

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute

Final Report: Project CA012.01

Period July 2001-June 2006

1. Introduction

The project entitled *Improving governance through civil society involvement in natural resource management in the Caribbean* started on 1 July 2001 and was funded under the European Commission's NGO co-financing budget line (B7-6000). The project was implemented by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) based in Trinidad and Tobago, with support from the Humanist Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries (Hivos) based in the Netherlands.

The project was designed to respond to two converging challenges facing the Caribbean: the challenge to develop and implement new modes of governance, which enhance community participation and collective action; and the challenge to manage natural resources for sustainable use to meet human needs. The underlying project assumption was that these converge because people's participation and the collaboration of institutions can improve natural resource management, which in turn provides the foundation for the strengthening of communities and the creation of partnerships.

The project's purpose was to reinforce the civil society contribution to the equitable and sustainable use of natural resources in selected countries of the insular Caribbean. The following anticipated outcomes were effectively achieved, as outlined in more detail in Section 3 below:

- The understanding (among civil society actors, resource management agencies and policy makers) of the institutional requirements for effective civil society participation in natural resource governance would be improved;
- The technical and financial capacity of selected civil society organisations (CSOs) involved in natural resource governance, including CANARI itself, would be strengthened; and
- The access and supply of information sources for Caribbean governments and civil society organisations involved in natural resource governance would be improved.

The project had a total budget of €903,234 of which €819,574 was provided by Hivos and the balance of €83,669 as counterpart funding by CANARI (see attached Audited Statements at Appendix 1). Additionally, the recipients of the small grants secured an additional €128,562 (US\$164,064) as counterpart funding. Numerous other complementary activities which meet the project objectives were carried out during the project timeframe, with funding from other sources, and the most important of these are documented in the updated logframe matrix at Appendix 2.

The project is now complete, with the exception of the wider dissemination of some of the project outputs including uploading of all the documents onto the website.

The report has been prepared by the Executive Director of CANARI.

2. Executive Summary

The project entitled *Improving governance through civil society involvement in natural resource management in the Caribbean* started on 1 July 2001 and was funded under the European Commission's NGO co-financing budget line (B7-6000). The project was implemented by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) based in Trinidad and Tobago, with support from the Humanist Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries (Hivos) based in the Netherlands.

The project was designed to respond to two converging challenges facing the Caribbean: the challenge to develop and implement new modes of governance, which enhance community participation and collective action; and the challenge to manage natural resources for sustainable use to meet human needs. The underlying project assumption was that these converge because people's participation and the collaboration of institutions can improve natural resource management, which in turn provides the foundation for the strengthening of communities and the creation of partnerships.

The project's purpose was to reinforce the civil society contribution to the equitable and sustainable use of natural resources in selected countries of the insular Caribbean, with a particular focus on improving:

- the understanding (among civil society actors, resource management agencies and policy makers) of the institutional requirements for effective civil society participation in natural resource governance;
- the technical and financial capacity of selected civil society organisations (CSOs) involved in natural resource governance, including those of CANARI itself;
- the access and supply of information sources for Caribbean governments and civil society organisations involved in natural resource governance would be improved.

CANARI used a range of different approaches including:

- Questionnaires, surveys and perception studies;
- Case studies;
- Policy briefs;
- Technical assistance to build civil society natural resource management capacity, e.g. strategic planning, conflict resolution, development of financial systems;
- Small grant project preparation workshop
- Training workshops in skills and methods (e.g. Proposal Development; Information Management for Civil Society) and provision of small grants/scholarships to participate in workshops on organisational development, conflict management and stakeholder identification and analysis.

The major objectives of the project were achieved notably in the areas of

- Consolidation and strengthening of CANARI's own governance structure, programming, and competence to manage small grant facilities;
- Enhanced recognition of the role that CANARI can play in regional and international development processes, including the facilitation of participatory policy processes;

- Enhanced capacity of small grant recipients to fulfil their role in the co-management of natural resources and building the capacity of other CSOs.
- A cadre of CSO change agents established and exchanging experiences and expertise both within and outside the project framework;
- Capacity of 25 small grantees and 4 recipients of technical assistance built in a wide range of skills, methods and competencies;
- Dissemination of project findings to a wide range of regional stakeholders.

