

## CARICAD's Transition to Remote Work During COVID-19

**By Devon Rowe**  
**Executive Director of CARICAD**

**T**he Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) was established by a decision of the CARICOM Heads of Government and became operational in 1980. CARICAD plays a critical role in supporting the process of regional integration by providing technical assistance to 17 Member States.

CARICAD, since 2016, has been making a deliberate attempt to increase its use of cost-effective electronic means to deliver services to its clients. The main drivers for the continuing transformation efforts were declining resources and the desire to increase output to meet the needs of Member States. In addition, there was a need to increase outreach and access to an ever-widening client base. CARICAD also delivers technical assignments with the assistance of consultants and consequently sought new means through which greater collaboration could be achieved.

CARICAD recognised the need to have a greater impact on leadership in public service. Consequently, in 2016, the Centre, following approval by the Board, began the process of planning the incorporation of the Caribbean Leadership Project (CLP) into core operations. The seven-year CLP funded by the Canadian Government was absorbed when it came to an end in July 2019. Over the life of the Project, useful products and tools were created and approximately 300 regional participants were trained. It was recognised that despite the acquisition of the assets of the CLP, the demand for ongoing leadership development required new methods of cost-effective outreach and access as the in-person (face-to-face) approach would not be affordable. A business plan was developed, demand and options evaluated, and programmes pivoted to virtual delivery consistent with the strategic focus of CARICAD.



**Devon Rowe Executive Director  
of CARICAD**

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# CARICAD's Transition to Remote Work During COVID-19

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**CARICAD's Executive Director Devon Rowe with former CDEMA Executive Director Ronald Jackson at the signing of an MOU.**

CARICAD had previously leveraged a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) to obtain periodic ICT services. In addition, a partnership with the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) offered the opportunity to receive technical analysis and advice on potential options to pursue for future CARICAD projects.

The advice suggested, among other things, the use of 'cloud solutions' for improved efficiency and effectiveness. That would provide CARICAD with an opportunity to step back from the looming expense of file servers which were in urgent need of replacement.

The imminent technology improvement meant that most of the CARICAD team could now be located and working from almost anywhere. The development and approval of a new Remote Work Policy was therefore seen as an essential contributor to regulate working arrangements for staff who would not be physically present at the Headquarters in Barbados.

Budgetary provisions were made in 2019/20 and approved by the Board for the acquisition of new technology aids to buttress the resources at the Centre. Enhancement of existing skills at CARICAD was also required and changes were made to staff responsibilities to facilitate the new way of working.

The CARICAD team travels to various assignments across the Caribbean and monitoring the dynamics of the regional and international developments is important. On January 22, 2020, CARICAD began to pay much closer attention to developments associated with the Coronavirus. The extreme steps being taken by China and memories of SARS in 2003 raised fears of the virus travelling to the Caribbean. Later in January 2020, Canada identified the first case of coronavirus. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), WHO's highest level of alarm, further indicating the seriousness of the virus.

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On March 8, 2020, CARICAD joined the Barbados Vocational Training Board, a partner organisation, to jointly celebrate 40 years of work at a church service. At the same time, the IMF, ECCB, AMAZON, GOOGLE and other major entities were restricting travel of their staff. The Tokyo Olympics were also rescheduled.

In the days immediately following the church service, the Chairman, Mr. Konata Lee and all CARICAD staff (including remote staff) met at a prior scheduled meeting to determine a set of next steps regarding the strategic activities of CARICAD. Mr. Lee had traveled to Barbados to participate in the anniversary service. The uncertainties associated with the Coronavirus were identified as the main risk to deliver on plans. Shortly afterwards, on March 11 the world was placed on enhanced alert when the WHO declared a global pandemic.

By the end of March, several countries had closed their borders and commercial air travel was grinding to a halt. While countries struggled to address the crisis, CARICAD considered how to continue providing value to the Member States. Among the elements considered and ultimately delivered were suggestions on how to develop remote work policy, topic-relevant webinars, the development of a Business Continuity Plan Template for COVID-19 and the finalisation of a COVID-19 sensitive hurricane recovery guide template.

Fortunately, CARICAD was able to pivot to remote work for all staff members using the remote policy that was already in place. The internal experience on remote work was compared with information available from other sources. The analysis offered perspectives and discussion points that supported our full-blown remote work experience and operations when the government ordered the shutdown.

As far as possible, the jobs of all staff members were converted to digital delivery. In addition, the proactive investment in ICT allowed the staff to remain in contact through cloud access to productivity tools and data storage. Preparatory sessions were held to test new digital tools, familiarise staff in their use, and to further explore and explain the capabilities of other digital tools in our possession. Delivery of technical assignments shifted to virtual means and new methods of interaction and execution were developed.

The negative effects of COVID-19 on the operations of CARICAD were significantly reduced because our conversion to digital operations were far advanced by the time remote work became necessary. COVID-19, instead, acted as an accelerant for work that was already underway.

Looking back at the experience it can be successfully argued that CARICAD's strategy to increase the use of digital tools, the associated improvement of human resource policies and competent, motivated staff were the main reasons the Centre did not suffer significant disruption. The actions of the Centre proved that cost-effective decisions can be made to deliver value, and, in our case, we were able to address the priority areas of access, outreach and collaboration.



**Chairman, Mr. Konata Lee traveled to Barbados to participate in the anniversary service.**

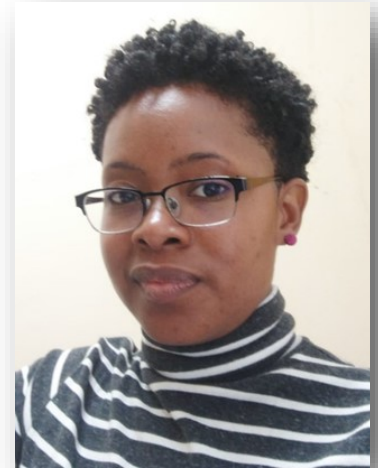


# Technology at the Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB): In Spite of, Influenced by, and Beyond COVID-19

**By Janelle S. Harewood**

**Systems Network Administrator of the Barbados Vocational Training Board**

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic has arguably been the most disruptive occurrence of this working generation, most notably because of sickness and death but also heralding simultaneous recessions across the globe, unprecedented levels of unemployment, shuttering several businesses permanently, and disrupting the educational plans of many. Let us think, has it been all bad news for organisations? If we look at the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, can we find any good in the resiliency of those organisations willing to embrace major change in their day-to-day procedures? Let's examine the technological impact of this major event of 2020 on one local, longstanding training institution; the implications for its survival and the conditions necessary for it to thrive.



**Janelle S. Harewood**

The Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB) is a training institution established in 1979 with an emphasis on vocational education and training. The BVTB aims to produce graduates who are capable on *Day One* in whatever trade they chose to learn; and this applies whether on the job or in a future classroom with the intention of furthering their education.

