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**NIHERST**

NATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF HIGHER EDUCATION
RESEARCH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 15th 2026

Dear Editor / Head of Department

**NIHERST and ILO Launch Landmark Reports on the 21st Century Skills
Across Emerging Sectors**

San-Fernando, Trinidad and Tobago, June 15, 2026 – The National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST), in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), today officially launched the Assessment of 21st Century Skills Across Emerging Sectors Reports, a landmark body of research designed to inform workforce development, education planning, and national policy in Trinidad and Tobago.

The reports, which focus on the following five (5) industries: **Maritime, Aviation, Tourism, Software design and applications and Agro-processing**, provide critical insights into the skills, competencies, and workforce demands required to support growth across emerging sectors of the economy. The initiative represents a significant step toward strengthening the country's human capital development agenda and ensuring that citizens are equipped to thrive in an increasingly technology-driven and innovation-focused global landscape.

At the launch, representatives from government, industry, academia, labour, and development partners were on site to examine the findings and recommendations emerging from the assessment.

Delivering opening remarks, **Dr. Indira Rampersad, Chairman of the NIHERST Board of Governors**, underscored the importance of evidence-based decision-making in preparing the workforce for the future. Dr. Rampersad stated “If these reports remain unread, we have failed. If they are read but not actioned, we have squandered an opportunity. But if we embed these findings into our strategic plans, our corporate training modules, and our university degrees, we will fundamentally future-proof Trinidad and Tobago”.

Remarks were also delivered by **Mr. Joni Musabayana, Director of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean**, who highlighted the role of skills intelligence in promoting decent work opportunities, economic resilience, and sustainable development. Mr. Musabayana, expressed “Skills mismatches are not simply an education issue or a labour market issue; they are a development issue. They affect productivity, competitiveness, employment outcomes, and social inclusion”

The event featured a detailed presentation of the research findings, including an overview of current and anticipated skills requirements across key emerging sectors, followed by a question-and-answer session with stakeholders.

The reports were formally unveiled during the ceremony, marking the culmination of an extensive research process aimed at identifying priority competencies and future workforce requirements.

The Assessment of 21st Century Skills Across Emerging Sectors Reports will serve as a key resource for national planning and stakeholder engagement as Trinidad and Tobago advances efforts to build a resilient, innovative, and globally competitive workforce.

Photos:



Caption: Dr. Indira Rampersad (NIHERST-Chairman)



Caption: Mr. Joni Musabayana (Director - International Labour Organization (ILO) Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean)



Caption: Attendees interacting with sector activation spaces



Caption: Attendees interacting with sector activation spaces

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About NIHERST

The National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST) is a statutory body committed to promoting the development of science, technology and higher education in Trinidad and Tobago, while supporting innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship across the national community.