However, the project also highlighted ongoing barriers and challenges to civil society participation in natural resource management in the following areas:

- continuing gap between the rhetoric and practice of participatory integrated natural resource management in most countries of the Caribbean;
- development priorities determined by external agencies do not always respond to the priorities as perceived at the regional, national or local level;
- under-resourced CSOs, both in terms of finance and skilled staffing;
- CSO governance structures that do not reflect or support the development of self-sustaining revenue-generating activities;
- overdependence in most CSOs on one or two key individuals and lack of succession planning, resulting in fragile organisations in the case of the departure of key actors;

Areas in which CANARI is seeking to work to build on the findings of this project are:

- case studies of participatory policy development processes in the region and an analysis of the critical success factors and challenges;
- case studies of participatory natural resource management institutions and arrangements in the region and an analysis both of the critical success factors and challenges and of the impact on local livelihoods;
- analysis of the range of CSO governance structures and the legislation that underpins them within the Caribbean region, with a view to identifying those that support a more entrepreneurial and proactive approach;
- technical assistance to build strong organisations and networks that can act as change agents, rather than CANARI's historic focus on key individual change agents;
- ongoing training at regional, national and local level of both government and civil society natural resource managers in areas of identified weakness, e.g. organisational development, information management; proposal development and project management; conflict management, participatory natural resource planning and management; strategic planning and visioning for community-based tourism; community mobilisation, stakeholder identification and analysis; and participatory mapping.

3. Review of programme and performance

3.1 Policy and programme context

3.1.1 Regional policy context

The following are factors within the regional policy environment during the period which have had a significant impact on the context within which civil society organisations in the region operate:

- A significant reduction in the amount of donor funding available to CSOs working in the field of natural resource management (e.g. withdrawal of Hivos and the Ford Foundation from the region with the exception of Cuba; reduction in funding from international agencies such as the UK Department for International Development and the Canadian International Development Agency). Few, if any, CSOs have successfully filled this gap with self-sustaining revenue-generating activities and there several instances of previously-strong national and regional organisations being diverted from their core mission in the attempt to secure sustaining funding.
- A shift in policy emphasis and funding from environmental conservation to sustainable development and poverty reduction. While this shift would seem to support greater civil society involvement, progress has been limited as a result of the absence of a culture of integrated multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder planning and the institutions to support it.
- The failure of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to implement the Barbados Plan of Action (BPOA) led to the 2005 Mauritius BPOA review meeting and the adoption of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI). Several governments in the region (e.g. Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados) fielded official teams with CSO representation and the Mauritius meeting generally provided a useful forum for Caribbean civil society to discuss and advocate for its development priorities. Although the MSI is also largely unimplemented to date, the spirit of the Mauritius meeting and the collaborations established there are being continued under an initiative co-ordinated by civil society actors such as CANARI and the University of the West Indies (UWI) Sustainable Economic Development Unit.
- A significant increase in the number of international agreements and commitments to which regional governments have signed up (e.g. Multilateral Environmental Agreements, Millennium Development Goals). Many of these commit governments to engage in participatory processes. However, the rhetoric of participation still exceeds the practice in most Caribbean countries, in spite of the fact that these international commitments have further stretched limited government human and financial resources so that partnerships with civil society would seem even more desirable.
- The increased incidence of natural disasters such as hurricanes which exacerbated the region's sense of vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change, resulting in an increased focus on disaster risk reduction and management including the critical role that civil society can play in enhancing resilience.
- Continuing migration of skilled labour from many Caribbean countries, further reducing the pool of potential management and technical staff in the CSOs (and government agencies) focusing on natural resource management.
- Political instability in Haiti and the aftermath of Hurricane Ivan in Grenada made it impossible to carry out some of the anticipated activities in those countries. In Haiti there was a complete communication breakdown with the proposed Haitian

small grantee (GRAMIR) and in Grenada it was necessary to substantially revise the project activities being coordinated by the Agency for Rural Transformation (ART) with a greater focus on its own capacity needs rather than those of the network to which it belongs.

