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Caribbean ICT Roundtable - Unprecedented Turn Out

The second in a series of regional events on the use of ICTs for development was held October 28-30, in Barbados. Chaired by the ICA and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Caribbean ICT Roundtable is being hailed a huge success. More than a hundred high profile participants, representing the region from various sectors, attended the working event that focused on the creation of a regional strategy for ICT development. On the final day of meetings, the ICA brought leading financial institutions together with development partners to discuss joint funding initiatives. Among others, the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, Caribbean Development Bank, UNESCO, and USAID, were in attendance.

The Media Release is available at:
http://www.icamericas.net/index_e.html

More information on the event, including links to discussion groups: http://www.icamericas.net/workshops/caribbean/

Dgroups Help Make Connections & Receive Funding

Facilitating knowledge exchange continues to be a key objective of the ICA. To maintain the momentum of the Caribbean ICT Roundtable, 6 new online discussion groups (Dgroups) are being set up, based on discussion topics agreed upon at the Roundtable. Several participants volunteered to chair the new Dgroups, facilitating the discussions around the specific themes.

Prior to the Caribbean ICT Roundtable, an online discussion group was launched to give participants a chance to introduce themselves and discuss their expectations and ideas for the roundtable. The Dgroup is still in use after the event, as a means to disseminate general related information and continue the dialogue on regional ICT projects and programs.

A Dgroup for the Southern Cone also exists to support that region's exchange of ideas. Positive feedback from participants and funding offers from donors will ensure the continued use of these important communication tools.

For additional information see:
www.Dgroups.org/groups/icacaribbean,
www.Dgroups.org/groups/icasur

Hemispheric Advisory Board Meets

November 21-22, the ICA Hemispheric Advisory Board (HAB) met for the second time. The Advisory Board includes digital pioneers active in ICT for development in the Americas, representing the private sector, government, educational institutions, and civil society in the hemisphere. South America, Central America, North America, and the Caribbean are reflected in the Board membership.

Connecting People.
Connecting Ideas.
Connecting the Americas.

About ICA

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The Advisory Board supports, on an ongoing basis, the strategic vision of the ICA, and provides guidance on program development. The HAB also identifies collaborative partnerships, fundraising and contributions with other constituencies; acts as spokesperson / mentor for change within their regions; and participates in key ICA events.

The next meeting of the Hemispheric Advisory Board is scheduled for June 2003, in Brazil.

Sharing 'Connecting Canadians' Experience

The HAB meetings were prefaced by a "Connectivity Tour: Closing the Digital Divide", coordinated by Industry Canada's Office of International Partnerships. Participants visited Industry Canada's leading innovative connectivity initiatives, including; a SchoolNet-connected school, the Telesat facilities for a demonstration of teleconferencing to remote/rural communities, the Computers for Schools Facility, a Smart Communities Program (OCRI/City of Ottawa), and learned about the Government-on-line Initiative.

Feedback from participants was very positive, with the key lesson learned being that the people (especially youth), and not the technology, are the key enablers of change.

For more information see the Media release:
http://www.icamericas.net/index_e.html

Current Projects & Case Studies

- Case Study of Computers for Schools in Colombia
- Case Study of a Universal Access Program in Costa Rica (Comunicacion sin fronteras)
- Profile of Community Telecentres Network in Chile (El Encuentro)
- Regional Telecentres project (somos@telecentros)
- Feasibility Analysis of Wireless Technologies in Low Teledensity Areas

Suggestions for additional case studies are always welcome. If you have a suggestion for a case study that would document best practices in the application of information and communication technologies for development, contact ica@icamericas.net

Stay tuned, because the New Year will bring many exciting new project and case study announcements!

Regional Consultations - Next stop, Central America

Following the success of the March-Southern Cone meeting and the Caribbean Roundtable in October, planning for the next regional event has begun. Central America, including Mexico is the region of focus, tentatively in March or April 2003. For more information contact lbarnola@icamericas.net