



**CARIBBEAN NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE  
(CANARI)**

**Governance and Civil Society Participation in  
Natural Resource Management in the Caribbean**

**Study of Partner Organisations**

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**« Une société civile peut exister  
en l'absence de démocratie,  
mais une démocratie ne peut exister  
sans une société civile forte »**

**“Civil society can exist  
where there is no democracy,  
but democracy cannot exist  
where there is no strong civil society”**

**Broadbent, 1993**

## Table of contents

	Page numbers
<b>Table of Contents</b>	3
<b>List of institutional acronyms</b>	4
<b>Preface</b>	5
<b>1. Introduction</b>	6-14
1.1 General context	6-7
1.2 Purpose of the study	7-8
1.3 Conceptual framework	8-14
<b>2. Methodology</b>	14-18
2.1 Sample	14-16
2.2 Data collection	17
2.3 Difficulties encountered	17-18
2.4 Limitations of the study	18
<b>3. Regional context</b>	19-24
3.1 Policy context	19-21
3.2 Institutional context	21-22
3.3 Organisational context	22-23
3.4 Geographical and cultural context	24
<b>4. Commonality and divergence</b>	25-44
4.1 Commonalties and divergence: a question of degree	25-41
4.2 Capacity building for “good” governance	41-44
<b>5. Issues arising</b>	45-53
5.1 Repatriating and repositioning the issue of participation	45
5.2 Promoting a rights-based approach	45-48
5.3 Public governance: from discourse to practice	48
5.4 Internal governance: advocacy through example	49
5.5 Demonstrating that it works	49
5.6 Building linkages	50
5.7 Building institutional capacity	50-53
5.8 Challenging the disconnect between rhetoric and practice	53
<b>6. Conclusions</b>	53-55
<b>Selected References</b>	55-56
 <b>Appendix: Results of the survey</b>	
<b>Annex 1: Survey instrument</b>	
<b>Annex 2: Compilation of survey responses</b>	

## **List of Institutional Acronyms**

Agency for Rural Transformation (ART)  
Anguilla National Trust (ANT)  
Assembly of Caribbean Peoples (ACP)  
Bahamas National Trust (BNT)  
Bahamas Marine Trust (BMT)  
Caribbean Community (CARICOM)  
Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA)  
Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI)  
Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC)  
Centro Oriental de Ecosistemas y Biodiversidad (BIOECO)  
Centro para la Conservación y Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (CEBSE)  
Consortio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD)  
Department for International Development United Kingdom (DFID)  
Environmental Awareness Group (EAG)  
Fédération des Amis de la Nature (FAN)  
Groupe de Recherche et d'Appui en Milieu Rural (GRAMIR)  
Humanistic Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries (HIVOS)  
International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)  
Jamaican Conservation Development Trust (JCDDT)  
Mouvement Paysan Papaye (MPP)  
Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (NCRPS)  
Programma Sibarimar (SIBARIMAR)  
Project Promotions Limited (PPL)  
Saint Christopher Heritage Society (SCHS)  
Saint Lucia National Trust (SLNT)  
Sustainable Economic Development Unit (SEDU)  
Small Projects Assistance Team (SPAT)  
Soufriere Regional Development Foundation (SRDF)  
Stakeholders against Destruction for Toco (SAD)  
Trinidad and Tobago Citizens Agenda Network (TTCAN)  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
University of the West Indies (UWI)  
World Association for Christian Communication (WACC)

## **Preface**

In a context where civil society organisations are often “over consulted and under involved”, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) would like to thank all the organisations and institutions which participated in this study. Each organisation took the necessary time to thoughtfully reflect on the questions, to provide valuable information on their organisations and experiences, and finally to raise issues which are crucial to the challenge of natural resource management and civil society participation in the region. The Institute would also like to acknowledge Ms. Sue Evan-Wong for editing the final report.

The information collected in this study will guide and inform CANARI's work. CANARI is committed to valuing the perspective and experience of partner organisations and to working in collaboration with them to develop programmes and projects responding to their needs in the area of institutional development.

It is hoped that this study will contribute to achieving this objective through providing an overview of partner organisations and flagging some of the key issues which they are addressing in their work to support natural resource management and civil society participation in the region.

Finally it is hoped that the analysis around the issues raised will stimulate debate between and amongst partner organisations on civil society participation in governance in general.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This section will give an overview of the study and provide information on: the institutional context within which this study took place - by making linkages with CANARI's ongoing work in the area of participatory natural resource management, the objectives of the study, and the conceptual framework which guided the work.

### 1.1 *General context*

In 2001, The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) carried out a mid-term review of its ten-year strategic plan in order to assess the ongoing relevance of the document and determine progress achieved in its research, analysis and advocacy programme areas<sup>1</sup>.