3.1.2 CANARI organisational and programme context

The project period also coincided with a period of substantial change and transition within the Institute, including:

- transition from the founder management team which established CANARI in the 1980s to a new management team and oversight structure (the Partnership) in 2001;
- closure of St Croix and Saint Lucia offices and move to Trinidad in 2001;
- departure from the region in 2004 of two members of the Trinidad-based senior management team and transition to a new management team;
- strategic review of CANARI's governance structure and activities (see www.canari.org) and development of strategic plan for 2006-2010 (see Appendices 3 and 4);
- continuous review and upgrading of financial and other systems.

In spite of these transitions, CANARI's strength can be measured by:

- its successful completion of several projects initiated by earlier management teams (e.g. Institutional Arrangements for Coastal Management in the Caribbean [DFID funded under its Natural Resource Management Programme]; Who Pays for Water: A regional project on markets and incentives for watershed protection and improved livelihoods [Caribbean component of a DFID-funded global project coordinated by the International Institute for Environment and Development])
- its successful negotiation during the period of a number of significant grants for regional project work involving both government and civil society organisations (e.g. FAO National Forest Programme Facility project covering 7 countries; EU Tropical Forestry project covering 8 countries)
- growing recognition by donors, government agencies and civil society of the unique role that the Institute can play in providing technical assistance in building partnerships to manage natural resources (e.g. contracts to facilitate aspects of the Montserrat Centre Hills project; Trinidad and Tobago Forest Policy and Protected Areas Policy; Trinidad Aripo Savannah Management Plan, fostering networking between UWI campuses).
- increase in strategic alliances and partnerships for the development and implementation of regional projects (e.g. with the Caribbean Regional Environment Programme (CREP) for capacity building; the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute on projects on integrated watershed management and sustainable land management; SEDU on the regional potential for payments for watershed services)
- continuing willingness of key change agents from both government and civil society to serve on CANARI's Board/Partnership.
- willingness of a wide range of civil society stakeholders to participate in CANARI's strategic review and planning processes (see Appendices 3 and 4)

In the case of the small grants fund, the mid-term evaluation highlighted the need for changes to the management and monitoring functions performed by CANARI and these were implemented for the final phase of the small grants.

In some cases, reporting on project components has been completed by staff who were not involved in the design or implementation although attempts have always been made to have data validated by others involved in the project.

Throughout its transition, CANARI has shared its lessons learned with its civil society partners both during the strategic review period and in workshops such as Organisational Development. The transitional period at CANARI might usefully be documented as a case study given the prevalence in Caribbean NGOs of problems of succession and/or over-dependence on a single strong individual.

3.2 Methodology

CANARI used a range of different approaches in the implementation of the project including:

- Questionnaires, surveys and perception studies;
- Case studies;
- Policy briefs;
- Technical assistance to build civil society natural resource management capacity, e.g. strategic planning, conflict resolution, development of financial systems;
- Small grant project preparation workshop
- Training workshops in skills and methods (e.g. Proposal Development; Information Management for Civil Society) and provision of small grants/scholarships to participate in workshops on organisational development, conflict management and stakeholder identification and analysis.

3.3 Objectives achieved

3.3.1 Major impacts

- Consolidation and strengthening of CANARI's own governance structure, programming, and competence to manage small grant facilities both through activities conducted under this project and through the strategic planning process funded by CANARI and The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (MacArthur);
- Enhanced recognition of the role that CANARI can play in regional and international development processes (e.g. the Mauritius SIDS meeting, the Joint Executive Committee of the Caribbean Regional Environmental Programme (CREP); the Technical Advisory Group for the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) as well as improved capacity within CANARI to perform these roles effectively;
- Four of the recipients of the major small grants and nine of the recipients of capacity building grants involved in some form of co-management of their country's natural resources. Countries involved are Dominican Republic, Saint Lucia, Jamaica, Grenada, St Kitts & Nevis, Antigua & Barbuda, Trinidad & Tobago.

