

“Integrating and Empowering the Caribbean ICT4D stakeholders; Unleashing the transformation potential for the region”

Report of the survey of the persons who participated in the ICT4D Policy Training

1. About the Survey

In November, 2008, twenty nine persons from around the Caribbean participated in an ICT4D Policy Training course which was organised by the CARISNET consortium under the project “Integrating and Empowering the Caribbean ICT4D stakeholders; Unleashing the transformation potential for the region” which was funded by IDRC¹. This training event was held in the Dominican Republic. A report of the event is located at <http://www.carisnet.org/en/ict4dpolicytraining>

This training was one of the of the supportive strategies to enable policy makers to integrate ICTs in sectoral strategies.

The evaluation of this training was done in August 2009. The CARISNET consortium decided to do a survey of the 29 participants who attended the training workshop and this report presents the results of that survey.

2. Survey Instrument

The survey instrument which was used is a questionnaire with the following questions , most of which required open responses :-

1. The training participants identified three areas of concern at the policy training workshop. Which of the areas are you involved with in your current work? Please choose all that apply:
 - a. Underutilization of ICTs due to lack of awareness about these technologies
 - b. Use of ICT's for antisocial and unethical purposes against and by children and youth: the need to build responsible digital citizens. .
 - c. Provision of affordable and sustainable access (broadband Internet) for the disadvantaged/ marginalized.
2. How has the ICT4D policy training course impacted your work?
(Please share some thoughts of the impact which the knowledge and information which you gained during the training has had on your work. Have you used any of the information in policy formulation? Have you shared the information with colleagues?)
3. Have you continued any of the relationships with any of the participants developed at the ICT4d policy?
4. What are your specific areas of interest for policy development? (Which sector(s) are you working in? For example.. health, education, culture, environment, governance, social cohesion..)
5. What other aspects of CIVIC has helped you in your policy work? Please share any specific examples.

The survey was administered online using a Lime Survey tool provided by Fundacion Taiguey. This format we think allowed for the high response rate. The survey was administered in English.

1 International Development Research Centre : <http://www.idrc.ca>

3. Findings

There were 18 complete responses and 1 incomplete response to the questionnaire. The nineteen respondents live and work in one or more of the following countries :-

- Haiti
- Trinidad & Tobago
- St Vincent
- St Lucia
- Guyana
- Belize
- Jamaica
- Barbados

The training group prioritised three areas of concern for policy development at the policy training workshop.. Respondents indicated more than one area of concern.

Area of concern	Number of persons
Underutilization of ICTs due to lack of awareness about these technologies	17
Use of ICT's for antisocial and unethical purposes against and by children and youth: the need to build responsible digital citizens.	4
Provision of affordable and sustainable access (broadband Internet) for the disadvantaged/marginalized.	10

The training group reflected interests in the use of ICT in different sectors – education, disaster management, governance, business and rural development - while some persons were interested in the development of comprehensive ICT policies and in issues such as responding to cultural diversity, regulation and universal access.

Impact of policy training on the work of the participants

Most of the participants indicated that the training impacted their work positively. One person noted that they shared the report with colleagues, while other participants noted that they were able to approach their work with their Governments in the different sectors and shared some of the training materials with their colleagues. A few people noted that the training had no impact on their work, while one person said that they felt that the trainer had no knowledge of global policy issues. The complete answers to this question are in Annex 1 to this report. The answers are reproduced as they were presented.

Collaboration of participants after the training event

Most of the participants noted that they remained in contact with colleagues, with the participants from Belize agreeing to work on an ICT4D Policy Advocacy group in Belize. The collaboration continued within the CIVIC platform and also at a bilateral level.

Annex 2 to this report has the complete answers to this question while Annex 3 shows the diverse areas

of interest.

Other aspects of CIVIC which facilitate the work of policy advocates and policy makers

The respondents to the questionnaire noted that they appreciated the ability to discuss ideas with colleagues in different countries and to get as one respondent said 'quick answers to questions'. Another person mentioned that it was a good place to bounce ideas off of colleagues. One person said that they had a low level of participation in CIVIC so could not comment.

Annex 4 to this report has the answers to this question.

Conclusions

The results of this survey which was conducted nine months after the training showed that the policy training was successful in stimulating national ICT policy development and building national capacity. The training was a useful strategy in the advocacy for ICT4D Policy Making. There is no evidence that this was going to move to regional policy development from the survey results. The Regional policy development is managed by institutions such as the CARICOM Secretariat managed Regional ICT Steering Committee. Some of the participants who were on the training are part of the Steering Committee.

The CIVIC mailing list and the discussions which are on it are useful resources to the CIVIC members who are involved in policy making.

Submitted by Vidyaratha Kissoon, DevNet,

Annex1 : Responses to : How has the ICT4D policy training course impacted your work?

