Capacity building for watershed management stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago

Report of the preparatory meeting and community showcase

Upper Malabar Community Centre
Arima, Trinidad
March 20-21, 2014

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1. Introduction

Forest removal, coupled with the current and expected impacts of climate change, will compromise the availability and quality of freshwater, a critical resource in Trinidad and Tobago. Locally, there have been various initiatives to encourage water conservation and to protect and manage watersheds. These efforts have, however, not been able to sufficiently nor sustainably reverse or reduce the causative issues which compromise freshwater quantity and quality. There is a need, therefore, to improve the systems which are in place for watershed protection while simultaneously encouraging public awareness and participation in water conservation.

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) has undertaken the *Capacity Building for Watershed Management Stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago* project under its Forest, Governance and Livelihoods thematic programme. The goal of this project is to improve the community-based management of watersheds in Trinidad and Tobago through building the capacity of community groups involved in watershed management, to share lessons learned and best practices in watershed management amongst the groups and to enhance their skills in communicating how their work contributes to clean, safe drinking water.

The project entailed a national workshop to sensitise project participants and allow them to input into the project planning and design, training workshops on organisational management for community stewardship, communication, erosion control techniques and activities to produce and disseminate material on environmental awareness, watershed protection and access to clean and safe drinking water. This is the report of the preparatory meeting and the community showcase to promote the outputs of the project and to contribute to disseminating lessons learned and sharing on how the work of the watershed managers contribute to clean, safe drinking water .

2. Participants

A total of 14 persons representing nine community groups, who had participated in the project activities, attended the preparatory meeting on the first day. Seven community groups were from Trinidad and two were from Tobago. The representatives of the nine groups from the first day presented to the seven representatives of seven key l organisations in watershed management on the second day. The seven organisations comprised of three representatives from organisations with legal mandates for the management of watersheds and one representative each from a national programme secretariat, the ministry with responsibility to support community development , the national environmental fund and a regional project with technical expertise in watershed management.

The lists of participants for both the preparatory meeting and the community showcase are shown in Appendix 1.

3. Objectives

The **meeting objective** was to promote the work of groups involved in watershed management in Trinidad and Tobago.

4. Method

The first day of the meeting focused on preparing the community groups to present their work to the invited guests, key stakeholders in watershed management in Trinidad and Tobago, on the second day. The approach included the use of facilitated plenary and working group sessions to enable participants to recall the activities of the project, review key concepts on communication, review outputs of the project such as the capacity assessment, workshop reports, videos, newspaper articles, project webpage and Facebook postings and to share experiences on piloting what they had learned from the project activities. The participants then worked together to craft messages and select communication products to transfer these messages to the key stakeholders.

The final session on the first day was dedicated to the project participants evaluating the project via video. Facilitators shared the following questions with the workshop participants and reviewed video shooting tips. Workshop participants then interviewed their peers and recorded the sessions.

Proposed questions for evaluation of the project
What part/s of the project will help you the most in managing your watershed? Why?
What have you learnt from the experience of other groups working in other watersheds?
How do you plan to pass on the lessons you learnt to the rest of your group in your watershed?
Did the workshop reveal any weaknesses your group may have to strengthen to make you better watershed managers? If yes, what are these weaknesses?
What have you learnt from the experiences of other groups involved in the project?
What did you like best about the project?
What is a key thing you learnt about communication from this project?
How does new knowledge learnt from the project help you to do your work?
What were some of the challenges associated with carrying out activities in the project?
What are some of the challenges associated with watershed management in Trinidad and Tobago?
Did anything unexpected happen as a result of this project? If yes, tell us.

On the second day, the community groups presented to the invited guests and CANARI facilitated a discussion among participants. The agenda for the meeting is available in Appendix 2.

5. Findings

5.1 Messages derived by community groups

The participants agreed that the messages could be presented in two categories, namely organisational issues and technical skills. The derived messages are presented under these headings.

Organisational issues	Technical skills
There needs to be better information exchange among the various stakeholders involved in watershed management.	Community groups need formal training on the technical aspects of forest management (for example dendrology and soil and water analysis) so that they can improve survival rates of seedlings.

Community groups working in watershed management need to have greater access to tools, equipment and technology to enable them to be more assertive in their role as watershed managers.	Community groups are collecting data on their work in watershed management and need training on database management and analysis so that they can use the data they produce from their work to advise management decisions.
Community groups need training in proposal development, project management, financial management and community mobilisation.	Community groups want to participate in field, formal research on forest species suitability/survival in watersheds and share what they have learnt with the Forestry Division and the National Reforestation and Watershed Rehabilitation Project (NRWRP).
Community groups involved in watershed management need to meet and share their experiences and best practices.	Community groups have recognised that the design we use for trails is not suitable for activities such as mountain biking. We would like access to training on trail design and management so that we can improve how the trails we maintain are managed.
Funding is a major constraint to improving organisational management for community groups.	
Community groups want to form a formal network of forest managers in Trinidad and Tobago because we recognise we have common challenges and we can learn from each other. We also believe because we experience similar challenges, our capacity needs are similar, and so we think it is strategic to come together to access opportunities to increase our capacity.	

