

**Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by  
developing small business ideas based on the sustainable use of  
natural resources**



Blanchisseuse Community Centre  
Blanchisseuse  
Trinidad

9<sup>th</sup> October, 2010

## 1 Introduction

The Blanchisseuse workshop is part of a project called “***Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by developing small business ideas based on the sustainable use of natural resources***” funded by the **JB Fernandes Memorial Trust** that



seeks to identify and work with six communities in Trinidad and Tobago who are interested in developing small businesses based on the sustainable use of natural resources (e.g. forests, fisheries, etc.). The six communities are Blanchisseuse, Brasso Seco, Heights of Aripo, Lopinot, Plum Mitan and Speyside. The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) will assist the six communities in identifying income generating project ideas to improve the livelihoods and income of the community members.

Figure 1 Participants listening to the facilitator at the end of the workshop

## 2 Workshop goal and objectives

The goal of the workshop was to conduct a preliminary assessment with the community on the potential for developing small businesses to improve community livelihoods based on the sustainable use of natural resources. The workshop objectives were to:

- a) To identify **natural resources** in Blanchisseuse that could be **sustainably used** for small businesses.
- b) To identify existing and potential community small businesses based on sustainable use of natural resources.
- c) To identify the **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats** that could contribute to an improved **quality of life (livelihoods)** in Blanchisseuse through the development of such small businesses.
- d) To validate the selection of Blanchisseuse for the project.
- e) To discuss the next phase of the project and who should be involved.

## 3 Methods

The workshop was highly interactive and participants were given an opportunity to share experiences with each other and the facilitators. The participants created maps of the natural

resources of Blanchisseuse, role played scenarios and held group discussions to brainstorm ideas on the potential for natural resource based small businesses in the community (see Appendix 1).

#### **4 Participants**

There were 19 persons attending the workshop (see Appendix 2). Most were members of the Blanchisseuse Community Council but there were a few who were members of community groups such as the Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT) and the Blanchisseuse Enhancement Group.

#### **5 Selection of Blanchisseuse**

The six communities were chosen based on criteria that were developed by a committee. The criteria were:

- a) Rural communities.
- b) Geographic spread (i.e. communities from different parts of Trinidad and Tobago).
- c) Potential for small enterprise development demonstrated by internal capacity (both at the community and individual level).
- d) Some existing capacity within the community, including ability (time, skills) to be involved in strategic visioning and planning process.
- e) Access to natural resources that can be sustainably used to develop a small business.
- f) Interest in developing a small business around natural resource use.
- g) External factors, existing relationships, experience and linkages, which may favour and facilitate enterprise development through the wise use of natural resources.
- h) Prior experience of partners working with the community.
- i) Potential to establish linkages with other projects and support initiatives of CANARI or other organisations.
- j) Existing infrastructure which facilitates access to community by car and also communication access by at least telephone.
- k) Partner(s) existing in the community willing and capable to assist with mobilisation and community engagement.
- l) High degree of collective commitment to community development.
- m) Ethnic diversity among communities.
- n) Livelihood vulnerability.
- o) Marginalisation from other assistance.
- p) Ability to replicate and adapt approaches in other communities.

The review of the selection criteria was moved to the end of the day's agenda as an introduction to the second round of workshops. The lack of electricity meant that the slide projector could not be used, so participants did not review the criteria in detail. However, they did confirm that the following applied to Blanchisseuse:

- rural community;
- geographic spread;

- livelihood vulnerability;
- prior experience of partners working with the community; and
- ability to replicate and adapt approaches in other communities.

## 6 Findings

### 6.1 Key natural resources and their uses

The participants determined that the following natural resources are important in Blanchisseuse:

Table 1 The natural resources and their current and potential uses in Blanchisseuse

Natural resources	Current Use	Potential use
Fish	Fishing	Value added processing - smoking, salting, filleting and packaging
Turtles	Hunting, sightseeing, protection, jewellery from shells	Turtle tours?
Lobster	(Spear)fishing	Shell for craft
Seamoss	Processing - drinks	Gels, selling drinks, <i>explore the uses of sea moss</i>
Coconuts	Craft, water, oil, sugar cake, ice cream	
Flowers	Decoration	Commercial growing and selling
Fruits and vegetables	Preserves (jams, jellies, pepper sauce), food	Commercialise
Wild meat	Hunting, food	Agouti farming, wildlife park
Crayfish	Food	
Pachro	Pachro water	
Birds	Bird watching, hunting	
Pawi	protection	Bird watching
Trees	Craft, jewellery, medicine, hiking, tours	Tour guiding
(Coconut) leaves	Costumes, craft, brooms	
Sandbox trees	Jewellery	
Crabs	Food	
Shells	Jewellery, craft	Commercial craft
Teak	Furniture	
Bamboo	Furniture, Craft, brooms	Commercial use
Herbs and shrubs		Bush teas
River	Kayaking, bathing	

## 6.2 Existing and potential community businesses

The participants were able to identify few small businesses in the community. Many of the businesses using natural resources, such as tour guiding, are owned by persons outside the community. The participants stated that the relevant skills exist in the community for developing a number of small businesses but access to money (e.g. start-up capital, loans) is difficult. The existing community businesses are:

- restaurants;
- fishing.

