A spiral-bound notebook with a light-colored, textured cover. The spiral binding is on the left side. The text is centered on the cover.

# The Forest and the Trees

Elements to Understand the IS in the  
Caribbean

# Speaker and sources

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- 10+ y. field and networking actor
- Caribbean ICT Roundtable event 2002 (ICA/ITU)
- Caribbean ICT Virtual Community moderator (volunteer after consulting)
- Consultant (to define CARIFORUM programme for the IS in the Caribbean)\

# Caribbean Divides

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- Lagging (seems) behind other regions (adoption)
- Regional Divides: richer countries ahead (but sometimes niches of creativity in the poorer)
- National Divides: urban/rural and in towns (access - use - benefits)
- Along the lines on the socio-economic divides

# •Low adoption

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- Embryonic e-government
  - Experimental e-Health
  - little SME adoption (big businesses yes)
  - Insignificant e-commerce, (opportunities emerging digital culture, ethnic foods, crafts)
  - Growing e-education but whole education that needs a change
  - Limited citizens use/empowerment (chat, buy and email)
- ➔ Little social/economic impacts on the majority people lives (indeed cultural)

# IS Background

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- Framework: institutions and strategies
- Access to telecom and technologies
- Awareness and understating
- Regulation and Legislations
- H.R.
- ICT industry and services

# Institutional Frameworks

- Few have national IS/ICT vision, strategies, and action plans
- Few countries have IS/ICTs coordination units
- Few have multi-stakeholder consultation or participation
- No regional mechanism for coordination – no one is in charge
- No/little voice in international negotiations and forums (WTO FTLA EPA ITU etc)

# National/sectoral Policies Strategies

- Few ones in place (adopted) and in implementation national IS strategy/vision/action
- Set of national IS strategy/vision, sectoral strategies (e-edu, -e-business, etc), government ICT policy, telecom policy, etc
- IS not integrated in the national or sectoral development agendas
- Competition among actors, overlapping projects, weight of external agendas (donors, businesses)

# Regional policy docs

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- America Connectivity Agenda
- CITELE action plan
- WSIS action plan
- Bavaro Declaration
- Caricom Connectivity Agenda
- CIVIC inputs to WSIS

# ICT Industry

- Quite limited
- Few call centers (low end) – some big failures
- Installation and maintenance – software resellers
- Even clone assembling declines
- Some small local solutions
- Few islands of advanced know how
- Problems to pay proprietary licenses
- Few open source initiatives
- Limited by expensive costs, regulations, HR and investment capacity

# Access and technologies

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- Most countries telecomm costs are high
- Competition only in cellular telephony
- Problems with de facto monopolies and regulation capacity
- Telecenters and cyber cafes spreading but still large uncovered areas
- High cost of Hard and Software
- Little Software development

# Legal E-frameworks

- Need for frameworks and law and regulations in data protection, electronic transactions, digital signature, computer misuse, Intellectual Property etc.
- Only one country seems to have the complete set
- Regulation of new technologies (VOIP. WIFI etc) problematic
- Inhibiting obsolete indirect legislation (typewriter)

# Monitoring

- Many studies / repeated / focused
- Few valuable sources IS progress / social impact
- No observatories nor national nor regional

# HR

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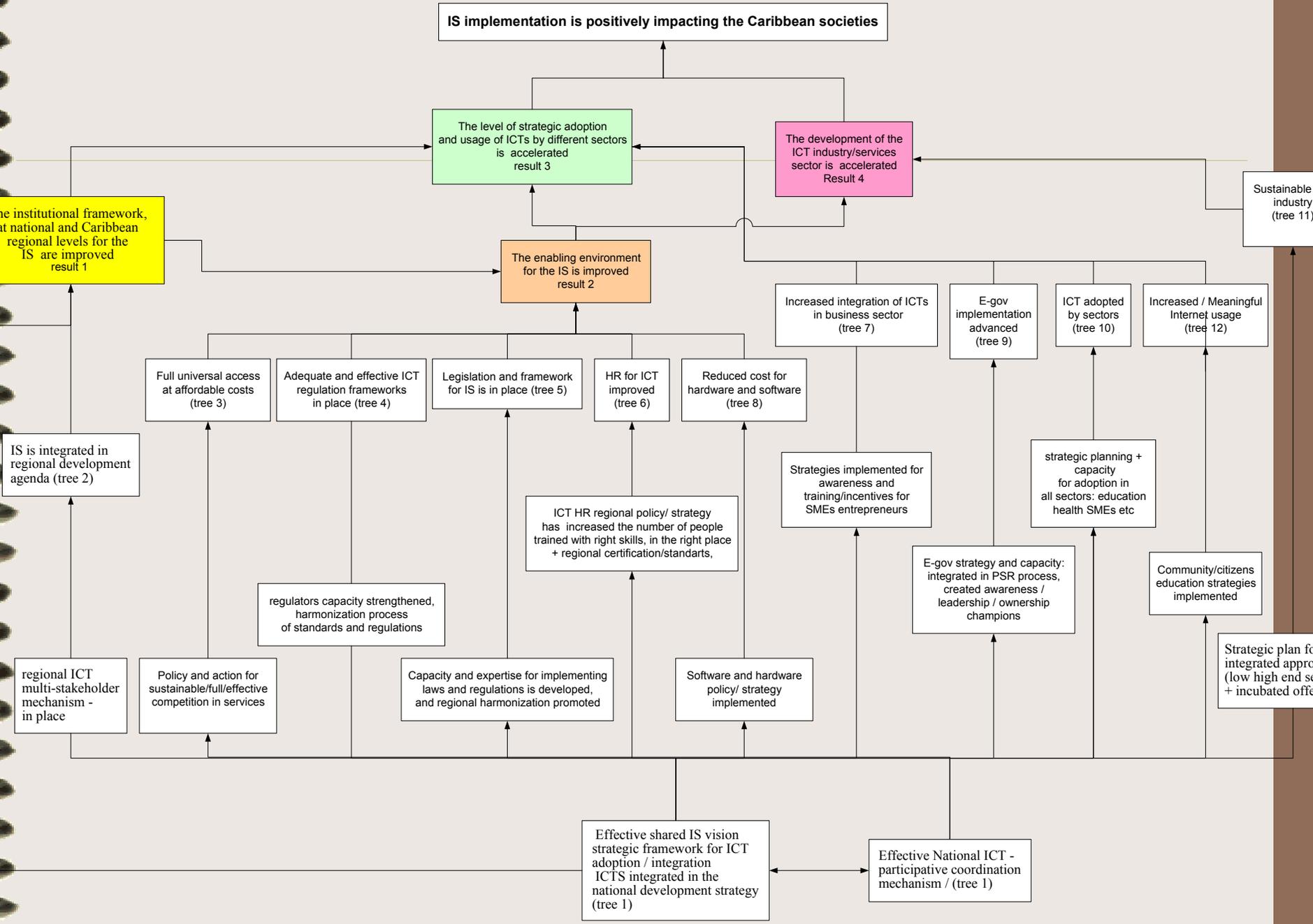
- Training in the low end of the segment
- Little capacity to develop, design and implement ICT4D / strategic adoption
- Brain drain “headache”
- Sustainable jobs and positions
- Some keep them interested and up to date
- Loops

