



Displacement Tracking Matrix

MONITORING MIGRANTS PRESENCE: TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO





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1. INTRODUCTION

Trinidad and Tobago, along with several other states, continues to navigate the delicate course of the COVID-19 pandemic and its new variants. Consequently, an intensive vaccination program was advanced to safeguard its population against the worst impacts of the virus. Additionally, active COVID-19 cases and related fatalities in the country have significantly trended downward. Nonetheless, health concerns are but one of the multifaceted complexities spurred by the pandemic as economic and labour market recoveries have been slow and headline inflation has accelerated².

Juxtaposed with these realities, however, the situation of Venezuelan nationals continues to evolve. More pointedly, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago's (GORTT's) registration and re-registration exercises for Venezuelans in 2019 and 2021 effectively legitimized the status of successful registrants and facilitated their access to legal employment opportunities.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that, anecdotally, there are accounts of some Venezuelan migrants returning to Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (hereinafter, Venezuela) and in 2021 there was a major repatriation effort for Venezuelan nationals, spearheaded by the Venezuelan Embassy. Yet, concurrently, reports of irregular entries persist.

The Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) 2022, therefore, offers a unique opportunity to explore the ever-changing situation of Venezuelan nationals against these backgrounds.

The International Organization for Migration's (IOM's) DTM is a system to track and monitor displacement and population mobility. It is designed to capture, process, and disseminate critical multi-layered information on the mobility, vulnerabilities, and needs of displaced and mobile populations, regularly and systematically. Hence, the DTM provides decision-makers and responders with insightful data to guide specific assistance to target populations.

A total of 1,323 Venezuelan nationals were surveyed in DTM 2022, between November and December 2022. The areas with the highes: number of respondents were Chaguanas, Tunapuna/Piarco, and Penal/Debe as shown in Map 1.

- 1 https://covid19.who.int/region/amro/country/tt
- 2 Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago (2022)

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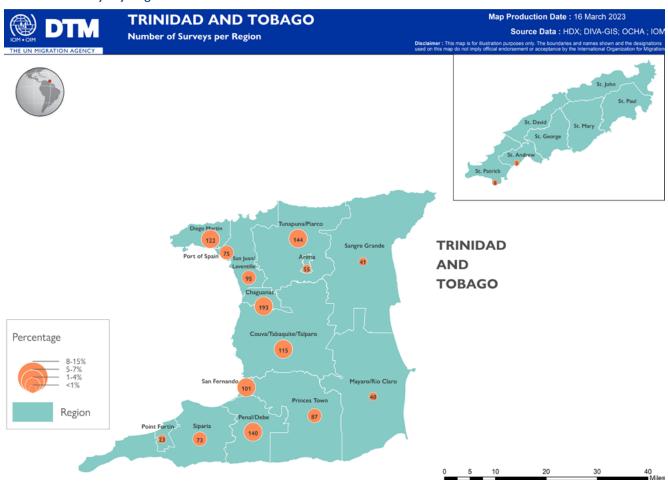
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MAP 1

Number of Surveys by Region*



2. METHODOLOGY

Consistent with previous DTM efforts, the 2022 exercise employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to capture information on key thematic areas.

Qualitatively, interviews with twenty-six (26) key informants, who work closely with Venezuelan nationals or on the subject matter, informed preliminary migrant profiles, and supported respondent referrals for interviews. These interviews were conducted between 21st September and 06th October 2022.

Subsequently, surveys were administered to Venezuelan nationals, who were over the age of 18 years, and were willing to participate in the interview process during the period November to December 2022.

Referral options were also extended to respondents who required this assistance. It should be mentioned however, that the participants in this exercise may have differed to the previous DTM exercise.

The data collection method involved both face-to-face and telephone-based interviews, as the improved health situation regarding the COVID-19 pandemic facilitated in person fieldwork.

Accordingly, a snowball sampling strategy guided these operations. This technique was deemed to be the most practical approach to access a 'hard to reach' population, in the absence of a well-informed sampling frame.

The choice of nonprobability sampling, however, did impose some limitations on the exercise regarding its representativeness³.

Data collection spanned approximately four weeks and it was executed by a team of bilingual enumerators, trained in DTM procedures. A survey instrument, which maintained respondent anonymity, was the data collection tool and the individual migrant was the sampling unit.

