**November 30th, 2020 – For Immediate Release**

## The Cropper Foundation Creates First-Ever Civil Society Data Lab
## Tackling Sustainability Challenges in the Caribbean

The Cropper Foundation and TTLAB have launched the [Data for Development Lab (D4D Lab)](#), a 'Think and Do' Lab that seeks, among other priorities, to support the increased use of data and technology by civil society within the Caribbean.

When it comes to data-driven decision making and technology uptake for sustainable development, the Caribbean does not have a great track record. Even more so, the use and uptake of cutting-edge data and technology has not been equitable across all sectors, with civil society organisations in particular, struggling to maximise the benefits that these approaches can provide across the various areas of development like inclusion, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.

The D4D Lab seeks to lower the barriers for more locally relevant and equitable uptake of data and technology within the Caribbean, by using a multidisciplinary approach that brings together contributors from civil society organisations, academic institutions, state actors, technical agencies, practitioners and citizens to co-create new technologies and approaches to data that boost sustainable solutions for Caribbean states.

The D4D Lab has already embarked on three (3) unique projects leading up to its launch.

- [Communi-TT](#) – A data visualisation platform that aims to localise the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by turning abstract global targets into actionable local targets.
- [AI for Agriculture](#) – Prototyping Artificial Intelligence (AI) models to develop an integrated suite of vegetation indices, deployed using Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (Drones) over landscapes and farming systems characteristic of SIDS.
- [Townhall-TT](#) – Prototyping the use of Natural Language Processing AI Models to rapidly collect, analyse and visualise people's thoughts and feelings about development issues within Trinidad and Tobago and the wider Caribbean.

The D4D Lab will seek to engage stakeholders over the next few months to co-create a pipeline of ideas and needs within the fields of data and technology, that are specific to the Caribbean and maximises regional talent and expertise.

The Data for Development Lab is co-managed by The Cropper Foundation, a non-profit organisation working for Caribbean sustainability and based in Trinidad and Tobago; and [TTLAB](#), an independent body at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, that serves to catalyse young scientists and engineers to leverage leading-edge research for solving local problems using Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and Mathematics. The Lab is also advised by [the EquiGov Institute](#), a leading Caribbean firm working in Data Privacy, Data Governance, Information Access, Transparency and Monitoring and Evaluation.

*improving lives*