



Civil Society Advocacy Case Studies

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



April 2018

About the project: The [CSOsForGoodGov](#) project is spearheaded by a consortium of seven¹ leading civil society organisations (CSOs) in Trinidad and Tobago. The main objective of the project is enhancing civil society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad and Tobago and specifically, to support the effective involvement of CSOs in national implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the heart of the effort to do this, the project consortium convened and officially launched the SDGs Catalysts Network in September 2017. CANARI is serving as convenor and coordinating activities of the Network under the *CSOsForGoodGov* project.

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- Caribbean Kids and Families Therapy Organisation (CKFTO)
- National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD)
- The Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago (ECTT)
- IAMovement
- Veni Apwann (VA)
- Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute (TTTI)
- Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (CAISO): sex & gender justice
- Institute of Gender and Development Studies (IGDS), University of the West Indies, St. Augustine and the Women Gender Water Network (WGWN)
- Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)
- Ms. Sasha Jattansingh (Consultant)

Credits

All photos and visuals included in case studies are credited to the contributing CSOs.

Disclaimer



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The CSOs For Good Governance: Enhancing Civil Society's Contribution to Governance and Development Processes in Trinidad and Tobago project is being supported by the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the project implementers and can under no circumstance be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

¹ Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI), Environment Tobago (ET), Network of NGOs for the Advancement of Women, United Way Trinidad and Tobago (UWTT) (which is project lead), University of the West Indies-Institute for Gender and Development Studies (UWI-IGDS), Veni Apwann (VA) and Women's Institute for Alternative Development (WINAD).

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Summary

This Advocacy Report has been developed to share case studies of successful examples of advocacy by civil society organisations (CSOs) in Trinidad and Tobago. The cases outline what was done, the main results and lessons learned and recommendations to improve advocacy processes and practices by CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago. Through this sharing, the CSOs involved hope to guide and inspire continued and enhanced advocacy by civil society to change policy and behaviour for sustainable development.

The CSOs featured in the advocacy case studies are [members](#) of the SDGs Catalysts Network under the project [CSOs for Good Governance: Enhancing civil society's contribution to governance and development processes in Trinidad and Tobago](#) (CSOs4GoodGov). This project is aimed at strengthening participation and effective involvement of CSOs in the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Trinidad and Tobago.

A total of eight advocacy case studies were developed on the work of the following CSOs:

- Caribbean Kids and Families Therapy Organisation (CKFTO) and the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD)
- Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago (ECTT)
- IAMovement
- Veni Apwann (VA)
- Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute (TTTI)
- Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (CAISO)
- Institute of Gender and Development Studies (IGDS), University of the West Indies, St. Augustine and the Women Gender Water Network (WGWN)
- Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

Some key lessons from these advocacy case studies are presented below:

1. Collaborative advocacy makes for successful advocacy action.

Most CSOs underscored the importance of developing partnerships and collaborations with other organisations including CSOs, government agencies and ministries, private sector companies and international development agencies which can leverage resources and expertise to improve the impact, visibility and reach of their advocacy action.

2. CSOs should consider the use of various forms of media and innovative outreach activities to get the advocacy message across.

Many CSOs recognised the need to develop suitable communication strategies which include different forms of media such as social media, print, TV, and radio as part of their advocacy action. A few CSOs highlighted the successful use of innovative tools such as short films and puppet shows in their advocacy campaigns.

3. Having a champion can increase the visibility, impact and success of the advocacy action.

Some CSOs noted that having a champion such as a high level public figure, a local celebrity or artiste can help to increase visibility, reach and support of stakeholders and the general public for the advocacy action.

4. Advocacy must be an ongoing strategic area of work for CSOs.

Most CSOs noted that advocacy needed to be an on-going area of work in their organisations to achieve the desired changes in policy, attitudes and behaviours.

5. CSOs should consider including capacity building and training as part of the advocacy action to increase impact and uptake of desired changes.

Some CSOs recognised the value of including capacity building and training sessions as part of their advocacy work to educate stakeholders on best practices which can be implemented and resources available to support desired change in behaviour or practice.

6. There is real value in measuring impact of the advocacy action.

Many CSOs noted the importance of incorporating simple monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities as part of the advocacy action. These M&E activities were necessary to measure and report on the impact of the advocacy action.

7. CSOs should strive to have better understanding of the international, regional and national policy context in which their advocacy work falls to better leverage strategic opportunities.

CSOs agreed that their staff, volunteers and members should be knowledgeable of relevant national policies and legislation as well as regional and international agreements which can impact their advocacy work. Better understanding of the international, regional and national policy context can create strategic opportunities for advocacy and can also enable synergies between local advocacy action and international advocacy actions.

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CASE STUDY #1

National Awareness and Education Campaign on Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities

Organisation(s): Caribbean Kids and Families Therapy Organisation (CKFTO) and National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD)

Date: 2013 to 2016

Geographic Location: Trinidad & Tobago

Partners: REPSOL E&P Trinidad and Tobago Limited (REPSOL)

SDGs in Action:



Caribbean Kids and Families Therapy Organisation (CKFTO) is a registered non-profit formed in 2008 in Trinidad and Tobago with a mission to provide therapy and support services to all children in need. National Centre for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) is a private non-profit organisation that provides individuals with the best opportunities for vocational growth and success. In 2013, CKFTO and the NCPD with sponsorship from REPSOL E&P Trinidad and Tobago Limited (REPSOL), launched a National Disability Awareness and Education Campaign **“Open Your Mind, Discover the Ability in Disability”**. The main objectives of this national campaign were to:

- change misconceptions on the issue of disabilities;
- promote persons with disabilities as productive contributors to national development;
- to encourage public and private sectors to provide employment opportunities for qualified persons with disabilities; and
- educate, sensitise and inform the public about persons with disabilities.

