In the k-NoW

A PUBLICATION OF THE CTU NETWORK OF WOMEN

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Light, Leadership and the Caribbean's Digital Future



H.E. DR ANNALEE C. BABB

Barbados' Ambassador to The United Arab Emirates

On leadership, light and why the Caribbean must claim its place in shaping the digital future

CTU NoW
Network of Women

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IN THIS ISSUE

Who gets to shape the Caribbean's digital future, and who gets to participate in it?

Across the region, technology is transforming the way we work, learn, communicate and access essential services. Yet the true measure of digital progress extends beyond infrastructure, innovation and connectivity. It lies in the opportunities created for people, the barriers removed and the voices included in decisions that will shape generations to come.

In this issue of In the k-NoW, we explore leadership, inclusion and innovation through the experiences of Caribbean women, emerging innovators and the institutions working to advance digital development.

Our cover feature turns the spotlight on Dr Annalee C. Babb and the importance of leadership in shaping the region's digital future. Trinidad and Tobago takes centre stage in our Country Profile, while Dr. Maria Myers Hamilton looks at spectrum, satellites & survival.

We also celebrate young Bahamian innovators through SmartSteps and explore the possibilities of early warning health intelligence. In Analysis & Perspective, Michelle A. Eng Leang considers a question that runs through the entire issue: The technology is here. Who is it working for?

Together, these contributions invite us to look beyond technological advancement itself and consider the people, perspectives and decisions that determine its value.

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Beyond Representation, Towards Influence

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Caribbean stands at an important moment in its digital development. Across our region, technology is transforming the way we communicate, conduct business, deliver public services and participate in the global economy. Artificial intelligence is challenging established ways of working, digital infrastructure is becoming increasingly essential to national resilience and emerging innovations are creating opportunities that would have seemed unimaginable only a generation ago.

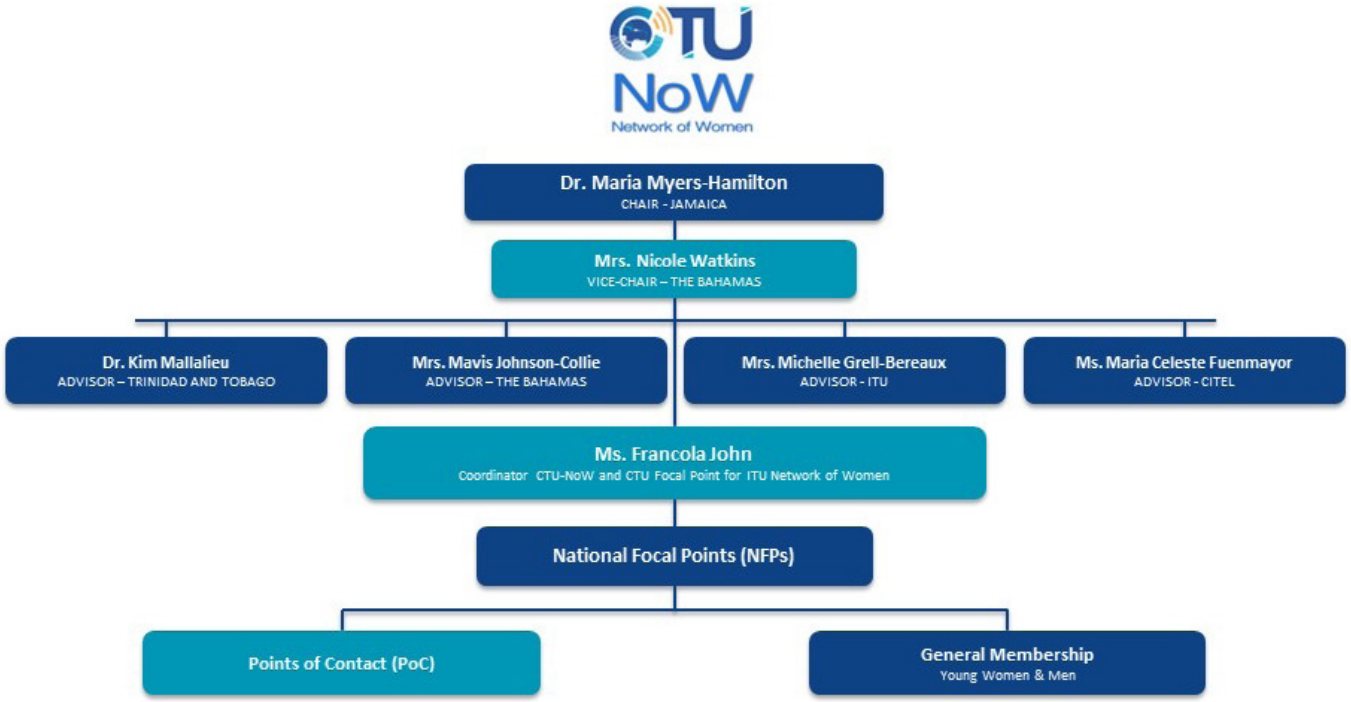
Yet, as we consider the possibilities before us, we must also confront an equally important responsibility: ensuring that women are not simply included in this transformation, but are empowered to influence its direction.

This conviction lies at the heart of the Caribbean Telecommunications Union Network of Women (CTU-NoW) and continues to guide the purpose of In the k-NoW.

We recognise that the advancement of women in information and communication technologies is not solely a matter of representation. It is a question of leadership, opportunity, equity and the capacity of our region to benefit from the knowledge, creativity and perspectives of all its people. When women participate meaningfully in the development of digital policies, technologies and institutions, we strengthen not only their individual prospects but the quality and inclusiveness of the decisions that shape our societies.

In this edition, we are privileged to share stories that demonstrate the many dimensions of that responsibility.

Our cover feature on Her Excellency Dr Annalee C. Babb presents a compelling perspective on leadership,



wisdom and the Caribbean's place in an increasingly complex technological world. Her reflections challenge us to consider how our region can move beyond adopting innovations developed elsewhere towards participating more actively in the conversations and decisions that will determine our collective future.

Equally significant is the contribution of Dr Maria Myers Hamilton, whose examination of spectrum management, satellite connectivity and disaster resilience reminds us that digital development must be measured not only by technological advancement, but by the ability of our systems to serve and protect people when they are most vulnerable. Her analysis of Jamaica's spectrum policy and the telecommunications response to Hurricane Melissa demonstrates the importance of forward-thinking regulation, institutional preparedness and regional cooperation. It also reinforces the value of Caribbean women bringing technical expertise and leadership to decisions that have far-reaching consequences for our societies.

The achievements of the young Bahamian innovators behind SmartSteps provide another powerful example of what becomes possible when girls are encouraged to pursue science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Their commitment to developing an assistive mobility solution reminds us that innovation is most valuable when it responds to genuine human needs. It also reinforces the importance of investing in young women, providing mentorship and creating opportunities for their ideas to be recognised and developed.

Through our examination of Trinidad and Tobago's digital transformation journey and emerging approaches to health intelligence, we also explore the broader institutional and societal implications of technological advancement. These stories remind us that digital development must be supported by sound governance, collaboration, accessible services and a commitment to ensuring that progress reaches communities across our region.

Taken together, these contributions reflect a fundamental principle: the future of technology must be shaped by the people whose lives it will transform.

For CTU-NoW, this means continuing to build a network that extends beyond professional connections. We must create opportunities for women to share expertise, develop leadership capabilities, support one another's advancement and contribute meaningfully to regional and international dialogue. We must encourage mentorship while recognising the equally important role of sponsorship in opening doors and creating pathways to leadership.

We must also ensure that the next generation of Caribbean women can see themselves not only as participants in the digital economy, but as innovators, policymakers, entrepreneurs, researchers and leaders capable of shaping it.

Our regional diversity is one of our greatest strengths. Across our Member States, women bring different experiences, perspectives and areas of expertise to the challenges of digital development. By connecting these capabilities and encouraging collaboration across borders, we can build a stronger collective voice and contribute to a more resilient, inclusive and innovative Caribbean.

In the k-NoW forms an important part of that effort. This publication provides a platform to recognise achievement, share knowledge, examine emerging developments and highlight the contributions of women and institutions advancing the region's digital agenda. More importantly, it offers an opportunity to inspire action beyond its pages.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the contributors, partners and individuals whose experiences and expertise have enriched this edition, as well as to the editorial team for its commitment to bringing these important conversations to our readers.

As we look towards the future, I encourage every member of our network, every partner and every reader to consider how we can turn our shared aspirations into measurable progress. The opportunities before us are considerable, but real transformation will depend upon our willingness to collaborate, invest in people and ensure that our collective voices influence the decisions being made today.

Our ambition must extend beyond ensuring that women have a place in the digital future. We must ensure that women have the opportunity, authority and support to help shape it.

Francola John
Publisher, In the k-NoW
Stakeholder Engagement Specialist Coordinator
CTU Network of Women
Caribbean Telecommunications Union

Who Gets to Write the Future?

EDITOR'S NOTE

The future has a peculiar habit of arriving before we have finished discussing whether we are ready for it. Across the Caribbean, conversations about artificial intelligence, digital transformation, cybersecurity and technological innovation are becoming increasingly urgent. Governments are developing policies, institutions are modernising their systems and businesses are reconsidering how they operate. Yet, amid the excitement surrounding what technology can do, I find myself returning to a more fundamental question: who gets to decide what our digital future looks like?

It is a question of considerable consequence for the Caribbean, a region whose geography, history, economies and cultures have shaped our relationship with the wider world. We have spent generations navigating systems designed elsewhere, adapting to international decisions and finding ingenious ways to make limited resources work. Our capacity for adaptation is extraordinary, but adaptation alone cannot be the ambition for the next chapter of our development. We must become architects of the systems that will shape our lives, rather than simply their eventual users.

Our cover story introduces Her Excellency Dr Annalee C. Babb, Barbados' Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, whose journey through journalism, diplomacy and telecommunications policy offers a compelling examination of leadership. Her philosophy of carrying light, of bringing wisdom, understanding and discernment into the spaces we occupy, challenges us to consider what we contribute when we enter positions of influence and what remains changed after we leave. Her reflections also raise an uncomfortable question about the Caribbean's place in global technological development: are we sufficiently prepared to participate in decisions that will determine our future?

