# 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

A project managed by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

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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 I 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	Community groups need formal training on the
among the various stakeholders involved in	technical aspects of forest management (for
watershed management.	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,	Community groups are collecting data on their work in watershed management and need training
equipment and technology to enable them to be	on database management and analysis so that
more assertive in their role as watershed	they can use the data they produce from their
managers.	work to advise management decisions.
Community groups need training in proposal	Community groups want to participate in field,
development, project management, financial	formal research on forest species
management and community mobilisation.	suitability/survival in watersheds and share what
management and community modifisation.	they have learnt with the Forestry Division and the
	National Reforestation and Watershed
	Rehabilitation Project (NRWRP).
Community groups involved in watershed	
Community groups involved in watershed	Community groups have recognised that the
management need to meet and share their	design we use for trails is not suitable for activities
experiences and best practices.	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
For disc is a major constraint to income in a	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	Global Water Partnership (GWP) has developed
watershed management	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	NRWRP has identified the need for sharing among
engaged in watershed management	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	The Ministry of Community Development
management, financial management and	indicated that they can provide this type of
community mobilisation.	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	The Ministry of Community Development is willing
of a network of forest managers in Trinidad and	to provide support through its field officers to
Tobago	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	NRWRP informed the group that they have plans
management for the sites	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.



#### Community Showcase Workshop Malabar Community Centre March 20<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> 2014 PARTICIPANTS LISTS

No.	Name	Organisation	Address	Telephone	Email Address
				Number	
1	Georgiana Boodoo	La Fillette Village Council	Cor. Paria Main Road & Cemetery	868 356	
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No.	Name	Organisation	Address	Telephone	Email Address
				Number	
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## 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
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6	Mr. Celeste Chariandy	NIHERST	Senior Research Officer	77 Eastern Main Road, St. Augustine	868 663 6130	Celeste.chariandy@nihe rst.gov.tt
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# Community showcase to promote the work of groups involved in watershed management in Trinidad and Tobago

## **Programme**

20<sup>th</sup>- 21<sup>st</sup> March 2014

#### **Objective**

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

#### **Draft agenda**

#### 20<sup>th</sup> 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



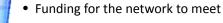
- To assist groups to become self sufficient and self reliant
- To develop entrepreneurs within the communities

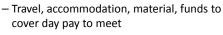


#### Needs of the network



- 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







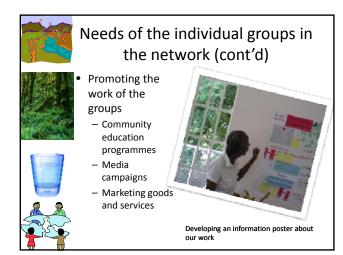
# Needs of the individual groups in the network



- 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









## Possible activities



- Training
  - Exchange visits and site visits
- Flea markets to generate income for the



- Meeting of the network
- Documenting the processes used in the formation of the network