



PRESS RELEASE

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CDB kicks off first regional VYBZING in Trinidad and Tobago

June 1, 2019, PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad and Tobago / BRIDGETOWN, Barbados – Today, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) opened the 2019 VYBZING Youth Outreach Programme as part of the 49th Annual Meeting of the Bank's Board of Governors in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

Under the theme "Youth-led Innovation, Regional Transformation!", the three-day event brings together 32 young people from Trinidad and Tobago and, for the first time, from 17 other CDB Borrowing Member Countries to build capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship.

"At CDB, we recognise that investing in youth development is the right thing to do and we know it is not possible to achieve key development goals if our young people are unable to reach their full-potential," said **CDB Vice-President Corporate Services Yvette Lemonias-Seale**.

Vybzing 2019 showcases and leverages the lived experiences, knowledge and skills of youth innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders for the co-creation of innovative responses to development challenges and the spurring of an entrepreneurial culture.

The programme includes a youth forum with sessions on design thinking, gender equality, social inclusion, and essential soft skills. On the first day a further 50 young people from Trinidad and Tobago attend the sessions.

"Young people are the foundation for effective development, and if properly engaged they will improve many of the structural development challenges that we face today, including enhancing the cohesiveness of families, promoting unity in our communities, advancing livelihood opportunities, and the overall development of our countries," said **Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago the Hon. Shamfa Cudjoe**.

This year's VYBZING introduces a youth innovation vision wall – an interactive, digital screen – presenting messages from youth participants and featuring highlights from the sessions. The wall will be on display during the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors, during which participants, including Heads of State, Prime Ministers, Ministers of Finance and key decision makers from development organisations will have an opportunity to learn of the innovative efforts of the young people and to hear their advocacy messages around development.

The programme also includes a youth innovation expo with young entrepreneurs and innovators from the Caribbean Region. On the final day, during a youth challenge, prizes will be awarded in various categories and a special prize for the response that best encapsulates the core principle of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, "Leave No One Behind".

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About the Caribbean Development Bank

The Caribbean Development Bank is a regional financial institution established in 1970 for the purpose of contributing to the harmonious economic growth and development of its Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs). In addition to the 19 BMCs, CDB's membership includes four regional non-borrowing members – Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela and five non-regional, non-borrowing members; i.e., Canada, China, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. CDB's total assets as at December 31, 2017 are USD3.02 billion (bn). These include USD1.64 bn of Ordinary Capital Resources and USD1.38 bn of Special Funds. The Bank is rated Aa1 Stable with Moody's, AA+ Stable with Standard and Poor's and AA+ Stable with Fitch. Read more at caribank.org.