	0.0	0.8	17.9	180.3	0.1	318.6	888.2
2020	30.1	292.2	0.0	1.5	17.3	87.1	0.2	262.1	690.4
2021	24.5	285.9	0.0	3.7	9.6	127.3	0.1	249.4	700.3
2022	33.2	345.5	0.0	0.3	12.4	163.7	0.0	441.1	995.7
2023	38.2	331.0	0.2	0.7	12.4	148.4	0.0	391.5	922.4

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 3

DIRECTION OF TRADE – IMPORTS 2000 – 2023 (\$M)

Year	Canada	CARICOM	Japan	Germany	United Kingdom	United States of America	Venezuela	Other Countries	Total Imports
2000	96.5	459.1	120.1	36.6	186.7	943.9	13.8	455.4	2,312.1
2001	80.3	436.4	89.1	36.5	171.9	877.0	8.8	437.3	2,137.3
2002	74.8	463.2	90.1	35.6	157.4	850.7	9.0	460.7	2,141.5
2003	84.8	570.5	106.9	39.5	148.9	891.2	6.1	542.7	2,390.6
2004	107.8	698.7	128.1	41.8	166.5	1,027.7	8.2	647.1	2,825.9
2005	114.4	627.9	165.5	52.2	176.9	1,172.0	11.1	702.9	3,022.9
2006	120.2	857.9	119.7	44.7	189.9	1,205.0	8.4	712.3	3,258.1
2007	118.6	845.6	118.8	61.6	213.9	1,205.9	2.6	798.1	3,365.1
2008	121.4	885.5	126.4	56.3	185.0	1,274.4	2.3	841.7	3,493.0
2009	103.0	752.6	82.8	34.3	134.4	1,054.5	0.9	683.6	2,846.1
2010	106.4	1,046.9	85.8	45.3	128.4	1,036.8	0.3	727.7	3,177.6
2011	112.5	1,200.7	82.6	72.3	143.3	1,115.8	0.6	825.0	3,552.8
2012	96.7	1,306.2	71.7	37.7	132.8	1,083.6	0.3	793.4	3,522.4
2013	99.9	1,185.0	69.3	45.7	143.2	1,153.3	0.2	841.9	3,538.6
2014	81.8	988.9	65.1	48.4	139.1	1,124.2	0.1	1,030.8	3,478.4
2015	76.5	682.2	69.1	53.9	136.5	1,148.5	1.1	1,070.4	3,237.2
2016	73.5	585.3	86.7	66.8	157.8	1,181.8	0.0	1,095.5	3,247.3
2017	76.2	642.5	90.8	43.7	129.6	1,148.9	0.1	1,072.4	3,204.0
2018	67.9	661.0	82.1	38.5	132.2	1,071.3	0.1	1,147.26	3,200.2
2019	74.0	578.6	79.1	44.5	132.2	1,061.3	0.1	1,191.0	3,160.7
2020	73.4	517.0	92.9	29.0	145.5	1,173.1	0.0	972.6	3,003.5
2021	87.5	603.3	73.6	28.4	147.9	1,313.3	0.0	1,093.3	3,347.2
2022	93.1	1,036.0	82.4	25.7	195.3	1,556.9	0.0	1,313.30	4,302.7
2023	85.8	1,084.8	113.2	39.4	210.5	1,561.1	0.0	1,152.37	4,247.17

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 4
SELECTED DOMESTIC EXPORTS
2000 – 2023
(\$M)

Year	Sugar	Molasses	Rum	Lard & Margarine	Other Food & Beverages	Electrical Components	Clothing	Chemicals	Other Domestic Exports	Total Domestic Exports
2000	53.3	0.0	24.5	9.0	51.2	42.9	5.8	47.6	146.0	380.3
2001	44.0	0.0	36.0	9.4	55.6	37.8	3.4	43.4	123.1	352.7
2002	37.7	0.0	35.5	9.3	52.7	28.7	1.4	42.1	126.5	333.9
2003	41.0	0.0	33.6	8.9	36.8	29.4	1.8	41.9	136.0	329.4
2004	44.9	0.0	44.6	10.0	39.0	29.6	1.2	42.4	135.2	346.9
2005	44.4	0.0	50.7	10.9	47.7	56.3	2.6	56.1	158.3	427.0
2006	39.2	0.2	44.3	14.4	42.2	47.3	2.3	60.2	241.6	491.7
2007	37.3	0.0	67.5	15.4	52.8	31.0	1.6	74.6	318.6	598.8
2008	45.0	0.0	66.0	19.8	59.1	27.4	0.9	66.8	241.3	526.3
2009	36.2	0.0	57.2	18.7	48.2	18.1	0.6	58.2	202.4	439.6
2010	19.3	0.0	66.8	18.8	44.5	22.2	0.5	124.0	212.1	508.2
2011	21.2	0.0	70.9	19.1	49.4	22.7	0.6	140.7	209.5	534.1
2012	22.3	0.2	82.4	20.2	53.6	20.4	0.5	128.3	265.0	592.9
2013	15.9	0.2	86.1	20.2	58.1	15.2	0.6	82.9	255.4	534.6
2014	18.1	0.0	78.7	20.0	64.5	18.9	0.4	88.9	265.1	554.6
2015	7.2	0.0	76.3	18.6	58.6	17.0	0.4	93.6	234.3	506.0
2016	7.1	0.0	77.6	18.5	71.0	24.7	0.3	91.7	233.3	524.1
2017	13.5	0.0	83.9	19.7	67.6	19.9	0.0	72.7	232.4	509.8
2018	0.4	0.0	79.8	20.2	69.5	20.3	0.0	80.3	240.2	510.7
2019	0.6	0.0	76.8	20.1	67.0	18.6	0.0	77.8	250.5	511.4
2020	0.9	0.0	75.9	21.1	64.7	16.1	0.0	84.7	186.0	449.5
2021	1.8	0.0	84.5	23.4	76.7	16.1	0.1	68.6	175.9	447.0
2022	1.9	0.0	86.0	24.7	96.1	19.4	0.0	67.6	206.5	502.3
2023	5.6	0.0	93.1	29.8	96.5	14.1	0.3	61.4	180.9	481.7

