



Report on the SDGs Catalysts Network 6th Quarterly Meeting

under the project

***CSOs For Good Governance:
Enhancing civil society's contribution to governance and development processes in
Trinidad and Tobago (CSOs4GoodGov)***



March 13, 2019

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute, Barataria, Trinidad & Tobago

1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of the *SDGs Catalysts Network's* 6th Quarterly meeting held on March 13th, 2019 at Caribbean Natural Resources Institute's Office, Barataria, Trinidad. The report provides an overview of the participants, objectives and methods, and recounts the main activities of the CSOs4GoodGov project. The following were addressed in the meeting:

- an overview of Year 2 activities and achievements, and Year 3 plans under each project component;
- a facilitated session to examine effectiveness of capacity building interventions under the project and engage Catalysts' in reflection on their role;
- a discussion on wider system shifts that can impact SDG implementation and inform our collective advocacy efforts;
- an opportunity for Catalysts to participate in ACSOTT survey.

Participants:

Nineteen (19) persons attended the meeting including:

- 16 participants from 13 SDGs Catalysts Network member organisations;
- 3 additional (non-Catalyst) members of the Capacity Building Working Group (CBWG)

See Appendix 1: List of participants.

2 Meeting Objectives

The specific meeting objectives were to:

1. To facilitate Catalysts' participation in CSOs4GoodGov project monitoring and evaluation, and for inputs into future planning (under the project and post-project)
2. To share latest CSOs4GoodGov progress reports on Year 2 activities and Year 3 plans, including key actions and activities requiring participation and inputs

See Appendix 2: Specific workshop agenda.

3 Methodology

Verbal updates were given by project component leads on status of various activities under their components and Year 3 plans. A final version of the knowledge platform was presented for viewing as part of the progress reporting.

Veni Apwann used a series of interactive exercises and plenary discussion to facilitate evaluation of capacity building interventions, and Catalysts reflection on their role and wider system shifts. Q&A's were accommodated throughout the sessions.

4 Review of Key Sessions / Discussion and findings

4.1 CSOs4GoodGov Year 2 progress reports and Year 3 plans

Brief reports were shared, noting Project component leads were in the process of preparing contributions to the Year 2 donor report. Key points from the updates given by project component leads and follow-on discussions are noted below.

UWTT:

CSO Advocacy Paper

- As part of work on the CSO Advocacy Paper, a roadmap was developed that anticipated the passing of the NPO Bill and the next steps. UWTT is proceeding with this roadmap and agreed strategy to further consult on the NPO Bill 2019 and gather inputs to strengthen the CSO Advocacy Paper. The longer-term aim is centered around how we effectively advocate for civil society recommendations to form part of the supporting regulations.
- UWTT plans to bring on a consultant to further the work on the CSO Advocacy Paper; this consultant would work with willing Catalysts to help take the Paper forward in a more holistic (i.e. beyond NGOs) and legal manner (making sure things conform to legal requirements).
- UWTT is committed to continued collaboration with the government to ensure the Project stays at the table in terms of further, much needed, developments whether it be regulations to the NPO Bill if passed as law, or other developments.

Small Grants Facility (SGF)

- CKFTO and FIA were recently awarded grants for Round 4.
- As year 3 approaches, there will only be 1-2 more rounds of the SGF, carded for April and June/August 2019 to align with SHIFT! Caribbean training and mentorship. The next rounds could be valued at up to \$TT50,000 and will not be later than August, to ensure grantees can comfortably finish their rounds. UWTT will be sending out the next call soon.

Other-Collaboration

- UWTT continues to maintain collaborative relationships with the Cropper Foundation, and the Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business (ALJGSB) as other EU funded project leads. As part of its own work, the Cropper Foundation identified the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), a Winnipeg based NPO funded by United Way Winnipeg, as having a platform/tool that could help map and visualize the monitoring framework for SDG implementation, at community level. UWTT was approached by the Cropper Foundation and will consider providing upfront money for implementing a similar programme locally.

