

Greetings presented to the Community Tourism Conference- May 23 – 26, 2003, Wyndham Rosehall, Montego Bay.

Salutations to distinguished guests and audience

Some of you would have seen the article in the Observer on Wednesday May 21, with the headline ‘Community tourism gets J\$10 mill dollars’. The article went on to say that the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Program for Economic Competitiveness (CPEC) has contributed this money for the development of Tourism with the hope of creating wealth and prosperity and alleviating poverty.

---- Of course these are our expectations and of course they are realizable.----

Why this intervention by CPEC;

Many of you may not have heard of CPEC but the main objective of the CPEC program is to strengthen the capacity of the Caribbean region to compete in the global economy through human resource development. It is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency and

based on the assessments done and the needs identified in the Tourism sector CPEC sees itself faced with several prime opportunities such as :

Business planning and management training

Market training

Standards development

Interpretation training

Computer and information technology training – among others.

Our commitment to Community tourism has been deepened as a result of the successes of the South Coast project for which CDN\$187,000 has already been spent in hospitality training, IT training, website development and tour guiding. A strategic marketing Plan has also been a critical output of this project and I am pleased to announce that the plan will be incorporated into the larger plan for the South Coast development being implemented by TPDCo ,JTB and other tourism related Agencies.

Under this program also, over 300 persons were sensitized to the benefits of community tourism in the four parishes of Clarendon, Manchester, St Elizabeth and Westmoreland. Through this program more persons have become aware of the

potential that exists in the communities for income generation from a variety of truly community experiences from bed and breakfast; farm and plantation tours ; cultural festivals and heritage related events;

No wonder then, that this niche is growing as rapidly as it is and is creating the opportunity for meaningful economic participation by communities in the tourism sector.

CIDA through CPEC is pleased to partner in this initiative with the SCF and the Institute for Peace in providing this forum for expression of ideas and the sharing of successes (Case studies) on this very important theme –“ Building Communities through Community Tourism”

We wish all participants a productive learning experience here, over the next three days. We have tried to assemble the best of the best in their field, to be here from Canada and the Caribbean.

**Let us open our minds and analyse , visualize,
interpret, plan and out of this experience should
come, the way forward .**

Thank You all.

**Presented by Paulette Mitchell
CPEC Project Coordinator**