The potential businesses identified were:

- jewellery making from the trees (bamboo, palms, etc.);
- processing of fish;
- turtle tours;
- using lobster shells for craft;
- using seamoss for gels, selling drinks;
- commercial growing and selling of flowers;
- agouti farming, wildlife parks;
- tour guiding;
- commercial crafts from shells found on the beaches;
- commercial use of bamboo for furniture, craft and brooms;
- making bush teas [from dried herbs and shrubs];
- making preserves from fruits for sale.



Figure 2 Facilitator verifying the ranked SWOT analysis

## 6.3 Key issues in the management of the natural resource

Participants thought that legislation was needed to protect some of the natural resources, such as the crabs and the seamoss. This should be done in conjunction with education and awareness programmes. They perceive that the natural resources are being depleted but mainly by people from outside of the community.

## 6.4 Other relevant issues affecting the development of community small businesses

Divisions among community members were considered a potential challenge. The cause of the conflicts did not emerge clearly from the SWOT analysis but was subsequently attributed mainly

to party political differences. Participants also identified the leadership style of a former Chair of the Village Council as having contributed to mistrust and divisiveness in the community.

There is also the perception from existing small businesses that there is not enough room for competition as there are limited markets available to the community. The participants said that if a type of business already exists in the community, it is likely that a similar business would not be patronised by community members; the new business would therefore have to depend on markets outside the community.

The participants also said that it is difficult to access land to conduct businesses in Blanchisseuse. A participant at the meeting said that he has been unable to purchase land to operate a woodworking shop. There is also difficulty getting permission to access and extract from state lands.

## 6.5 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of Blanchisseuse

The participants were asked to rank the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in Blanchisseuse, which produced the following:

Table 2 The results of the SWOT analysis as ranked by the Blanchisseuse participants

<p><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are people in the community with small business skills</li> <li>• Good culinary expertise (cooking, wines, preserves, etc.)</li> <li>• Harvest festival unites the community</li> <li>• Good utilities (electricity, water, etc.)</li> <li>• Fish processing skills available</li> <li>• Low crime</li> <li>• Good transportation</li> <li>• Can use the river for kayaking, etc.</li> <li>• Lots of practical skills exist within the community</li> <li>• The private shops, guest houses existing in the community are successful</li> <li>• Clean water</li> <li>• Existing high level of visitors (this was not identified until after the ranking session so was not ranked)</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is low participation in the village (low or no cooperation within the community)</li> <li>• Lack of communication within the village</li> <li>• Small business management</li> <li>• Lack of trust</li> <li>• Tour packaging skills absent</li> <li>• Unsustainable lobster fishing, hunting, crabs, seamoss, crayfish harvesting practices</li> <li>• No farming</li> <li>• Internal politics divides the community</li> <li>• Lack of conservation skills</li> <li>• Lack of sporting activities</li> <li>• Competition within the community can cause conflicts</li> <li>• Coconut trees going extinct - not replanting</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Branding a festival or food as being “Blanchisseuse”</li> <li>• “Fish Friday”</li> <li>• Wildlife tourism park</li> <li>• Bakeries</li> <li>• Fish and fish tackle shop</li> <li>• Organised camp site</li> <li>• Gas station, tyre shop (not natural resource based but might support</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arima – Blanchisseuse road poorly maintained</li> <li>• Poor law enforcement</li> <li>• Too much uncontrolled camping</li> <li>• High walls blocking the view of the beach causing fewer tourists or visitors</li> <li>• Pollution of the water by chemicals (domestic/ agricultural)</li> <li>• Access to credit facilities/ land</li> </ul>

<p>increased tourism)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruits that are wasting can be used for preserves</li> <li>• Access to credit/ funding agencies</li> <li>• Excellent external support</li> <li>• Agouti farming</li> <li>• Money motivates the community</li> <li>• Tourism from the use of the river</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoreline/ beach erosion from indiscriminate building from persons outside of the community</li> <li>• Pollution of the river from the source</li> <li>• Rising crime and corruption that can affect investments in the area</li> </ul>
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## 6.6 Recommendations for next steps in the process

The participants all agreed that certain key persons and/ or groups should be contacted to for the next steps in the process. These were:



Figure 3 Attendees participating in the AWOT analysis

- fishers;
- caterers/ cooks;
- drama group; and
- Paradise Hill Women in Action<sup>1</sup>.

The community also recommended that CANARI host the next workshop on a Sunday so that the Seventh Day Adventists may also attend.

## 7 Overall results

The workshop achieved its stated objectives. The participants were able to identify and map the natural resources of Blanchisseuse and

identify some of the existing and potential uses for small businesses. The pawi conservation project was the only other relevant initiative taking place in Blanchisseuse at that time.