- CANARI involved in participation in and/or facilitation of a number of participatory policy processes involving government agencies and civil society stakeholders in Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, St Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent & the Grenadines and Montserrat.
- A cadre of CSO change agents established and exchanging experiences and expertise both within and outside the project framework;
- Capacity of small grantees and recipients of technical assistance built in the following areas (see Appendix 5 for executive summary of the final evaluation of small grants facility)
 - increased institutional capacity to carry out organisational mandates;
 - new and deepened partnerships with other CSOs and government agencies, including new co-management arrangements;
 - improved understanding of partners and their needs;
 - improved systems for resource monitoring;
 - improved participatory planning mechanisms;
 - the establishment of good internal governance policies;
 - strengthened transparent financial and other reporting systems
 - improved understanding of organisational visions and mandates, organisational contexts and stakeholders' perception of the organisations;
 - improved methods for information management, dissemination and sharing;
 - improved methods for conflict management;
 - improved understanding of how to use existing legislation to challenge the disconnect between rhetoric and reality and rhetoric and practice;
 - the generation of additional funding for spin-off projects;
 - improved skills in conflict management, organisational development, financial management

3.3.2 Main outputs

The main outputs of the project are:

- a) Baseline study of partner organisations (see Appendix 6)
- b) Report on small grant proposal preparation workshop (already submitted to Hivos)
- c) Report on workshop on Information Management (already submitted to Hivos)
- d) Policy brief No. 7 *Civil society and governance in sustainable development* (Appendix 7)
- e) Policy brief No 8 *The importance of information management to civil society* (Appendix 8)
- f) Mid-term evaluation of the small grants programme (already submitted to Hivos)
- g) Small grant project final reports (outcomes summarised in Appendix 5, original versions available on request)
- h) Final evaluation of the small grants programme (Executive Summary attached at Appendix 5, full version available on request)
- i) Report on technical assistance provided to Nature Seekers (Appendix 9);

- j) Summary report on technical assistance provided to The Travel Foundation, Tobago (Appendix 10)
- k) Spanish language edition of the case study from the Dominican Republic *El Bosque es Nuestra Gran Parcela* (attached at Appendix 11) Funding is being sought from GTZ, Dominican Republic for an English language edition.

Additionally there are reports on all training workshops for which scholarships were provided, including participant evaluations.

3.4. Activities undertaken

The detailed activities undertaken are contained in the updated logframe matrix at Appendix 2 (which includes activities conducted under complementary projects) but the following represents a summary of the key activities undertaken under this project:

- a) Identification of 21 natural resource management CSOs with potential to act as change agents in their countries and sectors to participate in a baseline survey;
- b) Analysis of the capacity building needs of the 13 CSOs that responded to the initial questionnaire (see Appendix 6)
- c) Provision of technical assistance to Nature Seekers Trinidad [strategic planning, organisational development]; Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society and the Negril Environmental Protection Trust [organisational development, conflict management] and The Travel Foundation, Tobago [strategic planning, organisational development including the development of alternative financing strategies].
- d) The documentation of a case study from the Dominican Republic of civil society management of a dry forest (see Appendix 11)
- e) Administration of a small grant facility offering grants of up to US \$35,000 to five CSOs, including launching facility, providing technical assistance to develop proposals and during implementation, monitoring progress, and external mid-term and final evaluation.
- f) Launch of complementary mini grant/scholarship facility to support capacity building needs (principally conflict management, organisational development, stakeholder identification, analysis and mobilisation) identified as a result of the relatively low uptake of the small grants and challenges faced by small grant recipients during the period.
- g) Facilitation of two regional workshops for approximately 15 CSOs on each occasion on small grant proposal development and information management for civil society
- h) Expansion of CANARI's library and web-based information to meet identified civil society information needs.

3.5 Resources and budget used

The total budget used was €903,234, broken down into the following categories:

Consumables and supplies	€46,530
Human resources	€252,849
Travel and subsistence	€114,687
Services	€52,544
Running costs	€66,906
Other costs (small grant/scholarship facility, library acquisitions)	€376,196

The major funding came from the European Commission's NGO co-financing budget line (B7-6000) via Hivos, with CANARI contributing €83,669.

The human resources included CANARI technical, financial and administrative staff and consultants with expertise in civil society capacity needs assessment, information management, library management, web design and management, and small grant management.

