

Making a participatory video: addressing the challenges of the Blanchisseuse fishing industry

Meeting with partners

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, Laventille

2:00 – 4:00 p.m., November 30, 2011

1 INTRODUCTION

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and the University of the West Indies are implementing a pilot project to use participatory video to help the fishers of Blanchisseuse document challenges fishing in their community and share these with partners who can help them to address these problems. It is funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Under this project, a team of fishers and others from the community worked together for two days to develop a video that told the story of their challenges, how those challenges were affecting the fishers and possible ideas to address those challenges. The participants in this



Figure 1 Rojer Fournillier discussing options for fuel supply in Blanchisseuse with the representative from NP

participatory video project were the producers, writers, videographers, narrators and interviewers. The videos were captured on the Motorola Defy smartphones that were provided courtesy of BG Trinidad and Tobago (BGTT) as part of the mFisheries project.

This meeting with partners was to present the video developed by the fishers of Blanchisseuse and served as a space to:

- Discuss the challenges in the Blanchisseuse fishing industry
- Discuss possible solutions to the challenges
- Form partnerships with various

organisations to address the challenges in the Blanchisseuse fishing industry

Several partner organisations attended the meeting. They were the Fisheries Division,

Seafood Industry Development Company Limited (SIDC), National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NP), the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO) and

CANARI. The National Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) and the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs (MEEA) were invited but were unable to attend the meeting. Five representatives of the Blanchisseuse Fisherfolk and Marine Life Association participated. See Appendix 1 for the list of participants and resource persons.

2 FINDINGS

Several challenges were identified in the video. These are discussed below with the solutions suggested at the meeting.

2.1 Ice and cold storage facility

The fishers of Blanchisseuse are forced to sell their fish to the vendors because they do not have a ready supply of ice so that they can store their catch.

Organisations that can offer assistance

- Seafood Industry Development Company Limited (SIDC)
- National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO)
- Fisheries Division
- Private commercial companies that the fishers can approach

Solution	Advantages	Disadvantages
Ask a private company to supply the ice box and truck the ice to the community as needed (short-term solution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be no maintenance cost for the fisherfolk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fishers will have to convince the private company that taking ice to the community is cost-effective for its business.
Install a small ice maker at the facility (6ftx3ft).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready supply of ice in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fishers will have to maintain the ice machine and this can be costly • The small ice machine may not supply enough ice for the fishers in the area¹
Ask SIDC to conduct a feasibility study to determine an appropriate location for an ice facility that will serve the north coast (Blanchisseuse to Maracas).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Las Cuevas may be the most suitable location for the facility. • If another site is chosen, Blanchisseuse will need to arrange transportation for ice to the community. • If Blanchisseuse is chosen as an appropriate site, the fisherfolk association will have to maintain the

¹ In subsequent investigations it was learned that a small ice machine can serve the Blanchisseuse community

Solution	Advantages	Disadvantages
		facility and put measures in place to ensure that there is transparency and accountability. This applies to all communities or cooperatives in T&T.

2.2 Fuel supply in Blanchisseuse

The fishers purchase gasoline from the vendors who sell from unapproved containers. The fishers are not eligible for gasoline rebates from the Fisheries Division because the fuel was not purchased from an approved vendor.

The vendors purchase gasoline from the Maraval service station as it “accepts” the unapproved containers. Maraval service station does not sell regular gasoline that is recommended by the manufacturer of the boat engines. The Maraval service station is also further away from the community than the Maracas service station that sells regular gasoline.