CANARI:

SDGs Knowledge Platform

- CANARI presented updated version of the Knowledge Platform to Catalysts, including review and demonstration on the main elements. Overall the platform was well received.
- While the platform was completed, remaining steps include acquiring a suitable domain and configuration of the server, pending which the platform would be launched. This is expected within March-April 2019. Once launched the platform would continue to be populated; a call would be made for submissions with clear guidelines.
- Some basic standard operating procedures (SOPs) will have to be prepared. Questions and suggestions were received from Catalysts on procedures for managing submissions, including approvals for posting etc. Suggestions made include to:
 - embed meta tags in documents uploaded to the Knowledge Platform to ensure relevant search results
 - use the Dewey Decimal System, so the platform can fit in with NALIS/library systems.
 - identify and engage backroom writers/editors to ensure continuous content for the Knowledge Platform, otherwise risk it becoming 'old' and irrelevant
 - implement a peer review option/system for submissions to the Knowledge Platform

CSO Advocacy Toolkit

- This will be a major publication from the project. CANARI will coordinate with others to work on this and publish in Year 3. Initial steps include drafting a product plan (will detail objectives, target audiences, messages, comms. pathways etc.) for review. Interested Catalysts and CBWG can be part of sub-committee to work on this in the next year.

Case Study on the project

- CANARI is looking at how we can develop case study on the project, suggested as part of EU-ROM recommendations; budget is being reviewed and potential to outsource to independent consultant to prepare being explored.

Veni Apwann:

VA reported on existing and upcoming capacity building opportunities:

- A specialist clinic was held on January 15th, focused on helping Catalysts design proposals which could be submitted to the CSOs4GoodGov small grants mechanism.
- A 2-day SHIFT! Caribbean Leadership Training workshop was held on February 18-19th, 2019. This Phase 1 of the SHIFT! workshop was deemed to be successful. Phase 2 would be held at the end of March 2019. Coaching with participants had already commenced and was proceeding smoothly. The Catalyst representative from Families in Action was able to share positive feedback on her experience from these sessions, noting she was already learning how to be more strategic and think more wholistically about the project she was designing. More updates would be provided as the training goes on.
- Opportunities for others to benefit from the SHIFT! training were highlighted, including upcoming public workshops (not covered by project) and exploring whether another SHIFT! workshop could be facilitated with project resources. Public SHIFT! Caribbean Leadership workshops begin with Phase 1 on May 18th. Catalysts were invited to participate, once self-funded.
- Brief sharing was done on two planned Veni Partaje – peer learning and exchange sessions as follows:
 - **Fund Development (scheduled April 2019)** – Peer exchanges to be led by Sandra Pyke Anthony, (Veni Apwann, Catalyst) on her YMCA fund development experience; and Michele Matthews-Morancie and Melissa Matthews (CBWG members) on ‘Rapport and Relationship Building’
 - **HR Management - How can efficient HR Management strengthen your role in SDG implementation? (Scheduled June 12, 2019)** - Peer exchanges to be led by Sarah McIntosh (Team Member, Component 3) and Nicole Leotaud from CANARI (if available), on the CANARI Transition; Barbara King (CBWG member) and Sharla Dwarika on lessons learned from the Parenting TT succession process
- Catalysts recommended that a male perspective be shared as well. Veni Apwann will invite Catalyst representative Shedron Collins from YBTT to share his succession planning journey. Another suggestion was to add a section in HR Management session on how to ensure programmes can function properly even after the lead person leaves
- Catalysts were informed about the video series designed by Agitate Media called “7 Small steps to Small Scale Advocacy Action” <https://ski.sh/2RAqMlz> which is being made available to them free of charge.

4.2 CSOs4GoodGov monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

With year 2 of the CSOs4GoodGov coming to a close, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) session was intended to give Catalysts the opportunity to:

- reflect on what they have been able to apply from capacity building interventions thus far, and identify enabling and challenging factors and lessons learned;
- reflect on their role and what they have achieved individually and collectively.