The national campaign involved the use of a public awareness and advertising campaign as well as outreach activities. School outreach initiatives were carried out across Trinidad and Tobago to sensitise school children about the myths and facts surrounding disabilities through interactive **Count Me In®** puppet shows.



Figure 1: Count Me In® puppet shows were carried out in schools in Trinidad and Tobago

A heavy media blitz was also incorporated into the national campaign which included press, television, mobile booths, radio, social media, billboards and websites and thus forced people to take notice. Seven local celebrities also came on board and used their celebrity status to urge the Government and the public to focus on the issues facing persons with disabilities and develop a culture of inclusion for all. A spotlight activity of this national campaign was the **“Break Down the Wall”** 2014 event where persons with disabilities were invited to “break down a symbolic wall featuring slogans of discrimination and marginalisation” to highlight common issues faced by the disabled in their struggle for inclusion and equal opportunity.



Figure 2: President Anthony Carmona and local celebrities at the Break Down the Wall event in 2014

Key Results and Impact

This national disability awareness and education campaign was an important advocacy vehicle for highlighting issues faced by persons with disabilities and resulted in numerous impacts including contributing to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in 2015. This campaign was championed by His Excellency President Anthony Carmona and later endorsed by the United Nations Resident Coordinator, Richard Blewitt. Their public support propelled the national campaign in 2015 and encouraged other CSOs and individuals to undertake related initiatives on disability awareness. The campaign also successfully contributed to increased employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors and improved access to education and training opportunities for persons with disabilities. Moreover, two Independent Senators with disabilities were appointed to the Senate in 2013. This campaign also successfully contributed to a more inclusive school environment for children with special needs and an overall more sensitive society to all persons with disabilities.

Key Lessons Learned

- Collaboration and partnerships amongst organisations enabled more effective resource allocation and mobilisation for more impactful and meaningful advocacy.
- The advocacy campaign should be implemented over a sustained period of time to ensure desired impact i.e. years not months.
- Having a champion who is a public figure, such as the President, brought about major visibility and impact for the national disability awareness and education campaign.
- Utilising multiple forms of media, innovative outreach activities like puppet shows as well as

popular local artistes and celebrities improved the success and visibility of the advocacy campaign.

Next Steps or Opportunities

CKFTO and NCPD are continuing on-going public education and awareness initiatives on disability as they advocate for the enactment of legislation by Government to support the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

References and Links

YouTube: Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities Channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC074a7Y_W5hrdJqiaLZwZqw

Advocacy Tips

- *Seek partnerships and collaboration with other CSOs when and where possible. There is value in building on each other's expertise and maximising resources.*
- *Any work on advocacy needs to be on-going, it cannot be "one-off".*
- *Be more knowledgeable of United Nations conventions, policies and laws which can impact the work of CSOs.*
- *Share information and seek support from relevant Government agencies where possible.*
- *Utilise all forms of media – print, electronic and social media in advocacy work.*

Facebook:

@SocialIntegrationOfPersonsWithDisabilities

<https://www.facebook.com/SocialIntegrationOfPersonsWithDisabilities/>

Facebook: @CKFTO

<http://www.facebook.com/ckfto.org/>

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CASE STUDY #2

Improving Corporate Governance in Trinidad and Tobago

Organisation(s): Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago (ECTT)

Date: 2011 to 2014

Geographic Location: Trinidad and Tobago

Partners: Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

SDGs in Action:



The Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago (ECTT) represents public and private sector organisations in the energy sector in Trinidad and Tobago. The ECTT has recognised the value of good corporate governance and has advocated for improved corporate governance practices in Trinidad and Tobago. Good corporate governance is about promoting corporate fairness, transparency and accountability through incorporating systems, processes and principles which ensure that an organisation is governed in the best interest of all stakeholders.

In 2011, with funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the ECTT first embarked on a project **“Improving Corporate Governance in Trinidad and Tobago”** which aimed at improving the corporate governance practices in both private and public interest companies within Trinidad and Tobago. The main objectives of this project were to:

- build institutional capacity of targeted companies to facilitate their compliance with the current and regulatory framework;
- strengthen corporate governance practices by documenting and disseminating information and models of international best practices;
- strengthen the public's capacity for advocacy and monitoring of governance practices; and
- create training resources on corporate governance standards and practices.

The project sought to increase awareness and uptake of good corporate governance practices in Trinidad and Tobago through the development and dissemination of resource tools, materials and information on good corporate governance, combined with capacity building on good corporate governance practices to achieve the change. This project was supported by the then Minister of Finance, Mr. Larry Howai, the IDB and Board Members of the ECTT who helped to improve project success through pooling of resources and expertise as well as championing for improved corporate governance through their public support of this project.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) were not initially targeted under the project. However, many CSOs attended the pilot workshop and expressed the need for corporate governance training. As such, the ECTT sought to include CSOs in the project. Sponsored training sessions for CSOs were conducted and they were the most responsive target group of the project. CSOs recognised the benefits from improving their corporate governance practices including increased collaboration with other organisations and greater access to funding.

A comprehensive corporate governance training and sensitisation programme was also conducted across Trinidad and Tobago for public sector, private sector and civil society organisations from 2012 to 2014. Over 352 persons were trained representing 176 organisations: 56 CSOs, 77 Private Companies, 17

Private/Family Businesses and 26 State Enterprises. A sensitisation session was also conducted for the media. An important milestone was the development of a Corporate Governance Toolkit. All training materials on corporate governance standards and practices and the toolkit are freely available [online](#) and were provided during training sessions. A simple Assessment Tool was also developed where organisations could do a self-assessment of their current corporate governance practices. The ECTT's approach of open access to resources coupled with associated training encouraged more voluntary efforts to improve corporate governance practices amongst many of the participating organisations in Trinidad and Tobago.