One of the challenges going forward may be the buy-in from community members not present at the initial workshop. Most of the participants from the first workshop were members of the Community Council and there is a division between the Community Council and the rest of the community. CANARI therefore needs to find ways to involve persons from all relevant groupings in the community.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ken Fournillier, a member of Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT) who was unable to attend the meeting, suggested that CANARI should invite additional people from the community to the next workshop. These persons were identified as Glenda (a senior teacher), Loiden Williams, "Eli" and "Sita". Mr. Fournillier was unable to give full names for these persons.

## Appendix 1



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## Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by developing small business ideas based on the sustainable use of natural resources

**Blanchisseuse**

**October 09, 2010**

### Agenda

9:30-10:00	Registration and snack
10:00-10:45	Welcome and introductions
10:45-12:15	Identification of natural resources in the community and businesses that make use of them
12:15-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:30	Identification of natural resources in the community and businesses that make use of them (cont.)
1:30-2:00	Identification of existing and potential enterprises within the community based on the sustainable use of natural resources
2:00-3:15	Analysing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and deciding which are the most important
3:15-3:45	Validation of community selection criteria and next steps in the project (with working break)
3:45-4:00	Evaluation and workshop closure



## Appendix 2

### List of participants

	Name of participant	Organisations	Tel#	Email address(es)
	Helen "Scott" Scott	Blanchisseuse Enhancement Group	395 – 9405	
	Orlando Reyes	Blanchisseuse Enhancement Group	389 – 0967	
	Philip "Phil" Radix	Blanchisseuse Community Council	480 0153	
	Victor "Vic" Gilbert	Blanchisseuse Community Council	383 3037	
	Helen B. Charles	Blanchisseuse Community Council Seabreeze Catering	669 4378	<a href="mailto:seabreezecatering@tsst.net.tt">seabreezecatering@tsst.net.tt</a>
	Wayne "Sparky" Fournillier	Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT)	756 5344	
	Anna "Sandy" Sandy	Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT)	374 4992	
	Dowin "Tenner" Reyes		298 0716	
	Jenny Lee Quay	Blanchisseuse Enhancement Group	794 – 5007	
	Ornella Reyes	Blanchisseuse Enhancement Group	389 – 0967	
	Ronnie Mars	Blanchisseuse Community Council	366 – 8596	
	Dain Elie	Blanchisseuse Community Council	396 – 1629	
	Elvira "Roxi" Matroo	Blanchisseuse Community Council	764 - 1917	<a href="mailto:roxi-ann31@hotmail.com">roxi-ann31@hotmail.com</a>
	Jaimee Wellington "Bright Eyes"	Blanchisseuse Community Council		
	Junior Wellington	Blanchisseuse Community Council		

	<b>Name of participant</b>	<b>Organisations</b>	<b>Tel#</b>	<b>Email address(es)</b>
	Kerrel Debisette		346 – 7767	
	Arveon Debisette		769 - 4752	<a href="mailto:arveondebisette2000@yahoo.com">arveondebisette2000@yahoo.com</a>
	Morrel Debisette		794 - 5489	
	Joslyn “Jos” Lee Quay	Blanchisseuse Community Council	760 7333 374 7520	<a href="mailto:joslee_56@msn.com">joslee_56@msn.com</a>

**Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by  
developing small business ideas based on the sustainable use of  
natural resources**



Report of the second workshop  
Blanchisseuse Community Centre  
Blanchisseuse  
Trinidad

Wednesday May 4<sup>th</sup> - Thursday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011

## 1 Introduction

The workshop is part of a project called “*Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by developing small business ideas based on the sustainable use of natural resources*” funded by the **JB Fernandes Memorial Trust**. The purpose of the project is to improve people’s quality of life in six rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago through facilitating and supporting the development of small and micro-enterprises based on the sustainable use of natural resources.

For this project, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) identified six communities in Trinidad and Tobago who are interested in developing small businesses based on the sustainable use of natural resources (e.g. forests, fisheries, etc.). CANARI assisted these communities in identifying their income generating project ideas, and helped them to work through the next steps. Through creating and supporting these business opportunities the livelihoods and incomes of community members may be improved.

The project is targeting the communities of Blanchisseuse, Brasso Seco, Heights of Aripo, Lopinot, Plum Mitan and Speyside.



Figure 1 Participants working on the visioning exercise for Blanchisseuse

## 2 Workshop objectives

The workshop objectives were to:

- a) develop a vision for enhanced quality of life in the community;
- b) identify a comprehensive list of potential sustainable natural resource-based businesses;
- c) apply feasibility criteria to choosing most feasible micro-enterprises that can be done by an individual, existing CBO, or collective group; and
- d) to validate what was existing capacity of the community in being able to develop micro-enterprises.

## 3 Methods

The workshop was highly interactive and participants were given an opportunity to share experiences with each other. The participants created images of their vision for the community and used interactive tools and discussions to determine the most feasible businesses for the community at that point in time (see Appendix 1 for the agenda).

## 4 Participants

Fewer people attended the second workshop than did the first workshop. There were 14 participants in total though only 12 people attended both days of the workshop. Seven of the participants had attended the first workshop (see Appendix 2 for the list of participants). Many of the new participants were members of the recently re-formed Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT). Unlike the first workshop, only a few members identified themselves as being part of the Village Council.

