

COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMME (CTP)
“Transforming Community Centres into Community Resource Centres”
information accurate to 11th February 2001

BACKGROUND

The Community Technology Programme (CTP) is an original initiative of the Community Development Department and was included in the submission of the 1999/2000 Estimates as part of the Community Resource Centre programmes. The initiative caught the attention of the Prime Minister who in his October 2000 presentation of the Economic Report to Parliament, announced the allocation of an additional \$1million to the Department “*to help transform community centres into resource centres at which access to Internet facilities and training in the new information technology can be provided on a community basis*”.

The Prime Minister further stated that the initiative was intended “*to ensure that children of families which cannot afford to provide such facilities at home have access within their communities to such necessary tools kits for survival and success in the Information Age*”.

The initiative was also discussed at the Estimates meeting with the Ministry of Finance on 31st January, 2001. At this meeting, the Prime Minister queried the non use of the \$1 million allocation. He re-affirmed that the project was initiated by the Department and should therefore be executed by this Agency and was to be one of two major projects he wanted the Department to undertake during the new financial year. He further indicated a willingness to provide the necessary resources for the project and wanted it properly planned and executed in the same manner other economic projects are carried out.

As a follow-up to the Estimates meeting, the Minister of Social Transformation met with Heads of Agencies under the Ministry to review the priority matters arising from the Estimates with a view to putting a strategy in place for the immediate execution of the project initiatives. Towards this end, he requested that Mr. Harold Britton, Deputy Chief Community Development Officer, coordinate the Community Technology Project (CTP). The Permanent Secretary was also asked to request the \$1million as a matter of urgency to avoid any further delays with the implementation of the project.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

- To make computer training and Internet access more readily available to the masses.
- To provide a linkage and support to the Edutech 2000 programme.
- To strengthen parents’ understanding of, and support for the use of computers in schools.
- To increase and improve the technological literacy of community members.
- To provide opportunities for social connections and communication.
- To lessen the reliance on Welfare and National Assistance grants.
- To facilitate the development and transformation of community centres into community resource centres.

PROGRAMME GOAL

The goal of the Community Technology Programme (CTP) is to provide effective access to technology and the Internet by economically disadvantaged community members. The programme will significantly increase educational attainment, and socially and culturally enrich children, parents, families and disadvantaged community members residing in rural and urban communities. It will also provide opportunities for educational advancement, access to services and communications, and enhance job career and business opportunities for adults.

RATIONALE

As we move into the new millenium, the Community Development Department (CDD) is planning to implement a Community Technology Programme (CTP) at community centres across the country that will help disadvantaged community members including children, their parents, and families to better position themselves in this digital era. The new initiative is related to the technological, not only between the haves and have nots, but also between parents and their children.

It is envisaged that many opportunities and outcomes will result from the initiative. ***These are as follow:***

1. Edutech 2000 is already being implemented in schools and hence the proposed community-based programme will complement initiative.
2. The importance of this linkage can scarcely be over-estimated, for if the Edutech 2000 programme is to achieve its maximum effectiveness, then it is essential that it receives intelligent support from parents of the children using the school facilities. This intelligent support requires some reasonable understanding of the technology's capabilities, and at present, many parents do not yet have any real understanding of how computers can be used or of how they can realistically assist and facilitate students' learning.
3. First-hand experience is always a preferred way of helping people acquire new understanding. However, for many of those who will participate in the CTP at the community centres, computer usage will be a brand new experience and should therefore result in the strengthening of parents' understanding of, and support for, use of computers in schools.
4. Providing for persons unable to afford computers in their own homes also means that such persons will have easy access to learning and educational resources that only a few years ago were not readily available.
5. It is well recognized that we continue learning throughout our lives, but our horizons are often circumscribed by the constraints of our physical environment. The capabilities of the Internet will now remove many of these constraints.

6. This initiative should also result in more community members making purchases of computers and in using the technology on a wider scale as they recognize just how valuable a tool it is for their own activities.
7. The Internet can be a means of identifying where resources are available, at what prices and, of course, it can be used for ultra rapid communications. The CTP therefore, can have numerous and extended ripple effects which would support Government's desire to see people in business, large or small, understand how best to use this new technology for their own benefit. For instance, E- Commerce is emerging as the way in which a great deal of business is going to be done in the future and it is necessary that our population be adequately trained to take advantage of this emerging technology.
8. Technology skills are the currency of the information economy and of 21st century civil society. Also, in today's world, access to computers and information depends largely on income, education and geography. The CTP therefore, should prove to be an effective tool for individuals and in bridging the digital divide.