Furthermore, tablets were used during data capture and the information generated was cleaned, coded, and analyzed, using standardized DTM techniques.

³ Non-probability samples cannot be relied upon to draw conclusions or make inferences on the entire migrant population.

^{*} All maps in this report are for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.



3. VENEZUELAN POPULATION PROFILES

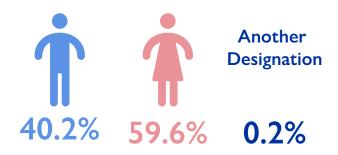
A total of 1,343 migrants participated in DTM 2022, of which 1,323 were Venezuelan nationals. It must be noted however, that given the nature and intent of the DTM initiative, the report is focused on Venezuelan nationals only. Reporting, therefore, filtered respondents on the basis of specific criteria regarding their age, i.e., they had to be 18 years and over, and nationality, i.e., they had to be Venezuelan.

A review of the demographic data showed that women respondents outpaced men respondents. In addition, three respondents identified as another designation. Graph 1 refers.

Conversely, interviews with key informants highlighted that there were marginally more female than male migrants in Trinidad and Tobago.

GRAPH 1

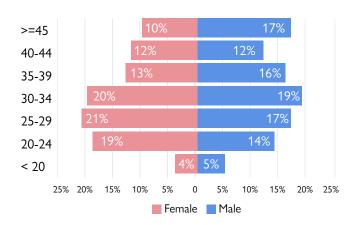
Distribution by Sex



An examination of age and sex further revealed that the highest number of respondents were in the 30-34 age group, followed by the 25-29 and the 20-24 groups, as highlighted in Graph 2. Two of the respondents who identified as another designation were in the 20-24 age group and the third in the 45 and over age group.

GRAPH 2

Distribution by Sex and Age

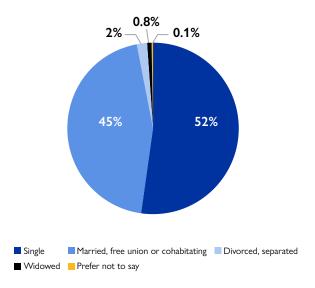


Regarding union status, there were slightly more single respondents than married, free union or cohabiting persons.

Additionally, these two categories, combined, accounted for approximately 97 per cent of the interviewees. Graph 3 illustrates.

GRAPH 3

Marital Status



Moreover, about 18 per cent of the female interviewees were pregnant or breastfeeding. Added to this, 46 per cent were single. The majority, approximately 63 per cent, were between 20 and 29 years old.

Most stakeholders, likewise, affirmed that there were pregnant female migrants in Trinidad and Tobago but remained uncertain as to whether they had travelled to the island pregnant or became pregnant subsequent to their arrival.

Inquiries concerning respondents' ethnicity revealed that most of the respondents did not align with any ethnic group. However, of those who did, about 80 per cent identified with the Warao ethnic grouping.

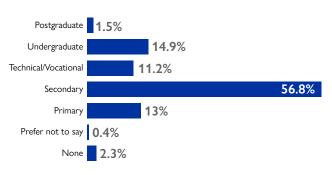
In the area of education, about 2 per cent of the interviewees had not completed any schooling. Notwithstanding this, approximately 57 per cent of the interviewees had completed secondary level education. It was also reported that 16.4 per cent of the respondents had completed university education.

Collectively, therefore, almost three quarters of the DTM 2022 interviewees had reportedly completed either secondary or university education. Graph 4 refers.



GRAPH 4

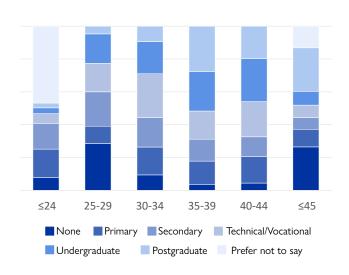
Completed Education Level



Also, a significant portion of the respondents in the \leq 24; 25-29; and 30-34 age groups had completed secondary level education, whereas the 35-39, 30-34 and 40-44 age groups had the largest number of university graduates as illustrated in Graph 5.

GRAPH 5

Completed Education by Age



MAP 2

State of Birth



Further to this, a disaggregation of completed education by work sector showed that approximately 3 per cent of the interviewees who engaged in cleaning/domestic work were university graduates.

