



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Public Administration

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Moving Communities Forward - Todd's Road ICT Access Centre Opens

From cocoa, to sugar cane, to ICT. Last Thursday, the community of Todd's Road, Chaguanas traced its proud history, welcoming the advent of a new chapter in the area, with the formal opening of the Todd's Road ICT Access Centre by the Ministry of Public Administration. Addressing the gathering, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Public Administration, Joan Mendez, announced that more Access Centres are to be opened in the coming months, as the Ministry continues its thrust to increase connectivity and improve human capacity across the country.

The ICT facility, located along the Todd's Station Road, boasts a cyber cafe with 10 computers, as well as a training room outfitted with 10 interactive smart TV displays. The centre's internet service includes Broadband service with a bandwidth of 75 MB (downloading), unlimited voice, 250 mobile minutes and 5 IP addresses. An emotional Maxie Cuffie, MP for La Horquetta/Talparo, and Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Public Administration, was moved by the advancements that have come to the community where he grew up, sharing personal boyhood stories of the sometimes difficult efforts that were required to reach his educational goals. He told the gathering, which included the First Standard pupils of the Todd's Road RC Primary School, that the future of our nation was "no longer in the children's bookbags, but on the internet", which has brought a whole new world of learning to students' fingertips.

As the Ministry with oversight of the national ICT agenda, the Ministry of Public Administration continues to pursue national development goals, seeking to ensure greater internet access to, and more productive usage of such by those at a disadvantage in the age of technology, including those in rural areas, and at-risk youth. Reducing the digital disparity across communities below the required threshold with respect to ICT through the introduction of specially equipped ICT facilities forms a key part of the *ICT Blueprint: National ICT Plan 2018-2022*. The Plan's vision is to achieve increased human capacity, innovation and higher digital literacy rates, as well as improved ICT infrastructure nation-wide, which will redound to improvements in TT's rankings on global indices.

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The formal opening on May 9, 2019 was well attended by members of the Constituency Executive, students, parents and teachers as well as residents of the community. They expressed satisfaction at the opening of the centre, since it will also mean easier access to online government services, printing facilities and training in both technical and applied ICT-related courses.

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