**BVTB Vision:** *To be a vocational training institution delivering world-class programmes driven by a customer-focused commitment to excellence.*

**BVTB Mission:** *Provide globally-recognised vocational training that empowers graduates to perform competently in the marketplace.*

The BVTB curricula are generally very hands-on as opposed to the alternative approach where much of the emphasis is on theory with the expectation of learning the practical aspects of the trade on the job. The full-time Skills Training Programme has twenty-nine (29) classes across twenty-four (24) trades; in the part-time Evening Programme there are currently thirty-three (33) courses across twenty-two (22) trade areas; and in the Apprenticeship Programme we oversee training in twelve (12) trades. Training in the Skills Training Programme and Evening Programme is currently conducted at six (6) locations across the island, while staff at the Administrative locations coordinate the teaching and management of students in all programmes.

The combination of the hands-on training requirement at the multiple teaching locations and in some cases multiple instructors for the same trade, while providing some benefits for the learner, could prove challenging from an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) perspective. Add to that multiple administration locations and you can see how the coordination of a smooth ICT experience could be, let's say, a challenging exercise. This is especially so in 2020 – the year the COVID-19 pandemic turned everything on its head.

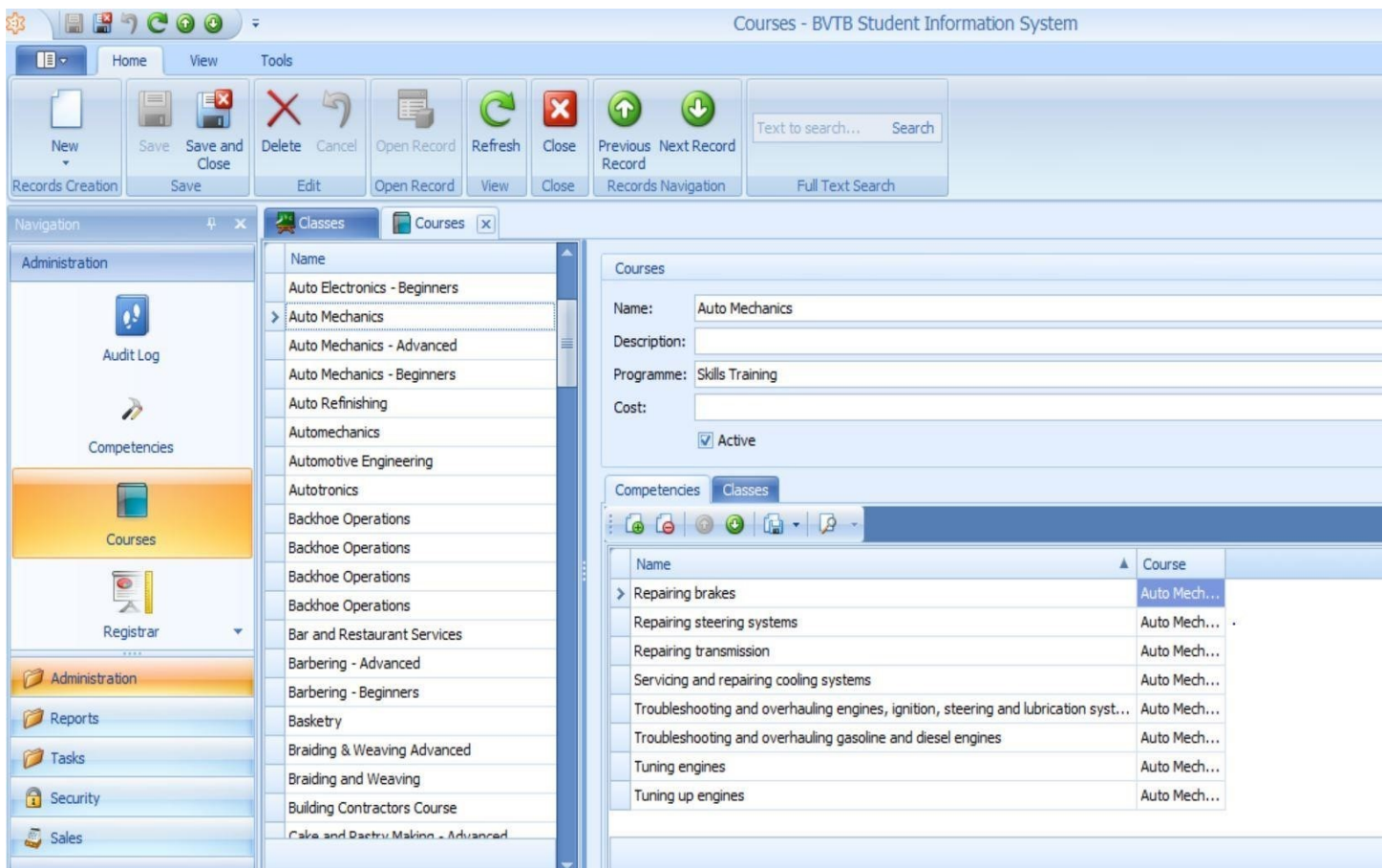
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# Technology at the Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB): In Spite of, Influenced by, and Beyond COVID-19

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## Technology Use at the BVTB

Technology has been playing an increasingly significant role in the operations and administration of the BVTB. Training locations are physically separated and so the BVTB has relied for some time on the use of a Wide Area Network (WAN) to make communication and the exchange of information easier. The WAN connects all the locations so that they appear to be on the same network; this means calls and files can be transferred seamlessly and use the same shared spaces on physical and virtual servers. In addition to the private WAN, the BVTB is also a node on the Barbados Government WAN between its Ministries, Departments, and Agencies and this offers additional benefit. The use of office productivity software for email, word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations using multimedia projectors is rather commonplace now throughout most organisations and the BVTB is no different. The Board also utilises a Student Information Management System which tracks students from application to graduation, and a Human Resources Management System which records staff information and allows remote access by all staff to their information and facilitates leave requests. The time and attendance system for staff is electronic and biometric, utilising scans of fingers or hands to record attendance.



**BVTB Student Information Management System**

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In the training arena, technology has also been increasingly available at the BVTB, but it is not always utilised to the same degree as within the administrative sphere. Each training location has access to the Internet, computers and projection equipment for the use of video demonstration and the majority of locations have a purpose-built Resource Centre where classes can allow each student access to a computer for research or practical purposes. The students of all full-time courses are also formally introduced to computer usage as part of their curriculum.

Certain classes also utilise trade-specific software to aid in teaching, such as automotive databases in the Auto trades, but for the majority of classes, the use of the projector to present the occasional online video is the extent of the integration of technology. Having said that, it must be recognised that in a technical setting, unless instructors are specifically instructed and trained to include more technological teaching methods, they will consider it easier to continue teaching the way they have done in the past.



**Resource Centre at C. Lomer Alleyne Training Centre**

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## **Along Came a Pandemic**

In March 2020, as official shutdown loomed for Barbados due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we would all be forbidden to leave home on most days. It quickly became apparent that while the use of some technology all along had certainly been useful and commendable, it was only possible thus far by having physical contact with devices located on BVTB premises. The small I.T. department of the BVTB therefore set about making the required configuration changes to multiple servers, firewalls, and mobile devices to ensure that the most critical staff could work from home and had access to their files. The use of virtual meeting software, and electronic documents and signatures became more widely adopted and administrative functions continued without major interruption.