Summary notes from sessions are included below but a full report of this session was prepared by Veni Apwann and can be found here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZK8RIKPYJdv5h5IPT_t1gb-H3-Y3gl74/view?usp=sharing
(N.B. Please download a copy as web storage is periodically cleared)

4.2.1 Evaluation of capacity building interventions

A **small group exercise** was held for Catalysts to reflect on their role and assess the extent to which advocacy capacities built in various ways since project inception, had been used to advance action on the SDGs. Catalysts reviewed the following questions in their groups and presented responses in plenary:

- a. How would you describe your role as a catalyst?
- b. How are you demonstrating that role?
 - i) Within your organisation
 - ii) With your external networks?
- c. Recalling the specific SDGs that you indicated your organisation was contributing to, how have you advanced advocacy around or action in these SDGs since the start of CSOs4GoodGov?

In summary, participating Catalysts seemed to have a good understanding of their role and what it was meant to do. They described their role as shift/change makers, facilitators and fire-starters and identified specific functions in being a voice for others, empowering change, growth and transformation in people, including via providing knowledge to promote change and helping people recognize shared interest across differences.

“...one of the things the SDGs Catalysts programme taught me is, get the information from my fellow Catalysts and trust that I can help explain or help represent them as best as possible within my organisation. That’s not something that I’d done before and I’m doing it now as a result of this CSOs4GoodGov project” ~Tracy Hutchinson, Habitat for Humanity

“...our understanding of being a Catalyst is that we need to promote SDG implementation. And therefore, as Catalysts, what we should be doing is to find or create those partnerships to allow this to happen” ~ David Shim, ACSOTT

With respect to demonstrating their role, Catalysts noted in their organisations they shared information with staff to raise awareness, and tried to more consciously integrate SDGs as part of project design. Externally, they tried to create further awareness in their networks, and became more open to collaborative partnerships with others, advocating collectively and identifying opportunities to do so. Partnerships noted include that by IAMovement and SERVOL on their school garden project; CAISO/Cropper Foundation/Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business working to implement a Common Services Hub to provide administrative services on a shared basis for NGOs; and Habitat for Humanity collaborating with disability organisations to improve access to affordable housing and land tenure for people with disabilities in Trinidad and Tobago. They are also implementing initiatives which reflect cross cutting and cross sectoral issues e.g. Habitat for Humanity campaign which addressed shelter and disabilities, CAISO championing of intersectoral human rights issues via advocacy for a national human rights institute (NHRI).

In terms of progress on advocacy or action in the various thematic areas their organisations worked in, Catalysts seem to be continuing to align with SDGs and design and implement projects with them in mind - some specific advocacy action projects by Catalysts have been given small grants funding – for example CKFTO has received multiple grants to advance its “Count Me In” Campaign (focused on inclusion for all/reducing inequality).

“...advocacy started as something we were doing, tree-hugging and quarreling, in 1970 – but then when we realised it’s actually a language and a skill, we became bona fide advocacy supporters.” ~ Bertrand Bhikarry, ET



Figure 1. Catalysts reflect on their role in small groups



Figure 2. Sample results of small group work by Catalysts

A **whole group exercise** was then held where Catalysts reviewed the challenges and enabling factors that impacted their involvement in the capacity building interventions and other key activities under the project.

Some barriers to participation were noted as limited time and human resources capacity to participate (some sessions lengthy) and travel logistical problems for Tobago participants. Additional issues included lack of clarity on the relevance of the interventions being offered, whether it was a priority for their organisation, and fear of cultural change by their organisations.

One important conclusion was that a Catalyst's non-participation in project activities does not equate to lack of involvement in advocating for and advancing SDG implementation.