## 5 Findings

### 5.1 Visioning

Participants were asked to develop a vision for the community based on the use of natural resources. One of the most important common elements that emerged was the need to create employment so that villagers would remain in the community as a concern was the number of persons leaving the community to live in other areas. None of the visions placed a strong emphasis on community members and groups working together on business or livelihood activities.

The participants also identified several ways to share the vision with others in the community. These included:

- portraying the vision in such a way that all the community members can see how they can benefit;
- having exchange visits with other communities doing similar ventures to motivate the Blanchisseuse community;
- bringing persons with technical skills into the community;
- networking through the Village Council, churches, Parent-Teacher Association so that the vision can be shared with a broader cross-section of the community;
- community groups hosting seminars; and
- seeking project funding to involve more people in the community in projects.

### Common elements of a vision for Blanchisseuse

- Blanchisseuse has many natural resources that are the basis for many businesses in the community.
- Natural resource-based businesses can be used to provide employment in Blanchisseuse so that people will remain in the community.
- The community is highly marketable and can attract visitors to the area.

Figure 2 Common elements of a vision for Blanchisseuse



Figure 3 A vision for Blanchisseuse

## 5.2 Identifying potential businesses

The participants were able to identify many actual or potential businesses that are based on the sustainable use of natural resources in or close to Blanchisseuse. These were grouped into relevant categories. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Potential businesses based on the sustainable use of natural resources in Blanchisseuse

Agriculture	Craft	Ecotourism	Processing/preserving	Retail (based on local products and skills)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial growing of flowers</li> <li>Agouti farming</li> <li>Cocoa farming</li> <li>Fruit farming</li> <li>Vegetable farming</li> <li>Coffee farming</li> <li>Fish farm (red tilapia)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jewellery (seeds and shells)</li> <li>Furniture (bamboo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turtle tours and conservation</li> <li>Nature tours</li> <li>Nature parks</li> <li>Agrotourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seamoss products (gels, drinks, mousse)</li> <li>Fish processing</li> <li>Fruit preservation</li> <li>Bush teas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restaurant</li> <li>Bakery</li> <li>Herb shop</li> </ul>

## 5.3 Feasibility of businesses

The participants used a matrix to determine the feasibility of the businesses identified in section 5.2 (see table 2 below). Each business could potentially receive a maximum of 60 points with a minimum score assigned to each category. The minimum score for the two compulsory categories (“Natural resources” and “Access to other resources”) was five points. If a business failed to obtain the minimum in any of the compulsory categories, it was immediately deemed unfeasible. Due to time constraints, it was not possible to assess all businesses in the same depth, so a preliminary prioritisation was done by the facilitators and participants, based on interest, skills and models available and preliminary assessment of likelihood of success.

Table 2 The feasibility rank, key points and driver(s) within the community for the identified businesses

Business (rank)	Key points	Driver(s) within the community
Seamoss products (57)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High demand for the products especially the drinks</li> <li>• Sustainable if harvested correctly               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There need to be dialogue with the harvesters</li> <li>○ Villagers only buy from sustainable harvesters</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Need to find models of managed harvesting as there is currently only open access in Blanchisseuse</li> <li>• Many in the community were already trained in harvesting and making seamoss products</li> </ul>	BEAT
Fish processing (54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal access to the resource exists</li> <li>• There is some finance available</li> <li>• Skills available in the community</li> <li>• Support in the community for the business</li> <li>• Existing models of fish processing</li> </ul>	Individual  Cooperative
Restaurant (54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing models of restaurants</li> <li>• Access to finance (some personal and would need loans)</li> <li>• Infrastructure ok</li> <li>• Some existing markets; can create markets</li> <li>• Existing business skills</li> <li>• Existing businesses</li> <li>• No competition for this type of business in the community</li> </ul>	Individuals
Bakery (54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal access to land needed</li> <li>• Healthy resources available</li> <li>• Finance needed for equipment</li> <li>• Existing markets</li> <li>• Little or no competition</li> <li>• Need more business skills</li> <li>• Models exist</li> </ul>	Individuals
Turtle watching and conservation (54)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing market in Blanchisseuse; other markets can be created with funding</li> <li>• Need to improve existing business skills</li> <li>• Existing models</li> <li>• There is some existing conflict within and outside the community where persons attempt to slaughter the turtles and poach eggs</li> <li>• Wildlife Section has offered support for the volunteers by giving a stipend</li> </ul>	Blanchisseuse Environmental Community Organisation (BECO)

Business (rank)	Key points	Driver(s) within the community
Fruit preservation (52)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource is healthy</li> <li>• There is an existing market for the products; markets can be created in other areas where they do not exist</li> <li>• There are several existing models for fruit preservation</li> </ul>	Individuals  Cooperative
Nature tours (52)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal access has been negotiated with Forestry Division</li> <li>• Healthy resource</li> <li>• Insurance costs are high but Tourism Development Company (TDC) will provide coverage</li> <li>• Good infrastructure</li> <li>• Existing skills in the community</li> </ul>	BECO
Jewellery (51)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most resources have legal access</li> <li>• Skills need to be built</li> <li>• Existing models</li> <li>• No existing market in Blanchisseuse</li> <li>• Low financing needs</li> </ul>	Individuals
Fish farm (42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land is there but unsure of the legal access to the land</li> <li>• There is no existing local market in Blanchisseuse for the freshwater fish but there is scope to effect a change in taste</li> <li>• Possibility to sell the fish in the north of Trinidad</li> <li>• Skills not in the community</li> <li>• Contribution to the community dependent on the demand for fresh water fish</li> </ul>	Individuals