Likewise, a few key informants referred to situations of underemployment.

In addition, a little over half of the respondents reportedly did not have proof of their educational background. Among those of the approximate 47 per cent who had proof, 27 per cent expressed

a need to prove skills or recognition of qualifications and studies in Trinidad and Tobago.

Apart from this, 99.8 per cent of the interviewees were Venezuelan nationals only, and of those with a second nationality, Trinidadian was most frequently mentioned.

The majority of respondents were born in the eastern states of Venezuela with the highest number of interviewees reporting that they were born in Delta Amacuro. This is depicted in Map 2.

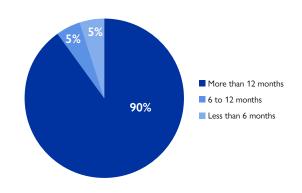


Additionally, approximately 82 per cent of the respondents had resided in their state of birth before travelling to Trinidad and Tobago.

In terms of the length of stay in Trinidad and Tobago, 90 per cent of the interviewed persons were present in the country for more than 12 months, as shown in Graph 6.

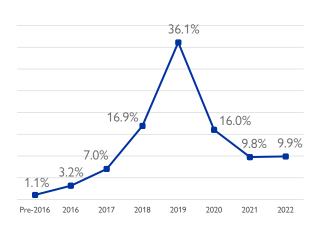
GRAPH 6

Time in Trinidad and Tobago



Furthermore, over one third of the respondents arrived in Trinidad and Tobago in 2019, followed by a drastic reduction in arrivals in 2020 and 2021 and the figures for 2022 were marginally higher than the previous year. Graph 7 illustrates.

GRAPH 7 Date of Arrival

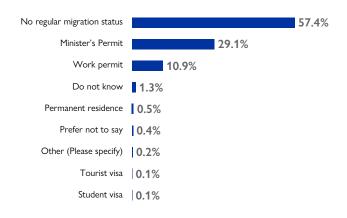


This pattern also corroborated with a key informant interview which recognized a reduction in the number of migrants entering Trinidad and Tobago.

Regarding the migratory status of the interviewees, approximately 57 per cent were without regular migration status. It was also noted that, about 40 per cent had either a Minister's Permit or a Work Permit. Graph 8 refers.

GRAPH 8

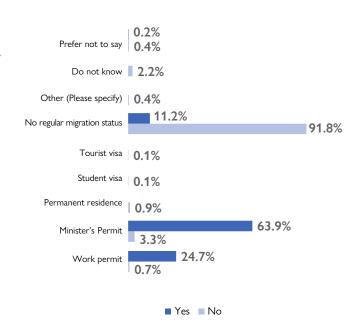
Migration Status



Additionally, a breakdown of migrant status by registration status, as it relates to the 2019 exercise, showed that most of the unregistered respondents were without regular migration status. Graph 9 elaborates.

GRAPH 9

Registration Status by Migration Status



Similarly, 43 per cent of the respondents were reportedly registered during the Government registration exercise in 2019.

Furthermore, approximately 81 per cent of registered interviewees participated in the Government re-registration process in 2021, and about 85 per cent of these persons were either asylum seekers or recognized refugees, by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).



4. ROUTES

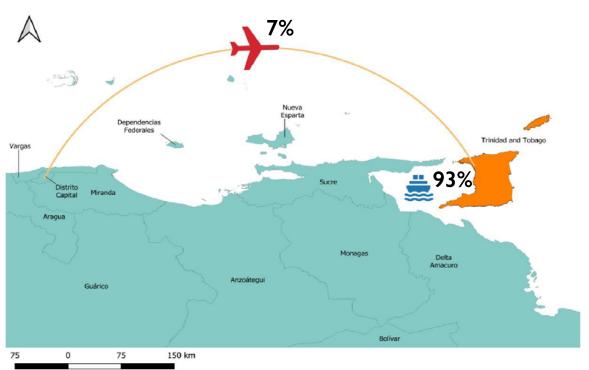
An examination of the transit routes, used by the respondents, revealed that 69 per cent began their journey in Delta Amacuro. Interestingly, 70 per cent of the respondents who began their journey in that area also resided there before departing Venezuela.