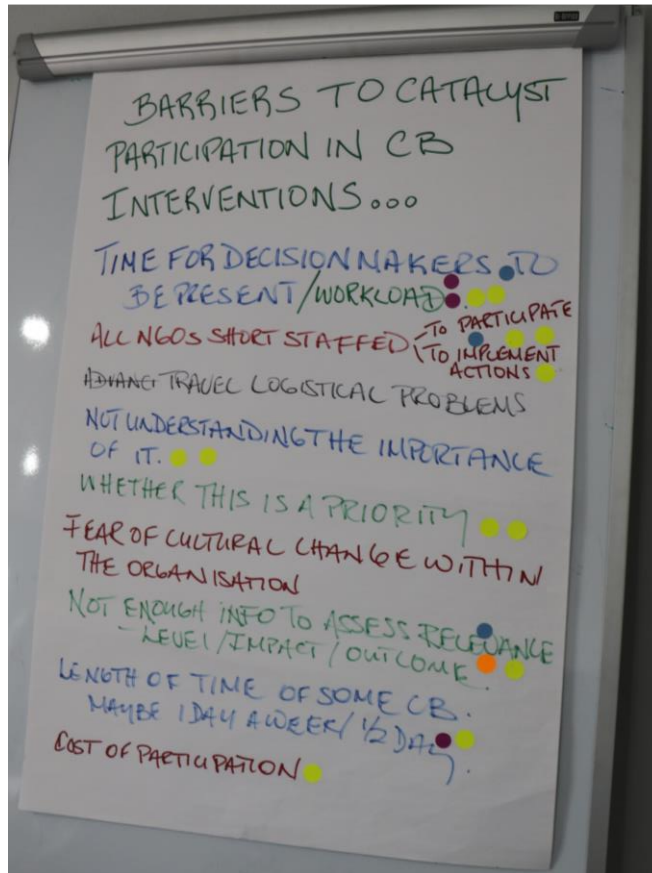


Figure 3. Catalysts feedback on barriers to participation in capacity building interventions

In a final exercise, Catalysts were asked to indicate whether their advocacy capacity status had increased/stayed the same/decreased since participation in the CSOs4GG project and to state the reasons for their assessments. 11 Catalysts participated in this exercise, with 9 reporting increased advocacy capacity.

4.2.2 Assessment of wider system shifts

- In this session, intended sharing was on current and impending policy shifts that can impact SDG implementation and inform our collective advocacy efforts.
- CANARI shared on recent update received from Adriana Sharpe, Assistant Director of Technical Co-Corporation Unit at the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) - Trinidad and Tobago is one the countries that has been granted approval to present its Voluntary National Report (VNR) at the 2020 High Level Political Forum, New York. A Ministerial Committee has been established to coordinate the preparation of the VNR. A draft road developed before with the aid of UNDP would serve as a base for developing the VNR.
- It was noted that currently the MoPD was meeting with other Ministries regarding the development of their sector plans for the roll out of Vision 2030 which would incorporate those SDGs for which the respective ministries are responsible. In addition, a draft Cabinet Note was prepared seeking the establishment of an SDG Unit, to support the work and serve as a coordinating mechanism.
- Catalysts agreed this was a key opportunity; due to limited time available CANARI committed to following up to provide further updates from the government end through the MoPD representative on the Project

Steering Committee and to further strategise with Catalysts on how to most effectively engage/contribute to the process.

4.2.3 ACSOTT Survey Exercise

- ACSOTT was given the opportunity to have their surveys completed by Catalysts who had not yet done so online. This activity was one of the deliverables of their CSOs4GG small grant project. 7 Catalysts completed the surveys at this point.

5 Wrap up and next Steps for the SDGs Catalysts Network

The session wrapped up after Catalysts completed evaluation forms. *Refer to Appendix 3 for participant feedback on the meeting.*

Wrap-up points, including next steps included:

- Reminders to participants that the meeting report would be shared, including full report of findings of the capacity building M&E session.
- Once the process is complete, Catalysts would also receive the Year 2 Annual Report currently being prepared by project component leads, and to be reviewed and approved by the EU Delegation.
- Project component leads will be following up on the various activities/items discussed including
 - engaging Catalysts in next steps with respect to the CSO Advocacy Paper and sharing calls for further small grants rounds
 - sharing more info on launch of the SDGs Knowledge Platform and inviting contributions
 - providing updates on the VNR process and working with others to develop a strategy for civil society to engage/contribute
 - engaging Catalysts in further capacity building interventions planned in Year 3, taking note of lessons shared at this session
- Project component leads will continue to seek synergies and coordinate across components as most effective and efficient way of utilising project resources and supporting Catalysts' participation in project activities.