One of the primary functions of the Community Technology Programme (CTP) is the cultivation in the community of the human capacity to use technology. By using the community centres as focal points, a number of interrelated functions are likely to be addressed. Some of these are:

- providing a place where people in communities can become familiar with information and communication technology;
- increasing skills levels in the community;
- providing opportunities for small businesses and community organisations to be advised on how to choose and employ technology;
- facilitating an exchange of information among technology users;
- providing facilities for community members to research various topics;

THE PROGRAMME

A number of workshops will be opened to students, parents, families and other economically disadvantaged community members. The courses of the core curriculum for the CTP are being designed to develop a basic understanding of the most common productivity tools. These workshops will be conducted by skilled and knowledgeable persons drawn from various communities across the country. It is also proposed to work in collaboration with the Barbados Community College on getting accreditation for the courses to be taught. The proposed workshops are as follow:

Introductory Workshops

- Introduction to Windows
- Introduction to keyboarding
- Fundamentals of Word processing - Microsoft Word & Word Perfect

- Introduction to Spread Sheets - Microsoft Excel
- Introduction to Access - Microsoft Access
- Fundamentals of desktop Presentations - Microsoft Power Point
- Introduction to the Internet and the World Wide Web
- Introduction to E-mail

Advanced Workshops

- Computer Graphics
- Desktop Publishing
- Multimedia
- Web Page Design
- Networking
- Computer Assembly and Repair

COMMUNITY CENTRES

The selected community centres will be upgraded to provide a safe, comfortable, and facilitative environment. Where appropriate, each centre will have an air-conditioned computer laboratory with approximately 18 - 25 networked, internet connected computers. Other equipment will include colour printers, scanners, laptops and video projectors. It is also envisaged that a resource/reference library with interactive educational CD-ROM, audio visual and other technology material will be set up at each centre. At centres where computer laboratories cannot be facilitated, workstations for between 6-8 persons would be set up for Internet purposes. It is proposed that the centres operate Monday to Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. depending on demand from the communities. It would also be necessary to mount a high level public relations campaign to sensitize the public to the programme. A manual and other guidelines for use of the centres will be prepared and made available to users of the programme.

The project will be executed as follows:

- Phase 1 - February to April 2001
- Phase 2 - May 2001 to March 2002
- Phase 3 - April 2002 to March 2003

Phase 1

	CENTRES AND LOCATIONS	FACILITIES
1	Speightstown, St. Peter	Computer Laboratory
2	Black Bess, St. Peter	Computer Laboratory
3	Bathsheba, St. Joseph	Computer Laboratory

4	Branchbury, St. Joseph	Internet Workstations
5	Colleton, St. John	Internet Workstations
6	Weston, St. James	Computer Laboratory
7	St. Marks, St. Philip	Computer Laboratory
8	Bonnetts, St. Michael	Computer Laboratory
9	Bush Hall, St. Michael	Internet Workstations
10	Bayville, St. Michael	Internet Workstations

Phase 2

	CENTRES AND LOCATIONS	FACILITIES
1	The Valley, St. George	Computer Laboratory
2	Drax Hall, St. George	Computer Laboratory
3	Sargeants Village, Christ Church	Computer Laboratory
4	Boscobelle, St. Peter	Computer Laboratory
5	Emmerton, St. Michael	Computer Laboratory
6	Jackson, St. Michael	Internet Work Stations
7	Deacons, St. Michael	Internet Work Stations
8	Aberdeen Jones Complex, Christ Church	Internet Work Stations
9	Belleplaine, St. Andrew	Internet Workstations
10	Rockfield, St. Lucy	Computer Laboratory

Phase 3

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	CENTRES AND LOCATIONS	FACILITIES
1	Grazettes, St. Michael	Computer Laboratory
2	Parkinson, St. Michael	Computer Laboratory
3	Pine Resource Centre, St. Michael	Computer Laboratory
4	Ellerton, St. George	Internet Work Stations
5	Friendship, St. Michael	Internet Work Stations
6	The Ivy, St. Michael	Computer Laboratory

HUMAN RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

In order to adequately coordinate, supervise, implement and manage the national Community Technology Programme (CTP), it is proposed that a Project Section be established under the Department with the following staff:

- 1 Project Manager**
- 3 Project Officers**
- 1 Information Technology Specialist**
- 1 Secretary**
- 1 Clerk/Typist**

In addition, the accounting section of Community Development Department would need to be strengthened to take account of the increased work load as a result of the new project. Towards this end, 1 post of Accountant and 1 post of clerical officer should be created.

BUDGET

The estimated cost of the programme is as follows:

	CENTRES AND LOCATIONS	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
1	Purchase of computer equipment	1 154 000	1 154 000	577 000
2	Purchase of work stations	106 000	106 000	53 000
3	Cabling and networking	120 000	120 000	60 000

4	Provision of security systems	76 000	76 000	38 000
5	Upgrading of electrical supply	132 000	164 000	78 000
6	Installation of air conditioning units	65 000	65 000	96 000
7	Purchase of software supplies	32 000	32 000	18 000
8	Telephone and Internet Accounts	28 000	28 000	14 000
9	Upgrading of facilities	240 000	400 000	300 000
10	Professional Services	42 000	425 000	575 000
	TOTAL	1 995 000	2 570 000	1 809 000