Key Results and Impact

This project successfully advocated for improved corporate governance in Trinidad and Tobago and led to key impacts, particularly the increased voluntary adoption of good corporate governance policies, procedures and practices across various public sector, private sector and civil society organisations. It also paved the way for further action in promoting corporate governance in Trinidad and Tobago such as the development of the National Corporate Governance Code in 2013 and the establishment of the Caribbean Corporate Governance Institute in 2012. This project also significantly increased awareness of good corporate governance practices and standards, especially amongst the members of the ECTT. Moreover, good corporate governance practices were also formally recognised in the civil society sector through the introduction of an NGO Award for Good Governance by the ECTT at its Annual Awards Initiative.

Key Lessons Learned

- Collaborations and partnerships with other organisations enabled the sharing of resources, expertise and best practices.
- Continuous stakeholder engagement throughout the project enabled the participation of new stakeholders who could benefit from the advocacy action.
- Capacity building of targeted stakeholders can complement communication for advocacy to achieve changes in knowledge and behaviour.

Next Steps or Opportunities

The ECTT continues its advocacy activities for good corporate governance in Trinidad and Tobago through its Annual Awards and training programmes (general

and customised) on its Corporate Governance Toolkit. This project's success has provided more opportunities for collaboration in good governance. Currently, the ECTT is part of a joint project with the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association and the Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business which is being funded by the European Union on capacity building for businesses. The ECTT is also partnering with organisations such as the Caribbean Corporate Governance Institute, the Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute and the Trinidad and Tobago Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative to lobby the Government for national legislation on corporate governance.

Advocacy Tips

- *Engage in collaborations with organisations having similar interests to maximise resources and expertise for a wider impact and reach of advocacy actions.*
- *Implement advocacy initiatives over an extended period to ensure desired results and impact.*
- *Include capacity building (e.g. training workshops) as part of the advocacy action since it is effective in encouraging desired change in behaviour or practice of the target audience.*
- *Secure additional funding to fully engage additional stakeholders for the advocacy action.*

References and Links

Corporate Governance Website:

<http://energynow.tt/corporate-governance/>

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CASE STUDY #3

Harnessing the Power of Film for Climate Advocacy

Organisation(s): IAMovement

Date: 2017

Geographic Location: Trinidad and Tobago

Partners: The High Commission of Canada; The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany; Cocoa Republic; Label House; MovieTowne; CARIGAMERS; Global Shapers Port of Spain; 2Cents Movement; Internet Society TT Chapter; Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE); New Fire; Tallman Foundation; One Young World; Energy Chamber; Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries; Kansmacker International; and NIHERST National Science Centre.

SDGs in Action:



IAMovement is a non-profit organisation founded in 2014 with the aim to effect positive social and environmental change and promote a diversified and inclusive Trinidad & Tobago (TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO). It is largely led by young people with the intent of becoming a platform for national dialogue on key social economic and environmental issues. The work of IAMovement focuses on addressing the critical challenge of climate change in TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. The CSO's growing online presence and digital following along with partnering and hosting of key climate events has led to the growth and development of IAMovement's local outreach and public engagement related to climate change over the past five years.

In 2016, IAMovement produced a short documentary "**Small Change**", which premiered at the Trinidad and Tobago Film Festival 2016. The documentary aimed to proactively move the climate change conversation forward in Trinidad and Tobago, given that the historic Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals, (which include Goal 13 on Climate Action) were agreed upon in 2015. *Small Change* sought to promote positive behaviour and attitude changes towards sustainability, low carbon development, conservation and respect for the environment.

Recognising the documentary as a powerful advocacy tool to initiate dialogue on climate change and energy issues in TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO and the effectiveness of interactive, group-focused forums, IAMovement developed and implemented "**Climate Talk**" from January to December 2017, initially with funding from the High Commission of Canada in Phase 1 and then from the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Phase 2. Other project supporters (listed above) provided in-kind support for the implementation of the project through co-hosting opportunities, human resources and products/services.



Figure 1: Climate Talk event at Fatima Boys' College in Port of Spain in 2017

As part of *Climate Talk*, the documentary was shown at group screening events in schools, public sector organisations, private sector organisations and public spaces throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Interactive, open-floor discussions following the screening enabled audience members to discuss the social, economic and environmental issues and opportunities for Trinidad and Tobago in pursuing low carbon development.

Key issues which were discussed at the *Climate Talk* events included: climate change and its impacts on small island developing states (such as flooding, extreme weather events, food security and public health issues); energy conservation, efficiency and renewable energy and the viability of the local energy subsidy; as well as the possible role of TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO in leading climate action in the Caribbean. In line with the theme and content of *Small Change*, these discussions revealed keen interest by most groups on renewable energy opportunities in the private and public sectors as well as waste management and recycling.

Key Results and Impact

Approximately 1,400 persons participated in 40 *Climate Talks* which were held in schools, public and private organisations, communities and public spaces throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Through the *Small Change* documentary and the *Climate Talk* events, IAMovement built public awareness on climate change issues. Moreover, the CSO was able to make information about the local gas subsidy easily digestible and understandable to all audiences and empowered them to understand and act on local energy issues facing Trinidad and Tobago, including energy wastage and over-consumption.

The success of *Climate Talk* paved the way for further collaborations with other organisations with key interests in climate change and energy issues. *Small Change* has been screened at key local events such as the Green Screen Environmental Film Festival, the Clean Energy Conference 2017 hosted by the Energy Chamber, and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Energy Month promoted by the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries. Due to the success of *Climate Talk* 2017, IAMovement decided to make the documentary available [online](#) for free public viewing.

Lessons Learned

- Short films which are audio-visually appealing and have strong local content were useful advocacy

tools to engage a diverse range of stakeholders on advocacy issues such as climate change.

