

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



**Lopinot,
Trinidad, 20th October 2010**

1. Introduction

The Lopinot 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) will 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.). CANARI will assist communities in identifying their income generating project ideas, and help them work through the next steps, linking them up with agencies that can assist in making their ideas a reality.

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) identify natural resources with potential to be sustainably used for small businesses;
- b) identify existing and potential community small businesses based on sustainable use of natural resources;
- c) identify key issues for management of natural resources; and
- d) identify other relevant initiatives.

3. Methods

The workshop was highly interactive and participants were involved in several group exercises to create a map of the natural resources in their community, as well as to analyse their community from the perspective of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. They also had to consider the potential for the development of small businesses based on the sustainable use of the natural resources. The workshop agenda is attached as Appendix 1.

4. Participants

Most participants were of a mature age, and all were members of the Protectors of the Environment group (POE). The group comprised mostly of males (18 out of 25). At first only a few participants were willing to actively take part in the sessions, and even though participation was encouraged, some persons remained inactive during the plenary sessions, perhaps mainly due to shyness and some lack of self confidence. However, almost everyone became actively involved in the mapping working group sessions. The list of participants is attached as Appendix 2.

5. Selection of Lopinot community

Participants were presented with a list of pre-selected criteria based on which the communities were selected for the purpose of this project. 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.

They were then asked to rank the criteria. Overall, participants agreed with the criteria selected, though only five of them) came to the board to stick their dots next to the criteria they agreed with. They generally did not think, however, that the criteria referring to the external factors, existing relationships, experiences and linkages which may favour and facilitate enterprise development through the wise use of natural resources were applicable to their community. They pointed out a number of other criteria they wished to add to the list, as other valuable reasons why Lopinot should be part of this project, namely:

- availability of marketable flora and fauna;
- existing potential for tourism/eco-tourism activities (trails through the forest, spring water);
- deep cultural and sporting traditions that would need to be further developed (lots of craft is made in Lopinot);
- most people practise agriculture, and would like to contribute to the development of this sector.

6. Findings:

6.1 Key natural resources in the community

Table 1 below compiles the matrices prepared by the groups in which they had to identify the existing natural resources, their current uses, as well as potential uses of these resources.

Table 1: Key natural resources in Lopinot

Natural resources	Existing uses	Potential uses
Water resources: watershed, river, riverside savanna	WASA maintained to supply water to the community, recreation, tourist attraction	Eco-tourism (forest trails and caves need to be maintained)
Agricultural land	Production of food crops for subsistence and sale in the market – crops include tomatoes, sweet pepper, provisions	
Forests	Much of the forests is reserved	
Cave	Tourist attraction	
Corn, plantain, other ground provisions	Plantain chips	Plantain, bananas, cassava chips, corn flour
Mangos, sour cherries	Small scale selling of mangoes and mango preservatives	Preserve to supply groceries, juices, export of mangoes, mango jam, cosmetics (with mangoes)
Balisier /other flowers	Balisier provided to political party, flowers used for domestic decor	Exotic flowers industry
Carapa (oil), Zeb a pique		Healing oils
Coffee and citrus (back in the days)		
Cocoa and coffee estates (private, but of public use)	Cocoa House (tourist attraction)	
Birds (parrots), wild life (agouti)	Hunting for domestic use and sale	
Watermelon		



Figure 1: Participants drawing a map of the natural resources in Lopinot.

6.2 Existing and potential community small businesses based on the use of natural resources

At present, micro enterprise in the community is limited to mainly market vending and hunting wildlife for sale. The members of the community do believe, however, that the potential exists within the community for the development of a number of enterprises including production of preserved fruits and vegetables, eco-tourism, production of exotic flowers for sale locally and for export.

6.3 Key issues for management of natural resources

Most participants, as members of the POE group, are very actively involved in the conservation and management of forests and seem to be very sensitive to and aware of the issues related to natural resource management. Concerns were expressed, however, about wildlife conservation as they believed that people in the community did not always adhere to the restrictions pertaining to the closed season for hunting. They indicated that they had seen the depletion of the community's wildlife over the years. Due to their knowledge and experience of the forest they did have recommendations about how to encourage the return of the wildlife to the forests.

The POE has been the recipient of a number of awards in recognition of their forest conservation efforts.