There was a contrast in the area of training because almost all classes were brought to a halt. There were a few classes which were technology-based or had a broader base of theory involved, and those instructors were able to complete some requirements using meeting software. However, for the most part it was impossible to continue the courses which had very technical elements such as auto-mechanics, carpentry, steel-bending and the like without face-to-face instruction. This was understandable given the limited use of available technology in the training arena.

This presents the BVTB with its greatest challenge as a vocational training institution – finding ways to impart technical knowledge in a remote setting. We have recently implemented a G Suite domain designed to facilitate remote learning through the Google suite of products. This involves issuing logon credentials to staff members and students in the Skills Training Programme. G Suite comprises several Google products such as:

**Gmail** – School-wide email used to exchange secure emails.

**Drive** – Store and organise assignments, documents, or class curriculum securely and access them from any device.

**Classroom** – Simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignments in a paperless way.

**Google Meet** – Connect with students virtually through secure video calls and messaging to keep learning going outside of school.

**Docs, Sheets and Slides** – Collaborate with students in real time on documents, spreadsheets, and presentations.

**Forms** – Create forms, quizzes, and surveys to collect and analyse responses.

**Jamboard** – Sketch and collaborate on an interactive canvas – Google's cloud-based smartboard, on the computer, phone, or tablet.

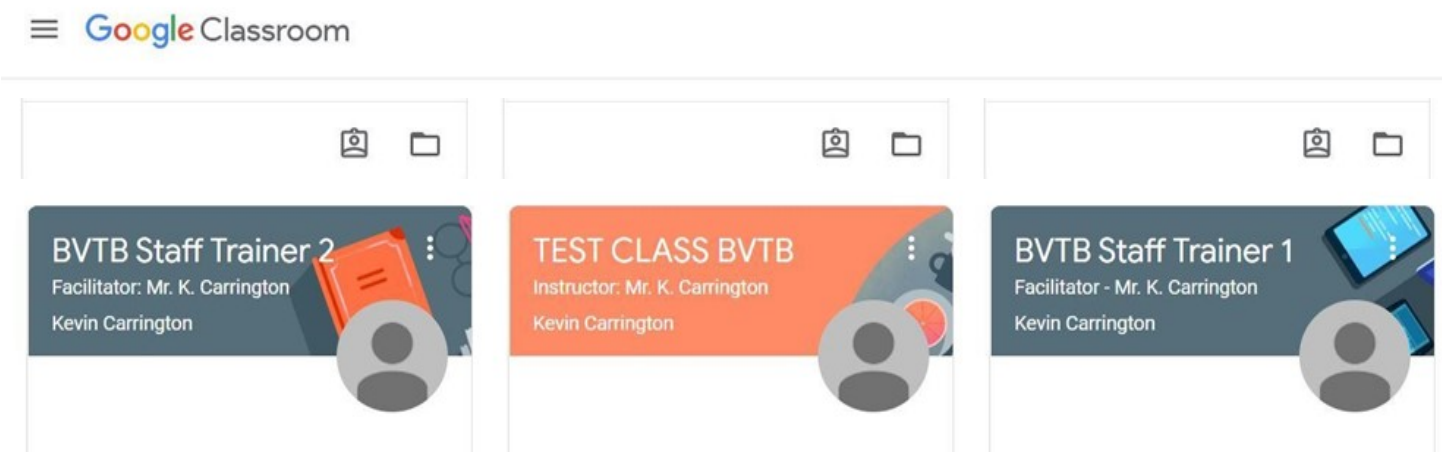
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The Ministry of Education, Technical and Vocational Training (METVT in Barbados) has agreed to assist in training the teaching staff to utilise G Suite and has held multiple training sessions. There is a high level of enthusiasm for the use of this technology. The objective is to encourage greater use of technology in the classroom, but also to prepare for any future situation where remote learning must be employed.



## **Beyond 2020**

In the area of administration, the intention is to increase the use of technology as a means of replacing manual and paper-based procedures. This is especially true in areas such as file and records management, accounting, and course management. One major goal is the acquisition of a document or content management system and associated hardware to convert past and current records to electronic format. There is also an intention to utilise modern technology to improve the network security and Disaster Management systems.

The solution to the challenge of teaching technical trades remotely remains high on the agenda. The first task is the acquisition of suitable technology for classroom management and instruction including the G Suite products, and the successful training of staff to be competent and enthusiastic about its use. The more daunting task is in curriculum reform to identify those areas where the use of technology can be substituted to reasonably satisfy the criteria for successful completion of a course.

Increasing the use of technology in technical training courses at the BVTB is a stated goal in the current Strategic Plan which was in place prior to the arrival of COVID-19. As the head of the responsible department, I can say that while finding technological assists for administrative functions and office-type courses is quite a simple task, there does not seem to be the same availability in the area of hands-on trades.

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However, as necessity remains the mother of invention, I am confident that there will be additional innovation post-COVID-19 in this arena. I refer to the creation of electronic or online simulators, by which a student may manipulate a virtual tool, be it a hammer, saw, trowel, or scissors to modify a virtual piece of wood, steel, brick, or any other material using the click of a mouse. This would be enhanced greatly were it to include the use of Virtual Reality where the student utilises a visual aid and tactical gloves to 'feel' the nuts tightening in the virtual engine as they practiced. This type of technology would represent the gold standard in remote learning and would be expensive whenever available ... but one can certainly dream. Until then, I'm sure with 3D printing becoming more commonplace, we should be looking forward to affordably printed realistic miniature tools, equipment, and mock-ups of engines, toilet tanks, and circuit breakers for students to practice on at home with guidance from instructors in an online classroom setting.

In the medium term, it would be of great benefit if multiple modular, detailed pre-recorded videos for each trade could be created so that students can watch them in the online classroom setting and have a visual reinforcement of what is outlined in the theory. It would be ideal for these videos to portray their course instructor, or a local instructor from another institution if videos will be shared among local vocational institutions. This may make them more relatable to the student.

In the short term, the availability of mobile devices to students and instructors, preferably laptops or large tablets with keyboards, is essential to the advancement of our technological stance within training at the BVTB. This would enable BVTB staff and students to utilise the G Suite products to their fullest extent and make their use a normal aspect of training even while face-to-face instruction is ongoing, so that if training at any time needs to be fully online there would be very little adjustment required by the instructor and students.

## **The New Normal...**

The achievement of any good outcomes from this disruptive pandemic requires a willingness to change. From a technical standpoint there are few administrative tasks that cannot now be undertaken online and remotely. However, the BVTB must be willing to adopt new procedures to facilitate this. Such changes will require transformational leadership at several levels. Leaders who can inspire those in the organisation to embrace progress, even in the face of the teething problems that are inevitably experienced in any major procedural change. Success is also dependent upon having a talented, committed, reliable team determined to make sure the work is done to a high standard whether they are physically present or not. The BVTB has several dedicated staff, however, success requires more than willingness and effort. Sometimes the missing element is adequate financial resources.

