

REMARKS BY
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DIGICEL FOUNDATION
2ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
DIGICEL HOSPITALITY SUITE
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Salutations

Good afternoon,

It is an honour and privilege to be asked to say a few words on behalf of Digicel Foundation partners at today's Annual General Meeting.

For those of you who may not be aware, National Center for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) is an NGO whose mission is to empower persons with disabilities through vocational rehabilitation, training, advocacy, research and consultative services in partnership with diverse stakeholders.

NCPD has had the privilege of partnering with the Digicel Foundation on a number of projects including:

- Installation of an Aquaponics system – This enhanced our agriculture programme as trainees can receive hands-on experience in this method as well as benefit from a training opportunity for self employment.
- Disability Sensitisation Workshops- NCPD facilitated these workshops with Digicel Foundation staff to raise their awareness about Disability
- Human Resource Policy – NCPD was happy to provide assistance and advice to Digicel on their HR Policy
- Employment – Digicel Foundation has hired an NCPD referral and has held further discussions on promoting the employment of PWDs

- Inclusive events – NCPD is always pleased to participate in Digicel Foundation’s Fun days and Kaleidodash events which provide PWDs with an opportunity to socialize and have fun.

And although we have been privileged to work with the Foundation on a number of projects, it is important to note that we are not your only partner. Digicel Foundation has partnered with many CBOs and NGOs working in the area of special needs and community development.

Your partnerships cover a **diverse range of important areas**. In Special Education you’ve partnered with organizations on Puberty, Sex and Sexuality Programmes; a Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Evacuation Pilot Project specifically designed for Persons with Special Needs; the introduction of Aquaponics in 14 Special Needs Schools; a performing arts project for children and adults with special needs in Tobago; capacity building in special ed schools through training sessions and in sports by partnering with Special Olympics Trinidad and Tobago National Games, for over a decade and introducing a Special Olympics Sports Development Programme in 2014. This partnership resulted in a spectacular performance at the 2015 Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles where the delegation of 64 athletes returned with 15 gold, 9 silver and 24 bronze medals... I am pleased to say that 17 of these athletes were NCPD trainees.

Your Community Partnerships includes partnerships with organizations in areas of professional development programmes; refurbishment of community spaces including play parks; the treatment and rehabilitation for substance abusers; social enterprise; and emotional literacy/mental health for children ages 5-8. This range of partnership reflects the Foundation’s

understanding that holistic improvement is needed for us to develop a secure nation, which encompasses more than just safety, but also social security, environmental security and mental and emotional security.

As I close I want to remind us all that in 2015 the United Nations adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs. Goal 17 speaks to '*Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development*'.

I believe that it is very significant that the UN SDGs speak to the need to **strengthening partnerships**, since without project partners such as the Digicel Foundation, many CBOs and NGOs will not be able to deliver the high quality services their communities have come to expect from them. Services without the existence of these CBOs and NGOs, would not otherwise exist.

On behalf of NCPD and all other Special Needs and Community Partners, I would like to say a very heartfelt thank you to the Digicel Foundation for your unwavering support. We thank you for building and fostering strong relationships with us all and for your continued partnerships with all of us as we work together towards an inclusive, sustainable and secure Trinidad and Tobago.

I thank you.