

NGOS GET ADDED BOOST TO HELP FAMILIES DISADVANTAGED BY COVID-19

Port of Spain, Trinidad, 9 June 2020 - Despite the gradual easing of COVID-19 restrictions many families in Trinidad and Tobago are still experiencing some measure of hardship as a result of the weeks of closures and consequent job losses.

A number of charities have been working diligently to assist those affected families and three of them were recently aided in their efforts with donations from CIBC FirstCaribbean.

The bank gave financial support to the Living Water Community, the Foundation of the Enrichment and Enhancement of Life (FEEL) and the Gift for Life Foundation so that they can continue their work to keep families and children as comfortable as they can in these challenging times.

“We cannot turn our backs on the people who need it most,” said Anthony Seeraj, Managing Director of CIBC FirstCaribbean in Trinidad. “We are very happy to support the efforts of these hard-working groups who seek the betterment of others.”

Rosemary Scott, assistant community director of the Living Water Community, said the group’s hamper drive meant preparing 1,000 hampers a week. “People were requesting hampers since the start of lockdown in March and we have not stopped,” she said. “We hope with all businesses opening, we hope numbers will be reduced and persons who were not working are able to generate income.”

Elena Villafana-Sylvester, chief executive officer of FEEL, noted a similar experience of supporting families in need. “We continue to support vulnerable households, particularly those who lost earnings during Covid-19. Since the start, we have assisted 30,000 households,” she said.

Nalini Ragoonanan, PRO for the Gift for Life Foundation, said the group initially pledged to assist 50 families and 15 orphanages. Instead, the NGO just completed assistance for 250 families and 22 homes. “The money we just received will help with the provision of education tool kits, since classes are now online, as well as groceries for the children’s homes,” she said.

The funding came through the bank’s charitable arm, the FirstCaribbean International ComTrust Foundation. The foundation covers funding in countries across CIBC FirstCaribbean’s regional footprint.

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Photos below.



Rosemary Scott, assistant community director of the Living Water Community, receives a cheque from Anthony Seeraj, Managing Director of CIBC FirstCaribbean in Trinidad.



Elena Villafana-Sylvester, chief executive officer of FEEL, receives a cheque from Anthony Seeraj, Managing Director of CIBC FirstCaribbean in Trinidad.



Nalini Ragoonanan, PRO for the Gift for Life Foundation, receives a cheque from Anthony Seeraj, Managing Director of CIBC FirstCaribbean in Trinidad.

About CIBC FirstCaribbean

CIBC FirstCaribbean is a relationship bank offering a full range of market leading financial services through our Corporate and Investment Banking, Retail and Business Banking and Wealth Management segments. We are located in sixteen (16) countries around the Caribbean, providing the banking services that fit our customers' lives through approximately 3,000 employees in 68 branches and offices. We are one of the largest regionally listed financial services institutions in the English and Dutch speaking Caribbean, with over US\$11 billion in assets and market capitalization of US \$2 billion. We also have an office in Hong Kong. The face of banking is changing throughout the world and CIBC FirstCaribbean intends to lead these changes with the expertise, integrity and knowledge gained from banking in the Caribbean since 1836.

CIBC FirstCaribbean is a member of the CIBC Group. CIBC is a leading Canadian-based global financial institution with 11 million personal banking and business clients. Through our three major business units - Retail and Business Banking, Wealth Management and Capital Markets - CIBC offers a full range of products and services through its comprehensive electronic banking network, branches and offices across Canada with offices in the United States and around the world.

For more information about CIBC FirstCaribbean, visit www.cibcfib.com, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) or [YouTube](#).

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