That question finds another dimension in the contribution of Dr Maria Myers Hamilton, whose examination of spectrum management, satellite connectivity and the telecommunications response to Hurricane Melissa demonstrates that regulation is far more than an administrative responsibility. The decisions made before a crisis can determine whether communities remain connected when conventional infrastructure fails. For a region vulnerable to natural disasters, resilience must be designed into our systems long before it is tested.

The young Bahamian innovators behind SmartSteps remind us that technology's greatest value lies in its ability to improve human lives. Their assistive mobility innovation demonstrates the importance of understanding genuine needs and creating solutions that expand independence and accessibility. Meanwhile, Trinidad and Tobago's digital transformation agenda and our examination of early warning health intelligence invite us to consider how institutional readiness, responsible innovation and public policy can translate technological ambition into meaningful outcomes for citizens.

As Editor-in-Chief, I believe In the k-NoW must do more than document technological advancement. We have a responsibility to examine the decisions behind it, question the assumptions guiding it and amplify the voices contributing to its direction. The women featured in this edition demonstrate that influence can be exercised through diplomacy, regulation, scientific inquiry, innovation and leadership. Their contributions remind us that representation matters, but meaningful participation requires knowledge, opportunity and the authority to shape decisions.

The Caribbean's digital future is not some distant destination towards which we are travelling. It is being shaped now, through the policies being written, the infrastructure being built and the opportunities being created. We cannot afford to remain spectators in a future that will determine so much about our lives. And so I return to the question with which I began: who gets to write the future? The answer must include us.

Michelle A. Eng Leang
Editor-in-Chief
In the k-NoW
CTU Network of Women



Annalee C. Babb: SHIFT THE SPECTRUM

Journalist, diplomat, telecommunications strategist and Barbados' Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, Her Excellency Dr Annalee C. Babb has spent a lifetime translating complexity into clarity. Now, as artificial intelligence, satellite systems and digital governance reshape the world, she is asking a question the Caribbean can no longer postpone: will we simply inherit the digital future, or will we help write its rules?

Before Dr Annalee C. Babb represented Barbados in Abu Dhabi, before telecommunications policy became one of the great intellectual threads of her career and before she found herself in rooms discussing information and communication technologies (ICTs), artificial intelligence and the governance of space, she was a little girl whose family wondered when she would speak. Her mother remembered an unusually quiet child, one who rarely cried or made much noise. Concerned, the family sought medical advice and was told simply to give her time. Then, at around two-and-a-half or three years old, her mother entered her grandparents' home one afternoon and called, "Good afternoon." A tiny voice answered, "Good afternoon." At first, her mother assumed another adult had responded. Instead, the greeting had come from Annalee. Her first words were a salutation, and for a woman whose life would eventually be built around communication, journalism, diplomacy, policy and the careful translation of complicated ideas between people and nations, the beginning feels almost prophetic.

Finding her voice did not immediately mean becoming comfortable using it publicly. Dr Babb describes herself as naturally introverted and profoundly shy, someone for whom speaking



before a crowd could still provoke hyperventilation well into her twenties and thirties. The composure people now associate with an Ambassador was not inherited ease with attention. It was acquired, strengthened over time through experience, conviction and faith. Raised by parents who were pastors, she remembers being fascinated as a young girl by the biblical account of Solomon asking God for wisdom. When her mother encouraged the children to pray for what they wanted, Annalee's request was strikingly precise: "Lord, give me wisdom and understanding and the eye of discernment." Decades later, that childhood prayer has become almost a philosophy of leadership. Ask Her Excellency Dr Annalee Babb what she regards as her greatest accomplishment and she does not begin with becoming an Ambassador, an academic degree, an international posting or an award. "My greatest accomplishment is that I know I carry light," she says. For Dr Babb, light is not optimism dressed in prettier language. "Light is wisdom, light is understanding, light is knowledge, light is discernment." It is the ability to enter complexity and see what matters, to understand the forces shaping a moment and to communicate that understanding in a way that helps others act.

Dr Babb entered university in the American Midwest at just 16 years old and graduated at 19 after studying mass communications, journalism and political science. Returning home to Barbados, she joined the Barbados Advocate as a sub-editor, working in an era when newspaper production demanded not only writing and editing but physical page layout, headline construction and a close understanding of how the placement of a story could influence the way it was received. Those newsroom years never left her. "Life is stories. Life is narratives," she says, a sentence that explains not only her relationship with journalism but the way she continues to approach policy and technology. Complicated systems still need a story people can understand. A former Permanent Secretary once praised her ability to produce what he jokingly called excellent "idiot sheets", briefing documents capable of making intricate subjects accessible to almost anyone. She remembers the description with humour, but the underlying skill is serious. Expertise that cannot be translated has limited reach. A brilliant telecommunications policy means little if the people it is intended to serve cannot understand



what it will change. A digital strategy that exists only in the language of specialists risks becoming an internal exercise rather than an instrument of development.

Journalism also delivered Dr Babb to the doorway of diplomacy. Assigned to cover a reception at the Venezuelan Embassy, she met young officers in the Barbados Foreign Service and learnt during an otherwise ordinary conversation that the then Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business was recruiting. After approximately two years in journalism, she had begun feeling that reporting on the world was no longer enough. If she wanted to help educate people about it, she needed to experience more of it herself, so she applied. The story becomes more revealing because of whom she chose not to tell about her application. Her uncle had previously headed the Barbados Foreign Service and served as Ambassador to Venezuela, and at the time of her application he held a senior position within Government. An aspiring diplomat could easily have been tempted to make use of the relationship. Annalee Babb said nothing. "If I couldn't get it on my own merit, I didn't want it." She successfully completed three rounds of interviews and only when officials were preparing to offer her the position did they contact her uncle to ask whether he happened to know an applicant called Annalee Babb. He had not known she had applied. Merit, for Dr Babb, was not simply about securing the job. It was about knowing that when she entered the room, she had earned her place in it.

Another decisive turn came at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts, where Dr Babb became fascinated by telecommunications deregulation and the liberalisation of monopoly telecommunications providers. The timing was important. The digital revolution was gathering speed and telecommunications was beginning to challenge assumptions that had shaped small states for generations. Geography had traditionally imposed hard limits. Distance increased costs, small populations constrained markets and physical isolation affected access to knowledge, capital and opportunity. Digital information and communication technologies (ICTs) offered another equation. Information could cross oceans instantly, markets could become larger than national populations and weightless digital creations, including knowledge, could circulate without observing traditional borders. The social, economic, political and cultural consequences for small island developing states (SIDS) were enormous. Dr Babb wrote her dissertation on telecommunications liberalisation and a journalist had become a diplomat while the diplomat was becoming a telecommunications policy thinker at a time when relatively few women occupied the field. In hindsight, the progression is remarkably coherent. Journalism taught her how to find meaning inside complexity. Diplomacy taught her to understand power, interests and negotiation. Telecommunications policy offered a place where communication, regulation, economics and human development converged. For Dr Babb, technology was never simply about the technology. It was about what technology could change.



That belief would be tested during a difficult period early in her professional career. Working in an environment she found overwhelmingly heavy, Dr Babb telephoned her mother in tears and told her she wanted to leave. Her mother listened and then gave her a sentence she would carry for the rest of her life: "But beloved, you carry your light with you wherever you go." The words transformed the way Dr Babb understood difficult environments and, eventually, leadership itself. Light could exist at different intensities. A small torch might illuminate only one section of a dark room while something stronger could push the darkness farther away, but she became interested in an even more disruptive idea: transmutation. To transmute something is not simply to change it temporarily. It is to transform its very nature. "I transmute the darkness so that only light remains." The distinction matters. Leadership,

in Dr Babb's formulation, is not simply the ability to make an environment better while you occupy it. The greater achievement is leaving behind conditions that remain better after you have gone. In 2025, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy presented her with its Fletcher Women's Leadership Award for leadership in public service, an honour that allowed her to acknowledge the woman whose words had helped construct that philosophy decades earlier.

The metaphor acquires an almost irresistible resonance in telecommunications. Fibre-optic networks quite literally use pulses of light to carry voices, knowledge, financial transactions, images and information across continents. Modern societies have built much of their communications infrastructure on light, yet Dr Babb is too experienced a policy thinker to romanticise technology. "Access can result in light or darkness," she says. Connectivity can create extraordinary opportunity, but it can also magnify existing inequality. Social media can connect millions while intensifying isolation. Digital systems can broaden access or deepen exclusion. Technology can increase transparency while enabling surveillance, and the same tools capable of democratising information can accelerate misinformation. Artificial intelligence makes the dilemma even more urgent.

Dr Babb worries that technologies capable of profoundly affecting humanity are being created without sufficient participation from people whose realities differ from those of their principal designers. Caribbean people, African people, Asian people, developing states and communities historically positioned outside the world's main centres of technological power cannot afford to become footnotes in systems that will shape education, labour, public services, security, social, cultural and economic life. "We need to be at the table to help write the rules of the game." The sentence captures one of the central challenges confronting small island developing states in the digital age. Adoption is not the same as participation. Receiving a technology after the design decisions have been made does not provide the same power as helping determine the architecture from the beginning. Who trains the systems? Whose data informs them? Which societies define acceptable risk? Whose language and culture are embedded in digital products? Which populations are treated as the default? These are all technological questions, but they are equally diplomatic, economic and political questions. Public policy therefore becomes essential. The Caribbean needs technical expertise, but it also needs the confidence and the positioning to enter global conversations early enough to influence their outcomes.