The review clearly identified the results achieved by the Institute with an emphasis on the following:

- An increased understanding and awareness of participation as an important element of effective natural resource management;
- A developed body of knowledge on participatory approaches to natural resource management with an emphasis on processes;
- An established informal and ad hoc network of groups, organisations and agencies established.

The review also signalled certain areas that should constitute institutional priorities in order to consolidate these gains.

Among these areas of focus were the following:

- Continued and strengthened focus on capacity building (including organisational development) to improve the ability of partner organisations to influence and participate in natural resource governance, and;
- Strengthened networks at both the national and regional levels in order to create a critical mass of organisations and institutions committed to participatory approaches to natural resource governance.

Toward this end, CANARI, in collaboration with the Humanistic Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (HIVOS) – a Dutch NGO that works to further emancipation and democracy, and to combat poverty in developing countries - developed a programme (2001-2006) focused specifically on the issue of capacity building to increase civil society participation in natural resource management within the insular Caribbean.

CANARI, in collaboration with key civil society partners, will be focusing on developing the capacity to engage government and other stakeholders in building management arrangements that facilitate good governance, and create examples of constructive collaboration between state and civil society in the collective interests of society. The experiences gained in the area of natural resource management will contribute to and encourage the development of similar initiatives in other sectors.

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<sup>1</sup> CANARI Mid-term review document ( 2001 )

By focussing on the organisational development of a diverse range of civil society organisations involved in natural resource management, the programme will:

- Increase capacity at both technical and programmatic levels and learning on the requirements of effective institutional frameworks.
- Strengthen linkages among and between partner organisations with a view toward deepening collaboration within the region.

The programme objectives are to:

- Develop a better understanding of the organisational development needs of key civil society organisations involved in natural resource management;
- Contribute toward the organisational development of key civil society organisations involved in natural resource management;
- Support individual and collective initiatives which will contribute to strengthening institutional capacity amongst civil society organisations involved in natural resource management;
- Improve access to and utilisation of information resources amongst civil society organisations involved in natural resource management.

The principal expected programme outcomes and results are:

- Improved understanding among partners of the institutional requirements for effective civil society participation in natural resource governance;
- Strengthened technical and financial capacity of selected civil society organisations involved in natural resource management;
- Improved access to and supply of information sources for Caribbean governments and civil society organisations involved in natural resource governance.

The programme is designed around a research action agenda that serves as the foundation for the development of other programme components. It also serves to validate the experiences gained through documenting the process, thus providing an opportunity for critical reflection. The research drives the programme, informs its content, and serves as a method for disseminating its results.

The first research activity is a study of a key group of partner organisations. The purpose of this study is to provide CANARI with information on its principal partner organisations: their organisational mission and vision, structure, experiences in natural resource management, and perceptions with regard to those factors which help and hinder participatory resource management. The study will provide the starting point for various activities that will be implemented in collaboration with partners.

## **1.2. *Purpose of the study***

The purpose of the study is to provide an overview of certain key and representative organisations involved in natural resource management within the region. More specifically the objectives are to:

- Provide an institutional profile of participating organisations.
- Identify some of the key commonalities and divergences amongst these organisations
- Identify some of the key issues and challenges facing these organisations in their work in the area of natural resource management.

- Inform CANARI's development of an appropriate capacity building programme in response to partner's needs.

### 1.3. Conceptual Framework

#### Overview of the concept of governance

Over the past fifteen years, and most notably since 1990, governance, or rather good governance, has become a key issue in the debate on democratisation and development.

The concept of governance has been the basis of an ongoing debate amongst a wide variety of institutions and has been coloured by both cultural and ideological considerations. (Blunt, P. 1995. Cultural relativism, good governance and sustainable human development. Public Administration and Development 15:1-9pp.).

For the World Bank and other international financial institutions, the concern with governance arose from the need to explore why so many international development initiatives had failed. Evaluations suggested that the way in which decisions were made impacted on the efficacy and sustainability of development initiatives. While the focus was initially on responsible economic management and the lack thereof, this eventually expanded to take into consideration the ways in which decisions were made within the society. The World Bank defines governance as being:

*“The traditions and institutions by which authority is exercised for the common good. This includes the processes by which those in authority are selected, monitored and replaced, the capacity of government to effectively manage its resources and implement sound policies, and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them.”<sup>2</sup>*

While including the notion of citizen participation, this definition clearly focuses on the role of the state in the economic and fiscal arena, with particular attention to the issue of corruption in the public sector. Thus the focus is primarily on efficacy, efficiency, and the rule of law.

