

Welcome Remarks
Permanent Secretary Sheila Seecharan
Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

Launch of the Adult Education ICT Lab.

Friday October 02, 2020

10 a.m.

Salutations.

- **Senator the Honourable Donna Cox**
Minister of Social Development and Family Services.
- **Mr. Michael Reid**, Chief Technical Officer
Ministry of Social Development and Family Services
- **Ms. Alicia Hospedales**, Senior Government Relations
and Affairs Executive
Digicel Foundation
- All Managers, Supervisors and Staff of the Ministry of
Social Development and Family Services
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

Thank you all for your presence here this morning, as we mark another milestone achievement towards the protection and enhancement of the rights and dignity of some of the most vulnerable citizens in our country. I am certain that many of you will agree that in response to this trying period in our world's history, it is a great relief to be able highlight positive developments along the way.

On this note, it is my pleasure to welcome all to this the official launch of the ICT lab for the MSDFS' Adult Education Programme 2020.

In many countries around the world, programmes that focus specifically on adult education are deemed vital to technical innovation, economic growth because they assist in empowering a large percentage of the labour force and society. Understandably, an educated and competent workforce and society are credited as being able to contribute to good governance structures.

At the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, many may be aware that our motto is *Helping, Empowering and Transforming Lives*. The Adult Education Programme aligns perfectly with these goals because the more persons

who are exposed to training at this level, it means that the Ministry is honouring its trust to empower and transform lives.

For many students, the AEP provides the opportunity to successfully repeat examinations and assessments that they were not able to pass on their first attempts at secondary school. However, for many others, the AEP is actually representative of their *first time within a formal educational setting* and more significantly, the *realisation of their basic human right to a quality education*.

The ceremony this morning follows several meetings, discussions and efforts by both the Ministry and Digicel Foundation. As it relates to the computers that have been donated to the AEP's Lifelong Learning Centre, these are in direct support of the Ministry's preparations to migrate the AEP's courses to the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Open Campus' online platforms. This decision will allow for modular studies to be pursued in various subject offerings, resulting in certification by the UWIOC. Can you imagine the feelings of joy and accomplishment that interested students will now experience at the end of their cycles of training? I can assure you that for many individuals and families, the dream of a tertiary education will not only become more real but also the prospect

of growth in the labour market, as well as, improved standards of living and employment opportunities. This, ladies and gentlemen, is evidence of a Ministry that is committed to the *protecting and nurturing our nation's greatest assets*.

In closing, on behalf of the Executive and staff of the Ministry, in particular those who spearhead the Adult Education Programme, I wish to thank Digicel Foundation for their kind consideration and generosity. The Ministry looks forward to expanding our relationship and celebrating the many success stories that emanate from today's gesture.

Once again I welcome all.