Her current position as Barbados' Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates gives Dr Babb an unusually valuable perspective on the speed at which that future is arriving. She speaks admiringly about the pace, intentionality and ambition with which the UAE is pursuing technology, innovation and future-oriented public policy. One experience at the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy made the contrast with the Caribbean particularly vivid. The subject was space diplomacy. Dr Babb listened as experts discussed satellites, the governance of space and the infrastructure of a rapidly developing space-enabled economy. It was not science fiction. The conversations were about policy, rules, sovereignty and economic systems being constructed in the present. Countries were already thinking about governance beyond Earth while parts of the Caribbean were still resolving fundamental terrestrial telecommunications and regulatory challenges. "We are behind and we need to figure out how to make sure that gap does not grow." The urgency is practical. Satellites increasingly support telecommunications, agriculture, environmental monitoring, disaster management and economic development. Space-enabled systems are becoming part of the invisible infrastructure on which life on Earth depends and, for small island states, climate vulnerability, disaster resilience and communications security make those technologies relevant now rather than in some distant century.



Dr Babb does not believe the Caribbean can solve the problem simply by acquiring new technology. New tools placed inside institutions unable to use them intelligently can create the appearance of modernisation without the substance of change. Her analogy is perfectly suited to the argument: imagine trying to install the latest operating system on one of the earliest Macintosh computers. The software may be powerful, but the machine beneath it cannot support what is being asked of it. Institutions face the same problem. The Caribbean cannot layer artificial intelligence, advanced data systems and twenty-first-century connectivity onto structures designed for another era and expect transformation to happen automatically. The underlying architecture of decision-making has to evolve too. Leadership must evolve with it. Dr Babb believes leaders must remain learners and authority cannot become a prohibition against admitting error. A serious leader should be capable of saying that something did not work, acknowledging what was learnt and changing direction.

She is equally concerned about the region's relationship with innovation. Dr Babb remembers once presenting an innovative proposal and being asked who had done it before and to find somewhere it had already been tried. The contradiction was obvious. If someone else must first prove an idea before the Caribbean is willing to attempt it, then the region is not innovating. It is following. "Believe in yourself," she says, "don't let self-doubt be your default mental model." That does not mean abandoning rigour. It means investigating and asking questions, experimenting, evaluating, correcting and being willing to stop when something does not work. Failure becomes information rather than humiliation. The same impatience appears when she discusses one of the ICT sector's most beloved expressions, digital transformation. The phrase has become ubiquitous. Governments announce it, companies promise it and institutions can apparently remain "in transformation" for years. Dr Babb wants something considerably more concrete. "Let me see some impact. And when I see impact, I know the transformation is taking place." For governments, regulators and technology organisations, the distinction demands a different measure of success. Transformation is a process. Impact is evidence. The more meaningful questions are whose lives were changed and how, who gained access, which service became easier to use, which citizen can now participate in something previously unavailable to them and what improved because the technology exists? Which small states and developing countries now have the tools to innovate for themselves, creating and scaling home-grown digital technologies, services and solutions? It is, in many ways, the journalist returning to edit the language of digital policy: remove the jargon and show the result.

Her philosophy of correction is similarly pragmatic, although delivered with a distinctly Barbadian sense of humour. Dr Babb is an advocate of "commending before you correct", arguing that people and institutions respond differently when progress is acknowledged before shortcomings are attacked. She points to the region's talent for understated praise. Make an excellent argument and someone might tell you, "You're not wrong." Dress beautifully and perhaps the compliment is, "You don't look bad today." Serve a wonderful meal and the verdict may be, "The food wasn't bad." Behind the humour is a serious leadership point. Language creates culture. An environment in which every conversation begins with what is wrong eventually produces defensiveness rather than creativity. "The Caribbean has come a long way," Dr Babb says, and she does not believe recognising that progress requires ignoring what still needs to change. The two ideas can exist together. The region has achieved much and the region must move faster.



For women entering leadership, her advice is equally direct: "You do not have to lead like a man." She rejects the assumption that authority becomes credible only when women reproduce traditionally masculine models

of leadership. Women can negotiate, command, be assertive and make difficult decisions while also valuing collaboration, connectedness, creativity and the capacity to build and nurture, leading from the feminine place of their power. For Dr Babb, those qualities do not dilute leadership. They expand it. That matters particularly in technology, where the systems being created will increasingly mediate human experience. Women cannot merely become consumers of that technological future. They need to participate in creating, governing and challenging it. Representation, in that context, becomes more than symbolism. When a young woman sees another woman occupy a room she had never imagined herself entering, possibility becomes visible.

Dr Babb has been mentoring young people since she herself was young, helping with university applications, theses, dissertations and career decisions. Now her thinking is moving towards something larger, which she calls "legacy infrastructure". The term feels appropriately technological. Infrastructure is what allows something to continue operating beyond the individual who built it. Dr Babb is interested in developing structures through which experience, wisdom, professional networks and institutional knowledge can be transferred intentionally to future generations, with young women especially important to that vision. "Light is transferable." The phrase brings her philosophy full circle. Representation can illuminate possibility, mentorship can turn that possibility into preparation, opportunity can convert preparation into achievement and leadership can help ensure that the next woman does not have to begin from the same starting point.

Dr Babb describes her life not as the execution of some perfect professional plan, but as an unfolding. Seen in sequence, the chapters almost seem to have anticipated one another. The quiet child found her voice. The teenage university student became a journalist. The journalist covering a diplomatic reception discovered an entirely different career. The young diplomat pursued further study and became fascinated by telecommunications policy. The telecommunications thinker developed into a public servant and international leader. The diplomat became Barbados' Ambassador in a country placing extraordinary emphasis on artificial intelligence, technology and the future. She also describes herself as a citizen of the earth, increasingly interested in how the experience accumulated across those chapters can benefit people beyond the confines of any single appointment. Titles eventually end. Knowledge does not have to, and wisdom never does. That is what makes legacy infrastructure so important to her.

Artificial intelligence will continue to develop, satellite systems will become more sophisticated, communications networks will evolve and digital governance will grow more complex. The next generation of technology will not wait politely for smaller states to decide whether they are ready. Rules will be written, systems will be built and markets will change. The question is not whether the Caribbean will encounter that future. It will. The question is whether Caribbean people, and Caribbean women in particular, will enter it as consumers of decisions made elsewhere or as people sufficiently prepared, confident and knowledgeable to help determine what comes next. Dr Annalee C. Babb's career offers an answer written across journalism, diplomacy, technology and leadership: understand the world deeply enough to question it, prepare yourself well enough to enter the room and carry enough light to ensure that when you leave, something in that room has changed. The Caribbean's digital future is already being written and Dr Annalee C. Babb's challenge is for us to bring our own light to the table before someone else writes the story for us.



MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
& ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Country Profile: Trinidad and Tobago

Building an Intelligent, Inclusive and Citizen-Centred Digital Nation

In the eighteen months since its establishment, Trinidad and Tobago's Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence has brought public service reform, digital public infrastructure and artificial intelligence under a single mandate, moving from strategy to delivery: a national digital credentials platform, enterprise AI tools for public officers and educators, and expanding access to connectivity and digital skills in communities across the country.

Achievements: April–September 2026
Outlook : October–December 2026



Senator the Honourable Dominic Smith
Minister of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence

KEY RESULTS

Ministry-reported figures, as at October 2026

AI & DIGITAL SKILLS

25,000+

public servants, teachers, students and citizens in structured AI and digital skills training

DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

8

institutions connected to VerifyTT, the national digital credentials platform

DEMAND FOR LEARNING

26,000+

registrations for free, world-class online learning through LearnTT

CONNECTIVITY & INCLUSION

22

community centres upgraded with high-speed connectivity and AI learning

1.Country Profile

The Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence (MPAAI) was established on 23 May 2025 through the merger of the former Ministries of Public Administration and Digital Transformation.

Led by Senator the Honourable Dominic Smith, Minister of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence, with Permanent Secretary Mr Cory Belfon, the Ministry unites public service modernisation, digital government and artificial intelligence under one mandate. Trinidad and Tobago is the first Caribbean nation with a ministry dedicated to artificial intelligence.

With internet penetration of approximately 80 per cent, the country is pursuing a whole-of-government approach that places citizens at the centre of service design, builds shared digital public infrastructure (DPI), and prepares the public service and the wider population for responsible AI adoption.

National priorities

- Digital government and public service modernisation
- Digital public infrastructure: digital identity, interoperability, digital credentials and digital payments
- Artificial intelligence and innovation
- Digital inclusion and connectivity
- Digital skills and workforce readiness
- Cybersecurity, data governance and digital trust

Policy framework

The Official Policy Framework for Digital Transformation rests on three pillars, with the stated aim of placing all government services online, achieving efficiency in public administration and building a truly digital nation:

PILLAR 1

Digital Services That Put Citizens First

Integrated, citizen-centred online government services.

PILLAR 2

Smart, Efficient Government Powered by Data and Intelligence

A modern, data-driven and productive public service.

PILLAR 3

A Digital Nation Built on Skills, Opportunity and People

Connectivity, skills and innovation that enable every citizen to participate.

One DPI ecosystem

VerifyTT, TTPass, GovLinkTT and CareTT are being developed as components of one national DPI ecosystem. Trinidad and Tobago joined the global 50-in-5 campaign on 22 September 2025 to accelerate this work alongside peer countries.



“The region cannot afford 21 disconnected digital transformations.”

Senator the Honourable Dominic Smith
Minister of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence

Key programmes

VerifyTT

National digital credentials platform and mobile wallet, operated by iGovTT on open standards.

TTpass

National electronic identity (e-ID) enabling secure authentication to government services.

GOV LINKTT

Government Interoperability Platform for secure data exchange between Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

CareTT

Mobile benefits wallet to apply for, track and redeem government benefits, linked to the national e-ID.

FUTUREREADYTT

Enterprise AI tools, training and guidance for public servants, teachers and students, in partnership with OpenAI and Superhuman (formerly Grammarly).

Anansi

National AI digital assistant for government information, drawing on 7,000+ FAQs from about 30 ministries and agencies.

LearnTT

Free national digital skills programme, including the ITU Digital Transformation Centre.

AI Centres TTWiFi

Community access centres offering connectivity, ICT services and AI learning, plus national public Wi-Fi.

CodeTT

Government-backed hub building local software talent and citizen-focused solutions.

Open Data (data.gov.tt)

National portal for publishing government datasets for reuse, research and innovation.