The United Nations system, as well as their bilateral and multilateral agencies have also integrated the notion of governance into their development discourse. Closely linked to rule of law, and democratic process, governance has come to include the notion of citizen participation in political processes in general. In a report prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on Governance and Sustainable Development in Transitional Economies, the objectives of governance are defined as:

*“Achieving social equity and cohesion, with a least a minimum standard of living for all its citizens, achieving and maintaining a state of legitimacy, being efficient both in promoting economic development and in allocating and utilising public resources.”<sup>3</sup>*

Within the region, and more specifically in Haiti, the United Nations has defined governance as the “process of consolidation and the operations of a certain number of systems related to the organisation and management of the state and society. This refers primarily to the management of relations between social actors and the articulation of their interests”.<sup>4</sup>

For the UNDP, the role of civil society, in other words the **organised** expression of diverse groups and interests within society, is essential to governance processes, and to democratising political, and decision-making processes. They are essential to the process of articulating

<sup>2</sup> www. Worldbank.org/wbi/governance

<sup>3</sup> UNDP, The Shrinking State: Governance and Sustainable Development, page 1 (1977)

<sup>4</sup> Bilan Commun du Pays, page 18 (2002)



interests and building social cohesion. With regard to governance, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have an important role to play which includes “generating legitimate demands, monitoring government policy making and implementation, and enabling people to participate actively in society “.<sup>5</sup>

The United Nations system has developed a framework that explores the linkages between good governance and the body of international human rights laws. This approach moves governance beyond the issues of efficacy and efficiency, and introduces the issues of justice and equity. Above all it embeds the notion of governance, and therefore the notion of participation, within a rights-based framework.<sup>6</sup>

Within the private sector, the notion of corporate governance focuses on how companies are managed, thus providing a link with the World Bank’s approach. Attention is, however, increasingly being paid to how money is made, and not just how money is managed - thus introducing another focus which raises issues of ethics and fundamental rights.

Within the social sector, and in particular within the NGO community, the concept of governance would appear at first glance to be a new buzzword. This would be an erroneous observation. Even if the terminology is in fact new, some of the related and underlying issues have been at the heart of NGO work for several decades. The NGO focus on community empowerment and increased citizen participation in decision-making processes is also linked to the notion of governance.

Thus while for some, the concept of “good governance” is linked primarily to issues of fiscal accountability and efficiency, for others the central issue is one of political accountability and participation.

While the content of this concept clearly varies from one organisation to another and from one culture to another, it would appear that one of the basic components of “good” governance is citizen participation in public policy formulation and its implementation.

### ***Governance and Civil Society participation in the Commonwealth Caribbean***

Against the background of the debate on governance, and the development challenges of the new millennium, the Commonwealth Foundation undertook an ambitious study to examine the issue of governance and citizen participation throughout the Commonwealth<sup>7</sup>.

Based on discussions with a broad and representative sampling of citizens, the study focused on three fundamental questions:

- the definition of a good society;
- the definition of the respective roles and responsibilities of the state, civil society and other social actors;
- the identification of those factors which would enable citizens to contribute to the development of a good society<sup>8</sup>.

The study provides a valuable source of information on the perceived state of governance and the hopes and aspirations of citizens within the Commonwealth.

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<sup>5</sup> page 103 Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> This will be further explored in Chapter 7, as this approach constitutes a challenge and an opportunity for consolidating the role of civil society in governance processes.

<sup>7</sup> Citizens and Governance: Civil Society in the New Millenium (2001)

<sup>8</sup> The study was carried out by national partners, most of whom were NGOS, using a focus group methodology and individual interviews with key informants. Particular attention was paid to ensuring that all voices were heard and particularly the voices which are most often silenced or ignored: women, indigenous peoples, the youth and the elderly.

As a part of the overall Commonwealth report, a study was carried out in six countries within the Commonwealth Caribbean: Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago. This regional report provided an opportunity for citizens to voice their concerns about their vision of a good society, and about the modes of governance to which they aspire. For the citizens of the region, the notion of a “good society” encompasses both the opportunity and ability to meet their needs, but also to build a sense of community, to gain recognition, and to be treated with respect.<sup>9</sup>

The Commonwealth report also clearly identifies some of the common themes identified by citizens with regard to the state of governance: “Notwithstanding the longstanding existence of institutions of formal democracy, nor the semblance of participation which the committees and consultative bodies established in some countries seek to provide, ordinary citizens are alienated from their leaders and have lost faith in their ability to effect change.”<sup>10</sup>

Among the primary constraints to citizen participation in decision-making processes were the following:

Factors constraining citizen participation in governance	
Actor	Constraints
State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deepening resource constraints</li> <li>• Absence of responsiveness and accountability</li> <li>• Race/class/party divisions</li> <li>• Crime and violence</li> <li>• Changing values influenced by global mass media</li> </ul>
Civil society (NGOs, Church, CBOs <sup>11</sup> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inexperience in facilitating citizen's own participation in governance</li> <li>• Not always accountable to community</li> <li>• Sometimes promote division and dependence</li> <li>• Inconsistent</li> </ul>
Citizens and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dependence, fear, apathy</li> <li>• Fear of victimisation</li> <li>• Insufficient (funds and technical) resources</li> <li>• Inadequate civic knowledge</li> </ul>

Source; Baker (1999)

The regional Commonwealth report concludes by stating that people have challenged not only government and civil society organisations to take action to redress the current situation, but they have also challenged themselves to become more involved in creating space and opportunities for effective participation in decision-making processes.