- Building partnerships with other organisations was necessary to leverage resources and expertise for advocacy action.
- Monitoring and evaluation activities, including use of key performance indicators, were useful to measure and report on the impact of the advocacy actions.
- CSOs should be knowledgeable on policies, international treaties and legislation which can impact the advocacy work being done.

Next Steps or Opportunities

Due to the success of *Climate Talk*, IAMovement has developed new partnerships with various public and private sector organisations which support climate change and sustainable energy initiatives in Trinidad and Tobago. The 2018 edition of *Climate Talk* will be rolled out. IAMovement is also producing an infographic poster and a short video on the economic, social and environmental benefits of renewable energy in Trinidad and Tobago, thus building upon the advocacy impact of *Small Change* and the *Climate Talk* events.

Advocacy Tips

- *Connect local advocacy actions with global actions or events to increase support, visibility and legitimacy of the CSO and the advocacy action.*
- *Develop partnerships with public, private and civil society organisations to leverage resources, including in-kind contributions, to sustain (or extend) the roll out of the advocacy action.*
- *Include short films with strong local content to share key advocacy messages with stakeholders.*
- *Utilise open floor discussions to actively engage stakeholders to share knowledge, issues and solutions as part of the advocacy action.*

References and Links

Website: <http://iamovement.org/climate-talk-2017/>

Vimeo: *Small Change* - <https://vimeo.com/178869524>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/iamovementorg/>

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CASE STUDY #4

Improving Accountability in Civil Society Organisations

Organisation(s): Trinidad and Tobago Transparency Institute (TTTI)

Date: 2012 to 2014

Geographic Location: Trinidad and Tobago

Partners: Commonwealth Foundation

SDGs in Action:



Launched in 1998, the Trinidad & Tobago Transparency Institute (TTTI) is the local chapter of Transparency International, the global civil society organisation leading the fight against corruption. The TTTI actively advocates for reduced corruption and promoting good governance in the government, civil society, media and business sectors through awareness raising, stimulating action and contributing to the reform of systems, institutions and laws.

In 2010, TTTI collaborated with the Commonwealth Foundation to prepare a CSO Accountability Toolkit which explores what accountability means for civil society, including principles and practical guidance on accountability and transparency for local CSOs to improve their good governance practices. This was part of a larger project by the Commonwealth Foundation which advocated for good governance in CSOs by providing country-specific resources to do so in Belize, India, Uganda and the Pacific Islands.

The Toolkit, which is freely available [online](#), consists of seventeen tools geared towards making organisational operations of CSOs more transparent. An Accountability Self-Assessment Tool was also developed for assessing organisational strengths and weaknesses and covers: Accountability Basics, Accountable Governance, Accountable Programmes and Accountable Resource Management. The CSO Toolkit was formally launched at the Arthur Lok Jack Global School of Business (ALJ GSB) in 2012.

Between 2012 and 2013, TTTI carried out a comprehensive training and capacity building programme on the CSO Accountability Toolkit throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Fourteen well attended workshops were held in both islands with over 300 participants from 115 CSOs; the feedback was extremely positive.

In 2014, the TTTI undertook monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the training and capacity building programme. The 115 original CSO participants were engaged to find out the implementation status of the CSO accountability tools and determine effectiveness and impact on their organisations. The Accountability Self-Assessment Tool was used in this process. The results showed that in 38% of CSOs who attended the workshops, most or some of the accountability tools had been voluntarily implemented in their organisations. In others (35%), no tools were yet implemented. No feedback was received to enable a proper assessment for the rest (27%).

Key Results and Impact

Through the development of the CSO Accountability Toolkit and the associated training programme, the TTTI trained over 100 CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago on how best to align their accountability systems and procedures with international good governance best practices. Follow up activities demonstrated that this training programme improved accountability practices in over 35% of the CSOs who were trained, through

the voluntary adoption of many of the accountability tools. This training programme also increased awareness of good governance practices and available tools to reduce corruption amongst CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago. Notwithstanding, many CSOs agreed on the importance of accountability and that the toolkit was an important resource but indicated that full implementation of the accountability tools was not feasible due to limited financial and human resources and lack of support by executive management.

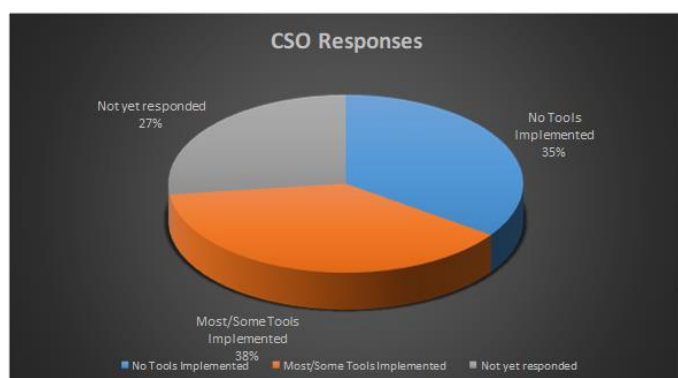


Figure 1: The CSO Accountability Toolkit was launched in 2012 and Training Sessions on the use of the toolkit were conducted across TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO in 2012 and 2013.

Key Lessons Learned

- Capacity building sessions (e.g. training workshops) on the use of the CSO accountability toolkit were the main strategy to change practice, with some communication on the governance issues folded into the workshops.
- M&E activities are necessary to measure the impact of the advocacy action by the TTTI but should be concise and should cater to the needs and capacities of the target audience. For example, telephone interviews should be used rather than hard copy surveys to enable a higher response rate especially in those CSOs with limited time and human resources.

Next Steps or Opportunities

The TTTI has continued its advocacy activities on good governance and accountability amongst CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago. The success of the CSO accountability training programme has provided more opportunities for collaboration in good governance and accountability with other organisations. In 2017,

the TTTI embarked on a joint initiative with Atlantic LNG to improve good governance policies and practices in eight CSOs at the community and national levels, including training on the use of the CSO Accountability Toolkit.