BY THE NUMBERS

25,000+
public servants, teachers, students and citizens in structured AI and digital skills training

3,000+
public servants who have completed structured AI training

38
AI Champions across 15 Ministries, Departments and Agencies

8
institutions on VerifyTT at launch

1,543
citizens trained through the Caribbean's first ITU Digital Transformation Centre

26,000+
Coursera registrations through LearnTT

22
community centres with upgraded ICT and high-speed connectivity

160+
datasets on the national Open Data Portal

Ministry-reported figures, as at October 2026

International partners

IDB · EU · CAF · UNDP · unesco · UNICC · ITU · OpenAI · SUPERHUMAN · Centre for Digital Public Infrastructure · 50in5

2.Digital Transformation Achievements

Digital government and digital public infrastructure

VerifyTT launched (22 April 2026). iGovTT, through MPAAI, launched the national digital credentials platform with eight institutions on board. Memoranda of Understanding were signed with the Ministry of Land and Legal Affairs and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service. Education credentials went live first, with civil records and police-issued documents to follow. A government-to-government partnership with India supported the platform's development.

Foundational DPI platforms handed over (April 2026). TTPass (e-ID), GovLinkTT (interoperability) and CareTT (benefits wallet) completed system stabilisation and formal handover to national ownership through MPAAI, iGovTT and UNDP. National DPI and DigiTT scoping workshops followed in August, and stakeholder consultations in September are informing the legislative and enabling frameworks for e-ID and interoperability.

Showcasing a 'credentials first' route to DPI (22 July 2026). With iGovTT and the 50-in-5 community, MPAAI hosted the global webinar The Caribbean Catalyst: VerifyTT and the Next Generation of Public Services.

Public Service Open House (23 June 2026). Held for United Nations Public Service Day, the Open House allowed citizens to experience digital government services first-hand.

Government cloud foundations. Approval was secured in June 2026 to initiate a proof of concept for the GoRTT Distributed Cloud, and Terms of Reference for an Enterprise Architecture consultancy were finalised in July.

Artificial intelligence

From signature to nation in nine months. FutureReadyTT, launched in January 2026 in partnership with OpenAI and Superhuman (formerly Grammarly), moved from a 500-licence MPAAI pilot in April to 15 Ministries, Departments and Agencies by October. Close to 10,000 public servants now have access to secure, enterprise-grade AI; more than 3,000 have completed structured training through a model that integrates the Public Service Academy, and 38 AI Champions lead adoption from inside the service. It is one of the largest AI skills-building programmes in the Caribbean.

AI in the classroom (from 28 May 2026). With the Ministry of Education, FutureReadyTT extends ChatGPT Edu and Grammarly for Education to close to 2,000 teachers and 12,500 students, focused on strengthening reading and writing and giving teachers lesson-planning support.

Measurable productivity gains. Public officers report time savings of up to 70 per cent in property and real estate activities, 50–60 per cent in iHRIS support and documentation, 50 per cent in Portfolio Management Office activities and 30 per cent in legal drafting, measured through the Ministry's internal monitoring and evaluation study. Time saved in the back office is time returned to citizens.

Responsible AI guidance (August 2026). Rules before scale: the Guidelines for the Secure and Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in the Public Service were issued to all Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

AI Sandbox. Working with UNDP, UNICC and CAF, MPAAI is piloting an AI Sandbox that gives public-sector teams a secure environment to build and test AI solutions, with the Anansi digital assistant among the first projects.

A united Caribbean approach to AI (July 2026). At a regional event themed on governance, innovation and resilience, MPAAI called for shared Caribbean approaches to AI skills, governance and innovation.

Connectivity and digital inclusion

Broadband for Navet and Tabaquite (July 2026). New high-speed infrastructure was launched under the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago's Universal Service Programme to serve underserved communities.

AI Centres . Following ICT and connectivity upgrades across 22 community centres, ten Access Centres are being rebranded as AI Centres and 16 sites are progressing towards full operation, offering connectivity, ICT services and AI learning.

TTWiFi. A National Usage Review (June 2026) confirmed significant public use across government offices, regional corporations and public access locations, and six additional TTWiFi sites were approved for implementation with iGovTT.

Community technology (15 September 2026). MPAAI donated 24 refurbished desktop computers to three non-governmental organisations.

Digital skills development

LearnTT expanded. The LearnTT learning platform soft-launched in June 2026. From August, the public gained access to more than 1,800 Coursera licences and capacity for 5,000 LinkedIn Learning users, generating more than 26,000 Coursera registrations: clear evidence of a nation ready to learn.

The Caribbean's first ITU Digital Transformation Centre. Launched in Trinidad and Tobago in November 2025, the Centre has trained 1,543 citizens through Cisco courses: 965 in Introduction to Data Science and 578 in Internet of Things and Introduction to Digital Transformation.

Inclusive training (May 2026). Targeted AI-enabled social media analytics training was delivered for persons with disabilities, training 30 trainers and 30 participants. Youth innovation (27 August 2026). The Minister backed the young developer of the award-winning Vendatt app.

LEARNTT AT A GLANCE

1,800+
Coursera licences opened to the public

5,000
LinkedIn Learning seats

965
trained in Introduction to Data Science

578
trained in IoT and Digital Transformation

Open data, innovation and digital trust

Open Data. The national Open Data platform completed stabilisation, user acceptance testing and security remediation (July 2026), and Cabinet approved measures related to an Open Data Charter (August 2026). The portal lists more than 160 datasets and a redesign is under way.

Open source . Trinidad and Tobago shared its approach to building an open-source ecosystem, including a planned Open Source Programme Office with The University of the West Indies, with the United Nations Open Horizons advisory initiative (September 2026).

CodeTT. Five digital solutions were developed with iGovTT (April 2026), and an IDB-assisted diagnostic commenced in August to shape CodeTT's next phase.

Legal and regulatory foundations. Legal reviews of the AI Tools Usage Agreement and UNESCO Readiness Assessment Methodology were completed (April 2026), and a legislative consultancy to modernise the digital legal framework commenced in August.

Human Impact:
Digital Services Making a Difference

Behind the figures are people: students who no longer wait to prove what they have earned, and public officers with more time for the work that only they can do.

CASE STUDY 01 University of Trinidad and Tobago

VerifyTT

Credentials verified instantly, not in weeks or months

UTT students now share verifiable digital academic credentials that employers and institutions authenticate on the spot, replacing a manual request-and-confirm process.

BEFORE ~~WEEKS MONTHS~~ Manual verification, handled request by request

AFTER **Instant** Digital credential shared by the student, authenticated by the recipient

> Our graduates used to wait weeks, sometimes months, for their qualifications to be confirmed. With VerifyTT, they share proof the moment an employer or university asks, and it is trusted immediately.
>
> Assistant Vice President , University of Trinidad and Tobago

CASE STUDY 02 Legal Services Division

FUTUREREADYTT

Less time editing. More time for legal analysis.

30%

less editing time

using Grammarly through FutureReadyTT. The officer retained responsibility for the legal analysis and final content.

OFFICER-REPORTED RESULT

> Grammarly has cut my editing time by about a third. That time now goes into the substance of the legal analysis, and the judgement and the final text remain mine.
>
> Senior Legal Officer , Legal Services Division

Recognition and regional leadership

CANTO Ministerial Award
for ICT Leadership and Digital Transformation 2026

Conferred on Minister Dominic Smith (August 2026).

World Economic Forum Young Global Leaders, Class of 2026

Minister Smith's selection announced 16 April 2026.

CTU Presidency

Minister Smith presided over the 32nd General Conference of Ministers in Cayenne on 23 September 2026, during CTU ICT Week, calling for regional coordination on AI and data governance before handing the Presidency to St Kitts and Nevis.

International Telecommunication Union

Talks with the ITU Telecommunication Development Bureau in Cartagena (16–17 June 2026) led to an agreement to explore ITU Academy Training Centres and Digital Transformation Centres in Trinidad and Tobago. The Minister was invited to join the board of the Alliance for Digital Transformation and Acceleration Centres.

Bilateral cooperation

Meeting with the Ambassador of Singapore to advance digital cooperation (3 July 2026).

Foundations laid: May 2025 – March 2026

23 May	2025 MPAAI established
Jul 2025	Anansi AI assistant launched; inaugural National Cyberdrill
22 Sep 2025	Trinidad and Tobago joins the 50-in-5 campaign
Nov 2025	Caribbean's first ITU Digital Transformation Centre launched; LearnTT platform Phase 1 completed; MoU with UAE entities on digital transformation
26 Nov 2025	National AI Assessment launched with UNDP (AI Landscape Assessment) and UNESCO (Readiness Assessment Methodology)
Jan 2026	FutureReadyTT launched with OpenAI and Superhuman (formerly Grammarly); selection for OpenAI's Education for Countries; Data-to-Policy training for senior officials
Feb 2026	AI Landscape Assessment findings presented; UNESCO RAM validation workshop at UWI St Augustine; Minister at the AI Impact Summit, India; AI Academy pilot for ~100 public servants
Mar 2026	AI Trust and Safety Workshop for public-sector leaders; TATT–TT-CSIRT cybersecurity MoU

3. Upcoming Projects and Initiatives

October–December 2026

1. Free AI workshops in communities

With UNDP, free AI workshops at AI Centres starting October 2026 and running to December 2026, for young people, seniors, persons with disabilities, jobseekers and the wider public.

2. Advancing DPI

Expanding VerifyTT to birth and death certificates, certificates of character, land records and passport services; progressing the e-ID and interoperability legislative frameworks; and advancing a single national mobile platform for government services.

3. Whole-of-Government Digital Modernisation

Service integration, enterprise architecture and common standards, supported by the IDB-financed Programme to Accelerate the Digital Transformation Agenda.

4. National AI roadmap

Finalising the UNDP and UNESCO AI readiness findings into a national AI adoption roadmap.

5. Regional coordination

Working with CTU Member States ahead of the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference 2026.

6. LearnTT Expansion

Expanding access to digital learning by onboarding additional learners to Coursera, LinkedIn Learning, HP Foundation, Linux Foundation and Cisco programmes through LearnTT.