Seamoss production emerged as the highest ranked business (57 out of 60), in part because BEAT had already implemented a sea moss project, so participants had skills and experience in producing seamoss products. Four different businesses were ranked second (54 points). Three of these are based on existing skills and activities in the community (fishing processing, restaurant and bakery) while the fourth, turtle watching and conservation, is a relatively new venture in Blanchisseuse. Several community members recently formed the Blanchisseuse Environmental Community



Figure 4 Participants working on the feasibility of the potential businesses



Organisation (BECO) specifically to undertake turtle conservation and tourism in the village. The lowest ranked business was fish farming (42 points), in part because participants had little information about this and doubted the skills and infrastructure existed to undertake this



Figure 5 Assessing the feasibility of the potential businesses

business. Participants' individual interests clearly affected the ranking of some of the businesses, particularly as some entrepreneurs, such as the jewellery-makers, were not represented at the meeting.

Table 2 shows that participants believed that there was relevant capacity in the community to establish many of the proposed businesses but the issue of access to land and state-owned resources such as forest products still needs to be resolved. Not having access to land also emerged from the first workshop as a hindrance to the

establishment of businesses in Blanchisseuse and may continue to do so. The participants were reasonably confident that there were existing

models for many of the potential businesses, underscoring the need for and value of exchange visits as a tool for learning and sharing the vision with the wider community.

#### 5.4 Capacity needs

The capacity needs are:

- information on the funding opportunities for developing small businesses of this kind;
- business management skills (including customer service);
- information on the economics of fish processing and farming;
- food health, safety, sanitation, quality and quality control;
- sustainable harvesting skills; and
- networking skills.

### 6 Evaluation

Participants situated themselves on an "evaluation line" (from zero or none to 100 or complete) on the floor to rank where they started at the beginning of the workshop and where they finished in terms of the objectives of the workshop. All indicated some growth/learning and many had made significant strides.

The participants were satisfied with the workshop and described the process as enjoyable, informative and thought it presented exciting opportunities for the community. Participants expressed a marked improvement in their ability to prioritise and choose a small business to develop. The majority of participants came to the workshop eager to get involved in small business development and by the end all of the participants' excitement and enthusiasm had increased. Similarly, most participants had an idea of what skills were required to start up small businesses and what skills and knowledge were still needed. Participants new to the workshop

were not as confident as the others in understanding the skills and knowledge needed to become successful businesspersons.

The workshop achieved all the stated objectives. The participants identified the natural resource-based businesses and assessed their feasibility in Blanchisseuse. They identified common elements of a vision for the community and discussed ways of sharing this with the wider community. They identified a number of businesses that would build on existing technical skills in the community. They either reinforced or started to develop skills in assessing whether a business would be feasible and what capacities need to be built within the community to ensure



their success.

The turnout for the workshop was lower than in the first workshop. Only seven of the original 19 participants attended the second workshop. The participants believed that CANARI should have advertised the workshop more widely by placing flyers at the schools and churches in the community. They believed that the time of the workshop had affected the turnout but some of the original participants said that they were unable to attend the workshop because of work commitments. This highlights that effective engagement of all stakeholders in a community may necessitate several meetings at different times and venues.

## **7 Next steps**

The workshop prepared the participants for the Community Expo where five participants were selected to represent Blanchisseuse. The Community Expo is designed to provide an opportunity to present the most feasible business ideas that came out of the workshop and network with funding and technical support agencies that can further facilitate and support business development in the community.

## Appendix 1



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## Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by developing small business ideas based on the sustainable use of natural resources

### Blanchisseuse

#### Agenda

Day 1 - May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 3:00 – 3:30 | Welcome, introductions, overview of first workshop                                    |
| 3:30 – 4:30 | Visioning – introduction, small group   |
| 4:30 – 5:30 | Small group report, development of common vision                                      |
| 5:30 – 6:00 | Develop comprehensive list of potential sustainable natural resource-based businesses |

Day 2 - May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 3:00 – 3:45 | Introduce feasibility criteria to choose most feasible micro-enterprises<br>Apply to one business |
| 3:45 – 4:45 | Small group work to apply feasibility criteria  |
| 4:45 – 5:30 | Small groups present<br>Select most feasible for development in the short-term                    |
| 5:30 – 6:00 | Summary of capacity needs of community<br>Wrap-up and next steps for Community Expo               |