Technological solutions are not cheap, especially if they are to be constructed correctly and securely, and the money is not always available to be spent in this area. Fortunately, there are often many open-source (non-proprietary) solutions that can serve as alternatives to some extent.

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# Technology at the Barbados Vocational Training Board (BVTB): In Spite of, Influenced by, and Beyond COVID-19

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*As unpredictable as this year has been, what would have been the technological outlook of the BVTB at the end of a 2020 with no major disruptions?*

As unpredictable as this year has been, what would have been the technological outlook of the BVTB at the end of a 2020 with no major disruptions? Would we have been content to continue as we were, with only the occasional use of technology in training as the need arose? Upon examination of the recent expansion into technology to assist with remote work and learning, the BVTB has invented no new wheels, nor have we innovated beyond the point of other schools. Much of this technology has been around for some time but was optional; not deemed as necessary to accomplish the required tasks, and certainly not considered worth the money and extra effort to learn and become proficient in its use, nor to completely redesign business processes and teaching curricula and methods. The BVTB is not alone in this way of operating; far from it, prior to the forced distancing caused by the COVID-19 pandemic we utilised technology to a greater extent than many training institutions in Barbados. However, a certain complacency does creep into day-to-day procedures and it is only when forced to change that a greater use of technology is embraced and made a priority.

In the future, the year 2020 will represent not only grief but for a long time will be regarded as the year that is representative of the greatest leaps and bounds in the adoption of technology. Those organisations that fail to recognise this will not survive or thrive as they will no longer be able to compete against those that took the necessary steps. The same is true in the educational arena. The pandemic has for a short time levelled the playing field within education in Barbados and the institutions that innovate the most and the quickest will have the most to offer when we come out on the other side. This will increase their desirability to the student population for which they all compete and will ensure their rise to the top of the academic and vocational arenas.

***Janelle S. Harewood is the Systems Network Administrator of the Barbados Vocational Training Board and has been for the past 14 years. She spends her days fighting technology fires, and charting the course for future ICT expansion in a way that would be meaningful to all who use and benefit from it.***

***She is an ICT professional with 18 years' experience in designing, building and managing networks, and computer systems administration. Her educational background includes a BSc. Computer Science and Management, an MSc. Computer Systems Security, and several industry certifications in the field of networking and ICT security which remains her area of passion.***

# Technology – CARICAD's Perspective from the Implementation Guide - Charter for Caribbean Public Services - 2015

by Franklyn Michael – Programme Specialist, CARICAD

**M**odern technology is contributing significantly to development and service improvement globally. In that regard the CARICOM Heads of Government mandated the development of the CARICOM ICT 4 D Strategy in 2009. It was approved in 2011. The significance of technology is reflected in the brief description of the Strategy provided by the CARICOM Secretariat on its website:

*The focus of the strategy is on ICT as an instrument for strengthened connectivity and development to foster greater prosperity and social transformation between and among member states, as well as the rest of the world.*

*In CARICOM, there is a continuing focus on mainstreaming ICT activities and developments to effectively contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to income poverty reduction, education, and health, environment and gender equity through:*

- *Creating economic opportunities and contributing to poverty reduction*
- *Managing the processes of providing basic services (e.g. healthcare, education) at lower cost and with greater coverage*
- *Facilitating access to information and the involvement of regional organisations and stakeholders through greater transparency and support to networking at every stage; and*
- *Enhancing the capacity to measure, monitor and report progress on the goals and strategies.*

## **Application and**

## **Implementation**

*"Recognising that modern technologies have enabled new methods of engagement, knowledge dissemination, participation and consultation. Further recognising the potential of those technologies to reduce inequalities in access to information and services and; recalling the commitments made under the CARICOM Charter for Civil Society, states undertake to optimise their use of technologies to promote openness and accountability, to foster continuously greater cost-effectiveness in their operations, ensure responsiveness to the needs of people as consumers of in the states' delivery of goods and services and ensure that the public services are adaptive and innovative as the societies they serve develop and evolve.*

*Subscribing states further commit to using all appropriate technological means to establish ongoing systems of consultation which further the participation of people in democratic processes especially the development of policies that directly impact on their lives and well-being."*

-- CARICAD

# CARICAD Committed to Strategic Partnerships

by Franklyn Michael – Programme Specialist, CARICAD

**T**his October 2020 issue of the CARICAD Horizon newsletter demonstrates CARICAD's commitment to strategic partnerships. There are articles from the Barbados Vocational Training Board and the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF).

CARICAD has a long history of strategic partnerships. Strategic Partnerships are a means of promoting, supporting and engaging in collaborative activities for the benefit of the stakeholders in CARICAD member states. The CARICAD 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Magazine identified almost twenty (20) entities as strategic partners. Many of those agencies and institutions are still regarded as partners although collaborative action might have waned in recent years.

CARICAD has made an even more determined effort to establish or rekindle strategic partnerships during the last five years and intensify the level of formality. In that regard, Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's) have been signed with the following partners:

The Latin American Centre for Development Administration	<b>CLAD</b>
The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency	<b>CDEMA</b>
The University of the West Indies – St Augustine Campus	<b>UWI</b>
The University of the West Indies – Cave Hill Campus	
The Central American Institute for Public Administration	<b>ICAP</b>
The Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility	<b>CCRIF</b>

CARICAD anticipates signing an MOU with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) to formalise a long-established, mutually beneficial institutional relationship. CARICAD has placed emphasis on formalising its strategic partnerships in MOUs for several reasons:

- The institutions maintain the partnership even when there are changes of personnel in either or both of the organisations
- A strategic framework is established which describes the Purpose, Goals, Objectives and responsibilities of the partners. That clarity is essential for proper coordination
- The leadership and internal chain of command for implementation, is assured
- The commitments and obligations are identified and agreed to
- Each organisation shares from its own strengths
- Potential conflicts over Mandates are avoided
- Monitoring of progress and sharing of information become routine
- There is a rational basis for promoting an equitable sharing of work
- Human and financial resources will be allocated for agreed activities
- Partners learn from each other and build capacity in new areas
- The partners recognise the value of each other's contribution
- Extension of the agreement once established, is straightforward

***'Sticks in a bundle are unbreakable'***

- African Proverb

CARICAD is convinced that the existing strategic partnerships have produced value for our member states and we will seek to expand the partnerships where the benefits of doing so, can be clearly determined.