7. Digital Skills Factory Scholarships

LearnTT and the Public Service Academy have partnered to facilitate the delivery of 100 scholarships provided through the ITU's Digital Skills Factory initiative, enabling public servants across Trinidad and Tobago to strengthen their digital skills and competencies.

Beyond December 2026: FY2026/27 Pipeline

Programmes in preparation for fiscal year 2026/27, subject to funding approval:

Scaling FutureReadyTT. Continue training in the new fiscal year, the target for 2027 is to double the number in structured AI and digital skills training to 50,000, and to give every LearnTT registrant a pathway to a completed certificate.

Data Governance and Management Programme. A National Data Governance Framework, data standards and secure data sharing to support Open Data and AI readiness.

National AI Sector Pilots. Four production-grade AI pilots in priority government domains, with measured benefits to guide scale-up.

Digital Skills, Training and Workforce Development. A National AI Academy, a coding and technology bootcamp, and certified training for major platform launches.

Digital Readiness and Institutional Reform. A national digital maturity baseline, re-engineering of high-volume services and Digital Transformation Officers in priority ministries.

Connectivity. Implementing six additional TTWiFi sites and bringing further AI Centres into full operation.

Strengthening National Cybersecurity Capacity. Advance cybersecurity awareness, training and capacity-building initiatives to equip citizens and professionals with essential cybersecurity knowledge and skills, foster collaboration among cybersecurity experts, and strengthen national cyber resilience.

Expected outcomes

- More government services available online, securely and from a single point of access
- A public service equipped with AI tools, skills and guidance for responsible use
- Wider community access to connectivity, technology and digital learning
- Trusted, interoperable DPI that can serve as a reference for the region

4. Opportunities for Regional Collaboration

Trinidad and Tobago welcomes CTU-supported collaboration with Member States and partners in the following areas, through shared standards, technical exchanges and regional capacity-building:

01

DPI and interoperability standards
including open-standards digital credentials and the VerifyTT implementation journey

02

AI governance for small states
building on the UNESCO RAM and UNDP AI Landscape Assessment experience

03

Cybersecurity and digital trust

04

Open data, data governance and open-source ecosystems

05

Digital skills and AI education
including AI Academy and LearnTT content

06

GovTech innovation
and citizen-centred service design

Trinidad and Tobago looks forward to working with CTU Member States to build interoperable, trusted and inclusive digital public services across the Caribbean.

5. Gallery and Resources

Launches, events and official galleries

Selected launches and events from the reporting period and the foundations laid before it. Scan a code or follow the link for official photo galleries and coverage. High-resolution images and captions are available from MPAAI Communications.



VerifyTT launch — 22 April 2026

National digital credentials platform launched with eight institutions on board.

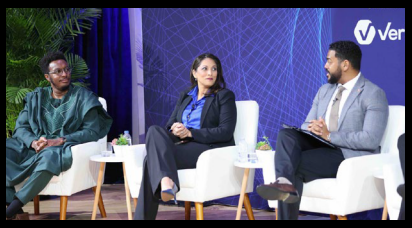
TTT News
https://tinyurl.com/ymw4ev7f



FutureReadyTT signing — 28 May 2026

MPAAI and the Ministry of Education formalise the national rollout of enterprise AI tools.

MPAAI PHOTO GALLERY
https://tinyurl.com/472wbw8s



The Caribbean Catalyst — 22 July 2026

VerifyTT's 'credentials first' journey shared with the global 50-in-5 community.

CENTRE FOR DPI
https://tinyurl.com/4ad66jjv



32nd CTU General Conference of Ministers — 23 September 2026

Minister Smith presides in Cayenne during CTU ICT Week and hands over the CTU Presidency.

CTU COMMUNIQUÉ
https://tinyurl.com/5bt74vbn



National AI Assessment launch — 26 November 2025

UNDP AI Landscape Assessment and UNESCO Readiness Assessment Methodology launched.

MPAAI PHOTO GALLERY
https://tinyurl.com/5m74rn6z



UNESCO RAM validation workshop

National validation of AI readiness findings at The UWI, St Augustine.

MPAAI PHOTO GALLERY
https://tinyurl.com/2wt43erf

All MPAAI photo galleries
mpaai.gov.tt/photo-galleries

MPAAI media releases
mpaai.gov.tt/news

Official channels
Instagram & TikTok: @minpublicadminai
Facebook: MinPubAdminAi
X: @OfficialMPAAITT
YouTube: @mpaai_tt
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Spectrum, Satellites & Survival: Designing Networks For The Hardest Day



Maria Myers Hamilton

Dr. Maria Myers Hamilton JP is Managing Director of the Spectrum Management Authority, Jamaica.

Spectrum Management as a connectivity tool: the Jamaica 600 MHz award

In part 2 of the series Dr. Maria Myers-Hamilton examines how Jamaica's 600 MHz spectrum award and the Hurricane Melissa satellite response show what resilience looks like when regulation is designed for outcomes, not only licenses

Spectrum is the foundational resource on which wireless broadband connectivity rests and the 600 MHz band, previously allocated to broadcasting, represents one of the most valuable assets available for extending meaningful connectivity to hard-to-reach populations. Its propagation characteristics enable coverage of rural areas and penetration into structures at a lower infrastructure cost than mid-band or high-band 5G deployments.

In July 2024, Jamaica's Spectrum Management Authority (SMA) published rules for the country's first-ever spectrum award in the 600 MHz band – a single contiguous block of 2×20 MHz in the 617-652 MHz and 663-698 MHz ranges. Jamaica had formally identified the 614-698 MHz band for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) at the World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 (WRC-23), held in Dubai in December 2023.

This identification aligned Jamaica with the broader regional trend: in the Americas, only Canada and the United States had previously assigned 600 MHz spectrum for mobile services, with Mexico planning assignment in 2025 and Colombia not until 2029.

Rather than maximising spectrum revenue, the beauty contest format prioritised the quality of the winning operator's deployment plan, financial capacity and commitment to timely network rollout

The award was structured as a beauty contest rather than an auction, a design choice with significant policy implications. Rather than maximising spectrum revenue, the beauty contest format prioritised the quality of the winning operator's deployment plan, financial capacity and commitment to timely network rollout. This approach reflects a deliberate regulatory judgment that connectivity outcomes, particularly in underserved areas, are best secured through operator commitment rather than price competition.

The licence conditions embed meaningful connectivity standards directly into the spectrum assignment. The winner must cover at least 50 per cent of the national population, including specifically designated unserved and underserved communities, within 12 months of licence assignment, rising to 95 per cent within 24 months, with a minimum download speed of 5 Mbps and a signal strength of -105 dBm or better across all obligated areas.

The licence term is 15 years and renewable, with a reserve price of USD 24 million (USD 8 million payable at assignment and USD 16 million in annual instalments over 10 years). A spectrum cap of 33 per cent of total available mobile spectrum per operator provides structural protection against undue market concentration.

This award demonstrates a mature regulatory approach that treats spectrum as a public resource with social

obligations attached, not merely as a revenue instrument. The direct translation of coverage and speed requirements into licence conditions – rather than voluntary commitments – provides the regulatory community with an enforceable standard and a precedent applicable to future award processes across other Caribbean jurisdictions.

Low earth orbit satellites in the Caribbean: licensing, deployment and regulatory challenges

LEO satellite services represent a structurally distinct approach to connectivity in the Caribbean, offering coverage independent of terrestrial infrastructure and capable of reaching populations that fixed and mobile networks cannot serve economically.

SpaceX's Starlink constellation, with over 4,786 satellites in orbit and approximately 2,000 further planned as of 2023, is the world's first and largest commercial LEO broadband service.[22] As of mid-2023, Starlink was commercially available in 14 Caribbean and Central American territories, including Jamaica (licensed in October 2022), with commercial launches planned for at least 15 additional territories including Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada and St Lucia.

Jamaica's Starlink licence is issued as an individual licence under the Radio and Telegraph Control Act of 1973, with an annual renewable term and annual regulatory and spectrum fees. The policy objective associated with the licence is coverage of rural and unserved areas, establishing satellite broadband as a complementary layer in Jamaica's universal service architecture rather than a substitute for terrestrial networks. The competitive LEO landscape is also expanding: Amazon's Kuiper and Telesat's Lightspeed have announced plans to launch services in the Americas, while OneWeb and Swarm are already licensed in Brazil.

The regulatory debate around LEO satellites in 2024 focused on three interconnected issues: spectrum coordination for satellite services at WRC-27; market access and licensing frameworks, with several jurisdictions – Thailand, Nigeria and South Africa – revising or scrutinising their regulatory approaches; and space sustainability, including orbital debris mitigation and the US Federal Communications Commission's five-year deorbit requirement for LEO satellites. The ITU Radiocommunication Assembly (RA-23) adopted a recommendation on the framework and objectives for 6G, with WRC-27 preparing studies on spectrum allocations for direct satellite-to-IMT device connectivity – a development with direct implications for Caribbean emergency communications, as the Hurricane Melissa case demonstrates.

Perhaps the most consequential development in the satellite landscape is the emergence of direct-to-device (D2D) technology. Starlink's D2D capability enables standard LTE mobile handsets to communicate via satellite without additional hardware, using onboard satellite modems that function as space-based cellular towers capable of interoperating with existing mobile networks as standard roaming partners. T-Mobile in the United States, Salt in Switzerland and One in New Zealand have established D2D partnerships with Starlink. Juniper Research projected over 300,000 connections accessing satellite 5G networks by the end of 2024. The regulatory implications of D2D, encompassing spectrum allocation, MNO interconnection arrangements and national PLMN (public land mobile network) code management, are examined in the following section through the Hurricane Melissa case study.

Hurricane Melissa: a case study in emergency satellite spectrum governance

Hurricane Melissa made landfall in Jamaica on 28 October 2025 as a category 5 storm, the strongest hurricane of 2025 and the third-most intense Atlantic hurricane on record. The storm caused extensive damage to terrestrial telecommunications infrastructure across significant portions of the island, eliminating mobile and fixed network coverage in the most severely affected communities.

The satellite communications response that followed constitutes the most significant documented real-world test of LEO and geostationary satellite emergency services in the Caribbean to date and its analysis yields regulatory lessons of direct relevance to spectrum policy, emergency preparedness and the WRC-27 agenda.