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 5
VISIBLE TRADE BALANCE – IMPORTS AND EXPORTS
2000 – 2023
(\$M)

Year	Imports (CIF)	Domestic Exports	Re-Exports	Total Exports	Balance on Visible Trade
2000	2,312.1	380.3	165.4	545.7	-1,766.4
2001	2,137.3	352.7	166.0	518.7	-1,618.6
2002	2,141.5	333.9	149.9	483.0	-1,658.5
2003	2,390.6	329.4	170.1	499.5	-1,891.1
2004	2,825.9	346.9	209.6	551.3	-2,274.6
2005	3,022.9	427.0	285.7	712.7	-2,310.2
2006	3,258.1	491.7	390.8	882.4	-2,375.7
2007	3,365.1	513.5	436.4	949.8	-2,415.3
2008	3,493.0	526.3	382.3	908.6	-2,584.4
2009	2,846.1	439.6	372.6	812.1	-2,034.0
2010	3,177.6	508.2	353.2	861.4	-2,316.2
2011	3,552.8	534.1	482.8	1016.9	-2,535.9
2012	3,522.4	592.9	557.4	1150.3	-2,372.1
2013	3,538.6	534.6	400.7	935.2	-2,603.4
2014	3,478.4	554.6	394.2	948.8	-2,529.6
2015	3,236.2	506.0	459.8	965.8	-2,270.3
2016	3,247.3	524.1	509.6	1033.7	-2,213.6
2017	3,204.0	509.8	460.9	970.8	-2,233.3
2018	3,200.2	510.7	404.8	915.5	-2,284.8
2019	3,160.7	511.4	376.7	888.2	-2,272.5
2020	3,003.4	449.5	241.0	690.4	-2,313.0
2021	3,347.2	447.0	253.3	700.3	-2,646.9
2022	4,302.7	502.3	493.5	995.7	-3,307.0
2023	4,247.2	481.7	440.8	922.4	-3,324.8

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 6
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
2014-2023

	(\$000)									
Industry	2014	2015	2016R	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021	2022	2023
Accommodation & Food Services	15.4	15.8	15.2	15.0	16.6	15.6	9.2	11.7	14.1	13.1
Activities of Households as Employers	5.0	5.1	5.8	4.8	4.4	4.7	3.8	3.9	4.9	4.3
Administrative & Support Service	7.2	7.1	8.7	7.4	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.1	7.2	6.7
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	3.4	3.7	3.6	4.0	4.0	3.5	2.8	2.8	3.6	1.7
Construction, Mining & Quarrying	12.0	12.1	14.6	13.3	12.3	11.4	11.1	10	11.3	10.5
Education	7.2	7.3	5.7	7.6	6.0	6.7	6.9	7	7.2	6.0
Elec. Gas, Steam, Water & Air Conditioning Supply	2.4	2.9	2.0	2.9	3.1	2.3	1.7	2.1	2.6	2.4
Finance & Insurance	5.7	5.5	5.3	5.5	5.8	5.3	5.7	5.2	5.6	5.4
Human Health & Social Work	6.6	6.8	7.2	6.6	6.0	6.3	5.8	6.1	6.9	5.7
Manufacturing	9.5	9.8	8.6	8.9	8.0	7.4	7.3	7.2	6.3	7.2
Other Services	3.5	3.8	4.3	4.6	4.0	4.8	3.3	3.9	0.3	9.7
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	4.2	4.5	4.8	4.2	4.6	4.7	5.5	4.9	6.5	7.2
Public Administration & Defense	8.7	9.6	11.4	9.6	8.7	7.4	9.9	11.6	4.7	3.4
Transportation & Storage	5.7	6.3	5.9	6.9	7.1	6.4	5.5	5.6	4.9	3.4
Wholesale & Retail Trade	21.2	20.2	23.9	20.3	19.3	19.1	16.9	16.5	13.6	12.6
Not Stated	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.2	1.6	2	0.9	1.1	6.5	5.6
Other Groups ¹¹	7.0	7.6	7.0	8.1	8.6	8.9	6.8	6.6	18.6	18.7
TOTAL	124.8	128.2	132.9	129.9	126.2	124.8	111.3	133.0	124.8	123.6

*Average for the third and fourth quarter of 2020. Information was not collected for the first and second quarters due to national restrictions on movement.