3.6 Assumptions and risks

The risks and assumptions documented in the project related only to the purpose and results level and not to the individual activities. They were:

Purpose level

- Governments amenable to civil society participation in natural resource management
- Civil society prepared to play a part in the management of natural resources
- Natural resource management is critical to the development of the region

Results level

- Acceptance of the role that civil society organisations can play in managing natural resources and improving governance
- Civil society organisations will have sufficient other capacities to address management processes
- Financial constraints of participants

The assessment of the validity and status of these assumptions is given in 44. below.

3.7 Management and coordination arrangements

The project was managed by CANARI with financial support and occasional project design input from Hivos. The project was targeted at the islands of the Caribbean region, encompassing three different languages (French, Spanish and English)

3.8 Financing arrangements

As noted under 3.5, the major funding came from the European Commission's NGO co-financing budget line (B7-6000) via Hivos, with CANARI contributing €83,669.

The counterpart funding provided by CANARI and other donor agencies to this project as stated in the audited accounts understates the full amount of counterpart and complementary funding which supported this project for the following reasons:

- only counterpart funding up to the amount stipulated in the budgets has been reported upon for clarity;
- it transpired in 2004 that there was a discrepancy in the area of counterpart funding between Hivos' agreement with CANARI and that between Hivos and the EU, with the former requiring only €16,763 and the latter €83,669. By the time the discrepancy was discovered, the Year 1 (2001-2004) accounts had been audited, as had CANARI's financial year accounts, so much of what could have been reported as counterpart funding during that period was not reported since CANARI thought it had already met its full counterpart funding commitment.

- The counterpart funding secured by the small grantees, in the amount of €128,562 is not reported.

Many of the complementary activities carried out by CANARI during the project timeframe with funding from other sources which supported the project objectives are documented in the updated logframe matrix at Appendix 2.

The project was originally designed to be a three-year project from July 2001-June 2004 but due to a variety of reasons, some of them beyond CANARI's control, the project did not really get off the ground until 2002, with substantial project activities commencing only in 2003/2004 following the collection of the data for and publication of the baseline survey. It was therefore agreed between CANARI and Hivos that the project should be extended to June 2006, with the 2001-2004 period being considered as Year 1.

3.9 Key quality/sustainability issues

The sustainability of the type of capacity building, technical assistance and small grant activity which formed the core of this project (after the baseline survey had been completed) is difficult to assess over the relatively short time frame of the project but preliminary evaluations of the application of the learning have been positive, particularly in the case of those organisations with whom CANARI was able to work over an extended period, such as Nature Seekers and the small grantees. Nature Seekers, for example, developed a strategic plan, revised its governance structure, and upgraded its financial systems and policies. During the project period, it has significantly increased its revenues and has been awarded a government reforestation project, which enabled it to employ an additional 30 members of the local community. Similarly JCDT, CEBSE and CAD were able to strengthen the capacity of both their own organisations and key partners and thus to contribute to the sustainability of their main programme areas.

4. Lessons learned

4.1 Policy and Programme Context

Respondents to the baseline survey felt that the priorities of their countries were determined by the need to attract direct foreign investment and strive for capital growth rather than environmental and social priorities. Against this backdrop, the concept of sustainable development was seen as an opportunity to broaden environmental discourse from a narrow technical agenda to one that engages with that on governance.

The state was seen to be retreating from its traditional functions (e.g. social welfare tasks) and this is impacting on poor and marginalised people. Women in particular are bearing the brunt as they fill in the gaps (e.g. by taking on additional caring roles in the home). At the same time demands for democracy are being made across the region by citizens and their organisations. This trend is particularly strong in the Commonwealth Caribbean but is also strong in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

The survey also revealed that the underlying issues related to engagement between the state and civil society are similar across the region although the legal frameworks (such as registration and incorporation requirements) differ. Legal status for civil society organisations can be conferred sometimes as a favour and at other times in return for the delivery of services. This can act as a fetter on the rights of citizens to organise themselves and advocate on the basis of common cause or concern.