6.4 Other relevant initiatives

Many of the members of the group also work with the Community Environment Protection and Enhancement Project (CEPEP) of the government which further encourages the caring for the natural resources. The groups also work very closely with the Forestry Division, particularly with respect to protection of the forest from fires. They also participate in the annual National Coastal Clean Up.

6.5 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis (SWOT) of Lopinot

For the purpose of the SWOT analysis, participants had to volunteer to play the role of TV reporters asking each other questions pertaining to each category. Table 2 below summarises the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that participants perceived to be specific to their community.

Table 2: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis of Lopinot

<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of POE, CEPEP in the community • Successful agriculture: food crops, vegetables and provision • Unity • Knowledge of forest management skills, uses of various trees and food preservation • Linkages with organisations/agencies such as : Agricultural Society, National Reforestation and Watershed Rehabilitation Programme (NRWRP), National Entrepreneurship Development Company Limited (NEDCO), other government agencies, Lopinot Village Council 	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of machinery • Inappropriate access roads • Lack of facilities • Lack of teaching skills in the community • Other groups of persons may not agree with some initiatives
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of fresh water resources • Presence of wildlife • Development of mango industry • Development of flowers industry • Eco-tourism • Abundance of banana, plantain, cassava, yam, christophene 	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime, common theft • Forest fires • Illegal logging • Illegal hunting

“Wild card”

Sports events, family day, cultural festivals, the conservation of the environment are the type of events and activities that bring the community together. They celebrate with parang, during the Christmas season, Divali, Carnival and the Heritage Festival.

Participants also identified the need for them to come together for the development of sports and cultural activities. They further stated that developing the agricultural sector would require a common effort, especially from farmers. But participants also emphasised that the community needed to have better access to roads, and lands.

6.6 Recommendations for next steps in the project

Participants did show interest in the project and its potential for them and the community of Lopinot. Though most of them felt good about how the discussions went, and seemed to have understood the purpose of the project, some also noted they would be waiting and/or expecting the follow up to this first workshop. It is important to make sure that participants are kept informed of the next steps and invited to attend the second workshop.

It will be equally important at the next step of the project to introduce the community to agencies which can assist in the development of businesses and perhaps invite representatives of communities which have had successful micro-enterprises to share experiences. It is important that at the end of this interface with the community they feel empowered to actually put the wheels of a community micro-enterprise into motion.

7. Evaluation and overall results

At the end of the day, as an evaluation of the workshop, participants were asked to go and sign/put their names next to the faces that reflected the most how they felt. Most of them chose the face with a beaming smile, while three put their names next to the face holding a glass of champagne. Participants were overall thankful and seemed to have grasped the main objectives and goals of the project. A few of them however insisted that they would be “celebrating”, referring to the face holding the glass of champagne, when they will be able to see the concrete results of this first workshop. Follow up is crucial for the trust that was built not to be ruined at this very early stage.

Based on the responses of the groups during the various activities of the session the following can be concluded as regards the objectives of the workshop:

- a. Participants have a clear understanding of the key terms used, including natural resources, sustainable use, livelihoods, though some may however have some challenges in finding the language to clearly articulate the meanings verbally.
- b. Participants understand the key intention of the project as being to assist in the establishment of community/ individual enterprises towards the improvement of their income and by extension how that impacts on their livelihood, which they understand in the broadest sense. They are aware of and appreciate the livelihood assets provided by their community.
- c. Participants understood and agreed with all of the criteria presented for their selection except one. They were also able to identify additional appropriate criteria.
- d. Participants were well able to identify the natural resources within their community, the few efforts at micro-enterprises based on the use of natural resources (existing and

potential). They were also aware of other initiatives related to natural resource management.

- e. The group demonstrated a general appreciation of the project and its intent and what is required from them in order for it to be successful.
- f. The group was comfortable with the facilitators and the majority of the participants participated actively, particularly in the group exercises.