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

¹¹ Other Groups includes the following industries: Information and Communications, Activities of Extraterritorial organizations & Bodies, Real Estate & Arts, Entertainment and Recreation.

APPENDIX 7
DIRECTION OF TRADE WITH CARICOM COUNTRIES
DOMESTIC EXPORTS
2014 - 2023
(\$000)

Country	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Antigua	17,699	16,305	16,608	16,143	29,076	18,594	14,822	13,181	12,806	12,889
Belize	2,505	3,146	3,116	3,389	2,033	2,407	2,689	2,678	4,000	4,088
Dominica	6,394	6,791	6,793	6,902	15,016	15,465	9,201	7,926	7,811	9,024
Grenada	18,477	14,975	16,885	16,507	18,180	18,392	13,092	12,415	16,707	13,969
Guyana	48,441	50,399	45,881	45,055	52,613	59,222	49,453	51,043	55,994	51,733
Haiti	1,575	588	473	867	1,044	638	1,311	1,303	1,518	1,329
Jamaica	29,223	35,839	34,214	36,517	39,223	59,650	54,780	51,106	69,652	66,192
St. Kitts & Nevis	10,509	11,656	12,365	13,452	15,575	15,897	8,932	8,810	10,967	7,484
St. Lucia	29,652	28,320	29,803	29,055	32,263	26,957	23,149	24,887	31,279	30,291
Montserrat	363	424	747	779	678	824	942	584	277	302
Suriname	4,844	5,805	7,527	8,532	9,677	11,221	5,755	4,300	5,194	6,386
Trinidad & Tobago	96,590	66,536	60,952	67,072	61,511	55,297	44,429	50,235	64,858	65,216
St. Vincent	19,459	19,294	21,730	18,852	18,912	20,510	18,018	13,156	13,175	12,068
Total	285,731	260,078	257,096	263,120	295,800	305,076	246,572	241,624	294,239	280,970

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 8
CONTRIBUTION BY INDUSTRY OF ORIGIN TO GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT
2015-2023
(MARKET PRICES (%))

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Accommodation and Food Services	10.9	11.6	12.4	13.4	14.1	7.7	6.5	11.3	13.2
Agriculture and Fishing	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.8	2.8	3.8	2.7	1.9	2.1
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation									
Services	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.1	0.8	1.1	1.2
Business Services	8.5	8.6	8.6	8.4	8.2	9.0	9.2	8.9	8.5
Construction	5.7	5.4	5.4	5.2	5.0	5.7	6.0	6.0	5.3
Education Services	5.1	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.8	7.8	7.4	7.0	7.9
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.3	2.4
Finance & Insurance	8.8	8.8	9.0	8.8	8.7	9.4	8.8	7.3	7.1
Health Services	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.7	5.1	4.3	4.2
Information & Communications	5.5	5.5	5.2	4.9	4.8	5.0	5.3	4.7	4.6
Manufacturing	6.8	6.8	6.9	6.6	6.5	6.1	6.4	6.6	6.4
Mining and Quarrying	1.0	0.8	1.0	1.2	1.1	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.0
Other Personal services	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.4
Public Administration, Defence &									
Social Security	4.9	5.1	5.0	4.8	4.4	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.9
Real Estate	12.7	11.9	10.8	11.0	11.6	14.8	15.4	13.0	12.5
Transportation and Storage	7.2	7.9	8.2	7.9	7.9	5.4	6.2	7.1	7.2
Wholesale & Retail Trade	13.1	13.2	13.1	12.9	12.6	13.2	13.7	13.9	13.2
Less FISIM Adjustment	-2.8	-3.1	-3.2	-3.1	-3.3	-3.7	-3.5	-2.9	-3.0
Total Value Added at Basic Prices	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 9
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT BY INDUSTRY OF ORIGIN
2015 - 2023
% CHANGE (CURRENT MARKET PRICES)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Accommodation and Food Services	-0.70	6.02	8.58	9.88	9.01	-50.50	-16.02	109.94	25.85
Agriculture and Fishing	-5.69	3.66	6.44	26.94	7.09	19.95	-29.53	-15.34	21.79
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Services	-2.70	-2.32	-2.72	0.00	-2.73	-40.22	-27.66	75.69	14.45
Business Services	-11.01	0.51	1.96	-1.22	1.46	-0.47	1.49	16.25	4.22
Construction	-0.50	-4.41	0.56	-1.60	0.56	1.63	6.61	18.61	-3.55
Education Services	9.05	-3.41	4.78	1.76	17.92	21.02	-5.75	13.74	22.23
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	-1.87	-1.89	2.88	0.04	0.51	-8.34	5.62	0.38	10.75
Finance & Insurance	8.07	-1.15	4.49	-1.55	3.00	-2.54	-6.18	0.12	5.40
Health Services	-3.71	-1.52	0.83	2.30	-3.43	5.55	9.42	1.71	5.23
Information & Communications	-6.61	-1.63	-2.90	-3.89	1.25	-6.23	5.71	7.58	6.03
Manufacturing	7.37	-0.22	2.35	-2.20	1.75	-14.80	3.75	24.15	4.89
Mining and Quarrying	-35.54	-16.34	26.80	19.78	-5.52	-24.35	9.12	38.63	-6.39
Public Administration, Defence & Social Security	-6.80	3.90	-1.78	-1.83	-4.96	0.62	2.32	16.07	8.57
Real Estate	1.96	-6.61	-8.55	3.67	10.01	15.15	3.74	1.92	3.80
Transportation and Storage	6.51	8.94	5.08	-1.71	3.66	-37.81	13.90	38.39	9.26
Wholesale & Retail Trade	-5.10	0.74	0.88	-0.05	1.07	-5.38	4.34	21.49	2.64
Other Personal services	0.00	0.50	-1.70	0.00	0.00	-8.03	-6.65	27.65	6.93
Less FISIM Adjustment	6.38	11.85	3.48	-0.38	8.14	2.91	-6.94	1.41	10.71
Total Value Added at Basic Prices	-1.45	-0.41	1.52	1.70	3.70	-9.76	0.18	20.11	8.34
Taxes less Subsidies on Products	-1.45	10.76	18.07	4.19	-2.64	-16.94	15.55	9.40	1.06
Gross Domestic Product at Current Market Prices	-1.45	0.81	3.50	2.04	2.81	-10.71	2.07	18.62	7.41

