

Dear Colleagues,

This is to formally introduce and launch the Project " CARISNET- Strengthening the Caribbean ICT stakeholders Virtual Community - CIVIC- as a regional mechanism to promote and support the use of ICT for development in the Caribbean", which was approved last year as a result of the ICA Call for Proposals.

The goal of the project is to enhance the effectiveness of CIVIC as a permanent multi-stakeholder forum, a mechanism able to build a common vision/perspective on ICTs in the region, promote a Caribbean strategy and foster regional Caribbean-wide actions that address critical development issues.

The Objectives of the project are :

1. To revitalize and sustain the existing forum with improved communication across the language barriers, and discussion animation/systematizing.
2. To promote membership in CIVIC among French and Spanish speaking countries.
3. To create a multilingual regional ICT clearinghouse to include resources and documents on ICT related policies, initiatives, skills, resources and institutions
4. To establish project priority areas and promote the development of collaborative project proposals.
5. To promote dialogue between donors and the CIVIC community to identify priority areas for project support and articulate a call for proposals

The project will run from April 2006 - March 2006 and it will be implemented by 4 organisations namely: Jamaica Sustainable Development Network Ltd, Fundación Taigüey, Dominican Republic), Foundation Networks & Development (FUNREDES), and DevNet (Guyana).

Notwithstanding this, there are several activities which will involve the inputs from the broader CIVIC membership, most significantly participation in the online discussions, the data collection for the database/clearinghouse of ICT4D initiatives, resources, practitioners etc, and the call for "success stories".

The main outputs of the project will be the Interactive online clearinghouse of information on the ICT in the Caribbean, enhanced exchanges and integration of key actors through a strengthened virtual community, a collection of ICT4D success stories from around the region, greater participation and inputs from Spanish and French speaking countries and strengthened collaboration and articulation of the donors support in the region.

We have placed in the resources section of the website

http://www.dgroups.org/groups/icacaribbean/index.cfm?opmain&cat_id 701&admin_id1 a project profile, with details of budget and activities, and a FAQ which highlights the answers to some critical questions.

You, as the CIVIC constituency, are the main stakeholders of this project, and we would like to take your concerns and perspectives into account as much as possible. We ask for your comments and inputs

to this document, so to make this project as participatory as possible.

Regards

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On behalf of the CARISNET consortium

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