The Starlink donated terminal programme

SpaceX mobilised its crisis response team proactively from 23 October 2025, engaging disaster management officials across the Caribbean as tropical storm Melissa developed. Following category 5 landfall, SpaceX chartered an Antonov An-12 cargo aircraft to expedite delivery of 400 terminals, bypassing normal shipping constraints. Over 900 Starlink user terminals were ultimately deployed to Jamaica. Within the first 35 days, approximately 250,000 people were connected through donated terminals, with the hardware permanently retained by recipient agencies. SpaceX provided 30 days of free service for all residential customers affected by the disaster. The crisis response team remained on the ground in Jamaica for nearly two weeks.

Direct-to-device activation: a historic deployment milestone

The activation of Starlink's D2D service in Jamaica within less than 24 hours of Melissa's landfall represents a significant milestone in emergency telecommunications. D2D enables any standard LTE mobile handset to communicate via satellite without additional hardware or configuration, making the service immediately accessible to the general population even where all cellular infrastructure was destroyed. SpaceX described this as a 'historic deployment milestone' achieved through close coordination with Jamaica's Spectrum Management Authority.

The SMA issued a temporary spectrum licence enabling D2D transmission over affected areas. The quantified impact was substantial: over 1.8 million SMS messages were carried via D2D through January 2026; 140,000 unique users registered on 1 November 2025 alone and 32 organisations were supported, comprising 14 humanitarian and 18 government entities.

The Hispasat/Indra Group Deployment

HispaSat, part of the Indra Group, deployed geostationary satellite antennas at multiple locations across Jamaica, from Westmoreland and St Elizabeth in the west to Portland and St Thomas in the east, through a turnkey emergency response platform. On-ground deployment was led by the Jamaica Defence Force, Jamaica Constabulary Force , and UNICEF, following in-country training facilitated by HispaSat technicians prior to the event. Neptune Communications Jamaica, which provides independent satellite services specifically designed for Caribbean government and critical agency emergency connectivity, also activated its services during the response period.

Four Operational Gaps And Their Regulatory Remedies

Despite its broadly successful outcomes, the Hurricane Melissa response revealed four operational gaps that have been formally documented in Jamaica's national resilience framework.

First, the absence of pre-identified beneficiary institutions caused delays in utilising specialised deployment teams, some of which required temporary withdrawal due to security issues and lack of electrical power. The solution is a pre-identified, geo-referenced registry of priority sites – hospitals, shelters, schools and emergency operations centres – maintained by the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management and shared with satellite providers in advance.

The activation of Starlink's D2D service in Jamaica within less than 24 hours of Melissa's landfall represents a significant milestone in emergency telecommunications

Second, the Government of Jamaica was responsible for providing routers and access points for the HispaSat deployment, but procurement delays affected equipment availability. Satellite service agreements should incorporate routers and edge devices as an integrated solution, with strategic buffer stock maintained locally.

Third, domestic telecommunications companies were entirely occupied recovering their own infrastructure, leaving insufficient trained local partners available for satellite deployment support. A minimum of two qualified local partners per technology platform should be identified and trained before any emergency.

Fourth, administrative and customs clearance processes were not aligned with emergency reaction timescales. A standing emergency spectrum authorisation framework, enabling immediate service activation from day zero under the Telecommunications Act, is required.

Technical Prerequisites For D2d Pre-Deployment

Starlink has articulated three technical conditions that, if established in advance by regulators and operators, would enable D2D activation materially faster than the sub-24-hour milestone achieved during Melissa.

- Spectrum pre-allocation: dedication of terrestrial spectrum available to all operators for emergency use, with D2D requiring 10 MHz uplink × 10 MHz downlink of cleared frequency division duplex spectrum in the 1.4–2.7 GHz band;
- MNO interconnection: pre-established interconnection agreements with all local mobile network operators eliminating procedural delays during activation; and
- PLMN code designation: a dedicated Public Land Mobile Network code for emergency service use, either from a partner operator or issued by the regulatory authority — without which standard LTE handsets cannot register to the emergency satellite network.

The SMA's formalised action item – to develop a standing emergency spectrum authorisation framework covering D2D and VSAT services, formalise pre-interconnection arrangements between Starlink and Jamaican MNOs, including PLMN code designation and pre-identify geo-referenced priority deployment sites – directly addresses these requirements, with a stated target of activation below the 24-hour threshold achieved during Melissa. This action item represents a concrete regulatory contribution to the WRC-27 agenda item studying spectrum allocations for direct satellite-to-IMT device connectivity.



SAVE THE DATE

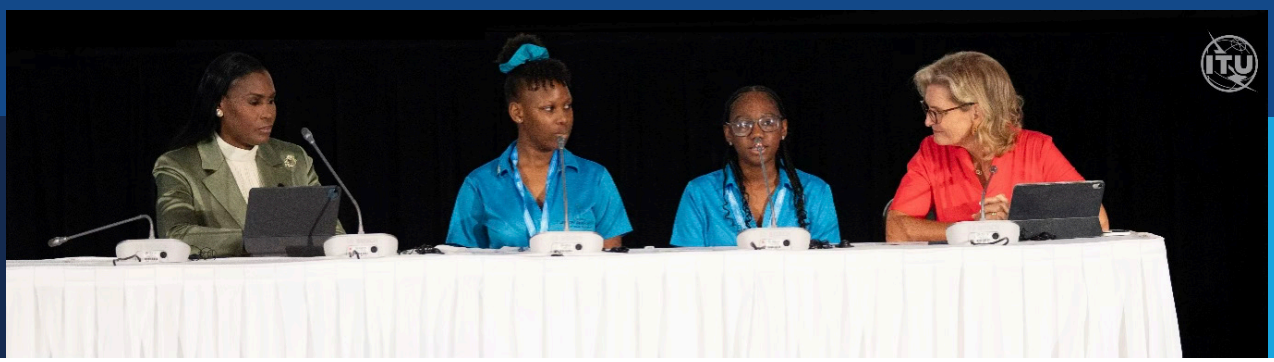
Right now, decision-makers are making multi-million dollar calls using less than half the picture. But there is more to our lands and seas than meets the eye.

That's why we're bringing together government leaders, geospatial experts, critical infrastructure decision makers, tech experts, and developmental institutions to chart the course for Caribbean location intelligence.

JOIN US as we go beyond the map, to uncover how Geospatial Knowledge will accelerate progress across the region.

DataAxis™

SmartSteps: Young Bahamian Innovators Take Bold Steps Towards an Inclusive Digital Future



In photo left to right: The Hon. Pia Glover-Rolle, MP, Minister of Labour, Public Service and National Insurance, Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Ms. Marena Strachan and Ms. Karis Moss, members of FEM STEM Bahamas and Mrs. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Secretary General, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

FEM STEM Bahamas' Karis Moss and Marena Strachan showcase the power of youth-led innovation and assistive technology at the World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum 2026.

At a time when the world is increasingly focused on harnessing technology to transform lives, two young Bahamian innovators are demonstrating that meaningful innovation begins with understanding the needs of others.

Ms. Karis Moss and Ms. Marena Strachan, members of FEM STEM Bahamas, were among the young innovators whose work took centre stage at the International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) World Telecommunication/ICT Policy Forum 2026 (WTPF-26), held in Nassau, The Bahamas, from 2–4 September 2026, following a Strategic Dialogue on 1 September.

Their groundbreaking project, SmartSteps, a technology-enhanced mobility cane designed to improve safety and independence for persons with visual impairments, offered a compelling example of how young women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) can develop practical solutions to real-world challenges.

More than an innovative device, SmartSteps represents a vision of technology that places people, accessibility and inclusion at the centre of digital transformation.

Innovation with Purpose: The SmartSteps Project

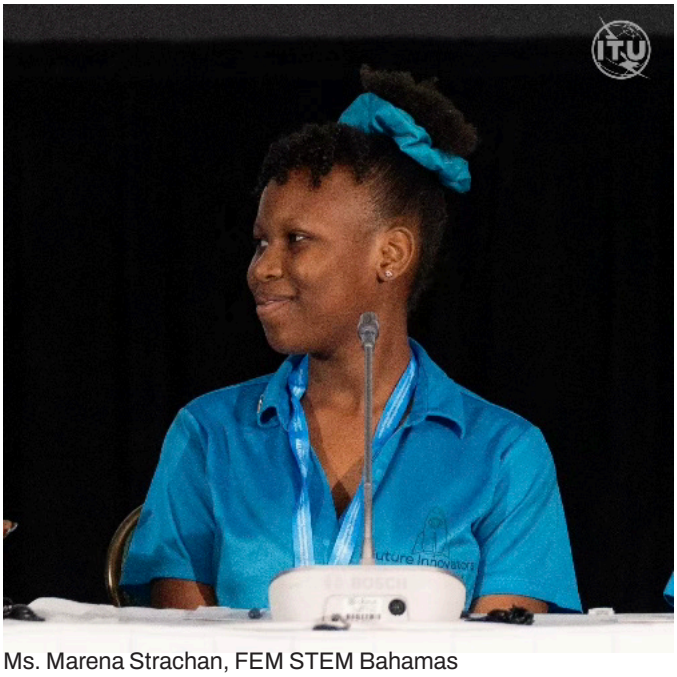
For persons with visual impairments, navigating everyday environments can present challenges that affect mobility, confidence and independence. Recognising the importance of accessible assistive technologies, the young innovators of FEM STEM Bahamas developed SmartSteps as a solution intended to support safer and more independent movement.

The project combines technological innovation with a people-centred approach to accessibility, reflecting the belief that advancements in STEM should deliver tangible benefits to individuals and communities.

Importantly, SmartSteps was developed with attention to the experiences of those it aims to serve. The project received positive feedback from the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities in The Bahamas following consultations with visually impaired individuals. The concept was recognised for its practicality, affordability and potential to improve everyday mobility and safety.

This engagement underscores a fundamental principle of inclusive innovation: technologies are most effective when the voices and experiences of intended users help shape their development.