Additionally, about 93 per cent of all valid responses confirmed that their mode of transport to Trinidad was via boat. Map 3 illustrates.

These results concurred with information from the key informant interviews.

MAP 3

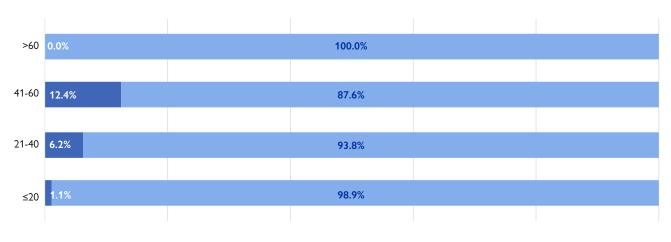
Routes



Disclaimer: this map is for illustration purposes only. Names and boundaries on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by

GRAPH 10

Transportation Type by Age

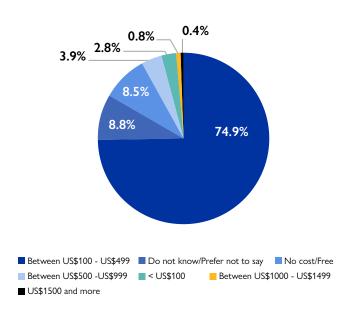




The results also highlighted that approximately 75 per cent of the interviewees incurred expenses between 100 to 499 US dollars for their trips and most of these travelers used sea routes. Nevertheless, a few respondents reportedly paid more than 500 US Dollars. DTM 2022, however, revealed a new finding as some respondents indicated that they incurred no costs for their trip to Trinidad. Graph 11 provides a graphic breakdown.

Moreover, about 74 per cent of interviewees were uncertain of their intended period of stay in Trinidad and Tobago. Added to this, approximately 16 per cent expressed their intention to stay for more than 12 months. Smaller percentages of the respondents reported that they intended to stay for '6 to 12 months' and 'less than 6 months,' as shown in Graph 13.

GRAPH 11 Cost of Trip

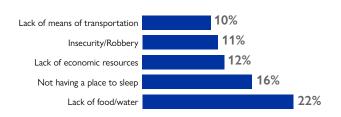


Approximately 83 per cent of the interviewed persons entered through unofficial entry points.

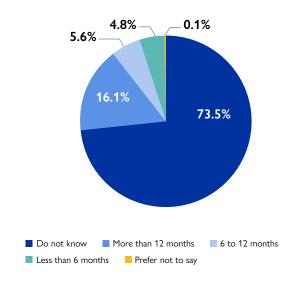
Concerning the journey itself, 63 per cent of the persons did not report any difficulties during the trip. Of the 37 per cent who did encounter challenges, the most frequently cited difficulties were; lack of food/water, not having a place to sleep, the lack of economic resources, insecurity and robbery and lack of means of transportation (Graph 12).

GRAPH 12

Top 5 Trip Difficulties



GRAPH 13 Length of Stay



Notwithstanding this, Trinidad and Tobago was the final destination country for about 47 per cent of the persons interviewed. This trend was echoed in a key informant interview which underscored that migrants were opting for alternative destinations.

It should be noted though that approximately 28 per cent of the survey respondents indicated that they 'did not know' their intended final destination and about 14 per cent stated that Venezuela was their final destination.

In a similar vein, approximately 67 per cent of the persons interviewed for DTM 2022, planned to return to Venezuela. However, most of them were undecided about when they would do so. Of the remaining respondents, about 32 per cent of the interviewees did not intend to return.

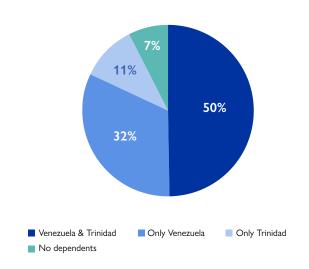
5. DEPENDENTS

With regard to economic dependents, 50 per cent of the interviewees had dependents both in Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela, while 32 per cent had dependents only in Venezuela, and 11 per cent had dependents in Trinidad and Tobago only, as depicted in Graph 14.