Advocacy Tips

- *Incorporate capacity building activities as part of the advocacy actions where possible since they are effective methods for promoting desired changes in the target audience.*
- *Include monitoring and evaluation activities to measure impact in the design of the advocacy actions.*

References and Links

Facebook: @transparecytt

<https://www.facebook.com/transparecytt/>

CSO Accountability Toolkit:

<http://transparency.org.tt/2012/07/20/civil-society-accountability-summary-toolkit/>

Press Release:

<https://www.atlanticlng.com/component/atlanticmedia/detail/925?Itemid=630>

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CASE STUDY #5

The Importance of Collaborative Advocacy in Changing Policy

Organisation(s): Veni Apwann (VA)

Date: 2015

Geographic Location: Trinidad & Tobago

Partners: Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education National Training Agency; Parenting TT; Kids in Need of Direction (KIND); CANARI; WINAD; The Arrow Foundation; Trinidad and Tobago National Council of Parent Teachers Associations; Brasso Seco Paria Tourism Action Committee; Rape Crisis Society of Trinidad and Tobago; The Coalition Against Domestic Violence; Human Development Foundation; Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago; Tobago Theta Company; Healing with Horses Foundation; Trinidad and Tobago Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Tobago Shelter; Environment Tobago; and Yahweh Foundation

SDGs in Action:



Veni Apwann is a non-profit company registered in 2003. Its mission is to build capacity in Caribbean civil society organisations (CSOs) by providing training, technical support and guidance to empower them to become visionary leaders in their communities. CSOs are uniquely positioned to address unmet needs in every sector of society. However, this work is often affected by challenges such as limited human resource and staggering financial challenges, which hamper civil society's ability to have the maximum reach possible.

In 2015, the Minister of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education, Mr. Fazal Karim in conjunction with the National Training Agency (NTA), recognising the potential value of CSOs in contributing to national development, initiated an informal partnership with CSOs to advocate for a proposed Cabinet Note aimed at allowing the provision of the On the Job Trainee (OJT) programme to support the civil society sector to be fully subsidised by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. At the time, CSOs were subject to the same policy as Private and Public-Sector organisations in which OJTs could be placed once the partnering organisation paid 50% of the stipend, a liability which many CSOs could ill afford. Working with the NTA,

Veni Apwann took up the cause to mobilise civil society and advocate for 100% subsidy by government, based on the argument of civil society contributions to national development. This assessment would validate the Ministry of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education's position that the civil society sector would benefit tremendously from 100% subsidisation of OJTs.

In March 2015, Veni Apwann made a call to local CSOs who readily provided information on how their work was contributing to the then pillars of national development. These pillars included:

- National and Personal Security
- People Centred Development
- Poverty Eradication and Social Justice
- Good Governance
- Holistic Child Development
- Foreign Policy
- Human Capital Development
- Information and Communication Technologies
- More Diversified Knowledge Intensive Economy

Veni Apwann prepared a collective document outlining the critical contributions of 16 CSOs representing various sectors towards national

development and a covering letter reinforcing the sector's need for the intended support, which was submitted to the NTA in late March 2015. This document supplemented the Cabinet Note prepared by the Minister of Science, Technology and Tertiary Education and was presented successfully to Cabinet.

Key Results and Impact

Effective August 2015, Cabinet approved the allowance of the recruitment of OJT Trainees by CSOs to help ease the burdens of staff remuneration. CSOs were given the opportunity to begin registering up to 10 OJTs per organisation for a maximum of 24 months.

To date, many CSOs have benefitted from access to additional and affordable human resources provided to their organisations through the OJT programme. These include members of the SDGs Catalysts Network, such as the Network of NGOs for the Advancement of Women, and other CSOs such as Parenting TT and the Yahweh Foundation. The Government's approval of providing 100% subsidisation of OJTs for CSOs signalled its willingness to recognise the critical work that they do and an understanding of government's role in creating a more enabling fiscal environment within which the civil society sector can operate. Veni Apwann and others feel that there is much more to be done in this area but it is a start.

Key Lessons Learned

- It is sometimes difficult for CSOs to invest time and other resources in strategic initiatives such as advocacy, given limited resources and competing short-term demands to deliver projects. It is key to be able to critically assess the feasibility and potential impact of any advocacy initiative, to weigh the cost of the effort that will be required to successfully advocate and to seize the opportunity in a timely fashion.
- Major national events such as national elections and possible change of government administrations can (and did) significantly hamper the implementation of the new policy change. The policy change was announced less than two weeks before the general election in 2015. While a few CSOs were able to bring on OJTs under the new government administration, further implementation was hampered by changes to ministries.

- Continuous follow up and follow through of key advocacy actions is necessary despite changes in government administrations and possible realignment of government ministries to enable effective implementation of the policy change.
- Advocacy messages should be reviewed and updated as necessary to remain relevant and reflect changing national circumstances. The drastic downturn in the national economy hampered the implementation of this policy change by the Government. However, during downturns CSOs play an even more critical role in national development and the subsidisation of OJTs would have facilitated this work. Unfortunately, this key message was not utilised by CSOs to advocate for continued access to this facility.