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 10
REAL GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT BY INDUSTRY OF ORIGIN
2015 - 2023
% CHANGE (2016 CONSTANT MARKET PRICES)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Accommodation and Food Services	4.37	11.09	4.32	1.28	2.66	-56.33	-10.44	113.75	10.72
Agriculture and Fishing	-8.55	1.54	2.22	28.23	2.29	15.97	-28.67	-18.00	9.38
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation services	0.16	-0.32	-0.57	10.84	11.23	-43.91	-23.31	73.85	11.15
Business Services	-10.91	2.66	3.00	-4.49	-5.46	-4.35	0.94	14.21	2.08
Construction	-0.55	-1.83	1.64	-5.18	-2.37	3.97	-2.14	0.72	-5.66
Education Services	-1.68	-3.61	-3.20	0.77	29.25	-0.91	-3.08	24.90	17.90
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	4.22	0.79	-1.08	-0.39	-0.18	-4.22	5.66	1.02	2.51
Finance & Insurance	2.69	-1.91	0.97	2.34	-0.24	0.12	-0.25	0.45	7.29
Health Services	-10.29	-8.24	-0.33	-1.14	-7.33	1.73	8.23	-3.19	-2.56
Information & Communications	-6.48	-2.10	-3.25	-7.66	-5.60	-9.87	4.56	6.75	4.95
Manufacturing	5.74	0.31	0.13	-4.66	2.49	-14.39	1.58	18.23	-0.04
Mining and Quarrying	11.18	-8.94	7.25	-2.73	3.49	-15.15	-7.87	14.03	2.68
Public Administration, Defence & Social Security	-3.80	3.69	-4.83	-6.55	-7.47	-0.43	1.02	11.73	6.17
Real Estate	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10
Transportation and Storage	4.29	9.43	0.95	-2.70	-3.95	-41.24	24.63	25.43	3.78
Wholesale & Retail Trade	-2.03	1.36	-1.83	-3.16	0.16	-6.16	-0.30	14.70	0.14
Other Personal services	-0.20	-0.43	-2.83	-7.41	-2.26	-7.74	-7.88	22.66	1.71
Less FISIM Adjustment	1.32	-6.58	-0.44	-2.40	2.57	13.74	-2.42	-1.30	5.38
Total Value Added at Basic Prices	-1.11	1.82	0.34	-1.13	0.43	-13.73	-0.18	16.27	4.16
Taxes less Subsidies on Products	1.16	1.58	-1.46	-1.53	2.33	-24.86	-0.87	31.17	3.61
Gross Domestic Product at Constant Prices	-0.85	1.79	0.13	-1.17	0.65	-15.05	-0.25	17.83	4.09

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 11
SELECTED INTEREST RATES
1990 – 2023
(PERCENTAGES PER ANNUM)

