

## Trinidad and Tobago Modernizing Its Tax Payment Ecosystem



NRD Companies Picture. Post of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

**The country is moving towards the introduction of online payments for the collection of taxes**

**October 5th, 2022.** Trinidad and Tobago is a Caribbean country located in the south-eastern West Indies with a population of approximately 1.4Mn. The country's Ministry of Finance aims to increase accessibility and improve the ease of honouring tax obligations for people and businesses, by supporting key legal, regulatory and change management initiatives for the digitalization of the online tax payment ecosystem in the country. With the help of CAF - Development Bank of Latin America, the Ministry of Finance has recently retained the services of NRD Companies to support these efforts.

Trinidad and Tobago is ranked in the "High EDGI countries" category in the United Nations' E-Government Development Index (EGDI), which presents the state of E-Government Development in the member states, and its overall performance of digitalization is above the average of the Caribbean sub-region. As well, Trinidad and Tobago stands as a "High-ranking country" according to the UN's Online Services Index (OSI), which measures the use of information and communications technology by Governments for the delivery of public services at the national level, and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago gives particular attention to "digital-first", and country's progress in digitalization and the integration of digital

technologies in its public services over recent years corresponds to a substantial growth in the use of the Internet amongst the population.

Yet, in terms of the population's use of e-payment services, the population is not adept to the use of digital channels to carry out financial operations. According to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, only 20% of the population makes online purchases and/or pays bills online, despite the fact that 81 % of people have a bank account and 20 % have a credit card.

“Most monetary transactions in the region continue to require the filing of multiple complex documents and spending long hours waiting in line at different government offices. The existing practices have a disruptive impact on businesses and individuals, especially those segments of the population that are less averse to technology and more socially vulnerable. Making tax payment procedures easier, as well as providing various channels to make payments, will not only improve the efficiency of taxation systems, but also greatly contribute to financial inclusiveness and just development nationally and across the Caribbean” explains the Honourable Colm Imbert, Minister of Finance.

The project, which is financed by the CAF - Development Bank of Latin America and the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, will include various aspects highly important to the introduction of online payments in the Trinidad and Tobago public sector. During the project, the legislation and regulations governing Trinidad and Tobago's payment ecosystem will be reviewed and adapted, detailed assessment of needs of institutions for online payment methods will be implemented and detailed recommendations to ensure security and resilience of the digital ecosystem needed to support the online tax payment system will be presented. As well, promotion of cultural change in the behaviour of the institutions, people, and businesses will be promoted, encouraging to embrace new possibilities provided by the introduction of innovative payment methods.

“CAF is committed to improving the quality of life of all Latin Americans and Caribbean peoples, and digitalisation opens endless opportunities to implement this strategic goal. We believe in the potential of Trinidad and Tobago to harness possibilities provided by digital tools and solutions. Just recently, CAF approved a USD 120 million loan to boost digital transformation of the State. This project is one of the important steps in the country's digital transformation, which will enable the public sector to be more efficient, and to act as catalyst for diversification and economic growth”, comments Gianpiero Leoncini, Representative of CAF in Trinidad and Tobago.

“We are excited and honoured to have been chosen by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to provide technical consultancy services to support the Ministry of Finance and other institutions towards the development of an online payment ecosystem for the collection of taxes in the country. Through this consultancy, we'll support government's efforts towards establishment of a unified and standardized approach to online payments in the public sector, ensuring both the best user experience and security of payments. Our company has been involved in numerous successful digital government transformation projects in the region, including in Belize, Guyana, Granada, St. Lucia, Sint Maarten, and St. Vincent & The Grenadines. Our global experience, and specifically in the Caribbean region, demonstrates that the implementation of digital innovations has brought major improvements to the provision of government services, and will have a significant impact on areas such

as ease of doing business, financial security, inclusion, and overall quality of life” says Mindaugas Glodas, CEO of NRD Companies.

## About the Ministry of Finance

*The Ministry of Finance is a central Ministry in the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, which plays a pivotal role in national development. The head of the ministry is the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Colm Imbert.*

*The Ministry consists of seventeen (17) Divisions and is charged with the responsibilities of revenue collection and revenue management; budget planning and preparation; budget management; the formulation of national fiscal and economic policy; trade facilitation and border control; debt management; and management of the State Enterprises Sector.*

## About CAF

*CAF is a multilateral development bank committed to improving the quality of life of all Latin Americans and Caribbean people. CAF's actions promote sustainable development and regional integration with the objective of becoming the green and blue Bank and the economic and social reactivation of the region. CAF is made up of Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Spain, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela, and 13 Latin American private banks.*

*More information: [www.caf.com](http://www.caf.com)*

## About NRD Companies

*NRD Companies is a global IT and consulting group of companies, specializing in governance and economic digital infrastructure development. Headquartered in Norway, the group unites companies operating in Fintech, GovTech, and practice-based consulting areas in aiding countries to reach UN sustainable development goals. NRD companies have a successful track record of implementing projects, such as e-service delivery platforms, national post digitalization, tax administration platforms, and other digital solutions, in all 5 continents. The Group is a recognized leader in the industry and is controlled by the INVL Technology UTIB. NRD Companies is a parent company for the following subsidiary corporations: Norway Registers Development AS, NRD Systems, NRD Rwanda, ETRONIKA, Infobank Uganda. More information:*

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