## Appendix 2

List of participants

NAME OF PARTICIPANT	ORGANISATION(S)	TELEPHONE NUMBER(S)	EMAIL ADDRESS
Anna Sandy	Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT)	374 - 4992	
Arveon Debisette	Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT)	769 - 4752	<a href="mailto:arveondebisette2000@yahoo.com">arveondebisette2000@yahoo.com</a>
Mellissa Subero Lee Quay	Blanchisseuse Early Childhood Centre	752 – 7753	<a href="mailto:suberomeillissa@hotmail.com">suberomeillissa@hotmail.com</a>
Joanne Ramdial	Blanchisseuse Early Childhood Centre	328 - 4049	<a href="mailto:angeleyesjr@live.com">angeleyesjr@live.com</a>
Glenda Lee Quay	Blanchisseuse Environmental Community Organisation (BECO) Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT)	669 – 3533 394 – 1603 725 - 0742	
Judith Aaron Razack	Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT) Blanchisseuse Environmental Community Organisation (BECO)	794 - 0117	<a href="mailto:jraz1925@yahoo.com">jraz1925@yahoo.com</a>
Philip “Phil” Radix	Blanchisseuse Community Council	480 - 0153	
Kenneth Fournillier	Blanchisseuse Environmental Art Trust (BEAT)	689 – 1046	<a href="mailto:kfour32@hotmail.com">kfour32@hotmail.com</a>
Choylin Lee Quay	Blanchisseuse Environmental Community Organisation (BECO)	732 – 4551	

<b>NAME OF PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>ORGANISATION(S)</b>	<b>TELEPHONE NUMBER(S)</b>	<b>EMAIL ADDRESS</b>
Joslyn Lee Quay	Community member	760 - 7333	<a href="mailto:leequayj@yahoo.com">leequayj@yahoo.com</a> <a href="mailto:joslee_56@msn.com">joslee_56@msn.com</a>
Jenny Lee Quay	Community member Blanchisseuse Enhancement Group	794 - 5007	
Kernel Debisette		346 - 7767	
Victor Gilbert	Blanchisseuse Community Council	383 - 3037	
Jogie Charles	Retiree		



## Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by developing small business ideas based on the sustainable use of natural resources

Feasibility criteria for potential businesses

(Highlighted are most important that can exclude a business)

### 1. Natural resources:

- a. Is there legal (formal or informal) access to these resources?
- b. Are the resources “healthy” enough to be sustainably used?
- c. Is there a sustainable method of extraction that can be applied?

### 2. Access to other resources (physical, financial, material):

- a. Do individuals, groups, or CBOs have access to finance?
- b. Do individuals, groups, or CBOs have the physical (e.g. space, a building) and material (e.g. tools) resources needed?
- c. Is there appropriate infrastructure (e.g. roads for transportation, internet services, telephone, access to banking, electricity, water)?

### 3. Market:

- a. Is there evidence of an existing market for the products or services?
- b. Is there access to this market?
- c. What is the competition?
- d. Can a market be created?

### 4. Capacity of community:

- a. Do individuals, groups, or CBOs have existing business skills (e.g. financial management, marketing, people management and communication)?
- b. Are there existing successful small businesses in the community that can contribute to / link with this business?
- c. Do individuals, groups, or CBOs have existing skills, knowledge, and/or experience in this particular business?
- d. Are those individuals, groups, or CBOs willing / “ready” / confident to get involved in this business?

### 5. Contribution to the community:

- a. What would be the contribution to the wider community?



## CARIBBEAN NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE

Fernandes Industrial Centre • Administration Building • Eastern Main Rd. • Laventille • Trinidad W.I.  
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- b. Is there likely to be wider support from within the community?
- c. Is there likely to be conflict and opposition from within the community?

### **6. External support:**

- a. Are there existing and/or potential avenues of support (from external agencies, other CBOs, other)?
- b. Is there likely to be conflict and opposition from outside the community?

### **7. Models:**

- a. Are there existing relevant models from other communities with respect to this particular business?

Potential Business: Seamos products (gels, mousse, drinks)

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High demand for the products especially the drinks</li> <li>• Sustainable if harvested correctly                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There need to be dialogue with the harvesters</li> <li>○ Villagers only buy from sustainable harvesters</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Need to find models of managed harvesting as there is currently only open access in Blanchisseuse</li> </ul>
	Are resources healthy?	3	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	3	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	3	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	3	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	3	
	Is there access to this market?	3	
	What is the competition?	3	
	Can a market be created?	3	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	3	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	3	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	3	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	3	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	3	
	Is there support in wider community?	3	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	3	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	3	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		57	



Potential Business: Fish processing (fillet, smoking, salting)

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal access to the resource</li> <li>• There is some finance available</li> <li>• Skills available in the community</li> <li>• Support in the community for the business</li> <li>• Existing models of fish processing</li> </ul>
	Are resources healthy?	2	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	2	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	2	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	1	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	3	
	Is there access to this market?	3	
	What is the competition?	3	
	Can a market be created?	3	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	3	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	3	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	2	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	3	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	3	
	Is there support in wider community?	3	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	3	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	3	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		54	

Potential Business: Restaurant based on local foods and produce that is affordable enough for local customers