# Awareness

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- Hype and fun - All want to do it
- But few “know-how” to mainstream ICT in sectors, to design and implement adoption process and strategies
- Stronger “we need to eat first” voices
- Low understanding = low policy/budget Support

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# Regional Actors

- **CARICOM**: connectivity agenda + links with e-commerce : **UWI** + e-government **CARICAD** / **UNDESA** / gov of Italy + Ministerial meetings
- Telecom: **CTU**: telecom / weak + **CANTO** (private sector)
- **ECTEL** : sub regional telecom regulation
- **OECS** / looking to ICTs, some other areas as e-education + Culture
- Sectoral agencies: **CDRA** (disaster mgmt) **CEDA** (e-com and trade information) **CARDI** (agriculture) etc

# Regional Actors (2)

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- Education: **CKLN** (tertiary education) in development + **CARADOL** / distance learning association
- **OCCUR** (regulators) CROSQ (norms)
- **CIVIC**: multi stakeholder network after roundtable of 2002, (support project being developed by 4 NGOs)

# ICT Projects/ Donors

- **IADB** : ongoing ICT project in Jamaica, stalled in Guyana, in the pipe for TT + regional study
- **CIDA-CDB-ITU-UNESCO**: regional workshops telecom, plus
- **WB** and **USAID**: Telecom liberalization in OECS and other countries (as DR) + economic projects with strong ICTs

# ICT Projects/ Donors (2)

- **WB**: supported CKLN, now OECS/ICT private sector development
- **UNESCO**: "Multimedia for Caribbean Communities centres " + support Caribbean Universities Project for Integrated Distance Education (CUPIDE) UWI
- **ECLAC**: in preparation: WSIS action plan implementation in the region

# ICT Projects/ Donors (3)

- **ICA** : Caribbean ICT Roundtable held in October 2002 + “ICT High Impact Growth Strategy Workshop” + small grants (60K) CFP for Caribbean projects + a stake in the CKLN
- **UNDP**: SDNP (Jamaica Haiti and Guyana somehow survived) + with Gov of Italy CARICOM agenda implementation (e-commerce and e-government) + national support as in Haiti

# ICT Projects/ Donors (4)

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- **ITU**: support (consultancies, technical assistance, etc.) + in the pipe: pilot projects, telecenters in Dominican, Haiti , tele-health initiatives e-learning project in Jamaica
- **COL** supported e-Readiness of CARICOM Member States in 2002 + distance education UWI
- **CBD** involved with CIDA in telecomm /regulators workshops

# ICT Projects/ Donors (5)

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- **IICD** in Jamaica – networking, demo/pilots
- **CARIFORUM** / EC support: CARIB-IS programme that is in final design stage to provide a framework to articulate the actors and initiatives, high level political dialogue, envision a multi-stakeholder regional coordination, an IS observatory and seed fund for “smart” project development

# CARISNET

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- Strengthen the CIVIC as a multi stakeholder regional discussion and collaboration space
- Develop and conduct online agenda
- Multilingual multicultural expansion
- Caribbean ICT data base - observatory
- CFP/funds + donors
- Final definition stage. ICA and 4 NGOs

# More

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- CIVIC:  
[www.Dgroup.org/group/icacaribbean](http://www.Dgroup.org/group/icacaribbean)
- CARISNET: “soon come”
- CARIFORUM ICT programme “just now”
- [WWW.YACINE.NET](http://WWW.YACINE.NET)
- [yacine@yacine.net](mailto:yacine@yacine.net)