The progress towards developing formal policies that enshrine civil society participation has been slower than anticipated at the project design stage. The baseline survey revealed that spaces for engagement between the state and civil society had developed (e.g. National Sustainable Development Councils [NSDCs]) but these had remained isolated instances rather than part of a concerted trend that institutionalises citizen participation. At the time of writing, only one NSDC (Grenada) remains operational although civil society in Trinidad & Tobago took the initiative in 2002 to form a National Sustainable Development Network and this is still functioning based on voluntary input of time and small financial and in-kind contributions.

In relation to policy, for example, most of the participating countries in the English-speaking Caribbean (Jamaica and Grenada being notable exceptions) do not have updated forest policies which reflect the modern realities of Caribbean forests being managed for sustainable use rather than timber harvesting or conservation. In spite of insufficient government resources to manage natural resources effectively on an exclusive basis, several countries still lack the formal basis to engage civil society in co-management. Moreover, in some cases where co-management arrangements have been initiated, the necessary regulations to allow for civil society collection and use of user fees have not been passed, leaving them either with inadequate funding to perform the management function (e.g. Negril Coral Reef Protection Society) or the necessity of renegotiating an ad hoc arrangement on an annual basis (e.g. Nature Seekers).

While CANARI has been able to document (both within this project and others) a number of cases of informal delegation of authority to civil society which have resulted in successful management of the resource, it is questionable whether these result in the desired degree of equity and sustainability, since they are often dependent on the political will of a particular agency, or in some cases, of a particular individual which further exacerbates the insecurity of the arrangement.

The absence of integrated planning in the region is a challenge to the goal of reinforcing the participation of civil society in strengthening the democratic process. While there are obvious synergies between policies focusing on poverty reduction and those promoting sustainable use of natural resources as a livelihood component, little exists in the way of formal or informal linkages.

It is clear that there is a continuing and urgent need for programmes that target civil society and governance and seek to build the capacity of both CSOs and their government partners to create institutional arrangements that support equitable and sustainable use of natural resources in the Caribbean. The inadequate capacity (human, financial, skills, absence of a clear vision) of CSOs to play an effective and sustained role in natural resource management was vividly illustrated by the project process:

- 21 of the leading Caribbean natural resource management CSOs targeted for the baseline survey but only 13 responded fully.
- Only 10 of the 13 respondents had the capacity to complete the initial small grant concept note;
- Only 6 of the 10 were able to complete the full project proposal;
- Only 5 of the 6 eventually took up the small grants offered to them, with the sixth citing inadequate capacity to take on a new project;

- 2 of the 5 grantees were unable to complete their projects as anticipated, one as a result of exogenous factors (Hurricane Ivan and the subsequent influx of funding for reconstruction activities) and the other as a result of the departure of key personnel and the need to focus on its own restructuring rather than building the capacity of the network to which it belongs.

However, on the positive side, the benefits of regional interactive participatory training and technical assistance, targeted at capacity areas identified as priorities by regional CSOs, was highlighted throughout the project. Participants particularly valued the ability to learn from regional case studies documented by CANARI and from the experience of other participants in the workshops. The need for and benefits of targeted exchange and study visits was identified and CANARI has started to include these as part of its methodology in new project proposals.

4.2 Process of project planning/design

It is difficult to comment on this as none of the current project team was with CANARI at the time the project was conceived. The contract between Hivos and CANARI made detailed provision for the activities in Year 1 but was less specific about Years 2 and 3, which proved to be extremely valuable in facilitating adaptive management of the small grants facility, once it became apparent that the original strategy of about a dozen medium sized grants was not feasible but that there was a strong need for scholarships and mini-grants to support capacity building in priority areas. With the benefit of hindsight, the logframe could have usefully been expanded to include OVIs and risks/assumptions for the individual activities.

Participants were able to submit their small grant proposals in their native language, with CANARI bearing the cost of translation into English for the purposes of project management and cross-learning between small grant participants. These costs and the time involved in effectively managing and monitoring a small grant programme were under-provided for in the original project design. However, as the small grant evaluation indicates, a high degree of oversight is necessary if the small grant funding is to be used efficiently and effectively to meet the grant objects. Similarly, the original project design did not allow for funding to translate into Spanish and French all the outputs so CANARI continues to seek funding to rectify this gap.