For Moss, Strachan and their fellow innovators, SmartSteps demonstrates that young people can move beyond being consumers of technology to becoming creators of solutions that address pressing societal needs.



Ms. Marena Strachan, FEM STEM Bahamas

From The Bahamas to the International Stage

The SmartSteps journey gained international recognition in June 2026 when a team representing FEM STEM Bahamas participated in the International Greenwich Olympiad in London, United Kingdom.

The six-member team, comprising Sanaa Clarke, Amelia Hepburn, Karis Moss, Amerie Pinder, Marena Strachan and Staria Wallace, achieved outstanding success, earning a Gold Award in the STEM Presentation Category and a Silver Award in the Environment Category.

Their accomplishments placed Bahamian youth innovation on the international stage and demonstrated the potential of STEM education to nurture creativity, problem-solving and leadership among young women.

The recognition also reflected the importance of mentorship, community partnerships and investment in opportunities that allow young people to develop and present their ideas beyond the classroom.

For a small island developing state such as The Bahamas, these achievements carry significance beyond individual awards. They illustrate how Caribbean youth can contribute to technological advancement and develop solutions with relevance far beyond their national borders.

SmartSteps at WTPF-26: Giving Young Innovators a Global Voice

The presentation of SmartSteps during the WTPF-26 Strategic Dialogue provided a powerful connection between international digital policy discussions and practical innovation.

Under the theme "From Vision to Action: Steering an Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Digital Future", the Strategic Dialogue brought together policymakers, industry leaders, development partners and other stakeholders to explore how digital transformation could create meaningful opportunities for all.

One of the discussions focused specifically on empowering women, youth and persons with disabilities in information and communication technologies.

Within this context, SmartSteps served as a tangible example of how youth-led innovation can contribute to accessibility and digital inclusion.

The project attracted recognition in the Forum's discussions, including in the official report on the Strategic Dialogue presented by the Hon. Sebastian Bastian, Minister of Innovation and National Development of The Bahamas.

Highlighting the importance of solutions developed in partnership with the communities they serve, the Minister referenced the youth-designed SmartSteps mobility cane as an example of how underrepresented groups can actively shape innovation and decision-making.

The participation of young innovators such as Moss and Strachan reinforced a vital message: young women must not simply be beneficiaries of digital development. They must have opportunities to influence, design and lead it.

FEM STEM Bahamas: Empowering the Next Generation of Women in Technology

Behind the success of SmartSteps is the commitment of FEM STEM Bahamas, a youth-focused non-profit organisation established in July 2019 to educate, empower and equip girls to pursue opportunities in STEM.

Through educational programmes, practical workshops, mentorship and hands-on learning, the

organisation supports young women in developing technical skills, building confidence and exploring careers in science and technology.

Its initiatives primarily target girls between the ages of 13 and 18, encouraging early exposure to STEM disciplines while promoting leadership, creativity and independent problem-solving.

FEM STEM Bahamas recognises that closing the gender gap in technology requires more than encouraging girls to study technical subjects. It requires creating environments in which they can experiment, innovate, collaborate and see themselves as future leaders.

The achievements of the SmartSteps team provide a powerful illustration of this mission in action.

By equipping young women with the knowledge, tools and opportunities to address real challenges, FEM STEM Bahamas is helping to cultivate a generation of innovators capable of contributing to national development and the wider Caribbean digital economy.

A Caribbean Model for Inclusive Innovation

The SmartSteps project carries important lessons for the Caribbean as the region advances its digital transformation agenda.

Across Caribbean countries, expanding digital access, strengthening STEM education, empowering women and girls, and improving opportunities for persons with disabilities remain important development priorities.

Initiatives such as SmartSteps demonstrate how these objectives can intersect through practical, community-oriented innovation.

They also highlight the importance of partnerships among educational institutions, governments, civil society, industry and organisations supporting women in technology.

For the CTU Network of Women (CTU-NoW), the achievements of Moss, Strachan and their fellow innovators reinforce the importance of encouraging girls and young women to pursue STEM careers, develop leadership capabilities and participate meaningfully in shaping the region's digital future.

Their work also illustrates why accessibility must be considered from the earliest stages of technological development, rather than treated as an afterthought.

When young women are empowered to innovate and when the needs of persons with disabilities inform technological solutions, digital transformation becomes more inclusive, relevant and impactful.

Small Steps, Transformative Impact

The story of SmartSteps is ultimately one of possibility.

What began as a youth-led effort to address a mobility challenge has developed into an internationally recognised innovation, demonstrating the creativity and potential of young Bahamian women in STEM.

Through their involvement in SmartSteps and its presentation on an international platform, Karis Moss and Marena Strachan have helped bring attention to the important role young people can play in advancing accessibility and inclusive technological development.

Their journey is a reminder that innovation is not defined solely by the sophistication of a technology, but by its ability to respond to human needs and improve lives.

As the Caribbean works towards a more connected, resilient and inclusive digital future, initiatives such as SmartSteps offer an inspiring example of what can be achieved when young women are given the opportunity to transform ideas into solutions.

For FEM STEM Bahamas, SmartSteps is more than a mobility innovation. It is a demonstration that the next generation of Caribbean women in technology is already taking meaningful steps towards shaping a more inclusive world.

CTU NoW Network of Women

Early Warning Health Intelligence™



By Corlette Deveaux, MBA

CEO & Co-Founder, Remember2, Inc. | Rm2.ai™

Why the Future of Healthcare May Depend on What Happens Between Visit

Healthcare has achieved extraordinary advances through medications, robotic surgery, artificial intelligence, precision medicine, and advanced diagnostics. Yet despite these innovations, healthcare continues to face a significant challenge: limited visibility into what happens between care interactions.

Every day, patients leave hospitals, physician offices, rehabilitation centers, and emergency departments appearing stable and well. Yet many important health changes occur afterward at home, quietly and often without observation. Blood pressure may rise, oxygen levels decline, mobility decrease, medications be missed, or subtle cognitive changes emerge. These changes often occur long before a crisis becomes visible, but they happen outside traditional healthcare settings where they frequently go unnoticed.

Many of healthcare's most costly and devastating events do not begin in hospitals. They begin at home.This challenge is especially relevant in The Bahamas, where noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, hypertension, and cancer account for approximately 75% of all deaths. As a result, chronic disease remains one of the nation's most pressing healthcare challenges, impacting individuals, families, employers, healthcare providers, and government resources alike.

At the same time, The Bahamas is experiencing a demographic shift. More Bahamians are living longer while managing multiple chronic conditions, increasing the demand for healthcare services, caregiving support, and long-term care solutions. Family members are often caring for aging loved ones across islands, or from abroad, creating new challenges in maintaining awareness of health changes before an emergency occurs.

For an archipelago nation, healthcare access can be affected by geography, transportation challenges, workforce shortages, and distance from specialized care. In these environments, visibility may become just as important as access.

For decades, healthcare has largely operated within a reactive model. Patients often enter the healthcare system after symptoms worsen, after complications escalate, or after hospitalization becomes necessary. Yet many health crises do not occur suddenly. They develop gradually through subtle physiologic, behavioral, and functional changes that evolve over days, weeks, and sometimes months.

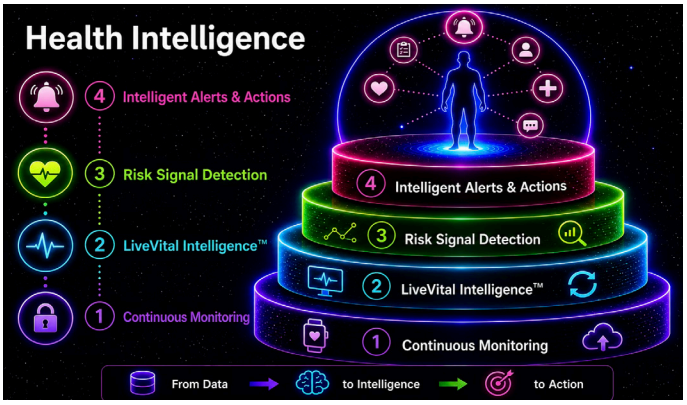
Caregivers frequently describe sensing that "something wasn't right" before a fall, stroke, hospitalization, or other medical event occurred. The challenge is that these concerns are often difficult to measure, document, or communicate before they become clinically obvious. This growing visibility gap may be driving the emergence of an entirely new healthcare category: Early Warning Health Intelligence™.

Early Warning Health Intelligence™ represents a shift in thinking, from episodic healthcare to continuous health awareness. It extends beyond telehealth, remote monitoring, wearables, and AI by supporting continuous visibility into health trends between healthcare interactions. And, it's about access across islands with real time visibility of health trends.

Historically, healthcare infrastructure has evolved in phases. The first era focused on hospitals and clinics. The second focused on digitization through electronic medical records. The next era may focus on Continuous Health Intelligence, the ability to maintain visible meaningful awareness of health trends between visits, helping identify evolving risks earlier and supporting more informed decision-making.

This is the vision behind Rm2.ai™, an Early Warning Health Intelligence™ platform designed to support continuous health visibility between care interactions. Rm2.ai™ combines connected health technologies, wearable integrations, caregiver engagement tools, and AI-supported trend analysis to help authorized families, caregivers, healthcare organizations, and clinicians maintain greater awareness of changing health patterns over time.

Health Intelligence transforms health data into actionable awareness, helping people see what may be changing before a crisis occurs. At the core of Health Intelligence are four critical layers: Continuous Monitoring, LiveVital Intelligence™, Risk Signal Detection, and Intelligent Alerts & Actions.



Continuous Monitoring focuses on maintaining awareness of health-related information such as activity patterns, vital signs, sleep trends, mobility changes, medication adherence, and other evolving indicators. LiveVital Intelligence™ transforms data into visibility by providing authorized caregivers and healthcare stakeholders with meaningful insights into health trends as they develop in real time .

Risk Signal Detection utilizes artificial intelligence to identify unusual patterns or changes that may warrant attention. Importantly, this is not intended to diagnose disease or replace healthcare professionals. Rather, it is designed to support earlier awareness of changes that might otherwise remain unnoticed.

