



CARIBBEAN FAMILY AND FRIENDS ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

Concept Note

Foundation for Development Planning, Inc.

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Caribbean Family and Friends Engagement Initiative

Introduction

The objective of the Caribbean Family and Friends Engagement Initiative¹ is to support the sustainable development of Caribbean communities by facilitating consistent and enhanced connections between communities and members of the Caribbean diaspora.

In addition to members of the Caribbean diaspora, the initiative encourages involvement by friends, well-wishers, and institutions that interact with the Caribbean and its citizens.

For the purpose of this initiative, family and friends include:

- Individuals in the Caribbean diaspora (persons born in the Caribbean and their descendants) and their extended families.
- Individuals who have a favorable view of the Caribbean.
- Individuals who visit or do business in the Caribbean.
- Diaspora associations.
- Organizations that wish to contribute to Caribbean development.
- Companies owned by individuals born in the Caribbean or their descendants.
- Corporations that conduct business in the Caribbean.

This initiative also acknowledges and is responsive to:

- The sense by family in the diaspora that the Caribbean is still home.
- The desire of family and friends in the diaspora to contribute to the well-being of Caribbean people.
- The consistent support (e.g. research, innovation, intellectual property development) provided by the Caribbean to family, friends, and others outside the Caribbean.

This initiative is therefore intended to supplement, not replace, existing mechanisms for engagement and action.

Background

Most of the countries in the Caribbean are small island developing states, which face unique challenges that constrain development opportunities. These constraints include small size, limited resources, distance from main markets, and a high level of dependency on fragile ecological systems. The small

¹ <http://www.fdpi.org/program-of-work/public-engagement/caribbean-family-and-friends-engagement-initiative/>

resource base and communities are extremely vulnerable to natural disasters and the effects of climate change.

Additionally, most Caribbean countries are single-sector economies designed primarily for export and are therefore vulnerable to disruptions from natural disasters and external geopolitical events.

Strategies to diversify economies have depended to a large extent on external financing in the form of foreign direct investment and loans. There are also inflows of foreign exchange in the form of remittances and grants from international development partners.

Despite these various sources of financing, many Caribbean countries have not achieved the development outcomes anticipated. As a result, Caribbean communities continue to face uncertainties due to the increasing damage to environmental and social systems, even as countries carry large debt burdens.

Some Caribbean countries and inter-governmental organizations established initiatives to increase financial investment by individuals and corporations linked to the Caribbean diaspora, as well as to support disaster recovery efforts.

The Caribbean diaspora has acted to alleviate some of the stresses through a variety of means, such as remittances, provision of medical and other supplies, and providing different forms of support to individuals and organizations. These efforts have been extremely beneficial to the recipients.

It is now recognized that development progress requires a ‘whole of society’ collective effort in designing and undertaking actions to create resilient communities that protect the well-being of Caribbean people.

This Caribbean Family and Friends Engagement Initiative is one mechanism in that collective effort, designed to facilitate consistent engagement and effective action, and responsive to the needs of Caribbean communities.

Organizational Leadership for the Initiative

The initiative is coordinated by the [Foundation for Development Planning, Inc](#) (FDPI), a nonprofit organization based in the United States Virgin Islands and designated by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) public charity.

The purpose of the FDPI is to engage in programs that lead to the sustainable development of Caribbean communities. As such, the FDPI collaborates with individuals and organizations in the public, private, and civic sectors in collective action necessary to produce sustainable social changes.

Thus, the Caribbean Family and Friends Engagement Initiative seeks to enhance the potential for success by facilitating collective action by a large network of individuals and institutions.

Scope of the Initiative

The FDPI recognizes the valuable contributions of other organizations, thus this initiative seeks to supplement, not replace, existing mechanisms for engagement and action. The initiative encompasses three modes of engagement:

(1) Conversations on Caribbean development

The purpose of the dialogue is to exchange information and perspectives that inform individual and collective action. Though there are many topics of importance, the FDPI considered it more constructive to focus on issues related to the state of Caribbean development and its place in world affairs. It is anticipated that the sharing of information and perspectives by individuals and organizations in the diaspora and in the Caribbean will illuminate possibilities and facilitate enhanced and more impactful collaboration.

(2) Individual action

- (a) Volunteerism, linked to initiatives, organizations, or networks.
- (b) Exchange of information.
- (c) Participation in learning and knowledge production initiatives.
- (d) Financial contributions to initiatives or organizations.

(3) Collective action

- (a) Mobilization of groups/organizations for actions that restore damaged systems or create new opportunities for community development.
- (b) Financial contributions to the Foundation for Development Planning, Inc (FDPI) to support specific initiatives or for unrestricted use to leverage program support and build program delivery systems.

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## **Foundation for Development Planning, Inc.**

The Foundation for Development Planning, Inc. (FDPI) is a civil society organization whose purpose is to engage in programs that lead to the sustainable development of Caribbean communities.

The FDPI is registered in the United States Virgin Islands and is certified by the United States Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) public charity. As such, donations by U.S. institutions and residents are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

FDPI's Tax ID Number: 66-0763692

Donate online: <https://www.fdpi.org/contribute/>

Donations can also be sent by mail to:

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