

PRESS RELEASE



Over 500 Students to Benefit from Improved Access to E-Learning in Montserrat

5 February, 2021 - Sint Maarten

A new ICT Infrastructure project currently being developed by the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports has entered its final stage of development after attaining initial concept approval.

The current proposal request stands at EUR 240,000. The project is being developed with technical assistance through the 11th European Development Fund's Resilience, Sustainable Energy and Marine Biodiversity Programme for Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (RESEMBID).

The project aims to create greater equity in access to e-learning among local students, while reducing disruptions to the territory's education system in the wake of recurrent and extreme natural events such as hurricanes, and the now conceivable global pandemic. Upon approval of the final project design, the project is expected to benefit more than 500 students and teachers across Montserrat.

Story Highlights

Over 500 students and teachers will benefit from a new €240,000 ICT Infrastructure project being developed by the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports of Montserrat. The project is now in the final phase of development.

The COVID-19 Resilience Response Facility is funded by the European Union under the 11th European Development Fund, and is a component of its regional RESEMBID Programme - implemented by Expertise France.

According to an official communication from the Ministry, “These systems must be in place to allow us to continue to provide education to children through remote access without physically attending school”, a necessary and timely provision amidst local efforts at preventing the spread of COVID-19.

The new system, which will provide laptops for students and teachers, upgraded facilities for e-testing, subsidized mobile hotspots for vulnerable youth, and training for teachers, is expected to deliver on the Government’s Agenda Item on improved educational outcomes and the National ICT Policy objectives.

With funding available under the fast-tracked €10 million RESEMBID COVID-19 Resilience Response Facility, local Education officials are now moving swiftly towards submitting a completed project design for review and final approval.

Approved by the European Union and Expertise France on Monday, 6th April 2020, The RESEMBID COVID-19 Resilience Response Facility supports the twelve Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) in their efforts at managing and responding to the impact of the Novel Coronavirus.

The Facility was established against the backdrop of overwhelmed public health systems across the OCTs, and the deepening social and economic challenges within the region.

With funding provided by the European Union under the 11th European Development Fund, the Facility is a component of RESEMBID – a €40 million technical assistance programme that supports the sustainable human development efforts of the Caribbean OCTs.

RESEMBID commenced operations in January 2019, and is being implemented by Expertise France – the development cooperation agency of France – in collaboration with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), and the twelve Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs).

The twelve participating OCTs are Anguilla, Aruba, Bonaire, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Montserrat, Saba, Saint Barthélemy, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

The Prime Minister of Sint Maarten, Silveria E. Jacobs, serves as the Programme’s Regional Authorizing Officer.

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About RESEMBID



The Resilience, Sustainable Energy and Marine Biodiversity Programme (RESEMBID) for Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) is financed under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) Caribbean OCT Regional Programme, and is being implemented by Expertise France.

The primary stakeholders are the 12 Caribbean OCTs: Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, and Saint-Barthélemy.

The Prime Minister of Sint Maarten has been designated Regional Authorising Officer (RAO) for the 11th EDF Caribbean Regional Programme, and as such represents the 12 Caribbean OCTs vis-à-vis the EU. The RAO liaises with national authorities and other stakeholders of the Caribbean OCTs, and plays a key role in information-sharing and knowledge management.

The overall objective of the Programme is to support the sustainable human development efforts of the Caribbean OCTs, and the operational objectives are based on three component pillars: Sustainable Energy, Marine Biodiversity, and Resilience.

Website resembid.org

About Expertise France



Expertise France is the international technical cooperation agency of France. The agency operates around four priority areas: democratic, economic and financial governance; security and stability of countries in crisis/ post-crisis situations; sustainable human development; strengthening of health systems, social protection and employment.

In these areas, Expertise France supports the sustainable human development efforts of partner countries with the provision of technical expertise and capacity-building, and as a project manager. The €127 million programme of Expertise France includes a portfolio of more than 400 projects in 80 countries, and 63,000 days of expertise provided. The work of Expertise France is part of the policy of solidarity and diplomacy of France.

Website www.expertisefrance.fr

About the European Union



The European Union is a unique economic and political union between 27 EU countries that together cover much of the continent. The work of the organization spans policy areas, from climate, environment and health, to external relations and security, justice and migration.

The EU plays an important role in diplomacy and works to foster stability, security and prosperity, democracy, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law at international level.

The European Union Delegation to Guyana, for Suriname, and with responsibility for Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Saint Barthelemy, Sint Eustatius and Sint Maarten, is part of the European External Action Service (EEAS), and represents the European Union in all matters of its competence. The Delegation actively promotes the values and policies of the European Union, in an open and equal partnership with the Governments and people of the countries to which it is accredited.

Website eeas.europa.eu/delegations/guyana

About GFDRR and the DRFI in Caribbean OCTs



The Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) leads the implementation of the Technical Assistance (TA) Programme for Disaster Risk Financing and Insurance (DRFI) in Caribbean Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) - this in partnership with the European Union (EU) and the World Bank Group (WB). The Program was launched in 2019, and is an integral part of RESEMBID.

Website www.gfdr.org/en/drfi-in-caribbean-octs