Appendix 1: Workshop agenda



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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

Lopinot

20th October 2010

Workshop 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	Organisation	Occupation	Address
Orelia Benjamin	Protectors of the environment	Supervisor	Lopinot
Ramdaye Hosein	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Serrafane Pacheco	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Khaymowatie Rampersad	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Darren Small	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	La Pastora
Nigel Baneo	Protectors of the environment	Supervisor	La Pastora
Collis Francis	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	
Terrance Boneo	Protectors of the environment	Tool Operator	La Pastora
Wesley Christo	Protectors of the environment	Tool Operator	La Pastora
Ian Lall	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	La Pastora
Frank Ramloogan	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	La Pastora
Leela Gildharie	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Benedict Lal	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	La Pastora
G. Lalsingh	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Nicholas Hosein	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	La Pastora
Bobby Charles	National Reforestation Program	Technical Assistant Officer	North Zone La Rue Pomms Maracas, St. Joseph
Vidya Ramoutar Samaroo	Protectors of the environment	Supervisor	Lopinot
Sandra R. Emile	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Patrina Benjamin	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Pauline P. Samaroo	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Theresa Lynch	Protectors of the	Rehab	Lopinot

	environment	Assistant	
Basso Ramgoola	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Larry Boodram	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Marlon Christo	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Lakhan Samaroo	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot
Ronald Narin	Protectors of the environment	Rehab Assistant	Lopinot

**Improving livelihoods in rural communities in Trinidad and Tobago by
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natural resources**



Lopinot Historical Centre
Lopinot
Trinidad

Thursday May 05, 2011

1 Introduction

The Lopinot 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**.

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 income of community members may be improved.

2 Workshop objectives

The objectives of the workshop 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 the existing capacity of the community in being able to develop micro-enterprises.



3 Participants

Fifteen (15) persons attended the workshop on May 05, 2011. (see Appendix 1 for the list of participants). All participants were members of the group Protectors of the Environment.

4 Methods

The workshop was highly interactive and participants were given an opportunity to share experiences and ideas 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, and the capacity needs to develop these businesses. See Appendix 2 for the workshop agenda

“A vision is what you want to see in the future for ourselves and for the community.”

5 Findings

5.1 Visioning

Participants found that the visioning session was very educational, and taught them a bit more about their neighbours, through their discussion and debate about the future of their community. They appreciated how the exercise made them think about what they want to see in the years to come in their village.

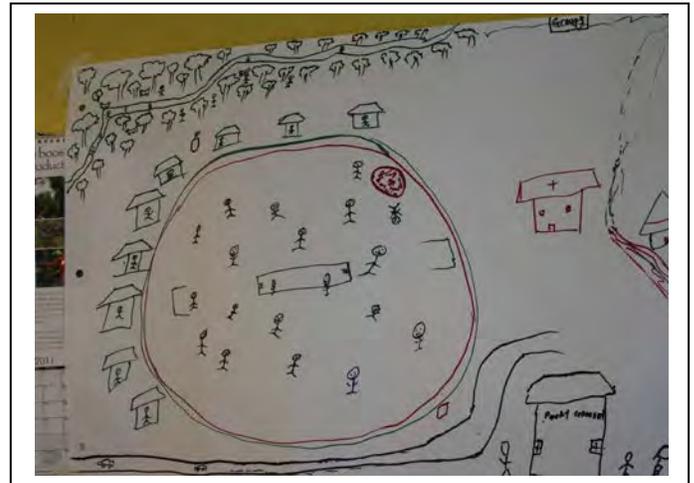
Common elements of the vision for Lopinot

- Unity (among villagers)
- Recreational facilities (for the children and to host community activities)
- Police post (increased sense of security to in the area)
- Local food and craft stalls (giving visitors to the area a taste of the village)

Communicating the Vision

When discussing how to effectively communicate the shared vision created in the workshop with the wider Lopinot community, participants suggested, circulating the vision among the groups in the area, particularly church and youth groups. Participants suggested using signs, posters and flyers to communicate the vision, as well as, the media to advertise the vision, to the wider community.

In the visioning exercise the participants came up with a definition of a vision based on their own interpretations of the meaning of vision. The participants, divided into three groups discussed and designed a vision for the community of Lopinot. The visions which were developed focused mainly on the quality of life in the community, with little emphasis on the use of the natural resources. As such the common elements of the visions were things like unity, development of a recreational space and a police post. The only common business idea for the community was selling local food.



The pictures above are of the visions for Lopinot designed by participants

5.2 Identifying potential businesses

The following list emerged from workshop 1 as the potential businesses based on the natural resources identified in the area. The list was reviewed at the May 5th workshop and added to the list was the production of cocoa products (cocoa bars etc.) and the bottling of spring water. The latter came out from one of the group visions.