Period Ended	Treasury Bills	Deposits - Minimum Rates				Prime Lending Rate(1)	Barbados Bank Rate	U.S.A. Bank Rate
		Three Months	Six Months	Twelve Months	Savings			
1990	8.06	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	10.25	13.50	6.50
1991	11.30	7.00	7.25	7.50	7.00	14.50	18.00	3.50
1992	6.60	4.00	4.25	4.50	4.00	10.75	12.00	3.00
1993	7.23	1.25	1.25	1.25	5.00	8.75	8.00	3.00
1994	7.77	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	9.75	9.50	4.75
1995	8.27	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	9.75	12.50	5.25
1996	5.61	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	8.75	12.50	5.00
1997	4.91	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	8.75	9.00	5.00
1998	5.70	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	8.75	9.00	4.50
1999	6.05	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	10.00	10.00	5.00
2000	3.85	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.50	9.50	10.00	6.00
2001	1.97	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	7.25	7.50	1.25
2002	1.51	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	6.75	7.50	0.75
2003	0.64	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	6.75	7.50	2.00
2004	2.76	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	6.50	7.50	3.15
2005	6.26	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	9.15	10.00	5.15
2006	6.56	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	10.15	12.00	6.25
2007	4.90	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	9.65	12.00	4.83
2008	4.81	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	9.00	10.00	0.86
2009	3.44	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	7.65	7.00	0.50
2010	3.35	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	7.65	7.00	0.50
2011	3.43	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	7.65	7.00	0.50
2012	3.61	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	7.65	7.00	0.50
2013	3.24	1.25	1.50	1.60	2.50	7.65	7.00	0.50
2014	2.55	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	7.65	7.00	0.50
2015	1.76	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	7.65	7.00	0.50
2016	3.10	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.20	7.65	7.00	0.50
2017	3.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	4.0	7.00	0.50
2018	3.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	4.0	7.00	0.50
2019	0.50	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.65	4.0	7.00	0.50
2020	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.65	4.0	2.00	0.50
2021	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.05	4.0	2.00	0.50
2022	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.05	4.0	2.00	0.50
2023	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	4.0	2.00	5.50

SOURCE: Central Bank of Barbados

APPENDIX 12
Selected Indicators in the Tourism Industry
2007-2023

Year	Accommodation & Food Services				Arrivals	
	Share in GDP (%)	Employment ('000 persons)	Stay-Over Expenditure (\$M)	Stay-Over Visitors	Average Intended Length of Stay (days)	Cruise Passengers
2007	21.9	n.a	1,761.40	562,541	n.a	539,092
2008	15.1	n.a.	1,711.60	567,667	n.a.	597,523
2009	14.4	n.a.	1,516.50	518,564	n.a.	635,212
2010	14.2	12.7	1,474.40	532,180	15.04	664,747
2011	12.8	13.2	1,314.10	567,724	12.18	609,844
2012	12.4	12.7	1,235.2	536,303	12.51	517,436
2013	13.4	13.3	1,406.20	508,520	11.82	570,263
2014	13.1	15.4	1,358.70	519,635	11.97	563,030
2015	12.9	15.8	1,344.30	591,872	11.19	586,615
2016	13.6	16.4	1,442.50	631,513	11.01	594,096
2017R	14.1	15	1,580.50	661,160	10.63	681,211
2018R	14.6	17.6	1,764.60	678,537	10.51	614,993
2019R	15.1	15.6	2,035.30	692,658	n.a.	686,813
2020R	7.4	9.2	n.a.	195,102	13.30	250,542
2021R	6.1	11.7	n.a.	144,833	14.50	71,953
2022	11.9	14.1	n.a.	442,576	14.70	250,527
2023	13.2	13.1	n.a	636,540	11.92	441,677

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service, Caribbean Tourism Organization, Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.

APPENDIX 13
Tourism Arrivals by Country of Residence
2004 – 2023

Year	U.S.A.	Canada	United Kingdom	Germany	Other Europe	Trinidad & Tobago	Other CARICOM	Other Countries	TOTAL
2004	129,664	50,032	213,947	6,970	23,060	26,492	77,845	23,492	551,502
2005	131,005	47,690	202,765	6,995	19,857	30,889	83,886	24,447	547,534
2006	130,757	49,197	211,520	7,478	21,922	34,480	82,496	24,691	562,541
2007	133,519	52,981	223,575	5,549	21,509	30,404	68,979	36,421	572,937
2008	131,795	57,335	219,953	6,098	25,727	28,385	72,254	26,120	567,667
2009	122,306	63,751	190,632	7,020	23,052	26,289	62,482	23,032	518,564
2010	134,969	72,351	181,054	7,260	23,962	27,259	58,923	26,402	532,180
2011	142,414	71,953	189,150	8,401	27,458	36,825	64,149	27,374	567,724
2012	130,762	72,020	173,519	9,182	27,937	38,005	58,482	26,396	536,303
2013	120,584	67,295	168,733	10,300	30,765	31,614	55,681	23,548	508,520
2014	118,510	65,813	186,858	11,992	32,744	27,915	50,815	24,988	519,635
2015	148,067	74,494	214,175	12,338	28,514	29,659	58,321	26,304	591,872
2016	168,945	78,903	218,638	11,492	28,278	34,000	65,679	25,578	631,513
2017	188,460	85,047	217,441	11,243	28,959	35,822	67,208	26,980	661,160
2018	204,249	86,499	220,695	10,621	27,883	32,636	70,201	25,753	678,537
2019	219,770	81,577	226,992	12,271	25,488	31,570	68,682	26,308	692,659
2020R	43,222	32,932	63,923	1,280	16,742	6,819	15,571	14,613	195,102
2021P	44,804	17,316	53,639	2,062	6,897	4,908	9,000	6,207	144,833
2022	128,989	49,197	178,886	4,115	16,427	17,090	34,946	12,926	442,576
2023	176,614	77,140	243,857	6,396	28,306	28,356	60,168	22,099	636,540

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service, Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.