Advocacy Tips

- *Do continuously research and nurture potential strategic partnerships with the public and private sectors with whom CSOs could identify common interests from which to form a base for positive change.*
- *Make advocacy an ongoing strategic programme area for CSOs.*

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Article:

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Civil Society Advocacy Case Studies

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

CASE STUDY #6

Leading on Human Rights Review and Advocacy through Collaboration

Organisation(s): Coalition Advococation for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (CAISO)

Date: 2011 to 2018

Geographic Location: Trinidad and Tobago

Partners: Association of Civil Society Organisations of Trinidad and Tobago; Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago; Living Water Community; Mental Health Matters; Squeaky Wheels; United Nations Development Programme; and others

SDGs in Action:



The Coalition Advocating for Sex and Gender Justice (CAISO) is a nine-year-old feminist CSO committed to ensuring wholeness, justice and inclusion for Trinidad and Tobago's LGBTQI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex) communities, by developing analysis, alliances and advocacy. CAISO uses voice, work and play to strengthen governance and build a nation all citizens can share. One focus of this effort has been leadership at sharing access and building others' capacity about using human rights mechanisms.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a human rights accountability process introduced in 2005 by the United Nations (UN). It is an integrated, comprehensive peer review of each member state's human rights performance (conducted roughly every 4.5 years) that occurs at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The UPR brings public international attention to a state's human rights performance. It also provides civil society stakeholders an opportunity to participate in the formal review of each country. The run-up and follow-up to the UPR can force public dialogue about human rights between governments and civil society actors and leverage media attention. The UPR provides CSOs working on a range of human rights issues a mechanism to weigh in, in writing, on a state's human rights record, and to engage their own

state and states conducting the review, both at home and in Geneva.

During the first UPR cycle, the International Planned Parenthood Federation offered affiliates, including the Family Planning Association of Trinidad and Tobago (FPATT), financial support to prepare civil society submissions. In 2011, FPATT invited CAISO to develop a joint submission on sexual rights for Trinidad and Tobago's review, sharing the funds. International LGBTQI groups supported CAISO in participating in the 2012 phase of the review in Geneva. The Trinidad and Tobago Government reached out to a number of CSOs during the review process, some of which advocated against recognition of LGBTQI rights, but FPATT and CAISO were the only local CSOs to undertake a written submission to the UN.

As a result, in the run-up to Trinidad and Tobago's second-cycle review (in 2016), CAISO sought to broaden the diversity of civil society participation. CAISO engaged the newly-appointed UN Human Rights Officer for the Caribbean sub-region and in August 2015 jointly organised a UPR orientation session, along with the Association of Civil Society Organisations of Trinidad and Tobago. Participating CSOs included ones working on children, community development, crime, disability, faith, gender, health,

migration and organisational development. Former UN staff also volunteered to coach CSOs in completing written submissions.

Two disability rights CSOs and one working with migrants and refugees completed civil society submissions, and CAISO again undertook a collaborative submission on sexual rights with FPATT and three other LGBTQI CSOs. The four submissions critiqued Trinidad and Tobago's fulfilment of the commitments it undertook during the first-cycle UPR, and made over 40 recommendations. CAISO then led a process where a larger team of CSOs worked together to narrow these to a three-page advocacy brief with 12 priority recommendations to:

- strengthen considerable weaknesses in state accountability mechanisms and access to redress for human rights – this included the establishment of a National Human Rights Institution and the ratification of key international human rights protocols and conventions;
- strengthen commitments and reform legislation and administrative frameworks to fulfil obligations to vulnerable migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and trafficking victims;
- take meaningful steps, with technical support, at fulfilling disability rights; and
- repeal child marriage and life imprisonment penalties for minors' sexual experimentation, build state capacity to serve LGBTI persons, formalise non-prosecution of consensual sex and expand access to sexuality education and reproductive services.

The cross-sectoral team of local CSOs lobbied foreign missions in Trinidad and Tobago on these priorities. Representatives of CAISO and the Living Water Community also visited Geneva in advance of the UPR session to lobby reviewing States with support from Geneva-based advocacy groups that focus exclusively on sexuality. The UPR CSO coalition also deliberately linked this work with civil society preparation for Trinidad and Tobago's 2016 review of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). They leveraged capacity-building and travel to Geneva for CEDAW advocates, who went on to establish the Committee for Concerned Citizens of Trinidad and Tobago (CCoTT), a local CEDAW watchdog committee. CAISO continuously shared updates, key developments and outcomes with civil society and the coalition partners using Facebook and email, which enabled persons to feel more involved and knowledgeable. Mental

Health Matters, a partner CSO, worked to garner media interest in and coverage of the review, with television and print media dedicating pre- and post-coverage, including an evening news feature and morning TV magazine interviews.

Key Results and Impact

Local CSO submissions increased from one submission from two groups in the first UPR cycle to four submissions from eight groups in the second. Human rights issues highlighted by CSOs in the second cycle expanded beyond sexual rights to include disability and migrant/refugee rights and strengthening human rights machinery. At the second cycle in 2016, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago accepted over 60 recommendations from member states including the establishment of a National Human Rights Institution, which was a significant victory for local CSOs involved in the UPR process. The outcomes of the second UPR also influenced the eventual amendment to the marriage acts to make child marriage illegal in Trinidad and Tobago. There is much work to be done on human rights in Trinidad and Tobago but the UPR process has highlighted the importance and potential of collaborative advocacy amongst CSOs in making change.

Key Lessons Learned

- It is possible for CSOs to strengthen advocacy for their own cause by sharing privileged access they have to advocacy spaces and their savvy about how to use them with others.
- Collaborations with CSOs that have not just similar but different objectives makes joint advocacy action more visible and impactful and strengthens the legitimacy of every issue for decision-makers.
- How to use international human rights mechanisms is not hidden knowledge. Simple interventions and good leadership can enable their effective use by advocates.
- Several resources for building CSO human rights advocacy capacity and gaining access to human rights forums are available from international partners and human rights systems themselves.