Dependents by Location



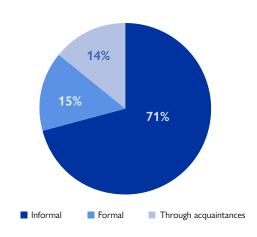
Correspondingly, the key informant interviews recognized a trend of persons entering with their families, inclusive of children.

Furthermore, given the incidence of persons with dependents in Venezuela, 83 per cent of the respondents sent resources to Venezuela, and 98 per cent of these respondents transferred money, which was occasionally comingled with food, medicine, and clothing.

Notably, 'informal transfer' emerged as the top method of sending money among the respondents, followed by 'formal options' and 'through acquaintances.' See Graph 15.

GRAPH 15

Means of Remitting Money



Family Groups

A closer analysis of the traveling companions showed that approximately 49 per cent of the respondents did not journey alone, and 65 per cent of them traveled with their families.

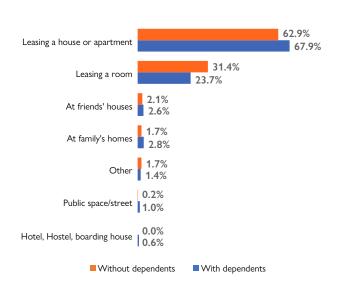
Additionally, 58 per cent of the respondents who did not travel alone had children in their travel group, and 65 per cent of these children traveled with their mothers. A small number of respondents also indicated that, there were cases of children travelling alone.

These results substantiated key informant interviews, which referred to instances of migrants travelling in groups, with children, as well as underscored the situation of some unaccompanied migrant children entering Trinidad and Tobago from Venezuela.

Apart from this, approximately 68 per cent of the persons, with dependents in Trinidad and Tobago, were renting houses or apartments. However, almost a quarter of the persons in this category were recorded as renting single rooms. Moreover, there were a few reports of public space/street dwelling which is a finding unique to the Trinidad and Tobago DTM. Graph 16 refers.

GRAPH 16

Accommodation



Interestingly though, the DTM 2021 key informant interviewees alluded to homelessness as a potential offshoot of sluggish post-pandemic economic activities. In addition, in the 2022 effort key informants recognized shelter challenges, inability to pay rent, and homelessness as notable migrant challenges after COVID-19.





6. WORK STATUS

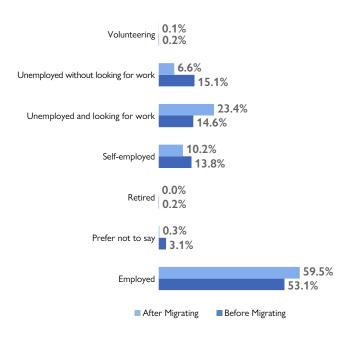
A key driver of migration is improved economic opportunity.

During the post-migration period, however, there was a reported increase among interviewees who were unemployed and seeking employment.

Nonetheless, a modest increase in employment was registered, as illustrated in Graph 17.

GRAPH 17

Work Status by Migration

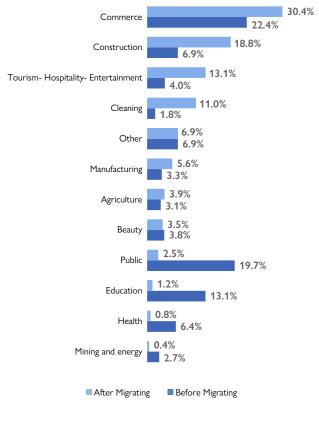


An analysis of the pre- and post-migration work sectors revealed a transition among some respondents into the construction and tourism-hospitality and entertainment sectors and domestic work. Notably, after their migration, about 19 per cent of the respondents were employed in the construction sector, approximately 13 per cent in tourism-hospitality and entertainment sector and 11 per cent were engaged in domestic work/cleaning, as shown in Graph 18.

It is important to mention, however, that sectors with very small percentages of respondents (i.e., 2 per cent or less) were omitted from Graph 18.

GRAPH 18

Main Work Sector



The data also showed that approximately 30 per cent of the interviewees who were employed at the time of the survey worked in the informal sector.

Similarly, an assessment of salaries, rated either hourly or monthly, indicated that 12 per cent of the respondents working in the formal sector and 31 per cent of the respondents working in the informal sector were underpaid, as they reportedly received less than Trinidad and Tobago's minimum wages.