Changing the relationship between civil society and the state and the way in which “power” is exercised is one of the fundamental priorities for the new millennium. “It is the connection between citizens and governance that prepares the ground to address the myriad challenges that face our societies. Poverty, marginalisation and discrimination can only be overcome through responsive governance and active citizenship”<sup>12</sup>

The Commonwealth Foundation’s study explores primarily the ability of those who “govern” to create the kind of society to which those who are “governed” aspire. This “*projet de société*” or worldview to which the people of the Commonwealth Caribbean aspire should inform and define

<sup>9</sup> Baker (1999)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Community-based organisations

<sup>12</sup> Commonwealth Foundation (1999)

their development. But more importantly, active citizenship or participation is also seen as a precondition for the “sustainability” of all development initiatives.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Governance and Sustainable Development***

CANARI's work is based on the assumption that participatory processes contribute to effective natural resource management. CANARI, as well as other organisations within the region, has contributed to demonstrating that participation is also a pre-requisite for sustainable development.

This view is echoed in the Department for International Development's (DFID) key principles for sustainable development which state that it must be:

- people-centred
- country led
- nationally owned
- process oriented
- outcome oriented
- and above all, participatory.<sup>14</sup>

Despite formally stated commitments to promote sustainable development, and clear language that it requires governance structures that facilitate citizen participation, progress in this area remains uneven in the Caribbean: citizen participation has at best been limited.

In 2002, the Caribbean Sustainable Economic Development Network (CSEDNet) undertook a pilot survey of 196 Commonwealth Caribbean NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) as part of a United Nations project to assess Caribbean sustainability processes.<sup>15</sup> The survey was part of a broader programme with objectives to:

- Develop and advocate strategies for sustainable development which include the full involvement of all sectors of civil society; and
- Provide policy advice, actions plans and policy documentation in environmental, economic and social matters of critical importance to Caribbean societies<sup>16</sup>.

The purpose of the survey was to “inform the development and prioritisation of appropriate development strategies ultimately aimed at the implementation of a programme of capacity building among civil society organisations in the Caribbean Region”.<sup>17</sup> Conducted prior to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the timing of the survey provided an opportunity both to identify key actors concerned with sustainable development issues, and to determine the extent to which such actors actively participated in the preparatory processes for the WSSD.

The outcomes of the survey were revealing with regard to the level of effective participation of citizens in decision-making processes related to sustainable development issues. With regard to participation in decision-making forums, results were as follows<sup>18</sup>:

- Despite a perceived high level of participation in policy making among respondents, analysis suggested that participation took place by invitation rather than by right.

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<sup>13</sup> The notion of sustainability, though most often used in relation to the sustainable use of the environment and natural resource base, also refers to the social and political sustainability of any development initiative.

<sup>14</sup> DIFD, Background brief on Strategies for Sustainable Development (2000)

<sup>15</sup> UNDP Project: TRI/01/G81/A/5G/99.

<sup>16</sup> Rennie, 2002

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Drawn from Mangones (2003)

- The majority of respondents felt that they had limited influence on decision-making confirming that, for the most part, participation consisted of consultative processes without any guarantee that input will in fact impact on policy.

The notion of participation has varying definitions.

- With regard to the WSSD, the overwhelming majority of respondents were completely marginal to the preparatory process, despite the fact they were actors in the area of sustainable development.
- Consultation took place through informal and *ad hoc* mechanisms, and lack of formalised institutional arrangements and explicit well-designed strategies for participation may have limited the effectiveness and opportunities for participation.

Overall, the CSEDNET survey contributed to generating knowledge about the strengths and weakness of civil society in the region, and their perceived degree of participation in policy formulation processes. It constitutes a significant contribution to advancing both theoretical and applied work on the relationship between sustainable development and civil society participation.

Subsequent workshops and discussions on the CSEDNET survey findings brought out the following points and suggested the need for research in additional areas<sup>19</sup>:

- An analysis of citizen participation must be placed within their national and regional context in order to identify the factors that influence the results. This is particularly true when looking at issues related to governance, or how power and decision-making is shared within a society or country.
- The classic triangle used for conceptualising sustainable development - which is based on social, economic and environmental factors would appear to be rather simplistic. Should a fourth dimension should be added which would take into consideration the political arena and policy environment?
- There is a lack of consensus on the notion of participation, which may explain the low levels of influence in decision-making, in contrast to the declared high levels of participation. There is need to clarify the notion of participation in a manner that is consonant with increased and more effective involvement in decision-making processes.
- There is need to explore the place of *ad hoc* arrangements and their relationship to more formal and institutionalised decision-making processes. Do they form a continuum, or are they parallel or complementary forms of participation. Are formal institutionalised mechanisms always preferable to *ad hoc* informal mechanisms?
- Is there a relationship between political and historical frameworks and opportunities for participation? Are existing political frameworks within the region conducive and sensitive to the need for participation? Is there a relationship between the size of a country and the level of participation or consultation with civil society?
- The map of civil society organisations in the region is changing rapidly: certain key organisations are no longer operative, while others have emerged, such as organisations within the diaspora that maintain links with their countries of origin. Are there important types of organisations not included in the CSEDNET survey that need to be analysed?