Next Steps or Opportunities

CAISO followed up to lead a 2015 process which resulted in partner CSOs - WINAD, Community Action Resource and the.art.IS - being granted the first Trinidad and Tobago thematic hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in over 15 years. Building on the two-cycle UPR process and the Inter-American experience, CAISO and UNDP are

partnering on a 2018 workshop on using international human rights mechanisms effectively, and to share regional successes doing so. It focuses on setting priorities for future collaborations in engaging with human rights mechanisms. CAISO is continuing to reach out and engage additional networks of CSOs and participants in a March 2018 advocacy planning workshop held under the *CSOs for Good Governance* project committed to collaborate to ensure fulfilment of the state commitment to establish an NHRI.

Advocacy Tips

- *Be creative and strategic as local CSOs in using international human rights mechanisms, and don't feel obliged to simply follow textbook approaches to engagement. International partners who provide funding and access often have set priorities, but be firm about yours in accepting their offers.*
- *Build advocacy skills through a learning-by-doing process, with knowledge imparted through the process of the advocacy.*

References and Links

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/caiso/>

Twitter: @caisott

Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/caiso>

Blog: <https://qspottt.wordpress.com/>

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Civil Society Advocacy Case Studies

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

CASE STUDY #7

Linking Gender to Water Resource Management in Rural Trinidad Communities

Organisation(s): Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS), University of the West Indies, St Augustine and the Women Gender Water Network (WGWN)

Date: 2010 to 2013

Geographic Location: Trinidad and Tobago

Partners: Community Development Fund, Ministry of Community Development; Atlantic LNG Company of Trinidad and Tobago (Atlantic LNG); GEF Small Grants Programme; Power Generation Company of Trinidad and Tobago (Powergen); and Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago (Petrotrin)

SDGs in Action:



The Institute of Gender and Development Studies (IGDS) of the University of the West Indies (UWI) St. Augustine campus and the Women Gender Water Network (WGWN) collaboratively engaged in advocacy from 2010 to 2013 on the issue of water access and management in Trinidad and Tobago. The WGWN emerged out of a research project undertaken by the IGDS from 1998 to 2002 entitled, *The Nariva Swamp: A Gendered Case Study in Wetland Resource Management*, where it was felt that water-related issues were not sufficiently examined. Based on the need to engage in work on water access and management in Trinidad and Tobago, the WGWN was established. Working with the IGDS, this network is comprised of UWI scholars as well as practitioners in the public and private sectors working on the issue of water and develops. It delivers training for adults and children, conducts research and data collection and develops resource materials on water access and management.

The WGWN actively advocated for gendered water use and management in communities through their Children Vacation Water Camp Programme which were held in the water-poor communities of Biche, Matelot and Icacos from 2010 to 2013. These water camps were funded by international development

agencies, including the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme and private sector partners such as Atlantic LNG Company of Trinidad and Tobago (Atlantic LNG) and the Power Generation Company of Trinidad and Tobago (Powergen).

The key aims of this advocacy action were to: influence future decision-makers; increase water education; promote behavioural change among the children; empower children to be responsible; influence the way water is used and managed at home, school and within communities. Gendered water use and management is seen as a key component in this process. The approach enabled participatory learning for children as well as parents on the water cycle and sustainable water management practices and helped encourage positive behavioural changes at home and school with respect to sustainable water use, management and conservation. Through ongoing research and collaboration with the communities, resource materials such as workbooks on key gender and water related themes were also developed even after funding for these camps had ended. Moreover, the activities also advanced research, data collection and analysis of water access and gender relations in rural communities in Trinidad by the IGDS through

collaborating with the communities and involving them in research projects on gender and water.

Key Results and Impact



The Children Vacation Water Camp Programme was attended by over 300 children between the ages of 7 to 12 years from the three remote rural communities between 2010 and 2013. The camps increased awareness of water issues amongst children and encouraged desired changes in attitudes and behaviours surrounding sustainable water use, management and conservation by children and families in these water-poor communities.

Figure 1: Children's water camps were held in water poor communities in rural Trinidad between 2010 to 2013 and sought to raise awareness and influence behaviours of children and ultimately, communities on sustainable water use, management and conservation.

The results were validated by follow up site visits and surveys by the WGWN and IDGS after the camps ended. The WGWN was also the winner of the Atlantic LNG CEO's Sustainability Award in 2012 due to the success of their advocacy work on gendered water management using the camps.

Additional benefits included the creation of networks of entrepreneurs in food production and other service providers within the rural communities. These networks in the camp communities of Matelot and Icacos became a source of economic empowerment for community women long after the camps were completed.

Key Lessons Learned

- Understanding the target audience and making linkages with actual community needs is essential to designing an effective advocacy strategy. Connecting the learning that the children were exposed to and entrepreneurship opportunities afforded to community women enabled the WGWN to successfully advocate for gendered

water use and sustainable water management in the communities.

- Complex issues such as gender mainstreaming require longer term commitment to change and can benefit from a multi-pronged approach e.g. WGWN and IDGS engaged the communities through other approaches such as collaborating with the community women to create resource workbooks long after the water camps ended.
- Advocacy can benefit from building internal and external partnerships which can provide greater access to expertise and resources which can help sustain the advocacy action even in the face of funding constraints.

Next Steps or Opportunities

The WGWN has showcased their work in water resource management at exhibitions held by the EMA between 2013 to 2016. The WGWN is currently developing a water education manual, based on the success of the Children Vacation Water Camp Programme. In addition, in February 2018 the Fundación para la Sostenibilidad y la Equidad, based in Costa Rica, approached WGWN to work with them on establishment of a water management system in a select community in Trinidad and Tobago.