Organisations that can offer assistance

- Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs (MEEA)
- National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NP)
- Commissioner of State Lands
- Fisheries Division

Solution	Advantages	Disadvantages
Purchase approved containers and collectively arrange for transportation to Blanchisseuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fishers can purchase gasoline from Maracas service station that is closer • Offers an interim solution to the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited supply of gasoline. The approved containers are generally smaller than the unapproved ones. • The service stations are allowed to fill only limited number of containers per person
Write to the MEEA and the CEO of NP asking that they install an above-ground storage tank with dispenser at or near the site for the use by the fishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready supply of gasoline in the community that will reduce costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The procedure of obtaining the storage tank may be difficult: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The fishers will need to write to the Commissioner of State Lands asking for the use of the site near the fishing facility. ○ The fishers may also need to verify that the site proposed has the

Solution	Advantages	Disadvantages
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> space needed including the setback from nearby sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The fishers will also need to enter into a supply agreement with NP and obtain a marketing licence from the MEEA. ● Only fishers will be able to purchase the gasoline

2.3 Marketing fish in Blanchisseuse

Fishers sell their catch to the vendors at costs that are below market price.

Organisations that can offer assistance

- SIDC
- NAMDEVCO

Solution	Advantages	Disadvantages
Implementation of new regulations that state that the fishers have to sell fish at a designated site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fishers will gain certification in fish handling ● Fish can be sold at market price ● SIDC has offered to assist the fishers with marketing development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The designated site may be at Maracas or Las Cuevas. Fisheries Division is still reviewing the consultant's report. The consultation did not involve any stakeholders. ● Fish will not be sold in the Blanchisseuse

2.4 Other challenges

Both the Fisheries Division and the SIDC indicated that the fishers needed to be properly organised with good governance to manage an ice facility and a fuel station. Several options were offered. These were to:

- Form a cooperative with the fishers of Blanchisseuse that can receive more concessions than an association. Cooperatives have more formal structures than associations.
- Form a cooperative with fishers from Maracas and Las Cuevas
- Form a cooperative that includes Blanchisseuse fishers and others (e.g. farmers)

"It is remarkable to capture the needs and suggestions of the fisherfolk and to see a lot of the stakeholders being represented in the room." **Raymond Lowe**

The formal structure can offer greater accountability and transparency to the transactions that will be managed by the organisation.

3 CONCLUSION

The meeting was very productive. Both the fishers and the decision-makers were able to discuss the challenges in Blanchisseuse and the short and long-term solutions that can be implemented. All parties expressed their commitment to working together to address the challenges.

The partners believed that the video brought the community to them virtually. They believed that the video helped to capture the reality of the issues facing the fishing industry in Blanchisseuse. The fishers believed that producing the video and then having the meeting with the partners allowed them to effectively show their challenges to those partners.



Figure 2 Ramon Fournillier smiling at the end of the meeting while Dexter Black discusses options for ice in Blanchisseuse with Nicole Leotaud of CANARI

Appendix 1: List of participants

Name	Organisation	Contact information
<i>Fisherfolk representatives</i>		
Dexter Black	Blanchisseuse Fisherfolk and Marine Life Association	312-6814
Lennox Ryan	Blanchisseuse Fisherfolk and Marine Life Association	
Ramon Fournillier	Blanchisseuse Fisherfolk and Marine Life Association	487-7022
Roger Fournillier	Blanchisseuse Fisherfolk and Marine Life Association	374-5044
Raymond Lowe	Blanchisseuse Fisherfolk and Marine Life Association	314-6594/732-2474
<i>Agencies</i>		
Nicole Leotaud	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)	nicole@canari.org 626-6062
Keisha Sandy	CANARI	keisha@canari.org 626-6062
Stacy Selby	CANARI	626-6062
Joslyn Lee Quay	Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations (CNFO)	leequayj@yahoo.com joslee_56@msn.com 760-7333
Christine Chan-A-Shing	Fisheries Division	cchanashing@gmail.com 625-8525
Michelle Picou-Gill	Fisheries Division	625-8525
Sherma Gomez	Fisheries Division	625-8525
Angelique Balbosa-Philip	National Petroleum Marketing Company Limited (NP)	abphilip@NP.CO.TT 625-1364
Charles Nurse	Seafood Industry Development Company Limited (SIDC)	cnurse@sidctt.com 390-7653