# CARICAD & UNDESA Rekindle Partnership

by Franklyn Michael – Programme Specialist, CARICAD

**C**ARICAD has re-established its strategic partnership with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). UNDESA describes itself as:

*A vital interface between global policies and national action in the economic, social and environmental spheres. Rooted in the United Nations Charter and guided by the universal and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global agreements, UNDESA responds to the needs and priorities of the global community. UNDESA is the place in the UN system where every Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) finds a home and where all stakeholders can do their part to leave no one behind. UNDESA has been helping countries to find common ground on sustainable development, population, social inclusion, financing for development and many other issues. From the Earth Summit's Agenda 21 to Rio+20 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNDESA has promoted and supported international cooperation for sustainable development and helped countries as they translate global commitments into national policies and actions. UNDESA assists Member States in preparing their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

The Executive Director of CARICAD Mr. Devon Rowe, Ms. Adriana Alberti and Mr. Jonas Rabinovitch of UNDESA have been holding discussions aimed at re-establishing what they all agree, was a very successful partnership. A partnership that produced value for CARICAD member states for 20 years. The partnership will be formalised with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). An online meeting between teams from CARICAD and UNDESA was held on Thursday, October 1, 2020. In that meeting it was agreed that in the short-term, the focus of joint efforts will be an initiative aimed at *Innovation in Public Service Delivery for the Sustainable Development Goals*. UNDESA has explained that:

*The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) embody the strategic vision and aspirations of all countries for the future of Development. Its implementation will require comprehensive actions at various levels, as indicated in General Assembly Resolution 70/1 on "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Innovation and public service delivery has been consistently acknowledged by the UN Member States as a key pillar for development."*

*The international community highlighted public service delivery as an integral component of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals; 13 Goals have content related to public service delivery. Among 169 targets, there are 59 targets (35%) related to public service delivery. Among 230 indicators, 66 of them (29%) require some specific public service to be delivered by public institutions. The public sector is the world's largest service provider. However, the bottom 20% remain typically marginalised, without access to the formal economy and to the formal market for basic services.*

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# CARICAD & UNDESA Rekindle Partnership

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The Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of UNDESA has prepared a set of comprehensive training materials that aim to facilitate and enable government officials to run training workshops on strengthening capacity for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The following has been agreed to by CARICAD and UNDESA as the way forward with regard to promoting *Innovation in Public Service Delivery for the Sustainable Development Goals among CARICAD member states*.

- UNDESA and CARICAD will plan a series of training webinar sessions. The objective is to contribute towards capacity development and peer-to-peer learning of senior government officials with emphasis on innovation, digital government and changing mindsets for public service delivery. The sessions will take place early in 2021
- Other key actors in the Region such as the CARICOM Secretariat and Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) will also be engaged in the initiative
- The main target audience will be senior decision-makers representing a cross-section from various governments in the Region – Office of Prime Minister, Ministry of Finance, other line Ministers considered strategic for innovation, digital government and public service delivery
- Both planners/implementers and Ministers will be debriefed about this capacity development activity
- The draft Toolkit on Innovation and Digital Government for Public Service Delivery developed by UNDESA will be jointly

reviewed prior to wider dissemination

- The partners will adapt a five-day face-to-face course for an Online Webinar Learning event and include pre-existing CARICAD tools such as the Leadership Development Programme

UNDESA will prepare a survey to be reviewed by CARICAD. The survey will support the intention to make the content of all materials as relevant as possible for training, as each Caribbean country is at a different stage of development concerning innovation, digital government and public service delivery. Participants will be asked to come to the workshop with specific objectives they wish to achieve so that they work on deliverables during the training.

UNDESA released a new publication on Tuesday, October, 6, 2020. The Compendium of Digital Government Initiatives in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic 2020, prepared by the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of UNDESA. The compendium aims to capture emerging trends in digital responses of UN Member States against the COVID-19 pandemic, and provides a preliminary analysis of their main features. These cases were shared for exchange of information so that Member States can learn from each other and possibly create new partnerships. The compendium lists selected initiatives according to major categories of action areas of:

1. Information sharing
2. E-participation
3. E-Health
4. E-business
5. Contact tracing
6. Social distancing and virus tracking
7. Working and learning from home
8. Digital policy
9. Partnerships

The Compendium is available at [publicadministration.un.org](http://publicadministration.un.org)

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# CARICAD & UNDESA Rekindle Partnership

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CARICAD and UNDESA have had an enduring partnership for almost 20 years. In that time the two entities successfully completed several important regional initiatives. UNDESA provided the financial resources to enable CARICAD to develop the CARICOM E-Government Strategy between 2008 and 2020. The strategy was approved by the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) in February 2010 and subsequently approved by the Community Council.

Caribbean E-Government Technical and Advisory Facility (TASF) was inaugurated on October 1, 2005 with funding support from UNDESA. UNDESA and the Government of Italy had collaborated with CARICAD during the consultations. The ultimate objective of the project was better government that was more responsive in meeting the needs of the people of the region.

Another major initiative was the project "Support to ICT Strategic Planning in the Caribbean Parliaments." The project, funded by the European Union, was intended to promote transparency, accountability, democratic participation and good governance in the Caribbean by empowering the Parliaments of this region to better fulfil their democratic functions and contribute to their institutional strengthening through ICT. A sum of US\$225,000 was allocated for the project. The Project was funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDESA through the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament in partnership with CARICAD. The project was launched at a regional workshop in Barbados in September 2010, and was completed in 2012.

The UNDESA, through the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, in partnership with CARICAD, assisted the Legislatures of 12 countries in the Caribbean to achieve the following results:

- A clear and concise Vision Statement on ICT in parliament developed and owned by each parliament of the Caribbean region
- A comprehensive Strategic Plan developed and owned by each parliament that links and makes operational the regional and global frameworks
- A well formulated development programme for ICT in Parliament (for each parliament) that will include all the projects that are prioritised and planned
- The establishment of a community of practice of ICT strategic planners in parliamentary administrations

The beneficiary countries were Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

Additionally, CARICAD and UNDESA explored the prospects for a Caribbean Public Service Awards scheme that would be aligned with the UN Public Service awards programme.

CARICAD and UNDESA cooperated in the development of the global Electronic and Mobile Government Knowledge Repository (emGKR). That project sought to develop the global repository for e/mGovernment. CARICAD worked with UNDESA to establish the Caribbean presence on the global repository portal.

UNDESA has provided a globally accessible platform for the publication of documents for partners such as CARICAD.

# 'Insurance: A Necessary Evil in the Face of a Changing Climate'

**Adapted from a paper presented by Mr. Isaac Anthony, CEO, CCRIF SPC at the Government of Barbados/IDB – Insurance Colloquium Insurance in the Age of Climate Change held in Barbados November 5, 2019**

**T**oday, more than ever before, a critical look at insurance within the context of disaster risk financing is timely, poignant, relevant and necessary given the realities we are faced with – Climate Change and the impacts of natural disasters on our people, infrastructure, ecosystems and economic growth prospects. The impact of Climate Change is a global phenomenon that disproportionately affects the lives and livelihoods of persons in developing countries, especially small island and coastal states, and it will require a mix of partnerships, resources and commitment to address the issues at the regional, country, community and individual levels. As leaders, our focus must be on people and ensuring that we strategically engage in actions that put people at the centre of development so that *'no one is left behind'*.

Let me begin by painting a picture: "The island is devastated, beyond imagination, every major building has been destroyed or has suffered structural damage; many lives have been lost and the death toll is expected to rise; a 32-year-old pregnant woman died when a 12-metre palm tree fell into her home; likewise a 32-year-old man died after battering waves engulfed a kiosk on the coast; agricultural crops have been destroyed, as well as fishing boats and infrastructure...". This picture is associated with Hurricane Ivan in 2004 and primarily the impacts on the island of Grenada. But the truth is, it could easily be Dominica in 2017, the British Virgin Islands in 2017 and more recently the islands of Abaco and Grand Bahama in 2019.

