



## **Gender Equality and Fatherhood**

### **Emancipation Support Committee on behalf of the Single Fathers Association of TT**

**Project Duration:** 30 months (end date 31st May 2018)

#### **Overview:**

The Single Fathers Association of Trinidad and Tobago (SFATT) was formed in 2012 in an effort to highlight the challenges being faced by single fathers in Trinidad and Tobago and to offer support to those fathers who were traumatised by involuntary separation from their children. No significant national action has been taken with respect to this matter.

SFATT has 1,300 members, all of whom have challenges with respect to equal access to parenting their children and the Association receives an average of 10 calls daily from persons who require legal, emotional, residential support among others in dealing with the same problem.

The Association requires support in strengthening the advocacy and lobby of the single fathers and also assistance in the further development and sustainability of the Association so that it will be able to provide on an ongoing basis required support and services to their members and their families.

This project therefore aims to raise public awareness and influence policy as regards gender inequality, at the expense of fathers, in the assessment and adjudication of parenting privileges and promote the institutionalisation of shared parenting. Action to be taken is also intended to contribute towards a better quality of life for boys and girls who are denied the opportunity to benefit from equal parenting by both father and mother, due to custody arrangements. In this regards research will be done and findings documented in order to assist in the advocacy and lobby for change in policy and practice towards equitable shared parenting.

#### **Objectives:**

- To research, assess and highlight the outcomes of custody battles in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T);
- To provide support to single fathers and their families to manage conflicts and address the trauma resulting from the involuntary separation from their children;
- To build the capacity of the Single Fathers Association of T&T

#### **Specific Outcomes:**

1. Documented information, resulting from research on the outcomes of 50 documented custody judgements made by the Family Court of Trinidad and Tobago and the impact of these on fathers, mothers, boys and girls, will be available for use by the Single Fathers Association of



## EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Trinidad and Tobago to public awareness and sensitisation of the issues faced by fathers and their families in this regard. The information will also be utilised in lobbying and advocacy for changes in policy and legislation that favour shared parenting.

2. Widespread dissemination of the information realised from the research activities utilising print, electronic and social media, and community events, which will allow for outreach to large numbers of persons in the society and an increase in public awareness and sensitivity of the experiences of fathers, boys, girls and mothers resulting from the existing approach to settlement of custody battles. A documentary video and a publication highlighting the major issues arising from the research and the voices of the fathers, mothers, boys and girls, will also be used as tools for the dissemination of information. The dissemination of information is also intended to lead to understanding and support for the alternative of equal or shared parenting.
3. Increased capacity to advocate and lobby for change in policy and eventually legislation, will be an outcome of the project as a multi sector committee will be established to review the results of the research completed and use them as the basis for proposing recommendations for change in policy and legislation in favour of shared / equal parenting and then leading the advocacy and lobby to the relevant authorities. At least six workshops for fathers of SFATT will be held to keep them updated with information and the activities of the project.
4. At least 30 outreach officers of the Single Fathers Association of Trinidad and Tobago will be trained to deliver conflict management/ resolution and counselling services to fathers and their families who reach out to them for support.
5. Conflict management/resolution and counselling facilities will be established at eight community centres in Trinidad and Tobago to provide easy access to conflict management/ resolution and counselling services of SFATT. The community centres chosen will be those which exist and provide services in 8 districts in Trinidad and Tobago, covering the northern, eastern, western, southern and central parts of the island. The facility will include a room within the community centre furnished with appropriate seating accommodation, table, relevant stationery and telephone access.
6. At least 20 members of the Single Fathers Association of Trinidad and Tobago will be trained in organisation management and development, proposal writing and financial and project management in order to further develop the capacity and ensure the sustainability of SFATT.
7. Increased and immediate access to the services of the SFATT will be facilitated by the development and operationalisation of a distress app called, the Distress Contact Hub will be operationalised and available via the website of SFATT.

###