- Ecotourism
- Processing plantain/ cassava/ corn
- Fruit preserves (mango/sour cherries), mango jam and mango cosmetics
- Healing oils from Carapa tree.
- Bottling spring water
- Processed cocoa products
- Selling Craft (bamboo baskets/maracas)



5.3 Feasibility of businesses

The above list of potential businesses was ranked by the participants, using a table and scoring each business based on several important criteria. See Appendix 3 for the feasibility matrix.

During the feasibility assessment the participants analysed all the potential businesses by asking several important questions relating to seven categories. When presenting the scores for each business they were asked to give some important points which came up in the feasibility discussions for each business.

The participants' ranking saw processing plantain and cassava coming out as the best business option for the community. One of the main reasons for the good rating was the abundant supply of plantain and cassava in the area, and the fact that consumers are now interested in healthy snack alternatives. The short comings of this business however was that there is plenty competition.

Participants found that the bottling spring water business was also a good idea for the community because the resource is readily available, however in the access to other resources category the idea lost many points as a lot of space and equipment is required. Also start up costs are high due to need for heavy machinery and heavy duty transport. Another reason this business did not score very well is that there is a lot of competition.

Participants brought up the issue of competition and a need for training as reasons for selling craft and fruit preserves scoring low. However participants expressed a serious lack of confidence in their ability to pursue businesses of any kind, at this point in time. This confidence problem can possibly attribute to the relatively low score of all the potential businesses in Lopinot.

The table below is the ranked list of potential businesses, highest to lowest, based on the total feasibility score.

<p>Processing plantain/ cassava/ corn (49)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Easy access to plantain and cassava •A variety of products can be made •Represents a healthy choice
<p>Eco- Tourism (48)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •This was done in plenary and no key issues were specifically pointed out.
<p>Bottling Spring water (42)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Resource readily available •Requires machinery, equipment and heavy duty transport •Lots of competition
<p>Processed Cocoa Products(41)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Little competition •Willingness to learn traditional methods •No heavy machinery required
<p>Selling Craft (40)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •People feel safer wearing craft jewellery. •Make nice souvenirs •Lots of existing competition
<p>Fruit Preserves (Mango/sour cherries) Mango jam and mango cosmetics (40)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lots of competition •training required •there is an existing market
<p>Healing Oil from Carapa (37)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •not readily available •very expensive •special skills required to make it

5.4 Capacity needs

Based on the prioritized list of businesses the participants were able to identify which businesses were the most feasible to develop in the short to medium term. They then compiled the following list of specific needs to be addressed in order to move forward with the businesses.

- Business Management Skills
- Communication
- Marketing
- Inter-personal skills
- Tour guiding skills
- Processing skills and equipment
- Access to finance
- Packaging materials and proper labelling equipment
- Production space and equipment

6. Evaluation

The evaluation was done in three groups of five people, to avoid confusion and to get a more accurate impression of the participant's experience. All groups showed varying levels of improvement in their ability to prioritize and choose small businesses. The participants identified that there was some improvement in their knowledge of the necessary skills to build successful businesses, but they were not very confident. Finally there was slight improvement in the excitement of the participants in getting involved in small businesses.

Participant comments indicated that the day was very educational. The feasibility session, in particular was highlighted as participants stated it helped them get a better idea of what should be considered when starting up a business, and in helping them be more confident in moving forward with the project. However the participants expressed that they did not see themselves attempting to start up any businesses in the near future, identifying their need for training as the major reason.

Participants were not surprised by the results of the analysis and they realized that the scores were very close, which motivated the participants to want to move forward with several of the businesses. The discussion and debate within the groups for the ranking encouraged participants to think seriously about their business ideas, and helped them to think of new ideas and approaches to business.

7. Conclusion and next steps

At the end of the day participants in Lopinot had developed a common vision for their community. They identified and prioritised a list of potential small businesses, using the established feasibility criteria and they identified the capacity needs which have to be addressed in order to develop the identified businesses.

The result of the visioning exercise was somewhat successful from the view that all participants understood what a vision is and the purpose and benefits of a vision. Also by engaging in discussion and debate they learned that for there to be a common vision there must first be discussion. However because there was no real consensus reached with regards to the natural resources available and the potential uses for these resources, the vision remained a bit broad

and made it difficult to relate the potential businesses discussed in the feasibility session to the vision for the community.

Also though the participants commented that the feasibility exercise motivated them to want to develop business ideas, in the capacity needs session the participants expressed their discomfort at moving forward with businesses at this point, saying that they needed more training before they could confidently move forward in developing small businesses. Therefore where the workshop was successful in helping the people of Lopinot identify natural resources and prioritize their business ideas, however, it did not give them requisite confidence needed for them to feel ready to move forward.