Whilst the physical, social and psychological impacts of disasters today are not dissimilar to Grenada in 2004, there are some key policy changes that the region has made to reduce the impacts of disasters, and vulnerability of our countries. Many of these changes are considered global best practice, for example, the approach to comprehensive disaster risk management as promoted by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), and disaster risk financing instruments that have been made available by CCRIF, the World Bank and the IDB for dealing with the aftermath of disasters.



**Property destruction in The Bahamas after the passage of Hurricane Dorian in 2019.**  
(Photograph provided by Father DeAngelo Bowe, Rector of the Holy Spirit Anglican Church in The Bahamas)

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# 'Insurance: A Necessary Evil in the Face of a Changing Climate'

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The impacts of Hurricane Ivan in 2004 brought into focus at the political level the need for quick liquidity following a natural disaster – to meet immediate needs of the population even before considerations of reconstruction and redevelopment. CCRIF and the introduction of parametric insurance in the Caribbean were born out of Hurricane Ivan. That one hurricane in 2004 resulted in two Caribbean nations – Grenada and the Cayman Islands – each suffering economic losses which totaled close to 200 per cent of their annual GDP; and a further seven countries were also severely impacted. Regional losses totaled over US\$6 billion. Again, these losses are not dissimilar to those from Hurricanes Irma and Maria which resulted in damage and loss being estimated at US\$130 billion and which affected 18 countries, including CARICOM member countries. Indeed, the catastrophic events of 2017 resulted in CARICOM declaring its ambition to become the first climate-resilient zone in the world.

But there is a reason that this paper opened with a discussion on Hurricane Ivan. This is because, following Ivan, CARICOM Heads of Government approached the World Bank for assistance to design and implement a cost-effective risk financing programme for its member governments. This marked the beginning of what would become the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility, now CCRIF SPC – the world's first multi-country risk pool based on parametric insurance. The selection of a parametric insurance instrument as the basis for CCRIF policies was largely driven by the fact that parametric insurance is generally less expensive than an equivalent traditional indemnity insurance product as it does not require a loss assessment procedure after a disaster, allowing for claims to be settled quickly and in the case of CCRIF, within 14 days of an event. This is an important feature considering the urgent need for liquidity after a

catastrophic event.

CCRIF limits the financial impact of devastating hurricanes, earthquakes and excess rainfall events by quickly providing financial liquidity when a policy is triggered. CCRIF currently offers four parametric insurance products – for tropical cyclones (based on wind and storm surge), earthquakes, excess rainfall (based on rainfall) and for fisheries – the latter was launched in July 2019 in two member countries – Grenada and Saint Lucia. CCRIF currently is in the process of developing products for agriculture and flooding (run-off). Countries are also requesting that CCRIF considers providing parametric insurance coverage for government assets such as building stocks (e.g. hospitals and schools) – as well as housing stocks.

CCRIF has 22 members – six more than the original 16 governments that joined in 2017 – three from Central America and 19 from the Caribbean.

CCRIF is a captive insurance company because of the nature of the service it provides and the insurance products that it sells, which attract risks that are priced too high by the traditional market. CCRIF therefore provides a bespoke insurance solution that enables the Facility to provide unique and tailored insurance/coverage that is not readily available in the commercial market. Another characteristic of a captive is that it is able to achieve lower premiums by retaining a portion of the risk while maintaining a claims-paying capacity that is better than the industry average. This is because CCRIF is able to directly access the reinsurance market as a captive and coverage can be made available at the lowest possible price because of risk pooling. Risk pooling makes the overall risk more stable and therefore more attractive to the reinsurance market, thereby reducing the cost of reinsurance.

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# 'Insurance: A Necessary Evil in the Face of a Changing Climate'

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Empirical evidence based on studies undertaken by the World Bank illustrates that insurance obtained through CCRIF could be as low as half the cost of coverage a member country could obtain on its own.

CCRIF has demonstrated that catastrophe risk insurance can effectively provide a level of financial protection for countries vulnerable to natural disasters. In fact, between its launch in 2007 and up to the end of 2019, CCRIF made 41 payouts totaling US\$152 million to 13 member governments. Payout amounts increase with the level of modelled loss, up to a pre-defined coverage limit of up to US\$150 million. CCRIF was never set up to cover all the losses on the ground.

So while these payouts are relatively small compared to the overwhelming cost of rebuilding, all recipient governments have expressed appreciation for the rapid infusion of liquidity, which they are able to use to address immediate priorities and to support the vulnerable.

CCRIF payouts have benefitted over 2.5 million persons in the Caribbean and Central America. Use of payouts has included providing food, shelter and medicine for affected persons; stabilizing drinking water plants; providing building materials for persons to repair their homes; repairing critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges and schools; payment of government salaries; and support for the agriculture sector; among others. It is important to note that some countries have used portions of their payouts for disaster mitigation – for example by building back better as was the case in the Turks and Caicos Islands where their CCRIF payout following Hurricane Irma in 2017 was used to reconstruct schools across the island to be able

to withstand future tropical cyclones.

CCRIF is playing a part in closing the insurance penetration gap. In the Caribbean, it is estimated that indemnity insurance used to hedge the immediate impacts/direct losses from natural disasters is only about three to five per cent, compared to developed countries, in which that figure is more than 40 per cent.

It is clear that the absence of insurance will have negative consequences for the scale and duration of the economic impacts of disasters. The importance of catastrophe risk insurance in the face of a changing climate cannot be

***CCRIF has demonstrated that catastrophe risk insurance can effectively provide a level of financial protection for countries vulnerable to natural disasters***

overstated and is supported by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), G7 leaders and the Paris Agreement, all of which have established insurance as an acceptable climate

adaptative instrument. Insurance therefore must be an essential component within governments' fiscal policy frameworks and an important tool of Climate Change adaptation as countries strive to advance the sustainability agenda.

CCRIF and the parametric insurance products that it provides must not be seen in isolation from other disaster risk financing tools. Countries in the region need to take a more holistic approach to disaster risk financing and build a financial protection strategy that combines a number of risk financing instruments that address different layers or types of risk – incorporating instruments that support low and high probabilistic events as well as those that address both low or high severity events – such as disaster reserve funds, contingent credit facilities, risk insurance, CAT bonds etc.

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# 'Insurance: A Necessary Evil in the Face of a Changing Climate'

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All these instruments have unique and distinct characteristics and are necessary to finance early response, recovery, and reconstruction needs while protecting a country's fiscal balance and preventing further disruptions caused by reallocations from other priorities (such as primary health care, education, national security, and social protection, among others).

Today in the Caribbean, a few countries such as Jamaica and Saint Lucia are putting in place disaster risk financing policies as a means of improving the understanding of the fiscal risks of natural disasters and recommending various risk financing tools and strategies to support meeting their targets for fiscal and debt sustainability and contributing to their development agenda.