APPENDIX 14

Index Of Industrial Production

1997- 2023

Year	All Industries	Mining & Quarrying	Electricity, Water & Gas	Manufacturing	Food	Beverages & Tobacco	Wearing Apparel	Wooden Furniture	Chemicals	Petroleum Products	Non-metallic Mineral Products	Electronic Components	Other Manufacturing
(Average 1994=100)													
Weights	1000	26	177	797	148	113	21	16	35	214	35	44	170
1997	117.0	121.5	114.5	117.4	114.4	82.8	125.1	134.0	148.3	120.2	181.0	111.4	119.1
1998	100.3	160.1	117.8	94.5	120.1	101.8	95.5	101.1	135.7	13.2'	251.8	93.2	128.2
1999	97.8	188.2	120.6	89.8	117.8	110.5	88.3	41.5	134.9	0.0'	257.6	87.0	126.0
2000	96.1	179.8	122.2	87.6	109.5	102.8	84.2	35.7	110.0	0.0	265.1	81.7	133.9
2001	89.6	160.7	127.6	78.8	113.0	92.4	43.0	34.1	96.1	0.0	248.3	55.9	115.2
2002	91.4	171.4	132.1	79.7	120.3	79.6	28.8	134.3	96.7	0.0	270.8	54.4	109.3
2003	90.3	144.2	136.1	78.3	117.6	84.9	25.1	136.0	103.0	0.0	285.5	46.0	100.1
2004	92.6	158.0	138.6	80.2	115.0	87.1	25.7	192.9	115.7	0.0	294.1	53.5	97.7
2005	94.1	170.8	137.8	81.9	116.6	84.8	25.2	193.9	121.9	0.0	305.7	41.7	105.1
2006	95.3	165.5	149.2	81.1	116.4	73.9	22.2	169.1	118.4	0.0	320.6	45.0	108.6
2007	95.0	155.7	152.9	80.1	117.8	76.9	22.1	158.4	118.2	0.0	313.0	33.6	106.1
2008	93.2	143.5	152.2	78.5	115.3	84.3	12.0	166.7	118.8	0.0	290.4	32.2	101.2
2009	84.1	90.0	153.3	68.6	103.8	74.8	14.3	133.4	90.4	0.0	236.6	21.8	93.5
2010	82.8	99.4	156.5	65.9	99.1	84.9	8.0	119.6	90.2	0.0	204.5	27.0	85.7
2011	79.7	85.9	154.2	63.0	95.1	78.1	11.0	111.0	812	0.0	207.3	24.8	82.5
2012	75.8	79.1	154.9	58.1	94.9	73.9	12.2	107.7	78.9	0.0	164.7	15.6	74.6
2013	76.9	77.3	158.5	58.8	94.8	70.3	6.7	124.6	73.5	0.0	181.8	17.6	76.2
2014	77.6	70.1	158.3	59.9	117.3	66.2	7.8	112.4	126.3	0.0	147.1	9.5	64.0
2015	77.9	61.3	155.5	61.2	120.8	54.3	4.7	126.7	148.2	0.0	177.5	5.5	64.2
2016	77.5	83.4	160.6	58.9	116.1	61.7	5.0	120.6	135.0	0.0	151.7	10.5	59.8
2017	75.0	90.4	153.2	56.5	92.7	56.4	5.0	121.3	149.7	0.0	171.4	14.1	64.7
2018	75.1	97.8	155.4	56.5	8.5	69.0	5.0	131.0	130.1	0.0	180.1	13.6	61.3
2019	73.0	83.6	154.0	54.7	84.2	66.3	5.0	122.4	128.4	0.0	188.2	16.4	57.0
2020	68.8	99.1	154.5	48.8	84.4	57.2	5.0	127.1	129.3	0.0	106.5	11.8	53.0
2021	68.6	69.8	147.2	51.2	81.6	47.5	5.0	121.8	165.7	0.0	178.5	8.5	51.4
2022	71.4	95.3	151.7	52.8	89.2	61.8	5.0	122.3	141.5	0.0	172.4	0.0	51.7
2023	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service