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing models</li> <li>Access to finance (some personal and would need loans)</li> <li>Infrastructure ok</li> <li>Some existing markets; can create markets</li> <li>Existing business skills</li> <li>Existing businesses</li> <li>No competition</li> </ul>
	Are resources healthy?	3	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	3	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	2	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	2	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	2	
	Is there access to this market?	2	
	What is the competition?	3	
	Can a market be created?	3	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	3	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	2	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	3	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	3	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	2	
	Is there support in wider community?	3	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	2	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	3	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		53	

Potential Business: Bakery based on cassava, coconut, local fruits and vegetables

- Products can be grown locally
- There has not been a business like this for years

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal access to land</li> <li>• Healthy resources</li> <li>• Finance needed for equipment</li> <li>• Existing markets</li> <li>• Little or no competition for the type of products</li> <li>• Need more business management skills</li> <li>• Many existing models</li> </ul>
	Are resources healthy?	3	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	3	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	2	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	2	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	3	
	Is there access to this market?	3	
	What is the competition?	3	
	Can a market be created?	3	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	2	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	3	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	2	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	2	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	2	
	Is there support in wider community?	3	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	3	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	3	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		54	

Potential Business: Turtle tours and conservation

One of the beaches in the area will be a protected beach

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing market in Blanchisseuse; other markets can be created with funding</li> <li>Need to improve existing business skills</li> <li>Existing models</li> <li>There is some existing conflict within and outside the community where persons attempt to slaughter the turtles and poach eggs</li> <li>Wildlife Division in Forestry has offered support for the volunteers by giving a stipend</li> </ul>
	Are resources healthy?	3	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	3	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	3	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	2	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	3	
	Is there access to this market?	3	
	What is the competition?	3	
	Can a market be created?	3	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	2	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	1	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	3	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	3	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	1	
	Is there support in wider community?	3	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	3	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	3	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		54	

Potential Business: Preservation of fruits (mangoes, plums, pommerac, pommecythere, citrus)

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource healthy</li> <li>• There is an existing market for the products; markets can be created in other areas where they do not exist</li> <li>• There are several existing models for fruit preservation</li> </ul>
	Are resources healthy?	3	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	3	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	2	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	2	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	3	
	Is there access to this market?	3	
	What is the competition?	3	
	Can a market be created?	3	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	1	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	3	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	2	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	0	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	3	
	Is there support in wider community?	3	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	2	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	3	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		52	

Potential Business: Nature tours

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• legal access negotiated with Forestry</li> <li>• healthy resource</li> <li>• insurance costs are high but TDC will provide coverage</li> <li>• good infrastructure</li> <li>• existing skills in the community</li> </ul>
	Are resources healthy?	3	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	3	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	3	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	3	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	3	
	Is there access to this market?	3	
	What is the competition?	2	
	Can a market be created?	3	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	3	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	1	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	3	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	3	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	1	
	Is there support in wider community?	1	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	3	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	2	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		52	

Potential Business: Jewellery from seeds and shells (coconut shells, sea shells, donkey eye and jumbie beads)

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most legal access</li> <li>• Skills need to be built</li> <li>• Existing models</li> <li>• No existing market in Blanchisseuse</li> <li>• Low financing needs</li> </ul> <p>(possibility that if the jewellery maker in the village were present in the meeting, the score may have been higher)</p>
	Are resources healthy?	3	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	3	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	3	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	3	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	3	
	Is there access to this market?	3	
	What is the competition?	3	
	Can a market be created?	3	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	1	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	0	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	2	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	3	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	3	
	Is there support in wider community?	3	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	3	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	3	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		51	

Potential Business: Fish farm in Blanchisseuse (freshwater fish e.g. red tilapia)

	Feasibility Criteria	Score	Implications
NATURAL RESOURCES	Is there legal access?	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land is there but unsure of the legal access to the land</li> <li>• There is no existing local market in Blanchisseuse for the freshwater fish but there is scope to effect a change in taste</li> <li>• Possibility to sell the fish in the north of Trinidad</li> <li>• Skills not in the community</li> <li>• Contribution to the community dependent on the demand for fresh water fish</li> </ul>
	Are resources healthy?	3	
	Is there sustainable method of extraction?	3	
ACCESS TO OTHER RESOURCES	Do you have access to finance?	3	
	Do you have the physical/material resources?	3	
	Do you have appropriate infrastructure?	3	
MARKET	Is there an existing market for your product?	3	
	Is there access to this market?	3	
	What is the competition?	2	
	Can a market be created?	1	
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY	Do you have existing business skills?	0	
	Are there successful small businesses of this kind already in the community?	1	
	Do you have existing skills/knowledge/experience in this business?	0	
	Are individuals/CBOs/groups with appropriate capacity willing to get involved?	1	
CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNITY	What is the contribution to the wider community?	1	
	Is there support in wider community?	1	
	Is there conflict/opposition within community?	3	
EXTERNAL SUPPORT	Are there existing/potential avenues for support?	3	
	Is there likely to be conflict from outside the community?	3	
MODELS	Are there existing models from elsewhere?	3	
TOTAL		42	



**Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by  
developing small business ideas based on the sustainable use of natural  
resources**