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

The CSEDNet survey and the subsequent workshops provided an invaluable opportunity to explore these issues with a broad range of partners, a foundation upon which other organisations can build. It also contributed to clarifying some of the key questions that should inform further research and action on the issues of governance and civil society participation in natural resource management.

### ***Civil Society Participation in Natural Resource Management***

The natural resource base provides a good focus for the practice of governance and a critical juncture for collaboration between state and civil society. As a collective asset, natural resource management calls for dialogue between state and civil society which could lead to the participation of civil society in the management of these resources.

CANARI's work, as well as the work of other organisations in the region, have demonstrated the importance of civil society participation in natural resource management. Sustainable resource management suggests that governance structures be inclusive, transparent, and facilitate the effective participation of key stakeholders in decision-making processes.

An underlying assumption in CANARI's work is that, through creating spaces for effective civil society participation, and empowering citizens to take a more active role in decision-making related to the management and use of natural resources, democracy is strengthened and deepened. One of the challenges in the coming years will be to further explore the potential for participation in natural resource management in order to influence governance in general.

CANARI recognises that management arrangements may vary as a function of the social, cultural and political context. Given the diversity within the region, CANARI will look at the various types of arrangements that have emerged within the region, and the various factors that facilitate and/or hinder good governance. One of the assumptions is that despite the diversity and the range of experiences within the region, there are some commonalities which can be identified and which have broader relevance.

The conceptual framework that guides CANARI's work is based on a definition of four key concepts:

1. *Civil society* - defined as the set of **organised** non-state and non-commercial actors. These include conservation and development organisations, non-governmental networks and coalitions, natural resource user groups, community based organisations, and local natural resource management organisations.
2. *Social Capital* - defined as the web of organisations created by citizens and the relations of trust, reciprocity and solidarity developed within and among these organisations.<sup>20</sup> Social capital is both a precondition for the development of civil society, and a by-product of its existence.
3. *Participation* - considered both a **methodology** and an **outcome**. It is a process through which concerned stakeholders become actors in decision-making processes that affect their lives and their communities.
4. *Governance* - defined as the rules, processes and practices through which power and decision-making are shared within an institution and within society.<sup>21</sup> The concept of **good governance** refers to a number of values which are considered key to ensuring equitable and inclusive forms of decision-making. These include: participation, transparency, and accountability. For the purposes of this report, the notion of

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<sup>20</sup> For further information on the notion of social capital see Putnam, R. (2000)

<sup>21</sup> The definition draws on the working definition used by the European Union.

governance refers more globally to the way in which power is shared and decisions made. As with participation, governance is as much about process as it is about the outcome and therefore concerns itself not only with how power is used - "*the where to go*" but also with how power is shared - "*the who gets to decide*".<sup>22</sup>

Based on these working definitions, four underlying hypotheses were formulated with regard to the linkages between natural resource management and governance with the wider Caribbean;

- At both international and national levels, the socio-economic and socio-political context, may influence the ways in which these issues are or can be addressed;
- While throughout the Caribbean the notion of participation may be considered as valuable and necessary, concepts of good governance and experiences of governance may vary as widely as the realities within the region.
- Good governance is built on two pillars: a structured and strong civil society, and a state apparatus which is committed to developing structures and methods which ensure accountability and which engage citizens in decision-making processes.
- Good governance in one area or sector, creates examples and models that can be adapted to other areas of collective interest.

Based on these assumptions, as a means of strengthening democratic processes, CANARI has decided to focus on developing a programme to reinforce civil society participation in, and contribution to, the equitable and sustainable use of natural resources in selected countries of the insular Caribbean<sup>23</sup>.

This study, which builds on the work carried out by the Commonwealth Foundation, CSEDNet and other actors aims to identify issues which need to be addressed in order to effectively promote greater levels of citizen participation in natural resource management and create the demand for improved governance and participation in other domains of interest to Caribbean society.

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<sup>22</sup> Graham et al, IOC, (2003)

<sup>23</sup> The programme goal, purpose, objectives and expected outcomes are drawn from the grant agreement between the EC and Hivos.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology used to carry out this study relating to the criteria used to establish the sample of partner organisations, the data collection, the difficulties encountered, and the limitations inherent to the study.