Notwithstanding this, 59 per cent of the employed interviewees did not consider their wages to be fair, with 30 per cent of them working in commerce, 16 per cent in the construction sector, 13 per cent in domestic work and 12 per cent in tourism and hospitality.

7. PROTECTION

Protection is a critical DTM thematic area, which delves into the major vulnerabilities encountered by migrant populations.

Accordingly, it was discovered that 31 per cent of the respondents had either experienced or were aware of someone in their migrant community who worked and received less than the agreed payment, and 10 per cent did not receive or were aware of persons who did not receive payment for work or activities conducted.



Further to this, approximately 5 per cent of the persons interviewed were forced or were aware of others in their migrant community who were forced to perform work, or other activities, against their will. These cases were concentrated in the construction and the tourism-hospitality-entertainment sectors.

The survey data also informed that 55 per cent of the respondents experienced discrimination that was primarily attributed to their nationality.

Likewise, key informant interviews referred to Gender Based Violence (GBV), exploitation and xenophobia as key challenges faced by migrants.

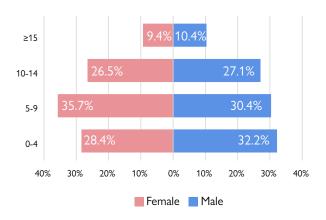
8. CHILDREN

The specific situation of children was analyzed, and it was noted that there were 1,405 children, under the age of 18 years, who lived with 50 per cent of the interviewees.

Additionally, an age and sex disaggregation of the children living with the interviewees showed that there were marginally more males than females. The 5-9 category had the largest number of children, followed by the 0-4 age group. Graph 19 refers.

GRAPH 19

Children by Age and Sex



Regarding the possession of birth certificates, 25 per cent of the respondents who lived with children, were aware of circumstances in which children who were born in Trinidad and Tobago, to Venezuelan migrants, did not have birth certificates.

Furthermore, lack of information, fees/costs and lack of documentation were the major reasons for this situation. A significantly smaller number of interviewees also proffered other explanations such as 'did not approach the authorities' and 'fear of the authorities.'

Correspondingly, a key informant, reported that birth registration amongst migrants is an emerging issue.

Added to this, the data showed that 64 per cent of the respondents who resided with children indicated that these children did not have access to education in Trinidad and Tobago.

'Fees' and 'lack of documentation' were identified as the main reasons for this inaccessibility to education. There were also two cases where 'disability' was indicated as the reason for no access to education and two reports of 'working' as the reason.

Moreover, respondents reported a couple instances of children involved in work that jeopardized their health, along with a small number of child detention cases.

Yet, it must be stated that there is neither a policy on nor provisions for the detention of children by the authorities in Trinidad and Tobago. Nevertheless, there may be extenuating conditions whereby the court may place children under the custody of a specific authority.

However, within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent national border closure from 23rd March 2020 to 16th July 2021, all irregular entrants were placed within quarantine stations, according to the prevailing health protocols.

In addition, the reported situations of separated and unaccompanied children were small.

9. HFAITH

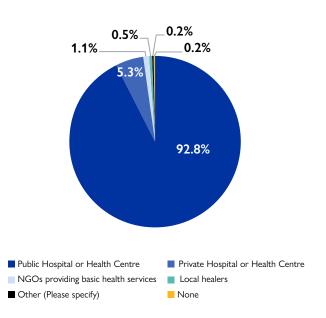
This section explored respondents' access to health services and related issues. It was therefore observed that about 35 per cent of the interviewees had no current need for health care services.

Furthermore, approximately 17 per cent of the interviewees asserted that they had no access to health services when they needed them.

Of the persons who had access to health services, the majority reported that the public hospital/health centre were their primary options, as shown in Graph 20.

GRAPH 20

Health Service Options



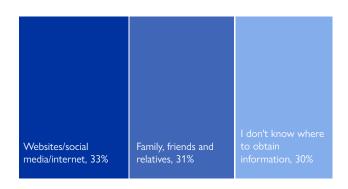




It was further noted that 'websites, social media/internet' was the top source of information about health services amongst respondents in DTM 2022. Additionally, 'I don't know where to obtain information' emerged as the top, third response, as highlighted in Graph 21. In the survey this was a multiple response question.