4.3 Project scope

The proposed geographic focus of the project was the islands of the Caribbean, including francophone and hispanophone countries. In total, some 30 organisations from 14 countries participated directly at various stages in the project with additional CSOs benefiting from in-country activities under the small grants.

4.4 Risks and assumptions

Of the assumptions that were documented in the original logframe, the following held true:

- *Civil society prepared to play a part in the management of natural resources:* this willingness was identified in all project countries, with a general perception that the pace of civil society involvement is constrained by government unwillingness and lack of capacity in the facilitation of participatory processes.

- *Natural resource management is critical to the development of the region:* for most countries, the primary economic driver is tourism which is heavily dependent on the preservation of the natural resources and the services provided (e.g. water, landscape beauty). Fishing and forest-based livelihoods are also significant in many islands of the Caribbean.

However, the assumptions that “*governments [are] amenable to civil society participation in natural resource management*” and “*acceptance of the role that civil society organisations can play in managing natural resources and improving governance*” varied between countries and even within countries according to the natural resource sector. In many government agencies, there is still a reluctance to devolve real power and authority to civil society. While this is usually couched in terms of apprehension about the capacity of civil society organisations to perform management functions, the reluctance often extends to sharing power with other government agencies and must therefore be characterised in some instances as ‘turfism’.

The assumption that “*civil society organisations will have sufficient other capacities to address management processes*” again could not be said to hold across the board, with significant weaknesses being identified even in well-established natural resource management CSOs. However, CANARI’s experience both within this project and others indicates that the lack of capacity for participatory management of natural resources applies to both government and civil society stakeholders, so it is often optimal to bring the two groups together for training and technical assistance.

Lack of capacity includes lack of adequate financial resources, the final risk identified. In most cases, this was not the root cause of governance problems although it was a contributory factor. The project also highlighted that financial constraints can be alleviated by co-management arrangements that allow the civil society partner to charge for its services, as is the case for example with Nature Seekers turtle tours and the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust’s (JCDDT) management of the Blue and John Crow Mountain National Park. Within the next year or two, it would also be interesting to analyse the impact on civil society capacity and governance of the major influx of funding in Grenada after Hurricane Ivan, which was almost entirely channelled through CSOs rather than government.

4.5 Project management/coordination arrangements and stakeholder participation

During the project period, CANARI recognised that in some projects, including this one, areas of responsibility were insufficiently clearly defined, with more than one person working on the same job and nobody clear about who had the lead responsibility. A new project management structure was put in place based on the creation of project teams for each major CANARI project/grant with a project leader whose responsibilities included donor reporting and overall project coordination. The individual subcomponents or ‘jobs’ within each project were then allocated to the member of the project team with the most appropriate skills, whose responsibilities include the management of any consultants or other staff members involved in the job, production of deliverables on time and within budget, and narrative reporting on that component. This system has worked well, providing a good mix of accountability combined with teamwork, the latter proving particularly valuable at conceptualisation stage and when

adaptive management was called for as a result of unanticipated factors during the implementation phase.

As noted above and in the final evaluation (see Appendix 5), the mid-term evaluation of the small grants programme identified the need for greater oversight of the small grants in order to maximise the outcomes, which resulted in a reallocation of funds to this activity and the creation of a team comprising a technical officer and the financial officer to carry out the monitoring. CANARI's original budget had significantly underestimated the costs of managing, monitoring and evaluating a multi-country, multi-lingual small grants programme in a region where travel and communications are expensive. However, the lower-than-anticipated uptake of the medium size grants and the lesser management demands of the mini grants and scholarships meant that it was feasible to provide adequate oversight during the critical final phase and all small grantees noted the value of this at the final evaluation workshop.