Participants were informed about the Community Expo where five participants would be selected to represent Lopinot. 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

Lopinot Participants List

Fernandes Workshop 2

May 05, 2011

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TEL. Nos</u>
Marlon Christo	717 1853
Ronald Narine	495 2853
Collis Francis	495 2853
Patrina Benjamin	360 8497
Basso Ramgoolam	781 5187
Sandra Emile	740 8667
Pauline Samaroo	753 5641
Vidya Ramootar	799 2982
Khaymavatie Rampersad	646 7914
Orelia Benjamin	369 0572
Theresa Lynch	792 5874
Angela Bally	779 0128
Nigel Banco	739 5027
Ramdaye Hosein	321 4828
Wesley Christo	743 2686

*** All participants are from Protectors of the Environment**

Appendix 2

Agenda

10:00 – 10:30	Welcome, introductions, overview of first workshop
10:30 – 11:30	Visioning – introduction, small group
11:30 – 11:45	Break
11:45 – 12:45	Small group report, development of common vision
12:45 – 1:15	Develop comprehensive list of potential sustainable natural resource-based businesses
1:15 – 2:00	Lunch (group businesses and participants)
2:00 – 2:45	Introduce feasibility criteria to choose most feasible micro-enterprises Apply to one business
2:45 – 3:45	Small group work to apply feasibility criteria
3:45 – 4:30	Small groups present Select most feasible for development in the short-term
4:30 – 5:00	Summary of capacity needs of community Wrap-up and next steps for Community Expo



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Appendix 3

Feasibility matrix of potential businesses in Lopinot

Potential businesses	Natural Resources			Access to other resources			Market				Capacity				Contribution to the community			External support		Mod	Tot	
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(a)	(b)	(c)	(a)	(b)			
Eco- tourism																						
Processing Cocoa and Coffee																						
Organic Farming																						
Craft and Bamboo																						
Aqua farming																						
Seasoning and Spices																						

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

Final visit – Lopinot

Wednesday 15th 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

Results

Evaluation probing questions

Participants stated that:

- a. *What do you think was the most important thing that the project achieved?*
 - The project was a very interesting learning experience and was an opportunity for members of the group (Protectors of the Environment POE), to come together and be all involved in an activity.
 - It also helped them get new ideas for what they want to do in their community, while the workshops gave them the opportunity to express things that they may have thought of before but never got a chance to say.

b. *How did the project impact on you personally?*

- They now have a much clearer vision of what it takes to set up a small business. The feasibility study in particular, helped them realise that there are various steps before being able to decide which business to work on.
- They know that help and assistance is available and that they can ask for it.
- The project inspired them, and made them aware of some of the possibilities.

c. What do you think could have been done differently / better?

- Everything went really well.
- Even though they did not know what to expect initially, or what was expected from them, CANARI did a great job.

What support would you need from CANARI, if any, in taking your ideas forward?

Participants stated they would CANARI to help them get training in the following areas:

- Accounting and more particularly how to manage a small business, how to account for expenses and benefits, and how to design a budget. Between 12 and 15 people said they would be interested in getting such training if it was made available to them.
- Management, financial management
- Computer literacy
- Tour guiding

Conclusion

Though overall interested in moving forward with some of the small business ideas that came out of the two workshops, members of POE seemed to be lacking confidence, and sounded quite uncertain of their capacity/ability to eventually set up at least one small business. One participant stated that she would be interested in moving forward, but only if it was a group initiative, as she could not see herself doing it “on her own”. When asked to say, by a show of hands, who would be interested in opening up a small business, or take part in such an initiative, 5 participants raised their hands.

It should also be noted that out of the list of potential small businesses analysed in the feasibility study, the participants’ preference seemed to go to the eco-tourism and tour guiding ventures, and to the preserving mangos and sour cherries enterprise.

List of participants (all from Protectors of the Environment)

Marlon Christo
 Ronald Narine
 Collis Francis
 Patrina Benjamin
 Basso Ramgoolam
 Sandra Emile
 Pauline Samaroo
 Vidya Ramootar
 Khaymavatie Rampersad
 Orelia Benjamin

Theresa Lynch
Angela Bally
Nigel Banco
Ramdaye Hosein
Wesley Christo