GRAPH 21

Main Sources of Information on Health Services



Also, 90 per cent of the respondents did not access reproductive and sexual health services. Nevertheless, persons who did obtain these services listed contraceptives (inclusive of condoms), HIV tests and treatment as the top three services accessed, respectively.

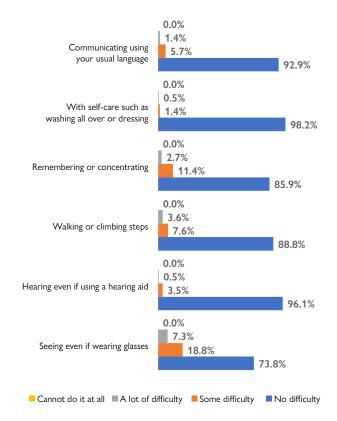
Further to this, 32 per cent of the pregnant mothers did not access prenatal services.

It was also discovered 79 per cent of the interviewees advised that they did not suffer from any non-communicable diseases, whilst about 55 per cent of the respondents who indicated that they experienced chronic conditions highlighted ailments such as cardiovascular disease/hypertension and gastroenterological diseases.

In addition, the issue of disability⁴ was probed, and it was revealed that most of respondents did not encounter any difficulties engaging in key activities.

Notwithstanding this, some interviewees reported challenges in the following main areas: seeing even if wearing glasses; remembering or concentrating, walking or climbing stairs, and communicating with usual language. Graph 22 refers.



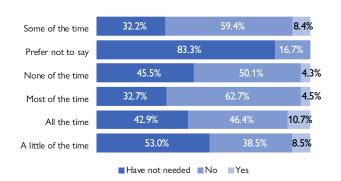


The survey also sought to ascertain the respondents' emotional well-being and approximately 18 per cent of them had been upset 'some of the time' during the two weeks before the interview, whilst about 9 per cent were upset 'a little of the time' and 8 per cent 'most of the time'.

More pointedly, about 63 per cent of the persons who felt upset most of the time, and 46 per cent of those who felt upset all the time did not access counselling or psychosocial support in Trinidad and Tobago, as depicted in Graph 23.

GRAPH 23

Emotional Support



Disability questions were consistent with the Washington Group Questions.



This finding supports the views of a few key informants who emphasized mental health challenges among the Venezuelan population. One stakeholder referred specifically to the adverse impacts of having to quarantine during the pandemic, on children's mental health.

10. IMPACTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic produced a range of deleterious, ripple effects. Accordingly, over half of the interviewed persons experienced difficulties from the inception of the pandemic. It is important to note, however, that the response option 'known someone who recovered from COVID-19', was the top difficulty in DTM 2022, as shown in Graph 24. Furthermore, not having a place to sleep/risk of eviction was the fifth most cited concern.

In the survey this was a multiple response question.

GRAPH 24

Top 3 COVID-related Difficulties

Known someone	Known someone	
who recovered from	who died from	Worsened quality
COVID-19 - 27%	COVID-19 - 20%	of food - 18%

Correspondingly, migrants' food security and inability to pay rent were recurrent themes in the key informant interviews.

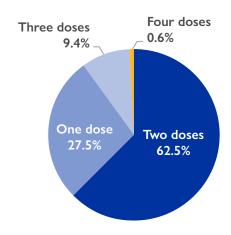
Moreover, 22 per cent of the unemployed respondents reportedly lost their jobs in Trinidad and Tobago due to the pandemic.

Nonetheless, it was noted that 33 per cent of the respondents received support during the COVID-19 pandemic, with in-kind assistance being the most widely accessed type. In addition, 65 per cent of this support was provided by religious organizations and 30 per cent by international organizations.

Further to this, approximately 87 per cent of the respondents were reportedly vaccinated, the majority of whom received 2 or more doses, whilst 13 per cent were unvaccinated. Graph 25 refers.

GRAPH 25

Vaccination Status



11. NEEDS

An examination of the respondents' needs highlighted food, secure shelter and accommodation, and education and training as first, second and third-level priorities, respectively. In addition, income generation and employment, under the first level priority, was identified as a secondary need, and medical care as a tertiary need, as illustrated in Graph 26.