Stakeholder participation was an integral element of all aspects of the project, as evidenced for example by:

- Stakeholder input into the design of the project via the initial baseline survey;
- Feedback from stakeholders at the mid-term evaluation of the small grants;
- Stakeholder input into the CANARI strategic review;
- Stakeholder perceptions study within the Nature Seekers technical assistance component;
- Continuous assessment of and responsiveness to new or reprioritised stakeholder needs both within and in complementary projects (e.g. design of mini-grant and scholarship facility, design and delivery of training workshops in organisational development, conflict management etc.);
- Inclusion of stakeholder needs assessments and consultative processes within all the small grants.

4.6 Project financing arrangements

The major challenges in the area of financing related to the long project gestation period, the slow project initiation phase and the implementation of what was originally conceived as a 3-year project over a 5-year time frame. Specific lessons learned by CANARI from this experience were:

- the critical importance of reviewing the budget at the project inception stage to reflect changes which might be necessary or desirable as a result of new factors or changes since the original proposal was written;
- the need for clarity from the outset between the project implementor and the donor (or in this case the intermediary agency) as to which activities should be allocated to which budget lines;
- the need to agree the budgets for each year well in advance of commencing that year's activities;
- the need for clarity about what is required in the way of counterpart funding and the implementation of internal systems to capture all such funding, including in-kind contributions.

4.7 Sustainability

The main challenges to sustainability which were identified during the project were:

- Departure of key individuals from the organisation with no succession planning. While the skills have largely remained in the region, they are not necessarily being applied in the field of natural resource management. For example, the former Executive Director of the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG) was recruited to manage the environmental component of the 2007 World Cup Cricket programme in Antigua.
- Most CSOs in the region have difficulty recruiting and retaining Board members with relevant skills. Unlike NGOs in Europe and the USA, few Board members regard it as their responsibility to engage in fundraising which is normally considered the purview of the Executive Director. Friction between Boards and staff is prevalent and the skills of the wider membership are often overlooked as a resource.
- Donor funding for the region and sector is diminishing but few NGO managers have the necessary entrepreneurial or business skills to spearhead revenue generating activities. For example, only one of the participants at a recent CANARI Organisational Development workshop for the leading natural resource management NGOs in the English-speaking Caribbean, including those targeted under this project, had ever worked in the private sector. There are few if any Caribbean professional fundraisers and it remains to be seen whether the fundraising techniques used in North America and Europe are transferable, given the weak philanthropic culture, particularly in sectors other than social services.
- Civil society networking and formation of strategic alliances remains relatively weak, in part because there is a common perception that organisations are competing for limited funding and in part because of weak conflict resolution skills.

On the basis of the lessons learned in this project and the clear need for ongoing capacity building of civil society organisations to reinforce civil society's contribution to the equitable and sustainable use of natural resources in selected countries of the insular Caribbean, CANARI has developed two projects specifically related to the role of civil society in and the potential socio-economic benefits to be derived from participatory forest management. These projects include assessments of the policy and institutional environment in relation to participation in 8 countries of the Caribbean as well as of the capacity needs of both government and civil society partners to effectively carry out their respective management roles.

CANARI has also been in discussion with other donors (notably the MacArthur Foundation) to implement a follow-up project on civil society and governance, which would include:

- an analysis of a range of CSO governance structures in the islands of the Caribbean with a view to identifying those that optimise participation of all stakeholders (e.g. Board, staff, membership, beneficiaries) and opportunities for revenue generation;
- an analysis of civil society networks and umbrella organisations in the islands of the Caribbean with a view to identifying:
 - those that are perceived by their membership to add value to the individual organisations rather than just placing an additional burden on already over-stretched resources and in what areas;

- governance structures and how these function in relation to the governance structures of the individual organisations, notably in relation to issues of representation and communication;
 - the scope and extent of civil society collaboration (e.g. does it include collective fundraising, collective marketing of services)
 - conflict management mechanisms, both formal and informal;
- continuing capacity building via training, technical assistance and study exchanges, notably in the areas of strategic planning and visioning; financial planning and management; organisational development; assessing and developing natural resource-based revenue-generating activities (e.g. community-based tourism, non-timber forest products); participatory natural resource management; participatory mapping.
- a small grants facility, probably with two levels of grant – medium and small – to address the needs of CSOs and different stages of development.
- identification of case studies and potential study visit sites which exemplify innovative and effective civil society participation or governance arrangements.