### 2.1. Sample

CANARI chose at the outset to limit the size of the sample in order to facilitate a thorough qualitative analysis rather than generate quantitative data: information that could inform planning processes within CANARI, and target key issues related to governance and natural resource management within the region.

This decision was motivated by the fact that recent surveys, such as the one undertaken by CSEDNet, focused on generating quantitative data on a broad range of organisations involved in promoting sustainable development within the Commonwealth Caribbean which provides a representative overview of these institutions. The current study aims to provide complementary information through including non-Commonwealth Caribbean organisations and a more detailed analysis of certain key questions.

The choice of partners is critical to both the process and the outcome. CANARI developed a preliminary list of potential partner organisations that reflect both the cultural diversity of the Caribbean and the myriad forms of civil society organisations.<sup>24</sup>

Two primary criteria were used to select organisations for the sample. They had to be:

- involved in the issue of natural resource management and governance;
- partners or potential partners in the HIVOS/CANARI programme on civil society participation and natural resource management;

Three secondary criteria used for establishing the sample were;

- *Geographical diversity* in order to include the various countries and territories within the wider Caribbean.
- *Linguistic diversity* in order to take into consideration the various linguistic groups which characterise the wider Caribbean.
- *Organisational diversity* in order to take into consideration the diversity of organisational structures put into place by Caribbean peoples to manage their natural resources and to promote development processes.

After deliberation, a list of 21 organisations was established by CANARI based on the various criteria presented above:

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<sup>24</sup> The list of potential partners draws on a variety of sources; the organisations and institutions which have participated in CANARI activities over the past years, the results of a recent regional survey undertaken of organisations working on issues of sustainable development, and finally key organisations involved in natural resource management within the various countries and territories.

List of organisations invited to participate in the survey		
Country or territory	Name of organisation	Area of activity
Anguilla	Anguilla National Trust (ANT)	Site Management and advocacy
Antigua	Environmental Awareness Group (EAG)	Advocacy for wetlands
Bahamas	Bahamas National Trust (BNT)	National Parks and Protected areas
Barbados	Barbados Marine Trust (BMT)	Environmental education
Cuba	1. Centro Oriental de Ecosistemas y Biodiversidad (BIOECO)	Environmental monitoring
	2. Programa Sibarimar (SIBARIMAR)	Management of wetlands
Dominica	Social Partners for Action and Transformation (SPAT)	Rural development
Dominican Republic	1. Centro para la Conservación y Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (CEBSE)	Rural development and advocacy
	2. Consorcio Ambiental Dominicano (CAD)	Participatory natural resource management
Grenada	Agency for Rural Transformation (ART)	Rural development and forestry policy
Haiti	1. Groupe de Recherche et d'Appui en Milieu Rural (GRAMIR)	Rural development and community empowerment
	2. Mouvement Paysan Papaye (MPP)	Rural development and community empowerment
	3. Fédération des Amis de la Nature (FAN)	Environmental Education and Advocacy
Jamaica	1. Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDT)	Protected areas management
	2. Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (NCRPS)	Protected areas management
St. Kitts	St. Christopher Heritage Society (SCHS)	Site management
St. Lucia	1. St. Lucia National Trust (SLNT)	Protected areas management
	2. Soufriere Regional Development Foundation (SRDF)	Protected areas management
St. Vincent	Project Promotions Limited (PPL)	Rural development and advocacy
Trinidad and Tobago	1. Stakeholders against Destruction for Toco (SAD)	Rural development
	1. Trinidad and Tobago Citizens Agenda Network (TTCAN)	Advocacy



## **2.2. Data collection**

The study was based on two complementary methods of data collection;

- A summary review of some of the key literature on the issue of civil society participation and governance within the region, in order to provide a background against which to analyse field level experiences and perspectives.
- A survey of a key group of partner organisations with a view toward integrating their perspectives and experiences.

The survey instrument was designed around 4 major axes<sup>25</sup>:

- institutional profile,
- experience in the area of natural resource management,
- linkages between natural resource management and gender, and
- linkages between natural resource management and governance.

It was decided to use open-ended questions rather than closed questions in order to solicit qualitative responses. This decision allowed organisations greater flexibility in responding to the various questions, and to establish their own priorities without reference to a predetermined frame.

The survey instrument was developed in English and then tested on two organisations to improve both content and clarity. The survey was then translated into French and Spanish for use in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba. The decision to develop three versions of the questionnaire rather than using only an English version was also considered an important message to partner organisations about the recognition of the importance of linguistic, and by extension, geographic diversity, and the willingness to approach them on “their own terms”.

The survey was distributed in January 2003 and responses were received over the following seven-month period.

The data was then compiled using a simple matrix in order to present a general profile of partner organisations<sup>26</sup>. Areas of commonalties and divergence were identified as well as key crosscutting issues judged pertinent for programme development and further reflection amongst partner organisations.