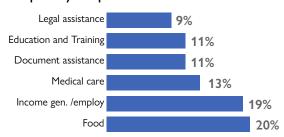
Interestingly, in 2022 'prefer not to say' and 'none' featured in the top three responses for the second and third-level priorities.

These expressed needs were reflected by key informants. Education for migrant children was the most cited need, closely followed by health care, food, rent/accommodation, and employment, respectively.

GRAPH 26

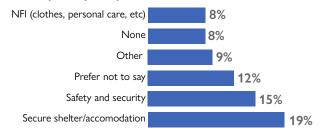
Prioritized Migrant Needs

First priority - Top 6

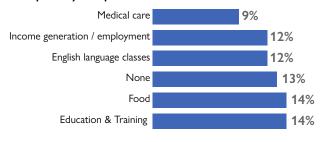




Second priority - Top 6



Third priority - Top 6



In addition, DTM 2022 introduced satisfaction and dissatisfaction ratings as they related to respondents' basic needs. It was therefore noted that sanitation and hygiene, closely followed by water and communication, topped the satisfaction category. Conversely, protection and security, medical/healthcare, and education, respectively, emerged as popular dissatisfaction areas amongst respondents, as depicted in Graph 27.

GRAPH 27

Basic Needs Rating

Top 3 satisfaction ratings

Sanitation and	Water 8.3%	
Hygiene, 9%	8.3%	7.2%

Top 3 dissatisfaction ratings

Protection and security, 10.2%	Medical Healthcare, 10%	Education and Training, 9.3%

12. SUMMARY

The DTM 2022 presented a changing reality for the respondents as it pertained to their vulnerabilities, needs, and general circumstances, within the evolving context of the pandemic.

More pointedly, food and income generation remained important needs of the respondents. It is instructive to note, however, that education and training surfaced as a key priority for them, which was echoed in the key informant interviews.

Interestingly, these findings coincided with increased instances of respondents residing with children who did not have access to education, as compared to DTM 2021 results.

This is a formidable concern, which could adversely impact the life chances and overall productivity of these children as they grow older

Apart from this, medical care and accommodation needs were evident. However, reports of street dwelling amongst a few respondents emerged for the first time in the Trinidad and Tobago DTM survey. Hence, this warrants further inquiry and action to avoid proliferation.

Additionally, for the second consecutive year, the arrivals of respondents to Trinidad and Tobago were substantially low, in contrast to previous DTMs. Moreover, both the key informants and the respondents alluded to a decline in Trinidad and Tobago's 'pull' factor, as a host country, for some Venezuelan migrants who desire to return to Venezuela or for others who opt for alternative destinations.

Nonetheless, despite the reduction in annual arrivals to Trinidad and Tobago, amongst the respondents, there was an uptick in persons 'without regular migration status', the majority of whom did not participate in the Government registration exercise. In this regard, measures to understand the needs and vulnerabilities of these individuals, regardless of their migrant status, should be embarked upon to safeguard them against exploitation and abuse.

The data also highlighted a few instances of unfair wages, non-payment, and performance of work against the individual's will, which could be indicative of human trafficking. Challenges of this nature should therefore be thoroughly investigated, and regular workplace inspections should be conducted to bolster the protection of workers.

Notwithstanding this, in comparison to prior DTMs, there were some improved labour trends amongst the interviewees, such as lessened instances of university students employed as cleaners in Trinidad and Tobago, and a decrease in the cases of informal work and situations of underpayment. These results may have been influenced by the re-registration exercise, which extended legal work opportunities for previously registered Venezuelan migrants.

There were also some encouraging health findings. Specifically, many of the respondents were vaccinated against COVID-19 and reportedly not afflicted with chronic medical diseases.

In addition, increased access to prenatal care was observed amongst the interviewees, in relation to DTM 2021.

Nevertheless, the low uptake of reproductive and sexual health services amongst respondents, could lead to grave consequences for both the migrant and host communities.

Further to this, information gaps related to access to health services, and processes for acquiring birth certificates for children born in Trinidad and Tobago persisted, which necessitates awareness efforts to address these deficiencies.

Also, similar to DTM 2021, feelings of discrimination amongst the respondents were unchanged.

Accordingly, cognizant of the advancements but ever weary of the encumbrances, it is imperative that the situation of migrants be systematically and consistently assessed to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of response efforts.



