



# THE MONTHLY EXPLORER



**Exploring Art as a Tool for Change**  
 Barbados Museum & Historical Society  
 Photo Credit: Denyce Blackman, UNDP Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean



## WHAT WE'RE READING

This month, the Accelerator Lab in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean was pleased to host a Signals Studio on "What risks and opportunities do we see in generative AI which are particularly pertinent to UNDP programming and to our way of working?"

To prepare for this, we have been immersed in the world of AI from the perspective of the four P's - people, planet, prosperity and peace. On the people side, we have been looking at global examples of job disruption due to AI, such as in Kenya where tea pickers have been angered by the replacement of manual tea picking with automation. How can a more equitable and just transition to AI be made?

On the planet side, we have been reading up on AI's impact on the environment. While certain functions are hard to measure, it has been found that, "There is limited data on the carbon footprint of a single generative AI query, but some industry figures estimate it to be four to five times higher than that of a search engine query."



## TOOLS WE'RE EXPLORING

On July 5th, our Accelerator Lab hosted the "Exploring Art as a Tool for Change" event where community members discussed the potential of art in relation to sustainability, vulnerable persons and economic diversification. This included our look at artistic tools to spark behavioral change, particularly among Small Island Developing States where creative expression can be used to for alternative thinking and action. We put this concept into practice by designing and painting a community mural alongside Persons with Disabilities, artists, thought leaders and more.

## WHAT WE'RE INSPIRED BY

Following our Art as a Tool for Change function, we were approached by several community members working on meaningful applications of art. This included an art therapist based in Barbados who is using creative processes to help persons who are neurodivergent, physically disabled and victims of abuse.

These and other forms of alternative therapies and treatments are relatively new for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. As such, we are inspired by the potential of the creative sector to introduce fresh and imaginative healing solutions to those who need them most.



## QUESTIONS WE'RE ASKING

What is the connection between gender and the Creative Economy? How and where do the two intersect? Alongside the UNDP Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Spotlight team, the Lab will be examining this intersection.

The Creative Economy represents major potential for economic and social development in categories such as design, visual arts, tourism and cultural heritage. Many of these skills and talents have potential to improve the ways in which gender is experienced and supported in the region. For instance, women owned and operated MSMEs providing creative products and services can be supported and strengthened.

Males can also receive support through reskilling and upskilling in areas such as woodworking, software development and the performing arts. What is particularly unique about these and other offerings is that in addition to providing employment streams, they also offer outlets for expression, community building and social cohesion.

## WILD CARDS

How are youth in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean feeling about AI in relation to jobs? Are they perhaps excited about its potential to boost productivity and generate new markets? Is there a fear of certain fields being eclipsed by AI? We will be looking into the disruption caused by AI for youth in the Eastern Caribbean through an upcoming poll on the Future of Work.