Essentially, within the context of the range of DRF instruments, CCRIF, through its parametric insurance products, really is about:

- providing quick liquidity
- allowing governments to quickly support the most vulnerable in their population immediately after a disaster
- reducing budget volatility
- not increasing the debt stock of countries – parametric insurance will not result in an increase in debt stock as it is not a form of disaster relief as are credit facilities
- offering diverse products for a range of perils and economic sectors and industries,
- offering products and services not readily available in traditional insurance markets

But can CCRIF do more, especially in the face of a changing climate which no longer is a threat but which is already with us? Can CCRIF do more in an environment where insurance penetration is low and where the private insurance market is still behind in providing solutions that 'leave no one behind'?

Can CCRIF do more in an environment where there still exist pockets of poverty across our islands and where vulnerability is still high? In short, the answer is yes, and it lies in the notion of scaling up – scaling up CCRIF.

Scaling up CCRIF in the facing of a changing climate means:

- Enabling existing CCRIF members to increase coverage for the perils they are now covered for
- Adding new members to the Facility and risk pool as an expanded membership will expand the total level of coverage in the region and allow for further reduction in premium costs
- Adding products for additional perils such as flooding, and for ecosystem services such as shoreline protection provided by coral reefs and mangroves; making available coverage in key economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism; and focusing on key infrastructure such as housing stock, schools and hospitals – many of which are old and are susceptible not just to hydro-meteorological hazards but also to earthquakes
- Accessing additional capital and further strengthening partnerships with regional and international development partners
- Increasing access by vulnerable persons to microinsurance and promoting inclusive insurance
- Building the capacity of CCRIF as an organisation and its research and development potential

CCRIF will continue to work with countries and do its part in advancing the sustainability agenda of this region!

***(CCRIF is a strategic partner of CARICAD, formalised in an MOU agreed in 2019.)***

# CLDP Update

September 2020, like our hurricane season, was full of activities, as two leadership development programmes were launched. The Mid-Level Leadership Development Programme was launched on September 10, with 31 participants from seven member countries, and three participants from regional institutions. On September 15, CARICAD had the opportunity to renew its partnership with the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, in the delivery of its Emerging Leaders' Development Programme. This is the second intake for this programme, and is an integral part of the ECCB's succession planning strategy. As with the first intake in 2019, the current programme has 24 participants; the main change is that this programme will be delivered completely virtually.

As the region has experienced a number of general elections, and changes in governments, we hosted a webinar on Navigating Political Transitions, with guest presenter, Mrs. Arlene McComie, retired Permanent Secretary from the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. This webinar provided participants with useful tips on how to address the tasks and challenges inherent in political transitions.

Follow us on our social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) to get updates on our various programme offerings.

## Teleworking Policy

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated the implementation of remote working arrangements in most sectors in the Caribbean region. In most instances, arrangements and rules to govern the remote working arrangements have had to be created rapidly. However, the roll-out of remote working has made it clear that there is a great need for Governments and other organisations to develop comprehensive remote working policies to govern remote working arrangements, which will become more commonplace now and in the future.

To this end, the International Labour Office (ILO) has published, "Teleworking During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond – A Practical Guide" - [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms\\_751232.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_751232.pdf)

CARICAD supports the use of this guide to support the development of policies to support the smooth functioning of remote working arrangements, to support business continuity and organisational resilience. Care should be taken to ensure that policies are aligned to the relevant legal frameworks, such as civil service acts and staff orders, as well as to note relevant legal amendments, change management and stakeholder engagement that might be required to successfully develop and implement your policies.

We would love to hear of your experience in developing and implementing remote working.



# My Experience of the Mid-Level Leadership Development Programme

**By Kishann Cupid Braithwaite**  
**Employment Services Manager**  
**Department of Labour and Workforce Development,**  
**British Virgin Islands, Cohort 13 – Trendsetters**

*(shared at the Virtual Launch of Cohort 15 of the Mid-Level Leadership Development)*

**I**t is truly a pleasure and honour to be here with you today to share about the Mid-Level Leadership Development Programme and its impact on my development. Whether you are here because you acknowledged the need for leadership development due to personal and professional aspirations, or a supervisor recognised your leadership potential and nominated you for this opportunity, know that this experience will be worth your time and effort.



**Kishann Cupid Braithwaite**

It will not be an easy road having to juggle your personal and professional commitments, but it will be worth it!

When I started this journey late last year, I was very excited and grateful for the opportunity because I strongly believe that a good leader never stops learning and growing. Having a keen interest in the personal and professional development of those around me, I made the decision to transition to management five years ago.

However, I quickly learned that despite my best intentions, managing people would be one of my greatest challenges. I was drowning and I needed a lifeline. To be honest, I enrolled in this Programme with limited expectation. I did not fully understand how my life would be

transformed... but transformed it was. The experience allowed me to transition from a place of anxiety and defeat to a state of confidence and assurance that I am the leader I always imagined and that I am capable of effecting change in my team and organisation using the tools provided.

I, like many of you, simply wanted to be a better version of myself. I had a checklist of qualities I admired in persons in leadership roles.

Those traits included: The ability to stay level-headed in the midst of chaos and confusion, to formulate strategic and innovative solutions, to be firm yet fair, to be proactive and not reactive, to stay resolute in the face of opposition, to effectively lead a team of various personalities, to be inclusive and not divisive in decision-making, and the list goes on.

Participating in this Programme forces you to take a look at yourself by identifying and exploring your strengths and areas of improvement. The Programme provides you with an arsenal of useful tools that you can apply daily at work and other areas of your lives.

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# My Experience of the Mid-Level Leadership Development Programme

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The discussion board exercises and other assignments help to reinforce the concepts and provide an opportunity to really think about the process and how you can effect change while interacting and collaborating with colleagues from around the Region, and of course receiving constructive feedback from your facilitators and expert guest presenters. I believe the culmination of the aforementioned components of the Programme, along with my willingness to be pushed beyond my restrictive comfort zone through active engagement, weighed significantly on my outcome... and I believe it will do the same for you.

We need more transformational leaders to navigate uncharted waters and lead the Public Service, and by extension our respective countries, through this era of pandemics, and unprecedented natural disasters that threaten our well-being and quality of life. I believe this Programme creates such leaders. I applaud you for taking this pivotal step, and I trust that you will come out on the other side ready to confidently lead and contribute significantly in your respective areas and beyond.

In closing, I challenge each of you to:

1. Embrace this experience by not only attending the sessions, but being fully engaged through active participation in sessions and on the discussion board and as much as possible seek to complete your assignments in a timely manner;
2. Use every opportunity to utilise what you learn weekly because practice makes perfect;
3. Refrain from being your biggest critic. In other words, fight the urge to compare

***We need more transformational leaders to navigate uncharted waters and lead the Public Service, and by extension our respective countries, through this era of pandemics, and unprecedented natural disasters that threaten our well-being and quality of life***

yourself to others. Your personal growth and development lends to the overall experience for yourself and your peers; and finally

4. Recognise that change really does start with you, so step off the ledge and out of your comfort zones from time to time. An unknown writer states, "Expecting things to change without putting in any effort is like waiting for a ship at the airport." You cannot expect your situation or those around you to change without first engaging in introspection and then resolve to take the necessary steps towards changing yourself and not focusing on changing others. It just takes a ripple and YOU can be that ripple.

