



power to
make a
difference



Five years ago, Republic Bank embarked on a landmark journey to redefine the shape and scope of social investment in the Caribbean. It was our belief that if we could give the nation's young, elderly and marginalised, the hope, vision and wherewithal to achieve, then as a Bank we would make a positive difference.

Such a decision was primarily predicated on the fact that we have faithfully served the people, businesses and governments of the Caribbean for over 171 years, financially, socially and culturally. Since our beginnings as Colonial Bank in 1837, we have been pledged in service to the people of this region and strengthening and refining that pledge has been our ongoing mission.

Founded on the philosophy that every human life has an invaluable contribution to make to national development, the Power to Make a Difference programme has successfully evolved over the past five years. This groundbreaking programme and our initial investment of TT\$40 million over 5 years in social programmes has given corporate social responsibility in the Caribbean, a more proactive, caring and holistic outlook.

This thinking, we hope, in time, will dominate the social consciousness of the region to the point where it becomes the standard that motivates others to level the charge that corporate social investment is a vital component to national progress.

THE PATH TO THE PRESENT

A major success of the Power to Make a Difference is the Power to Learn programme. This programme focuses on youth development through education, sport and culture and ensures that young people have a solid foundation upon which to build as they look toward the future. Through the years initiatives under this arm have gained greater recognition, favour and impetus on a communal and national level.

Every Republic Cup football tournament and camp moves children closer to the values of integrity and teamwork. Every Laventille netball and basketball league we host gives additional numbers of young players the arena to hone a craft and showcase their skills. Every golf clinic we create increases the opportunity for more



regional and international champions. Every literacy class that we conduct helps one more child bridge the divide between despair and hope. Every music scholarship that we offer creates the possibility of another steel pan maestro, and elevates the instrument even higher in the eyes of the world.

Moreover, we also recognise that the picture of holistic social investment would be incomplete without the careful conceptualization and execution of comprehensive poverty alleviation programmes that address not just the effect of poverty deviance, crime, violence and destitution; but also the cause – lack of opportunity and hope for improvement.

To that end, we have helped build homes for elderly persons who otherwise would have had nowhere else to go. Partnering with The Trinidad & Tobago Cancer Society, we have made definitive steps in increasing the move to early detection and treatment of cancer, with the aim of reducing the mortality rate. We have given hope to marginalized youth by giving them a place to live, the tools to live and, a renewed sense of purpose.

Understanding that the business of business is people, through the Power to Succeed, we have successfully worked with the local business community and its leaders, as well as with the University of the West Indies, to proactively guide business development and empower a rising class of young entrepreneurs and leaders through the avenues of education and endowment. Indeed, five years have passed with much having been accomplished.

However, in looking back at the achievements of the last five years, we realise that while we have moved closer toward fulfilling our moral mandate as a driving force behind sustainable development, much remains to be done. This thinking is instrumental in our decision to preserve the programme, launching a second five-year phase in 2009.

RENAISSANCE – FIVE YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

In unifying us with the various communities, the Power to Make a Difference has created a transparent legacy that is as easily understood as it is defined. As always, we



believe that such transparency is essential to our altruistic desire to see the Caribbean's indigent, lost, helpless and hopeless truly empowered.

With little surprise, what started out as an effort to become more involved in the communities in which we serve, quickly became the means by which we were better able to employ our wherewithal-financial and emotional – toward the alleviation of societal ills and in the process, combat social and communal entropy.

Not only did we exceed our promised \$40 million in social investment by \$12 million, but we witnessed a reawakening of corporate social investment in Trinidad and Tobago and across the region.

By championing The Power to Make a Difference, Republic Bank has catapulted itself, the nation and the region into a new era-one not solely of corporate responsibility – but of corporate conscientiousness, guided by the moral conviction to get others equally involved, either through example or action.

With five years gone by and a new era before us, we relish the fact that we took on the challenge of making a

difference, driven by a philosophy of “the power of one serving many.” Underlining this, is our innate belief, that as each part affects the whole, we, in our unique way, are effecting a real transformation in those whose lives we have touched.

THE FUTURE

In looking back at what we have accomplished, we are given impetus for the future. Even as the fifth year draws to a close, it ushers in another – an era where corporate social investment becomes the rule and not the exception. In this new era, Republic Bank stands strategically poised throughout the region as the innovator of a higher standard of corporate giving and corporate support.

Our plan, as always, is to be part of the national solution, and to help Trinidad and Tobago citizens realize their power to make a difference in their own lives and in the lives of others.