Intelligent Alerts & Actions focus on communication, reminders, caregiver notifications, and escalation pathways that support timely engagement when concerns arise.

Together, these layers help create a more connected and informed care ecosystem.

The urgency of this shift continues to grow. Aging populations, rising chronic disease rates, healthcare workforce shortages, caregiver burden, and escalating healthcare costs are placing unprecedented pressure on healthcare systems worldwide. Governments, insurers, employers, providers, and families are seeking approaches that support better outcomes while reducing strain on overburdened systems.

The economic implications are substantial. Chronic diseases contribute significantly to healthcare spending, lost productivity, preventable hospitalizations, and caregiver burden. As these challenges continue to grow, healthcare leaders are increasingly recognizing that earlier awareness may play an important role in supporting more proactive care strategies.

According to the Pan American Health Organization, noncommunicable diseases account for approximately 75% of all deaths in The Bahamas. Meanwhile, healthcare expenditures are estimated at approximately $1.3 billion annually, underscoring the growing human and economic toll of chronic disease on our nation.

Importantly, Early Warning Health Intelligence™ is not about guaranteeing prevention, diagnosis, or outcomes. Responsible healthcare innovation requires scientific rigor, ongoing research, regulatory compliance, and ethical oversight. However, a growing body of evidence suggests that healthcare is steadily moving toward models that support earlier awareness and greater continuity between traditional healthcare encounters.

For The Bahamas, this represents a unique opportunity. As chronic disease rates continue to rise and the population ages, healthcare innovation must extend beyond hospitals and clinics into everyday life. The ability to recognize health changes earlier, support caregivers more effectively, and strengthen connections across the healthcare ecosystem may become increasingly important in building a healthier and more resilient nation.

For The Bahamas and healthcare systems around the world, the future may depend not only on access to care, but on how well we understand and respond to what happens between care interactions. That is the mission of Rm2.ai™, to support continuous health awareness, earlier insights, accessibility, and more connected care. Because healthcare cannot respond early to what remains invisible. For more information visit www.Rm2.ai.

The Technology Is Here. Whom Is It Working For?

By Michelle A. Eng Leang

The Caribbean has become remarkably good at discussing its digital future. We have strategies, frameworks, conferences, ministerial declarations and an expanding vocabulary that includes artificial intelligence, digital public infrastructure, interoperability and responsible technology governance. Governments are investing in digital services, institutions are developing new capabilities and innovators are demonstrating that geography need not determine the limits of ambition. Much of this progress deserves recognition. But somewhere between the announcements, the investments and the impressive statistics, we must ask a deceptively simple question: who is all this technology actually working for?

It is a question that cannot be answered by counting platforms, celebrating partnerships or reporting how many people have registered for training. Those figures matter, but they measure activity rather than the full experience of transformation. A government service can exist online without being accessible to the people who need it. A person can complete digital training without gaining an opportunity to apply those skills. A community can have connectivity without enjoying meaningful digital inclusion. The distinction is not between progress and failure. It is between what technology makes possible and what people can actually do with that possibility.

Trinidad and Tobago's Country Profile illustrates both the scale of the ambition and the importance of examining its outcomes. More than 25,000 public servants, teachers, students and citizens have participated in structured artificial intelligence and digital skills training. LearnTT has recorded more than 26,000 registrations, while VerifyTT is introducing new possibilities for authenticating academic credentials. These developments represent important institutional progress, but their longterm significance will depend on whether they improve access, reduce administrative burdens, create opportunities and make public services more responsive to the people they exist to serve.

Dr Maria Myers Hamilton's examination of spectrum management and disaster resilience introduces another dimension to this conversation. When Hurricane Melissa damaged Jamaica's telecommunications infrastructure, connectivity became a matter of immediate public necessity. Her analysis demonstrates that regulatory decisions, spectrum allocation and emergency preparedness are not abstract technical concerns. They influence whether people can communicate, access information and receive assistance when conventional systems fail. Resilience cannot be measured by infrastructure alone. It must also be measured by what remains available to people when that infrastructure is under pressure.

The young Bahamian innovators behind SmartSteps offer a different but equally important perspective. Their assistive mobility solution begins not with the excitement of a new technology, but with an understanding of a human need. The same principle informs the possibilities explored through early warning health intelligence. Innovation becomes meaningful when it responds to circumstances that affect people's independence, wellbeing and quality of life.

Across these examples, a consistent challenge emerges. We must become more demanding in how we define digital success. The number of systems deployed matters, but so does whether citizenscan use them. Investment in innovation matters, but so does whether solutions reach the communities for which they were designed. Representation in technology leadership matters, but so does the authority to influence the decisions being made. The Caribbean does not lack ambition, intelligence or creativity. What we need is the discipline to connect technological advancement with measurable human outcomes. That requires policymakers, regulators, institutions and innovators to move beyond celebrating implementation and begin examining impact. A successful digital transformation must be evident in the quality of public services, the resilience of our communities, the opportunities available to our people and the extent to which technology makes everyday life better.

Progress is not the technology we introduce. It is the difference that technology makes in people's lives.

CALL FOR MEMBERS: Strengthening Caribbean Women's Representation in Digital Policy



Caribbean women leaders have a new opportunity to amplify their voices, influence digital policymaking and strengthen the region's representation in international digital governance.

The EULAC Network of Women Leaders in Digital Policy, in collaboration with the Caribbean Telecommunications Union Network of Women (CTUNoW), has launched an outreach initiative inviting Caribbean governments and public authorities to nominate women representatives to join the Network as Governmental Members.

The initiative builds on the growing partnership between the two Networks, formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in 2025, and represents another important step towards advancing women's leadership, participation and influence in shaping digital transformation across Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe.

Strengthening Caribbean Voices in Digital Governance

The EULAC Network of Women Leaders in Digital Policy brings together women representatives from public authorities responsible for digital policy across Latin America and the Caribbean, supported by aOiliated regional and international partners, including the CTU.

The Network provides a platform for collaboration, knowledge exchange and dialogue on digital policy priorities, while promoting greater participation by women in the institutions and decisionmaking processes shaping the digital future.

As Caribbean countries accelerate their digital transformation agendas, ensuring that women are represented in policy discussions and leadership structures is increasingly important.

Through stronger engagement with the EULAC Network, Caribbean governments can contribute regional perspectives, share national experiences and participate in discussions that support more inclusive and responsive digital policies.

To date we have five (5) CTU Member States who are country members of the EULAC Network of Women in

Digital Policy. They are:

- Belize
- Jamaica
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- Suriname
- Trinidad and Tobago

An Invitation to Caribbean Governments

Under the EULAC Network's governance structure, **Governmental Members form the political and technical core of the Network,** contributing their expertise, national perspectives and experience to its activities and decisionmaking processes.

The current call invites CTUNoW Member States to express their interest in becoming Governmental Members, with each participating country designating one or two women representatives from relevant government ministries, agencies or public authorities.

Women whose professional responsibilities allow them to represent their countries in digital policy discussions are encouraged to express their interest.

CTUNoW members who may not be positioned to serve directly as Governmental Members are also encouraged to identify and recommend suitably qualified women within their governments or public institutions.

For Caribbean countries already represented within the EULAC Network, coordination will take place with existing Governmental Members and CTUNoW to ensure continuity, strengthen collaboration and avoid duplication.

Building Partnerships for Greater Impact

This membership initiative reinforces the shared commitment of CTUNoW and the EULAC Network to advancing gender equality and women's leadership in digital governance.

It also creates opportunities for Caribbean women to strengthen professional relationships, exchange policy experiences and contribute to regional and international conversations on emerging digital priorities, including artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital inclusion, connectivity, innovation and digital skills development.

By expanding Caribbean governmental representation, the Networks aim to ensure that the perspectives and priorities of small island developing states and other Caribbean countries are more effectively reflected in broader digital policy discussions.

The message is clear: Caribbean women must not only participate in digital transformation — they must help shape the policies, partnerships and decisions that drive it.

Call to Action: Become a Governmental Member

The CTU Network of Women encourages its Member States, National Focal Points and women working in government and public authorities to support this important initiative.

Interested countries are invited to submit an expression of interest, providing the following information:

Country

- Name of government ministry, institution or public authority
- Full name of the proposed woman representative
- OOicial position or designation
- Email address

Expressions of interest should be sent to both:

Francola John
CTU Network of Women (CTUNoW)
francola.john@ctu.int
Technical Secretariat
EULAC Network of Women Leaders in Digital Policy
digitalsecretariat@giz.de

Shaping a More Inclusive Digital Future

The partnership between CTUNoW and the EULAC Network reflects a shared vision of a digital future in which women are recognised not simply as beneficiaries of technological advancement, but as leaders, innovators and decisionmakers.

Through this call for membership, Caribbean governments have an opportunity to elevate women's leadership, deepen international cooperation and strengthen the Caribbean's collective voice in digital policy.

CTUNoW encourages Caribbean governments to seize this opportunity and nominate women leaders who can represent their countries and contribute to shaping an inclusive, innovative and resilient digital future.

For further information or to express interest in membership, contact francola.john@ctu.int and digitalsecretariat@giz.de.

2027 / REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

ICT Calendar of Events

01	**CTU 2027 1st International ICT Forecast and Industry Watch Meeting**	13th January | Virtual
02	**First cluster of Council Working Groups and Expert Groups in 2027**	18th - 29th January | Geneva
03	**The 11th annual Trinidad and Tobago Internet Governance Forum (TTIGF)**	28th - 29th January | Hybrid
04	**CANTO Connect and 42nd AGM**	31st January - 2nd February | Panama
05	**Caribbean DNS Security Forum - 16 February 2027**	16th February | Trinidad and Tobago
06	**POST-ISAC Cyber Resilience Capacity Development Workshop**	17th - 19th February | Trinidad and Tobago
07	**Spectrum Management Task Force Meeting and Workshop**	23rd - 24th February | TBD
08	**GSMA Mobile World Congress (MWC)**	1st - 4th March | Spain
09	**ICANN 88 (Community Forum)**	13th - 18th March | Lisbon Portugal
10	**56th Executive Council Meeting (EC54)**	24th March | Virtual

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