Given the relatively small size of the sample, and the emphasis on *discourse* rather than *observation*, the analysis focused more on qualitative issues rather than a quantitative analysis *per se*.

## **2.3. Difficulties encountered**

A number of constraints marked the realisation of this study.

- The primary constraint was the delay in receiving responses from partner organisations. Initially planned to be completed over a three to four month period, the survey process took approximately seven months to complete.

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<sup>25</sup> The survey instrument is presented in Annex 1.

<sup>26</sup> The compilations of the survey are presented in Annex 2.

- The second constraint was that, of the 21 organisations contacted, only 14 organisations responded, and 13 organisations provided information that could be used. This represents a response rate of approximately 64%.

The comparatively low level of response can be interpreted as follows:

- Lack of interest in participating in research which is perceived to have an academic rather than practical focus This is perhaps best captured in the response of one participant: *"You can either do the work or write about it. We do the work."*
- A limited human resource base facing the challenges of ambitious programme objectives – a primary characteristic of the NGO community in the region - with little time for completing questionnaires.
- A sense that, far too often, studies undertaken do not in fact inform programming and action – another primary characteristic of Caribbean NGOs.

Whichever interpretation best reflects the position and thinking of various organisations, the very limited participation in the survey is informative in itself and suggests some areas of focus for the future.

- Similarly, out of an initial grouping of organisations representing 14 countries, the final sample was based on organisations coming from 11 countries, with no response from organisations based in Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and an invalid questionnaire from Trinidad and Tobago. While this is regrettable, the sample does cover most of the territories within the region, and three of the major language groups
- A fourth constraint was identified with regard to the survey instrument itself. While the decision to use open-ended questions was motivated by an interest in generating good qualitative data, it created difficulties in terms of the codification of the responses.
- Although it was pre-tested, the survey instrument, did not appear to be sufficiently precise: some questions were perhaps too ambiguous and therefore left room for interpretation by participating organisations. As a result, the quality of the information received varied from organisation to organisation.

## **2.4. Limitations of the study**

Given the nature of the study and the information generated, the conclusions drawn, although indicative, cannot be considered as representative of all organisations within the region working on issues of natural resource management.

Certainly some of the issues raised may be significant to other organisations working in the same area, and perhaps to other civil society organisations within the region. The purpose of the study, however, was to examine more closely a given set of institutions, and based on the small sample, to examine key issues of relevance to them. The extent to which these issues have broader relevance and significance is a therefore secondary issue.

### 3. REGIONAL CONTEXT

The regional context provides the backdrop against which the issue of civil society participation in the area of natural resource management occurs, and the framework that either constrains or facilitates this involvement.

Given the diversity of the region, and the rapid changes which it is undergoing as a result of globalisation, it is difficult to identify all the aspects which characterise the current context, and condition the opportunities for participation. Notwithstanding these provisos, there are common themes and challenges, even if their form of expression may differ from country to country.

The chapter will present, in summary form, four facets of the regional context which impact directly on the issue of governance and civil society participation;

- The *policy context* - affecting policy processes and content that impact on civil society participation in natural resource management, and by extension in other arenas;
- The *institutional context* - factors which affect the ways in which the primary actors interact with one another;
- The *organisational context* - factors which impact on the development of civil society organisations.
- The *geographical context* - the physical and cultural factors which impact on the ability of the region to collectively address development issues.

#### 3.1. Policy context

An analysis of the policy context within the region is marked by certain fundamental characteristics which are in turn conditioned by two international trends which are impacting on the formulation and content of policies:

- Globalisation and the development of free trade areas such as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) pose a major challenge to the small and vulnerable economies of the region. Concomitant to this is the redefinition of the sovereign role of the state, and the limits of that sovereignty with regard to regional, hemispheric, and international institutional arrangements. The economic model is presented as being monolithic and universal, and applicable in its entirety.
- The vulnerability and narrow base of Caribbean economies often forces states to give priority to direct foreign investment and capital growth, rather than environmental or social concerns, and to focus on short term economic gain rather than sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development, although initially focused on the need to balance economic development and environmental concerns, has become increasingly inclusive and has been brought into the sphere of governance.<sup>27</sup> In a workshop bringing together key practitioners within the Caribbean, it was defined as “the transformation of the political culture to enable a democratic process of allocating the use of resources for equitable economic and social development over a sustained time period and within the constraints of the sociocultural carrying capacity, using a participatory methodology”.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> DFID/UNDP. Workshop Report the Seminar on Participatory Processes and Sustainable Development (2002).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

The ideological base of the neo-liberal economic model suggests major changes in the structure of national economies, in their place in regional and global structures and in fundamental **transformations in the role and purview of the state**. This is characterised by the notion of a “shrinking state”, whereby the primary functions of the state are reduced to minimal functions, while the role of service provider is increasingly transferred to – and funded by – the private and social sector<sup>29</sup>. While this translates into downsizing the state, it also creates an obligation to define the nature of the relationship with other social actors, and to establish mechanisms for the institutionalisation of this relationship.

