

PRESS RELEASE

Plans are underway for an Economic Development Forum to be held in the Parish of St. Mark.

The Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD) is collaborating with the Member of Parliament Hon. Dr. Clarice Modeste-Curwen, the St. Mark Steering Committee for Business Development, the Grenada Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC) and the Grenada Rural Enterprise Development Project (GREP) in planning the Forum, which is scheduled to take place at the Victoria Hotel on July 21.

The Forum will guide the process by which an Economic Development Plan can be formulated in keeping with the needs of the people and the resources of the Parish.

In preparing for the Forum, the ARD invited residents and business owners to participate in an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the Parish on June 29. From this, it was determined that the Parish has several resources upon which to develop income generating activities. These include fertile soils, abundant tree crops, strong family linkages, an abundance of fresh water, water falls and other natural attractions, rare historic petroglyphs and cultural traditions, among others.

The ARD Land Utilisation Survey, which was conducted in November 2005 in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries, indicated that St. Mark has a higher percentage of mixed tree crops at 50 percent - notably nutmeg, mango, cocoa and citrus - than the national average of 35 percent.

In order to develop an effective Economic Development Plan that facilitates expansion and diversification of existing businesses and the establishment of new enterprises, more information is required about the status of existing businesses.

To this end, the ARD, in collaboration with the Central Statistics Office of the Ministry of Finance and Planning, will conduct a Survey of households and businesses in the Parish from July 11 to 17.

Seven enumerators will be in the field gathering information about business activities - formal and informal - throughout the Parish.

Information for photo: (l to r around the table): Robin Swaisland, ARD Senior Projects Manager; Sarah Baker, Economic Forum Project Coordinator; Kenneth Noel, GREP Business Promoter; Malcolm Antoine, Minister's Liaison; Georgia Wilson, ARD Research Officer; Melinda Phillip, Economic Forum Assistant Project Coordinator; Richard de Lima, ARD Director of Economic Recovery; Ronald Theodore, GIDC Investment Promotion Manager.

July 7, 2006

Agency for Reconstruction and Development Inc.
Botanical Gardens, St. George's, Grenada
Tel: 473-439-5606/07/08;
Fax: 473-439-5609;

Email: mail@ardgrenada.org <mailto:mail@ardgrenada.org>
Website: www.ardgrenada.org