APPENDIX 15
Importation of Select Commodities
2019 - 2023

Year	2019	2020(R)	2021 (R)	2022	2023	% Change over 2022
Root Crop Imports ('000 kgs)						
Cassava	4.77	3.98	0.77	2.23	0.49	-78%
Eddoes	150.67	176.03	147.7	195.28	118.52	-39%
Sweet Potato	23.37	30.72	4.35	5.43	31.51	480%
Yam	56.11	128.16	74.09	111	78.81	-29%
Onion	1,696.31	1,780.36	1,540.23	1,664.64	1884.32	13%
Peanut	384.33	395.53	370.22	340.78	368.58	8%
Vegetable Imports ('000 kgs)						
Beans (String)	0.19	0.67	0.36	2.38	2.09	-12%
Beets	48.68	69.31	72.58	97.26	74.04	-24%
Cabbage	448.35	473.08	477.48	580.82	598.95	3%
Carrot	624.69	553.77	554.78	506.73	540.67	7%
Cauliflower	906.2	59.2	73.45	79.58	94.33	19%
Corn	46.74	46	43.14	41.19	47.19	15%
Cucumber	3.18	14.51	3.69	3.19	14.67	360%
Egg plant	0.43	0.4	0.94	7.58	2.57	-66%
Lettuce	640.3	465.91	424.15	508.94	519.05	2%
Peas	2.3	1.16	1.48	3.6	4.48	24%
Melons	494.13	465.81	277.53	397.33	455.94	15%
Okras	0	0	0.8	0.17	0.44	159%
Peppers (Hot)	2.86	6.04	0	19.32	14.27	-26%
Peppers (Sweet)	300.34	273.22	252.34	252.55	293.52	16%
Pumpkins	197.28	199.84	122.86	141.69	160.4	13%
Squash	1.74	16.49	17.82	24.46	34.89	43%
Tomato	107.21	271.74	213.73	286.74	453.13	58%
Spinach	34.21	11.16	16.65	27.99	31.4	12%
Paw Paw	41.69	41.81	31.26	18.65	7.09	-62%
Bananas	2,734.93	2,048.42	2,053.36	2,551.96	2,559.50	0%
Plantain	1,383.99	1,362.46	1,336.63	1,164.97	806.25	-31%
Figs	2.12	1.8	2.2	5.16	4.87	-6%
Zuchinni	89.65	64.84	56.47	51.59	75.72	47%
Livestock and Dairy Product Imports ('000 kgs)						
Pork	2,740.70	2,152.30	2,783.00	2,676.90	2,917.10	9%
Beef & Veal	2,221.20	1,993.20	1,921.80	2,490.40	2,444.00	-2%
Mutton	1,086.00	1,007.70	1,002.50	1,175.40	1,183.00	1%
Poultry	1,766.00	1,581.70	1,057.60	1,762.90	1,389.20	-21%
Table Eggs	22.5	0	19.1	15.8	130.6	727%
All Milk	2,830.90	2,874.40	3,212.00	3,085.80	2,411.00	-22%

SOURCE: Agricultural Planning Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security

APPENDIX 16
Production of Selected Agricultural Commodities
2019 - 2023

Year	2019	2020(R)	2021 (R)	2022	2023	% Change over 2022
Sugar Production						
Cane Harvested (tonnes)	84,588.57	90,177.61	92,129.07	95,955.00	109,493.71	14%
Area Harvested(acres)	7,294.75	n.a.	4,444.25	6,303.88	n.a	n.a
Sugar ('000 tonnes)	7.9	7.9	5.3	4.4	7.2	64%
Cotton Production						
	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	
Cotton Received (kgs)	6,640.55	14,866.09	12,626.28	8,144.84	7,299.91	-10%
Running bales	10	24	16	10	10	0%
Hectares planted	34.20	124.64	80.94	78.91	9.31	-88%
Root Crop Production ('000 kgs)						
Cassava	675.7	1,551.00	1,213.90	560.4	805.35	44%
Eddoes	193.7	263.1	201.1	287.6	250.35	-13%
Sweet Potato	4,159.60	3,544.30	3,413.90	2,543.50	3,407.61	34%
Yam	241.7	395.6	580.6	989	671.18	-32%
Onion	1,309.50	1,327.70	1,402.00	1,486.50	1,327.32	-11%
Peanut	3	15.7	8.9	8.3	4.67	-44%
Vegetable Production ('000 kgs)						
Beans (String)	441.9	592.0	188.7	168.1	161.1	-4%
Beet	78.3	331.6	115.7	122.6	77.5	-37%
Cabbage	607.4	594.3	290.6	311.9	345.7	11%
Carrot	485.8	314.0	257.9	340.4	318.7	-6%
Cauliflower	11.3	7.4	0.0	0.3	0.6	73%
Corn	177.9	143.8	57.5	51.2	100.7	97%
Cucumber	1,772.9	1,904.5	1,157.8	1,245.6	1,129.9	-9%
Egg Plant	210.3	346.1	178.3	209.1	147.6	-29%
Lettuce	1,225.9	1,857.2	1,059.8	979.7	710.0	-28%
Peas	10.5	33.9	29.0	43.9	73.6	68%
Melons	1,534.5	1,330.1	1,235.9	1,963.7	1,877.2	-4%
Okras	1,231.5	1,219.6	891.8	673.6	549.5	-18%
Peppers (Hot)	830.9	896.6	383.3	226.1	142.5	-37%
Peppers (Sweet)	659.6	657.9	460.5	474.5	462.1	-3%
Pumpkins	478.4	905.7	392.8	505.7	414.1	-18%
Squash	1,106.9	1,085.1	1,082.3	970.3	609.9	-37%
Tomato	1,327.1	1,684.9	1,063.6	906.0	1,026.5	13%
Bonavise	8.7	4.6	6.2	0.9	8.1	766%