The next quarterly meeting of the SDGs Catalysts Network would be scheduled for **late May/early June 2019**.

Upcoming activities for participation, and inputs of Catalysts are summarised below:

	April 2019	May 2019	June 2019
VA Veni Partaje sessions			
Next (planned) call for small grants projects			
Launch of SDGs Knowledge Platform and call for contributions			
7 th Quarterly meeting of the SDGs Catalysts Network		Date TBC	Date TBC

Appendix 1: List of participants

	Name	Organisation	Contact No.	Email
1.	Jennifer Sancho	United Way Trinidad & Tobago (UWTT)	625-8286	jsancho@uwtt.com
2.	Kristen Francis	United Way Trinidad & Tobago (UWTT)	625-8286	kfrancis@uwtt.com
3.	Candice Ramkissoon	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)	626-6062 / 779-0407	candice@canari.org
4.	Sasha Harrinanan	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)	626-6062	sasha@canari.org
5.	Colleen Davis	Veni Apwann (VA)	741-1139	daviscolleen99@gmail.com
6.	David Shim	ACSOTT	633-4724/787-7815	assoc.csott@gmail.com
7.	Bertrand Bikharry	Environment Tobago (ET)	620-2080	bertrand@bhikarry.net
8.	Andy Roberts	Environment Tobago (ET)		
9.	Tracy Hutchinson-Wallace	Habitat for Humanity	702-4663	contactus@habitat-tt.org
10.	Talya Mohammed	IAMovement		
11.	Colin Robinson	Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (CAISO) / Alliance for Justice & Diversity	782-2290, 322-7373	caisott@gmail.com
12.	Krista Hamel-Smith	Caribbean Kids and Families Therapy Organisation (CKFTO)	628-3268, 384-8937	gmanager@ckfto.org
13.	Alicia Small	SHIFT! Caribbean (CBWG member)		
14.	Mohamed Hallim	Agricultural Society of Trinidad & Tobago	361-4290	mohamedhallim@hotmail.com
15.	Monique Augustine	Families in Action	733-9273	monique.augustine@familiesinaction.net

	Name	Organisation	Contact No.	Email
16.	Valerie Remy	SERVOL	(M) 774-8656	marketingservoltt2@yahoo.com
17.	Stacey Rocke-Manick	Family Planning Association	789-5387	programs.fpatt@gmail.com
18.	Michele Matthews-Morancie	Agitate Media (CBWG member)	323-2509	micheleamatthews@gmail.com
19.	Melissa Matthews	Agitate Media (CBWG member)	323-2509	melissa@agitate-media.com

Appendix 2: Meeting Agenda



SDGs Catalysts Network 4th Quarterly Meeting

under the project

CSOs For Good Governance: Enhancing civil society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad and Tobago (CSOs4GoodGov)

CANARI Conference Room

March 13th, 2019

9:00am – 12:30pm

Meeting Objectives:

1. To facilitate Catalysts' participation in CSOs4GoodGov project monitoring and evaluation, and for inputs into future planning (under the project and post-project)
2. To share latest CSOs4GoodGov progress reports on Year 2 activities and Year 3 plans, including key actions and activities requiring participation and inputs

AGENDA

8:30am	Registration	
9:00am	Welcome and session overview	CANARI
9:10am	CSOs4GoodGov Year 2 progress reports and Year 3 plans <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Components 2, 4 and 5 – UWTT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management • Small Grant Facility updates • Legal and Fiscal update b) Component 1 - CANARI c) Component 3 – Veni Apwann 	Component leads (10 mins each) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UWTT - CANARI - Veni Apwann
9:40am	CSOs4GoodGov monitoring and evaluation (M&E) by Catalysts – interactive session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of capacity building interventions: Medium-term M&E changes in knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) and lessons • Assessment of wider system shifts • ACSOTT survey exercise 	Led by: Veni Apwann & Capacity building working group (CBWG) members (As above, CANARI, UWTT) ACSOTT
12 noon	Recap of meeting and next steps Session evaluation Wrap up and close	CANARI