5.2 Communication products developed by the community groups for the key stakeholders

The workshop participants produced two products: 1) a short drama piece depicting a group outing at a river ('river lime') which included a poem written by one of the members focusing on presenting the messages on organisational issues and; 2) a power point presentation (Appendix 3) which presented the messages on technical skills.

5.3 Responses from key stakeholders

The table below is a summary of the responses from the key stakeholders who joined Day 2 of the meeting.

Issue	Response
Building capacity on technical aspects of watershed management	Global Water Partnership (GWP) has developed resources to share with community groups involved in watershed management and will attempt to make them available in hard copy to workshop participants. NRWRP has identified the need to build the technical capacity of groups in the programme and has drafted plans for the training of community groups in aspects of dendrology for the new financial year.
Promotion of the community groups' work	GWP offered to share the outputs of the project through their networks. NIHERST offered to promote the work of the community groups through their community outreach activities.
Information exchange among community groups engaged in watershed management	NRWRP has identified the need for sharing among the community groups in the programme and has drafted plans for the groups to meet in the new financial year.
Training in proposal development, project management, financial management and community mobilisation.	The Ministry of Community Development indicated that they can provide this type of training to the groups once the group is registered as an organisation with the Ministry of Community Development. The Green Fund is willing to fund this type of training once an organisation is registered with the Ministry of Community Development and submits an application.
Support for the formation and proposed activities of a network of forest managers in Trinidad and Tobago	The Ministry of Community Development is willing to provide support through its field officers to assist in setting up the network. The Green Fund indicated that they have not funded the formation of a network in the past, but they have funded the activities being proposed under the network and are willing to meet to further discuss the proposal.
Active participation in work planning and data management for the sites	NRWRP informed the group that they have plans to share the maps that were put together with the community groups. NRWRP was pleased to hear that the groups were willing to more actively participate in collecting data for management and would consider this for

| | work planning in the future. |
| | NRWRP personnel indicated that during their regular course of work, they visit groups under the programme and work with them to formulate work plans. |

6. Evaluation

The evaluation session indicated that this project contributed to improving how the community groups function through building their capacity in communication, networking and erosion control. Video footage for the session is available on the project webpage. Representatives of the groups indicated that the project revealed to them a concept of watershed management that not only included their efforts at reforestation in a particular area, but highlighted the interconnectedness of all stakeholders in the watershed. Many indicated that the project conveyed to them the value of effective communication within their organisations to promote cohesiveness and to keep members informed and motivated. Most expressed pleasure in having the opportunity to meet with other groups involved in watershed management and they related how they welcomed the opportunity to share their challenges and successes with their peers. All commended the training session on erosion control and reported that they had practiced some of the techniques. Finally, most reported that they were sharing or were planning to share what they had learnt with the other members of their group.

7. Next steps

The community groups decided to meet on April, 10 2014 at 1:00p.m. at the Santa Rosa First People's centre to work on the formal creation of the network.

CANARI informed the participants that within the next month, the videos would be finalised and posted online, final reports would be drafted and also posted online and the project would be officially complete.

8. Conclusion

The meeting was useful in promoting the work of community groups involved in watershed management to key targeted stakeholders (including key government agencies, funding agencies,and a regional technical organisation). The meeting was also able to share information on issues (such as development of work plans, training on data gathering and communication) in a non confrontational manner between the community groups and the governmental agencies. Additionally, these targeted stakeholders provided information to further promote the work of the community groups in watershed management. The meeting also provided an opportunity to review and evaluate the project using video. The use of video provided CANARI with valuable feedback on the effectiveness of the approaches piloted during the project and provided representatives of the community groups, with varying literacy levels, with an alternative to writing which made it easier for them to express their opinion on the piloted approaches.

Appendix 1 - Participant list

Community Showcase Workshop
Malabar Community Centre
March 20th - 21st 2014
PARTICIPANTS LISTS

No.	Name	Organisation	Address	Telephone Number	Email Address
1	Georgiana Boodoo	La Fillette Village Council	Cor. Paria Main Road & Cemetery Street, La Fillette	868 356 1587/726 8093	
2	Carl Fitzjames	Brasso Seco Paria Tourism Action Committee	Brasso Seco, Paria	868 468 6923 868 486 6059	carlfitzjames@hotmail.com
3	Alicia Madoo	Brasso Seco Paria Tourism Action Committee	Brasso Seco Paria	868 713 7380/ 332 4620	
4	Anthony Cordner	Fundamentals Cultural Group	Speyside Housing Scheme	868 354 6238	
5	Lyndon Glasgow	Anse Fromager	P.O. 133, Scarborough	868 720 2109	meave54@hotmail.com
6	Jay Ann Joseph	Anse Fromager	P.O. 133, Scarborough	868 324 4054	ansefromagercamp@gmail.com
7	Cristo Adonis	Santa Rosa First People (Carib)	No 19 Calvary Hill, Arima	868 367 8121	cristo_adonis@hotmail.