# Dominica Keeps Faith with CARICAD

**By Rosemund Warrington, HR & ODE Specialist, CARICAD**

**T**he Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica has once again sought the services of CARICAD to undertake a multi-pronged assignment in the Public Service. On November 1, 2020, CARICAD will begin a Job Re-Classification and Organisational Review Assignment, scheduled to extend over a 12-month period. Components of the assignment include, organisational reviews of 16 ministries and four departments; a Job Re-classification exercise; rationalisation of allowances; and capacity development in critical strategic HR areas.

This assignment is seen as a logical flow from a recently-completed Public Sector Transformation Strategy (PST) assignment by CARICAD for the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica. The PST Strategy was submitted in September, 2020. The process to develop the Strategy included consultations, research, regional round table discussions on public sector transformation, a presentation by Dr. Lennox Honychurch on the History of Reform in Dominica, as well as a formal evaluation of the previous Modernisation Strategy. The overall project was coordinated by Mrs. Rosemund Warrington, Strategic HR & ODE specialist at CARICAD and executed by a number of CARICAD's Associates including UNIVERSALIA, Dr. Cletus Bertin, Maria Mason-Roberts and Dr. Gwendoline Williams.

During the period 2009 to 2015, under the leadership of Ms. Irma Edwards, then Chief Personnel Officer and Board Director of CARICAD, CARICAD's services were engaged for a number of assignments. In 2010, CARICAD undertook a comprehensive HR Audit and Workforce Analysis of the Public Service. This assignment extended over a period of 12 months and included a number of CARICAD's Associate Consultants such as Dr. Valda Henry, Maria Mason-Roberts, Marsha Thomas Frederick, Lynette Andrews (now deceased) and Dr. Gwendoline Williams.

Additionally, in 2012, CARICAD conducted a Job Evaluation of the Public Service. This was carried out in partnership with the KPMG. Recommendations were made for salary grades of all jobs. Mrs. Warrington was the Task Leader for both projects. In 2009, CARICAD initiated and led a Consultation/Policy Retreat for Permanent Secretaries and Chief Personnel Officers of the OECS on the Integration of the magistrates' courts under the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court. This was led by former Executive Director, Mrs. Jennifer Astaphan. In 2015, following the passage of Hurricane Maria, the Government of Dominica accepted CARICAD's offer for a one-week advisory intervention by Mr. Franklyn Michael in support of the recovery efforts. His efforts and suggestions were well received.

Over the years, CARICAD has engaged in many other activities by invitation of the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica including a Comprehensive Review of Social Services with funding from DFID in 2006, and Change Management interventions during the Economic Stabilisation Programme in 2003.

CARICAD hopes that the example set by the Commonwealth of Dominica in regards to CARICAD as the first-choice-partner for Public Sector Transformation will be followed by other Member States.

# From the Archives

by Franklyn Michael – Programme Specialist, CARICAD

January 25, 2010

## **HUMAN RESOURCE AUDIT AND PLANNING PROJECT UNDERWAY FOR DOMINICA**

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica has engaged the services of the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) to conduct a Human Resource (HR) Audit and Planning Project. The Project began in November 2009 and is scheduled to be completed in August 2010.

The Project's purpose is:

*"The development of strategies for improvement in the utilisation of human resources and for the attraction and retention of the number of people required with appropriate skills, expertise and competencies for the improvement of organisational effectiveness within the Public Service of the Commonwealth of Dominica."*

Additionally, this Project is closely aligned to the Medium-Term Public-Sector Reform Strategy (MTPSRS). The MTPSRS comprises four key components: Public Administration Modernisation, the Enabling Environment, Rationalisation of Social Services and Economic Management. In light of this, this HR Audit and Planning Project will focus on three main areas:

1. The performance of a Human Resource Audit
2. The development of a Human Resource Plan
3. The development of Succession Plans for all Ministries and Departments within the Public Service

Significantly, this HR Audit and Planning Project will interpret and align Government priorities and corporate strategy with human resources in Ministries and Departments. It also includes training and capacity building components which, along with the development of the Succession Plans, seek to enable key individuals to identify and review those with potential and prepare them to assume higher level positions in the future.

The Project has entered into an accelerated phase of implementation since the beginning of this year. In that regard, meetings have been held with selected representative groups to provide detailed information about the Project and obtain feedback to shape its implementation. CARICAD's Programme Specialist for Institutional Strengthening, Mrs. Rosemund Warrington, is the lead coordinator for the project which is being sponsored by the World Bank. In addition, CARICAD has engaged three consultants; Dr. Gwendoline Williams, Dr. Valda Henry and Ms. Lynette Andrews to facilitate the successful implementation of the project over a period of ten months. Also, active support from the Chief Personnel Officer and a Reference Group comprising senior public officials and union representatives in Dominica will be critical factors to the Project's success.



# CARICAD Continues to Expand Its Engagement with Statutory Organisations

**By Rosemund Warrington, HR & ODE Specialist, CARICAD**

CARICAD recently concluded a Human Resource Capability Review at the Grenada Tourism Authority (GTA). The core objective of the assignment was to undertake a systematic assessment of the GTA's human resource capacity and capabilities to ensure value for money. The Review focused on four key dimensions of organisational performance, namely, Strategy, Structure, People and Process.

The key outcome of the assignment was to develop a roadmap to building capabilities that would have the strongest and most direct impact on the implementation the GTA's strategy.

CARICAD is pleased to have been selected for this assignment and to be involved in providing recommendations for organisational development issues that ultimately impact sustainable tourism at a national level. This is of enormous importance since the tourism sector in the Caribbean region is currently confronted with particular challenges that call for deliberate action such as a collaborative position on climate change and vulnerability to the impacts not only of natural disasters but pandemics such as COVID-19. The role of HR capabilities in enabling achievement of organisational mission-critical goals and in assisting organisations to respond to increasing expectations and strategic challenges, cannot be underestimated.

This Review was CARICAD's first full-fledged remotely-managed technical assignment. Like most organisations, CARICAD has had to adjust and adapt work modalities during the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure business continuity. Without doubt, **setting clear and understandable goals, effective communication and interaction at various levels, a dynamic support team on site to ensure timely provision of documents and information, and a good collaboration platform** were important elements contributing to the achievement of deliverables by the CARICAD team.

The Review was led by Mrs. Rosemund Warrington, Strategic HR&ODE Specialist at CARICAD, and supported by an Associate Consultant, Mrs. Marsha Thomas-Frederick, also an HR Specialist.

CARICAD's range of skills and services remains a valuable asset to be drawn upon by all Statutory Organisations in the Region.

***The CARICAD Horizon is a regular publication of the  
Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD).***

***The Horizon has superseded the "Chronicle".***

***The Editor-in-Chief is CARICAD's Executive Director, Devon Rowe.***

***The Production Team comprises:***

***Franklyn Michael, Rosemund Warrington, Dr. Lois Parkes,  
Trudy Waterman and Angela Eversley.***

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**Special COVID-19 Edition May 2020:** <https://publizr.com/caricadsec/horizon---covid-may-2020-final>

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