- I have not used any of the information as yet.
- It was helpful in opening new ways to conduct our work in reaching and understanding our members
- Each of these events that I attend informs the ones that follow. Directly after the ICT4D course I was a participant at the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in India, where I went with a focused sense of what the CIVIC space sees as the issues for the Caribbean. I also share information with colleagues and with my students - an ongoing process. As a spin-off, the College where I teach is currently engaged in extensive policy review. The methodology used for Internet policy is often useful in that field also.
- Very much.
- It has afforded me some academic structure to to the practical policy development work with which I was engaged. A report on the course and the course material was shared with colleagues although I am not aware of any direct practical use made.
- Being currently involved with ICT strategy development for the Haitian government, the ICT4D course helped us structure our work, ask the right questions and structure the choice of the priorities
- Useful because of the participants and ideas. Larger pool of people to draw on for the training work that I do. Learnt about policy issues in other areas of the region
- Hardly.
- It has increased my awareness of the cross cutting issues. I have since participated in policy at ARIN
- considering I didn't attend the whole workshop - I went to the training for the website on day 2, and on day 1 I found that the facilitator was rather ignorant on certain global policy agreements and institutions, I didn't get much to take away from the session to apply to my work
- The ICT4D policy training course has made me more aware of the concept of policies. Now, I always start any ICT project with ensuring that the right policies are in place to support it, and, if not, work to develop such policies that would support the project.
- It made me more aware of the need to sensitise key policy & decision makers about ICT4D.
- A greater understanding and knowledge of the Caribbean ICT community
- The opportunity of policy having an impact has not yet been created.
- I find it very helpful because my department is upgrading and as a result the policy development has been very useful so far.
- One of the most intractable areas for policy development in the region is the lack of understanding of the policy development ecosystem and the role of collaborative engagement of the various sectors. The training placed the issues in perspective and helped participants to envision a framework for collaborative policy development in areas of ICT4D
- It has broadened my awareness of the issues confronting caribbean countries and the region as a whole
- The training was very useful in making people work by group of interest.

Annex 2: Responses to : Have you continued any of the relationships with any of the participants developed at the ICT4D Policy Training?

- Yes, through the CIVIC platform
- Yes! we continue to be in contact via the virtual lists
- I already knew many of the people involved. Last week at the Rio LAC preparatory meeting for the IGF, I had the opportunity to renew non-virtual contact with Jacqueline Morris and Stephane Bruno.
- yes
- Not really. Relationships existent before the course have continued. Of contacts newly made, there was only one subsequent meeting with one of them at a regional event at which we both happened to be present.
- No
- Yes.
- Chatting Yes, effective work No.
- Yes I still participate in CIVIC
- Absolutely - I am in regular contact with some of the participants
- Yes, in Belize, we have been discussing about establishing an ICT4D organisation whose major goal will be to provide advice and advocacy for ICT4D policies at levels of our country.
- Only a couple...
- Through the list.
- No.
- Yes I have. In fact, BrainStreet has been gaining a lot.
- Yes.
- yes
- Yes Some contact was made and continue to collaborate on a day to day basis.

Annex 3 : Responses to : What are your specific areas of interest for policy development?

- I am interested in the use of ICTs for all sectors
- Education online Environment -- on climate change, and social cohesion
- My main interest is in the policies concerning diversity of language and culture on the Internet. I am interested in governance generally, and particularly as regards young people - I teach so this is almost automatic. Recently I have been working with Privacy/Free expression and Intellectual property rights.
- governance
- ICT policy development generally but with special interest in (a) Internet governance policies for increased broadband penetration, usage and content development and (b) spectrum management.
- Legal framework for the protection of electronic information
- 1)Affordable and sustainable access for rural communities particularly for farmers, especially women farmers 2) Use of ICT for disaster management and climate change risk management for farmers and rural communities which means increased policy dialogue with decision-makers who undervalue the utility of ICTs
- Broadband access, new regulations, alternative thinking, more effective regulation, rate application involvement and advocacy, training.
- I am on a local training policy committee at the Chamber of Commerce.
- ICT policy in education, public uptake of technology, esp cheap mobile technology
- My specific area of interest is Education.
- National ICT Policy Development, including all sectors...Government, Private & Non-Government. A couple of critical areas of concern for me are the Education and Sustainable development sub-sectors.
- Education, environment, governance
- How its effect reaches at the community level.
- elearning, networking,
- Broadband access for socially underprivileged groups plus ICTs in education and training; Internet governance issues converged on education and training
- Coherent National IT Policies in each country
- culture social cohesion content

**Annex 4 : Responses to : What other aspects of CIVIC has helped you in your policy work?
Please share any specific examples.**

- The sharing and project management
- By keeping a constant flow of information and communication, is very helpful to my area of work.
- CIVIC is useful for information sharing. It is a good way for getting quick answers to questions about regional issues. Other people's ideas are always useful in adding shape and dimension to one's own. This is particularly useful when the other ideas are from a different perspective, or are very contrary to one's own. CIVIC is especially useful because of the range of ideas and perspectives that it brings together.
- i have understood better how to write and document policy. I was also satisfied in the training on how to make policy advocacy.
- Enhanced awareness of sources for information, experience and expertise in the field A useful sounding board for policy proposals Caribbean perspectives on issues of global significance in the Internet community.
- Reading the mails in the CIVIC list gives sometimes good pointers
- I feel able to call on CIVIC members for advice and help. For example through CIVIC members I have been assisted to begin development of a carbon-foot-printing tool for Jamaican and ultimately Caribbean farmers.
- Information sharing primarily and some networking. CIVIC continues to be an organisation of busy people who talk a lot but do not collaborate effectively and allow personality to restrain progress.
- Specifically the need to understand policy formation and as stated earlier, my interest has moved to IP policy at ARIN because very few in my region wants to get involved in this area
- Mainly the networking and discussions
- Just recently I spearheaded the development of the ICT for Education policies of the Ministry of Education (Belize). I actually used the hand-out that was given to me at the CIVIC training as a guide for developing these policies. It worked out well.
- The national peer networking aspect...we are presently utilising it to develop a national ICT4D support organisation.
- Information on Caribbean developments
- Policy has no direct association with current work. My level of participation in CIVIC does not allow for further comment to this question
- Advocacy
- The List; it has allowed me to make joint programmatic interventions in the specialist areas of my knowledge and interests
- Once again, awareness. Increased awareness of policies, practices and current issues in Caribbean countries.
- exchange of experiences in different countries in Caribbean