No.	Name	Organisation	Address	Telephone Number	Email Address
		Community			com
8	Natasha Shepherd Valentine	Santa Rosa First People (Carib) Community	Arima	868 398 4233	
9	Richard Smith	Sundew	LP33, Guatapajaro Road, Caratal	868 725 0253	smithrlc@yahoo.com
10	Bernice Copeland	Sundew	L.P. # 121 Main Road, Cumuto	868 482 6712	bernicecopeland@hotmail.com
11	Suzan Lakhan-Baptiste	Nature Seekers Inc.	10¼ mp Toco Main Road Matura	868 398 3038	suzanlakhan@natureseekers.org
12	Nila Ramroop	Aripo Youth Development Organisation	Heights of Aripo	868 382 6230	
13	Yolande Youk See	Caura Northern Range Hiking Group	Caura	868 750 9806	yolandeyouksee@yahoo.com
14	Annmarie James	Caura Northern Range Hiking Group	Caura		
15	Patricia Franco	CANARI	Unit 8, Building 7, Fernandes Business Centre, Eastern Main Road, Laventille,	868 626 6062	info@canari.org
16	Keisha Sandy	CANARI	Unit 8, Building 7, Fernandes Business Centre, Eastern Main Road, Laventille,	868 626 6062	keisha@canari.org
17	Neila Bobb-Prescott	CANARI	Unit 8, Building 7, Fernandes Business Centre, Eastern Main Road, Laventille,	868 626 6062	neila@canari.org
18	Raynaldo Phillips (Consultant)		Arima, Trinidad	868.374 5869	raynaldo.phillips@gmail.com

Representatives of key stakeholders

No.	Name	Organisation	Job Title	Address	Telephone Number	Email Address
1	Mr. William Trim	Department of Natural Resources	Acting Conservator of Forests	Highmoore Centre Wilson Road Scarborough, Tobago	868 660 2079	trim20031@gmail.com
2	Ms. Adana Antoine	Ministry of Community Development	Community Development Officer	ALGICO Building, Jerningham Avenue, Belmont	868 625-0639 ext. 3042	
3	Mr. Vijay Bissookhram	National Reforestation and Watershed Rehabilitation Programme Ministry of the Environment and Water Resource	Forest Officer	East Zone	868 397 2618	vbissookram500@gmail.com
4	Dr. Natalie Boodram PhD	Global Water Partnership-Caribbean Secretariat	Programme Manager - Water, Climate and Development Programme (WACDEP)	C/o NIHERST # 77 Eastern Main Road St. Augustine	868 663 4829	nboodram@gwp-caribbean.org
5	M r. Runako Osborne	Green Fund Executing Unit	Community Liaison Officer	44-46 South Quay, Port of Spain	868 483 2973	Runako.osborne@gov.tt
6	Mr. Celeste Chariandy	NIHERST	Senior Research Officer	77 Eastern Main Road, St. Augustine	868 663 6130	Celeste.chariandy@niherst.gov.tt
7	Ms. Marcia Tinto	Environmental Management Authority	Senior Environmental Education Officer	8 Elizabeth Street, St. Clair	868 379 0681	mtinto@ema.co.tt

Community showcase to promote the work of groups involved in watershed management in Trinidad and Tobago
Programme
20th- 21st March 2014

Objective

To promote the work of groups involved in watershed management in Trinidad and Tobago.

Draft agenda

20th March

8:30 – 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome Objective Overview of agenda
9:30 - 10:30	Sharing on the use of skills gained from involvement in the project
10:30 – 11:00	Break
11:00 – noon	Review of communication products of the project
noon- 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 2:30	Group preparation for meetings with invited guest
2:30 - 3:30	Project evaluation exercise
3:30 - 4:30	Wrap up and closure

21ˢᵗ March

8:30 – 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 9:30	Welcome and introductions About CANARI
9:30 - 10:30	About the project " Capacity building for watershed management stakeholders in Trinidad and Tobago"
10:30 – 11:30	Individual meetings between groups and invited guest
11:30 – noon	Evaluation, wrap up and closure

Proposal for the formation of a network of watershed management organisations

A presentation of watershed management groups in T&T

21 March 2014
Malabar Community Centre

Objectives of the network

- To share information, best practices and experiences among watershed groups
- To equip groups within the network with skills to be effective watershed managers
- To assist groups to become self sufficient and self reliant
- To develop entrepreneurs within the communities

Needs of the network

- Formation of the network
  - Mentor to help establish the network
  - Understudy for the mentors to assume that role for others
  - Consultant to develop proposal for funding
- Funding for the network to meet
  - Travel, accommodation, material, funds to cover day pay to meet

Needs of the individual groups in the network

- Acquiring skills to be effective watershed managers
  - Training in watershed management
  - Strategic planning for all organisations in the network
  - Financial management (e.g. book- keeping)
  - Monitoring and evaluation
  - Enterprise development to diversify revenue

Needs of the individual groups in the network (cont'd)

- Promoting the work of the groups
  - Community education programmes
  - Media campaigns
  - Marketing goods and services

Developing an information poster about our work

Possible activities

- Training
  - Formal workshops
  - Exchange visits and site visits
- Flea markets to generate income for the groups
- Meeting of the network
- Documenting the processes used in the formation of the network