

The Rural Alternatives Center of El Limon (CA) To Open its First Community Micro-Hydroelectric Specialized Training Center

On Friday, July 26th, The [Rural Alternatives Center of El Limon \(CAREL\)](#) will open the first building of its campus. It is a unique and innovative structure with an environmental architecture that reflects its surroundings. The building was constructed using ferrocement and is designed to resist earthquakes and hurricanes. It features a 24 x 32 ft classroom/assembly area, and a 16 x 24 ft office.



With the completion of this center, unique in the Dominican Republic, CAREL will develop a curriculum of technologies aimed at improving the quality of rural life by focusing on community micro-hydroelectricity, internet access, and other technologies. It will provide a platform for the exchange and promotion of rural sustainable development at the local, national, and international levels. Furthermore, the building itself will provide a much-needed hurricane refuge for the community of El Limon.

As part of the project, CAREL is developing a national Technical Support Network with 25 communities and 5 regional coordinators who have already committed as partners. The Center will train and certify at least 50 community technicians.. It will also hold 10 workshops and systemize technical extension services in participating communities.

Construction of the Center was made possible by the Department of Sustainable Development of the OAS, through the grant "[Support for Community Micro-Hydroelectric Projects in the Dominican Republic](#)," which was implemented by CAREL, the InterAmerican Foundation, and other contributors. Labor was provided by members of the Dominican Network for Renewable Energy (REDSER), the El Limon construction crew, and many other supporters.

CAREL is a grassroots non-profit organization, based in the rural village of El Limon, Dominican Republic. It was founded during the process of implementing the country's first community micro-hydroelectric project and rural telecenter. In 2012 CAREL was selected as a recipient of a USD\$50,000 grant under the ECPA-OAS "[Sustainable Communities in Central America and the Caribbean](#)" project supported by the U.S. Permanent Mission to the OAS.

The project's objective is to provide technical assistance and capacity building to support and replicate a community-based, highly participatory micro-hydroelectric initiative in the Dominican Republic. As part of this initiative, CAREL is developing an "open university of the countryside" for education, research, and the creation of appropriate solutions for sustainable rural development at the local, national, and international levels.



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