

# CAISNews

*"An electronic newsletter of the Caribbean Agricultural Information Service (CAIS) to improve access to agricultural information in the Caribbean Region"*

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## **Introduction**

CAISNews focuses on activities associated with developing the capacity in information and communications management in the Caribbean region. CAIS support to national networks is important to us at the Secretariat and we look forward to working with you to implement the key programmes identified by stakeholders as priorities. Please remember that CAISNews is also available on the CAIS website [www.caisnet.org](http://www.caisnet.org). Many thanks to the readers who sent us feedback and remember your contributions are important in making this our newsletter. Happy reading.

## **ICT in the Caribbean**

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) developments and initiatives focus on the capacity of developing countries to take up the "digital opportunities" represented by new technology. However, most discussions have been concerned with larger countries with less attention given to the small and microstates such as the Caribbean and Pacific island nations. There are particular development problems and characteristics, which have had an impact on the small island states experience with the changes that have taken place in ICTs. These problems and characteristics include the shortage of resources (including human) for social and economic development, the limited size of national markets and the remoteness and internal dispersion of island states.

The above summary was extracted from an article titled "ICT Developments and initiatives in the ACP Caribbean and Pacific regions" which was found in the Courier No 192 May-June 2002. The Courier is the magazine of ACP-EU development cooperation. This issue of the Courier is dedicated to Information and Communication Technologies and interestingly the country reports are on St Lucia and St Vincent. The Caribbean and more importantly Information and Communication Technology are highlighted in this issue. Feel free to visit the Courier online: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/publicat/courier/index\\_192\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/publicat/courier/index_192_en.htm)

## **Women use CD ROM Technology to improve income**

Information on ways to improve yields of crops and livestock and marketing help women in Uganda who use the Nakaseke Telecentre to dramatically improve their living standards. The CD ROM technology is used to transfer this information to the women who may have very limited education. As such the CD ROM is interactive and relies on sound so that those who may not read can listen to the information in their own native language. This project has also sparked interest in the children to learn about the computer. One benefit is that the children are encouraged to read in their quest to learn more.

Source: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid\\_2078000/2078444.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/sci/tech/newsid_2078000/2078444.stm)

## **CAIS in the Countries**

*St Vincent*

The project proposal document has the approval of both the Chief Technical Officer and his deputy. The personnel department is currently working to prepare a one-week training workshop in documentation and records management. The Library has now been allocated a much larger area for its activities.

## **Publications and Websites**

### Publications

Vernon, Richard. 2001. *Knowing Where You're Going: Information Systems for Agricultural Research Management*. The Hague: International Service for National Agricultural Research. ISBN 92-9118-054-8

The information in this book is separated into parts one and two which target the research manager and the information manager respectively. The areas covered in part one include information management and strategy, the agricultural research management information system (MIS), and case studies on developing a MIS. While, part two focuses on building a MIS, information systems for administration, scientific information, and aspects of information science and technology. There are graphs and real examples in the book adding to its vivacity.

### Websites

[www.ifla.org](http://www.ifla.org)

News about IFLA 2002: the 68<sup>th</sup> General Conference and Council of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

[www.planex.co.uk](http://www.planex.co.uk)

The Planning Exchange is one of the foremost providers of information services on community, economic, environmental, and physical regeneration and development in the UK.

[www.cilip.org.uk](http://www.cilip.org.uk)

The Institute of Library and Information Professionals

[www.telecommons.com](http://www.telecommons.com)

The TeleCommons Development Group (TDG) is a unique international telecommunications & networking consulting firm specialising in results-oriented solutions for rural areas, agriculture, health, education and community development.

[www.cgiar.org/isnar/arrow/index.htm](http://www.cgiar.org/isnar/arrow/index.htm)

AROW (Agricultural Research Organisations on the Web)

Initiated and managed by ISNAR, the AROW site contains a worldwide directory of over 1,100 organisations and universities working in agricultural research that have a home page on the Web.

<http://cris.csrees.usda.gov/menu.html>

CRIS (Current Research Information System)

CRIS is the documentation and reporting system of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) for ongoing and recently completed research projects in agriculture, food and nutrition, and forestry.

[www.lib.montana.edu/~alijk/iaald.html](http://www.lib.montana.edu/~alijk/iaald.html)

IAALD (International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists)

IAALD facilitates professional development of and communication among members of the agricultural information community worldwide.

[www.worldwatch.org/worldsummit](http://www.worldwatch.org/worldsummit)

The Worldwatch Institute is a non-profit independent environmental research organisation, which has educated the public and policymakers about important global environmental and development issues for more than 20 years. You can access the ongoing series, outlining priorities for the World Summit on Sustainable Development on their website.

[www.asis.org/SIG/SIGIII/](http://www.asis.org/SIG/SIGIII/)

You can access more information on the Call for papers for the 2002 International Paper Contest on International Digital Libraries, Information Science and Technology in Developing countries. The theme is “Knowledge, Connections and Communities: the Developing World Perspective”.

[www.ileia.org](http://www.ileia.org)

The LEISA, magazine on low external input and sustainable agriculture is published quarterly by ILIEA (Centre for Information on Low External Input and Sustainable Agriculture – LEISA). The July 2002 issue, volume 18 no 2 is appropriately titled “Changing information flows” and examines rural information access especially with the rise of modern communication technologies.

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