APPENDIX 16 CONT'D
Production of Selected Agricultural
Commodities CONT'D
2019 - 2023

Year	2019	2020(R)	2021 (R)	2022	2023	% Change over 2022
Chive	3,340.1	3,790.9	1,049.5	504.2	1,963.5	289%
Thyme	171.0	238.5	62.9	66.8	384.8	476%
Marjoram	455.6	693.2	155.8	6.3	65.7	939%
Parsley	393.3	1,157.4	332.4	24.0	63.1	163%
Spinach	84.5	116.1	60.3	27.6	52.7	91%
Dill	0.1	4.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	-100%
Basil	0.3	0.4	1.8	1.0	1.0	-7%
Paw Paw	2,531.4	776.6	60.4	72.9	175.7	141%
Squash (finger)	37.4	68.0	8.6	16.6	33.9	104%
Chinese Cabbage	384.7	360.9	124.6	224.3	293.1	31%
Runcifers	10.5	17.6	9.7	9.6	11.1	16%
Bananas	654.3	1,630.8	1,429.4	258.8	1,836.6	610%
Plantain	64.5	293.7	739.4	265.4	429.2	62%
Figs	0.0	27.2	0.0	0.1	11.2	7929%
Zuchinni	307.6	103.8	101.5	66.8	107.5	61%
Livestock and Dairy Production ('000 kgs)						
Pork	2,840.30	2,869.20	2,634.00	2,539.40	2,450.10	-4%
Beef	172.5	182.3	161.2	201.2	189.3	-6%
Veal	0.4	43.6	0.6	0.3	0	-100%
Mutton	92.2	98.7	65.4	84.6	90.9	7%
Chicken	16,232.00	11,964.90	13,183.40	15,536.30	15,527.50	0%
Turkey	397.6	141.5	298.1	134.7	161.1	20%
Eggs	3,749.90	3,471.50	2,605.70	3,099.40	2,907.50	-6%
Milk	4,657.40	3,978.00	4,340.70	4,039.40	3,837.80	-5%

SOURCE: Agricultural Planning Unit, Ministry of Agriculture ,Food and Nutritional Security

APPENDIX 17
Population, Rates of Birth, Death and Infant Mortality
1984 – 2023

Year	Resident Population at December 31	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Rate of Natural Increase	Infant Mortality	Rate of Population Growth R
	('000persons)	(Per 1000 pop.)	(Per 1000 pop.)	(Per 1000 pop.)	(Per 1000 births)	(%)
1984	255.8	16.7	7.8	8.9	18.4	0.3
1985	257.0	16.7	8.3	8.4	17.8	0.5
1986	258.0	15.7	8.4	7.3	19	0.4
1987	258.8	14.8	8.5	6.3	22.3	0.3
1988	259.4	14.5	8.6	5.9	19.5	0.2
1989	260.3	15.5	8.8	6.7	18.2	0.3
1995	264.4	13.1	9.4	3.7	13.2	1.6
1996	264.6	13.3	9.1	4.2	14.2	0.1
1997	266.1	14.3	8.7	5.6	13.2	0.6
1998	266.8	13.6	9.3	4.3	7.8	0.3
1999	267.4	14.5	9	5.5	10	0.2
2000	269.3R	14	9.1	4.9R	17	0.7
2001	270.4	15	8.9	6.1	15.8	0.4
2002	271.3	14.1	8.5	5.6	14.4	0.3
2003	272.2	13.9R	8.4	5.5R	9.9	0.3
2004	272.7	12.8R	8.9	3.9R	18.4	0.2
2005	273.4	12.8R	8.0R	4.9	8.3	0.3
2006	273.9R	12.5R	8.4R	4.1R	11.1	0.2
2007	274.7	12.9	8.1	4.8	13	0.3
2008	275.2R	12.9	9.0R	3.9	18.3	0.2
2009	275.7	12.9	8.7R	4.2R	8.7	0.2
2010	278.1R	12.2	8	4.2	10.1	0.9
2011	278.3R	11.2R	8.3R	3	13.7	0.1
2012	278.6R	11.4R	8.4R	3.0R	11	0.1
2013	278.5R	10.9	8.9R	2.0R	7.3	0.0
2014	278.3R	10.6R	9.3	1.2	10	-0.1
2015	278.0R	10.3R	9.2	1.1R	8	-0.1
2016	277.4R	9.2R	9.3	-0.2	13.5	-0.2
2017	276.7R	9.3R	9.5R	-0.2	8.9	-0.3
2018	276.0R	8.7R	9.2R	-0.4	9.1	-0.3
2019	275.4R	9.4R	9.6R	-0.2	7.4	-0.2
2020	274.4R	8.6R	9.9R	-1.3	6.4	-0.4
2021	269.1R	8.1R	10.8R	-2.5	12.7	-1.9
2022	267.3R	8.1R	12.5	-4.4	10.1	-0.7
2023	265.6	8.4	12.6	-4.3	NA	-0.6

SOURCE: Barbados Statistical Service



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