Advocacy Tips

- *It is important to understand the needs and issues of target audiences of the advocacy action when designing an effective advocacy strategy. This can make the advocacy messages and actions more relevant and appealing to the target audience.*
- *The advocacy strategy must be reviewed and adapted as community needs and issues change to ensure continued buy-in and support of the advocacy action by the target audience.*

References and Links

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Website:

<http://sta.uwi.edu/igds/genderwatercommunity.asp>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/IGDSWGWN.Children.Water.Camps.Programme/>

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Civil Society Advocacy Case Studies

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

CASE STUDY #8

Civil society input in shaping the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Organisation(s): Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)

Date: 2013 to 2015

Geographic Location: Trinidad and Tobago

Partners: Independent Research Forum

SDGs in Action:



The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a non-profit technical organisation that is engaged in research, policy influence and capacity building for participatory natural resource management across the islands of the Caribbean. In 2012, CANARI became a member of the Independent Research Forum (IRF), a global network which brings together the expertise and experience of ten leading sustainable development research institutes and think tanks from five continents, united by a common commitment to sustainable development for improved human wellbeing.

As part of collaborative work with the IRF, CANARI co-facilitated a series of series of eight informal retreats for senior government negotiators and United Nations officials who were members of the United Nations Open Working Group (UN OWG) leading the process of developing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The retreats were held in New York and created a space for negotiators to share diverse perspectives and find common ground on complex, potentially divisive issues related to principles of universality and differentiation, integrated approaches to development and addressing cross-cutting issues, criteria for development of goals and targets, implementation challenges, integrated financing, partnerships and accountability. CANARI also led advocacy on the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) at the regional and national

levels in the Caribbean. Taking an action-learning approach, CANARI provided technical support to negotiators representing Caribbean Community (CARICOM) governments at the United Nations between 2013 to 2015, engaged directly in national and regional consultations, and facilitated dialogue among stakeholders and within civil society. An action learning approach was used to bring together stakeholders to address complex problems through shared learning, analysis and action that simultaneously:

- assisted in practical problem-solving and effecting change;
- expanded knowledge and understanding; and
- enhanced competencies of the actors involved.

This action-learning process focused on developing and negotiating a strong Caribbean position on the new global agenda. Learnings were channelled into advocacy processes aimed at changing perspectives, policy, practice and behaviours. Activities undertaken by CANARI as part of this process included:

- facilitation of two informal one-day retreats with CARICOM negotiators in New York, and providing ongoing communication and advice through email and occasional meetings, to support delegates in refining their negotiating positions and identifying priority issues;
- organisation of a series of webinars on critical themes led by regional experts, and sharing the

recommendations coming out of these with the negotiators and others through brief reports;

- organisation of a two-day workshop that brought representatives of the CARICOM UN OWG negotiating team, regional sustainable development experts and other stakeholders together to share perspectives on regional priorities for the SDGs and lessons from previous experiences in global negotiations;
- facilitation and co-hosting with the Trinidad and Tobago office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) of a meeting to develop and document a civil society position on sustainable development priorities in Trinidad and Tobago, seeking to influence the Government's position at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa;
- additional face-to-face meetings, blogs and news releases to share information on the SDGs and advocate for a development agenda appropriate to the needs of CARICOM countries.

Key Results and Impact

CANARI established an informal network of Caribbean sustainable development experts from CARICOM Missions in New York, lead negotiators in capitals, the CARICOM Secretariat, CARICOM agencies, the University of the West Indies, and civil society to contribute to development of a strong and coherent Caribbean position on sustainable development priorities at the regional and national levels in the Caribbean.

CANARI supported CARICOM stakeholders and negotiators with identification and communication of Caribbean priorities for sustainable development and a framework for negotiating these. Lessons on negotiation in global policy processes were shared with CARICOM negotiators.

CANARI represented a voice of Caribbean civil society at the regional preparatory meeting and the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa. Recognising the contribution made in supporting CARICOM negotiators, CANARI was invited to be a member of the official Trinidad and Tobago delegation at the Samoa conference.

A key output of the process was a briefing paper outlining a Caribbean strategic position on sustainable development priorities.

Key Lessons Learned

- Collaborating with respected and like-minded international partners brings credibility to and builds capacity of CSOs.
- Engagement in global policy processes provides an avenue for CSOs to directly engage with governments and key international stakeholders and bring civil society perspectives to them.
- CSOs can leverage their reputation as a well-established source of sustainable development expertise and use a collaborative, rather than confrontational, approach to build trust and buy-in from government negotiators and open doors at the global, regional and national levels.
- Webinars are an accessible cost-effective way of engaging experts from across the region (including technical agencies and universities) in collective analysis of issues and development of specific recommendations that government negotiators and other stakeholders can easily use.
- A CSO can create informal safe spaces for sharing among diverse stakeholders to collectively analyse ways to address complex development issues.
- A CSO can be recognised as a valuable source of technical information and a credible partner to governments.

Next Steps and Opportunities

CANARI has continued to advocate on the implementation of the SDGs and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda through its ongoing work programmes. Flowing from the IRF experience, CANARI collaborated with other CSO partners to develop the *CSOs4GoodGovernance* project (2017 to 2020), funded by the European Union. This aims to initiate a process for strengthening advocacy and engagement of civil society on implementation of the SDGs in Trinidad and Tobago. Through this project, CANARI is presently facilitating knowledge sharing, collaboration on advocacy and integrated working among CSOs across different to address key national priorities under the SDGs.

Advocacy Tips

- *Continuously and proactively engage with national governments on influencing sustainable development priorities as part of a sustained advocacy programme instead of waiting to be invited to consultations.*
- *Consider acting as an intermediary between governments and civil society. CSOs acting as intermediaries can enable information sharing and create spaces where other CSOs are able to make more informed contributions on national sustainable development priorities and issues and be listened to by decision-makers.*
- *CSOs can take a collaborative, rather than confrontational approach, as an effective advocacy strategy.*

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Caribbean
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References and Links

Website on the CANARI advocacy project:

<http://www.canari.org/addressing-caribbean-priorities-in-global-sustainable-development-policies>

Website on the Independent Research Forum:

<https://www.irforum.org/>

Resource: CASE STUDY Small countries, big voices?

Learning from Caribbean experience in the post-2015 negotiation process

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