

NewsExtra

UN rep: 100,000 undernourished people in T&T

ST CLAIR

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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO has 100,000 undernourished people and the figure represents 7.4 per cent of the population.

And the combined overweight and obesity rates locally for men and women are 55 per cent and 62 per cent, respectively.

Latin America and the Caribbean tend to waste six per cent of the global food produced or 78 million tonnes per year.

Dr Lystra Fletcher-Paul, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) representative, shared these statistics while delivering the feature address at the launch of Nourish TT, at the Shell corporate suite, Scotiabank Stand, Queen's Park Oval, St Clair, yesterday.

She lauded the intervention of Nourish TT, which seeks to strive towards achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) such

as ending hunger, malnutrition and poverty; reducing wastage and losses; and promoting sustainable management of the environment and social responsibility.

Nourish TT, a local non-governmental organisation (NGO), is on a drive to end food waste and to assist the 100,000 needy people in Trinidad and Tobago affected by poverty.

Among those present were Nourish executive directors—president Krista Dos Santos, vice-president Joanna Nelson, treasurer Neesha Rambharrack and director of technology Stephen Moodoo.

They were joined by non-executive directors chairman Vincent Pereira, Gillian Warner-Hudson, Robert Tang Yuk and Vaughn Martin and Independent senator Jennifer Raffoul.

7.5 million undernourished people in Caribbean

Fletcher-Paul continued shar-

ing more statistics on the number of undernourished people in the Caribbean.

"Between 2014 and 2016, the number of undernourished people in the Caribbean was estimated to be about 7.5 million—a decline of eight per cent from eight million over the past 25 years. Trinidad and Tobago is among four countries in the region with undernourishment levels less than ten per cent of their population. The other countries are Dominica, Bahamas, Belize and Jamaica," she said.

"Compared to Haiti, with undernourishment levels of 53.4 per cent, one can say Trinidad and Tobago is doing well. But three countries—Barbados, Guyana and St Vincent and the Grenadines—have met two main global targets set by the World Food Summit 1996 and the MDGS in 2000, and with undernourishment levels less than five per cent."

Moving to obesity, she said: "The levels are alarming and



ON A MISSION: Dr Lystra Fletcher-Paul, centre, listens to members Joanna Nelson, second from right, vice-president of Nourish; Krista Santos, president, right; Neesha Rambharrack, left, treasurer, and Stephen Moodoo, chief technology officer after the launch of Nourish yesterday. The launch was held at Shell Corporate Hospitality Suite, BGT&T/Scotia Stand, Queen's Park Oval. —Photo: AYANNA KINSALE

have serious implications for the incidence of non-communicable diseases such as stroke, hypertension and diabetes.

"Obesity rates among females in the Caribbean are four times higher than their male counterparts.

"Obesity and malnutrition are linked to the overconsumption of processed foods which are high in sugar, fat and salt.

"Overconsumption is a form of food wastage. It is estimated globally 1.3 tonnes or roughly one-third of the food produced for human consumption is either lost or wasted annually. Losses may occur during production, harvesting, handling, storage and processing, while food wastage occurs when we throw away food that is still edible—at wholesale and retail sales, in prepared services and at the consumer level," said Fletcher-Paul.

About Nourish TT

The motto of the NGO is "good

food should never be thrown away" and its mission is to end hunger and reduce food waste locally.

To enable companies to be part of Nourish's endeavour, they use the company's website to post about possible food donations to the Nourish website.

Charities can then place orders for food and these orders are collected by Nourish and delivered to the charities. Nourish does not receive food that cannot be eaten.

On an average, Nourish distributes about 2,500 meals per week.

The 2012 World Food report, What A Waste, found T&T to be one of the biggest offenders when it comes to wasting food. Nourish has joined others across the globe like Hands For Hunger (Bahamas), Foodcloud (Ireland) and Fareshare (United Kingdom) whose aim is to end hunger.

"We would like to see this initiative replicated throughout the Caribbean," said Fletcher-Paul.