Appendix 3: Summary of meeting evaluation responses



SDGs Catalysts Network 6th Quarterly Meeting

under the project

CSOs For Good Governance: Enhancing civil society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad and Tobago (CSOs4GoodGov)

March 13, 2019

Meeting evaluation form

1. I learnt that...

- As a group, we can make greater change.
- Organisations/Catalysts are taking away messages from the project to their respective networks, which was not clear before. However, there are Catalysts who do not connect to SDGs but (who) have improved their capacity to advocate for their respective networks.
- We need more of these forums to continue the collaboration and networking.
- Some useful partnerships have occurred. Most seem positive about the network.
- Progress has been seen across the board but there is still work to be done getting people on board.
- I am on the right path with my work and understanding goals and objectives is critical.
- We should try to find the relevance of our work to the Sustainable Development Goals. The Advocacy Tool Kit is being developed. A Fund Development Workshop is in the making.
- There are so many aspects of the NGO world I need to learn about. Networking is important.
- This was my first meeting, with no background knowledge of the SDGs Catalysts Network. However, the session was informative and I learnt the importance of collaboration with other NGOs and alignment to specific SDGs; at an organisational level, to achieve better outcomes.
- There are many other CSOs/NGOs that have similar issues as we do.
- Many positive things are happening through the group.

2. I felt that...

- CKFTO can collaborate with other members.
- CSOs are interested in participating in the project but have limited resources, so cannot participate in all activities.
- It was a good session. Met some new folks!
- The meeting had a lot to cover in a short space (of time).
- Those present have 'drunk the Kool-Aid'. We need to share some with others.
- Valuable discussions occur but action (is) needed.
- I am learning many new concepts with every meeting.
- Catalysts continue to strengthen NGOs and have a great impact on the society.

- I felt it would have been more beneficial to have had the opportunity to review the efforts of the Network thus far, to have a better appreciation and have context to respond.
- I was not able to participate fully, due to the fact that I did not have prior knowledge of previous sessions.
- More sharing was possible.

3. I noticed that...

- Other CSOs have similar challenges.
- Everyone was interested in sharing about their experience in the project to-date.
- Everyone was engaged.
- Many Catalysts (were) missing.
- Newer members are encouraged to contribute; they don't feel intimidated.
- There were new representatives of CSOs at the meeting.
- Few persons were taking notes, unlike me, so I guess I have plenty more to learn.
- I noticed a level of comfort among the participants. The sharing of information and experiences was commendable and useful. An enjoyable session, despite my limited insight to the role and function of the group.
- The groups were quite familiar with each other and spoke the same language.

4. I discovered that...

- There are new members (i.e. not seen at meetings before)
- We need to find a way to continue this project beyond the end date.
- Trinidad and Tobago has been blacklisted by the EU for no anti-money laundering ((legislation not fully in place)).
- I have to be more strategic in my information sharing to Catalyst members.
- There is a lot of good work happening.
- All who attended were very knowledgeable of the work of their organisations.
- The NGO world is vast and there are many aspects I need to acquaint myself with. There is a great need for the advancement of knowledge with networking, writing proposals, et cetera.
- There is a three-year strategic plan that is in train and I would like to have access to previous information, to be able to see how my organisation can benefit.
- People have views about CSO representation.

5. I would like to suggest that...

- We have another Specialist Clinic with Shift (Caribbean), free for the members, during the week.
- To have a slightly bigger space or fewer large tables.
- More time (needs to) be allocated.
- We speed up digital forms of communication/meeting.
- All that was discussed be put in writing and circulated. I noticed that Mr. Shim took some very good notes on his computer and you could request him to circulate them.
- 'Newbies' have further sessions for advancement.
- There be more action outcomes of sessions.