**Final visit – Blanchisseuse**

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2011**

**Objectives**

1. To get feedback from the community on the whole project – workshops and Community Expo
  - a. Results – benefits
  - b. Lessons
2. To identify specific and concrete actions for next steps by the community
3. To identify any specific future support needed from CANARI

**Agenda**

1. Review the project – objectives, what was done
2. Ask evaluation probing questions:
  - a. What do you think was the most important thing that the project achieved?
  - b. How did the project impact on you personally?
  - c. What do you think could have been done differently / better?
3. Help the community to develop a workplan for their next steps: what is the task, who will be responsible / lead, who will help, when will this be done
4. Ask them what support they need from CANARI, if any, in taking their ideas forward (will be different for different communities).
5. Closure – note that we will submit reports to them on their workshops, the Community Expo, and the whole project

**Attending**

*Participants*

Joanne Ramdial  
Randel Joseph  
Kerlon Joseph  
Kester Joseph  
Choylin Lee Quay  
Melissa Subero-Lee Quay  
Glenda Lee Quay

Victor Gilbert  
Anna Sandy  
Phil Radix  
Mikeshia Debisette  
Arveon Debisette  
Kerrel Debisette  
*Facilitator*  
Keisha Sandy

## Results

### 1. Evaluation probing questions:

- a. What do you think was the most important thing that the project achieved?
  - Learning about other resources that they were not aware of in the community
  - Meeting other groups doing similar activities in their own communities and seeing possibility for linkages with other communities
  - Learning of a process that can be applied to other businesses
  - Learning to assess the feasibility of businesses
  - The community working together to achieve one goal.
  - Meeting organisations that can assist in development of businesses in a one-on-one session. Participant believed that they would not have been able to meet those organisations.
- b. How did the project impact on you personally?
  - Motivated one participant to become involved in businesses based on the use of natural resources (agriculture)
  - One participant realised options for retirement planning (fish processing)
- c. What do you think could have been done differently / better?
  - The workshops needed to be advertised better to reach more participants. This should include flyers placed at the schools, churches and bars in the area. CANARI should also target the heads of the different groups in Blanchisseuse so that they can share the information with a larger cross section of the community.
  - There was a large gap between the first and second workshops and persons lost interest in the process.
  - The time between the second workshop and the Community Expo was too short (two weeks) and the community felt rushed

2. Help the community to develop a workplan for their next steps: what is the task, who will be responsible / lead, who will help, when will this be done

<b>What is the task?</b>	<b>Who responsible/ lead?</b>	<b>Who will help?</b>	<b>When?</b>	<b>Agency/ individual providing external support</b>
Training in proposal writing	Joslyn Lee Quay	Jenny Lee Quay	July 31, 2011	
Ask National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited (NEDCO) to visit Blanchisseuse to discuss financing for businesses	Arveon Debisette	Victor Gilbert, Joanne Ramdial	August 15, 2011	NEDCO
Community members meet to discuss possible options for agricultural projects. These are: a) Several individual projects b) Other community members join the Blanchisseuse Agricultural Group (BAG) and seek financing as one group c) Another group forms that incorporates members of the BAG	Victor Gilbert	Randel Joseph Kerlon Joseph Kester Joseph	June 30, 2011	
Training in fish farming	Joslyn Lee Quay	Jenny Lee Quay	July 04, 2011	Fisheries Division, Seafood Industry Development Company Limited (SIDC), Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute

<b>What is the task?</b>	<b>Who responsible/ lead?</b>	<b>Who will help?</b>	<b>When?</b>	<b>Agency/ individual providing external support</b>
				(CFTDI)
Training in fish processing	Kerrel Debisette	Mikisha Debisette	December 31, 2011	Fisheries Division, CFTDI
Purchase fish processing equipment	Glenda Lee Quay	Choylin Lee Quay	September 30	NEDCO
Training in business management	Arveon Debisette	Victor Gilbert, Joanne Ramdial	September 30, 2011	NEDCO, Veni Apwann
Blanchisseuse Expo			Easter 2012??	
Invite Community Development to Blanchisseuse	Anna Sandy	Joslyn Lee Quay	September 30, 2011	

3. Ask them what support they need from CANARI, if any, in taking their ideas forward (will be different for different communities).
  - Mentor or “big brother” to the groups in Blanchisseuse to keep them interested in the businesses. This includes providing advice and direction on further development of the businesses
  - Support for the training efforts

### **Conclusion**

The participants believed that it was important to have community businesses to achieve the vision of using natural resource-based businesses to improve the quality of life in Blanchisseuse. They discussed the possibility of having group agricultural projects such as organic and fish farming. One of the Community Expo participants explained that many of the agencies that approached Blanchisseuse at the Expo were interested in funding group projects. There was greater likelihood of funding if the businesses were owned by groups. Another participant however, cautioned those present about forming groups specifically to seek funding as those groups are disbanded when the funding is no longer present.

CANARI will continue to support the Blanchisseuse community as it seeks to develop natural resource-based businesses including mentoring the community and providing training in areas such as proposal design. CANARI will also seek to facilitate continued development of partnerships with other organisations that can provide assistance to the community.