Within the region, this trend is most apparent in the domain of social policy - with the privatisation of social services such as education and health for example. This ongoing transformation, while in theory creating opportunities for participation and partnership, has not been without difficulties, and has raised fundamental questions with regard to the obligations and responsibilities of the state vis-à-vis its citizens.<sup>29</sup> Concomitant to this decrease, is a significant increase in the burden on citizens, and particularly women, to take up the slack<sup>30</sup>. This constitutes an area of ongoing concern and debate within the region.

In the political arena, the **democratic process** is generally accepted as the norm within the region, although there is justifiable debate on the form the democratic process should take, depending on the widely differing individual context and history of each country.

If in some territories within the Commonwealth Caribbean, democratic process is strongly anchored in the political tradition, the limits of this process are now being felt as citizens become more and more alienated from the state, and participate less and less in electoral processes<sup>31</sup>. This is accompanied by a growing lack of confidence in the ability of the state to take into consideration the interests of its citizens, and a growing concern about the lack of citizen participation in decision-making processes. This was amply demonstrated in the recent survey on governance in Jamaica.<sup>32</sup> This has created a dynamic whereby efforts are increasingly being made to open the process to citizens, and to constructively engage them in various forums.

In the case of the Commonwealth Caribbean, democratic processes are being consolidated through citizens seeking to push beyond the limits of current governance practices. In some other countries within the region, such as Haiti, the demand for democracy has translated in the fall of dictatorial regimes and opened the way to a “transition to democracy” where the challenge has been to put into place processes and structures which embody the democratic ideals and create space for increased participation<sup>33</sup>. This transition, which for some countries is a “hesitation waltz” marked by two steps forward and one step back, directly challenges the predominant culture of decision-making that has characterised governance within the region.

The predominant **culture of decision-making** is characterised by centralised and vertical processes, and by lack of a long-term vision. As a result, citizens have little space and virtually no role in decision-making processes. Short term goals, responding to immediate political imperatives, and a “crisis management” approach often take precedence over a long term vision and - in the name of efficiency, consultative processes and citizen participation

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<sup>29</sup> Note that there is significant debate about the relevance of this model particularly in countries where major social disparities exist. According to the UNDP, in certain parts of the world this model has contributed to worrying trends in human development which include increased poverty and increasing inequality. Too often this model has led to a decrease in the range of capacities and responsibilities of the state (UNDP 1997).

<sup>30</sup> The increased burden placed on citizens in general and women in particular has led to a decrease in the well being and the standard of living of families throughout the region. While the poor have been hardest hit, the outcome has also been felt at the level of the middle-class.

<sup>31</sup> This phenomena is certainly not limited to the Commonwealth Caribbean but is generally identified in various countries with a strong democratic tradition, thereby the emphasis is on the limits of the current model.

<sup>32</sup> Baker (1999)

<sup>33</sup> The term democratic transition implies that it is an ongoing process rather than an end point.

fall by the wayside. The culture of decision-making not only effects policy process and content but impacts on the institutional environment within which policy is made and implemented.

### **3.2. Institutional context**

The institutional environment comprises both the legislative frameworks and institutional arrangements that govern the interface between the state and civil society. By its very nature and scope the institutional context plays an important role either in creating or constraining opportunities for participation.

While there are areas of divergence and similarity in institutional context, underlying issues appear to remain the same.

- Without doing a thorough analysis of the **legislative frameworks which confer legal status to NGO and other types of civil society** associations in the region, it is apparent that there are major differences at the national level. Even within the Commonwealth Caribbean there are differences with regard to the types of legal status available, complexity of the registration process, and differing levels of privilege and obligation:

In the wider Caribbean, Haiti illustrates the complexity of this issue and its impact on the relationship between the state and civil society. Prior to 1987 and the adoption of a new Constitution which formally recognised the right of citizens to organise themselves into associations, the legislative framework was primarily coercive, and served to strengthen state control over citizen associations, which were seen as a focus for resistance and organised criticism of the state. Despite the fact that the new Constitution clearly embedded the right to form associations in national legislation, no enabling legislation has been put in place, and existing legislation has not been modified to make it compatible with the wording of new Constitution. As a result, civil society organisations remain dependent on the state to confer legal status: legal recognition becomes a favour and a filter on aspirations, limiting the right of citizens to exercise one of their fundamental liberties, and creating a situation that was recently characterised by an international observer and journalist as a “democratic deficit”.<sup>34</sup>

The Dominican Republic on the other hand has embarked on an ambitious and far reaching programme to address both the lack of effective and/or appropriate legislation conferring legal status to civil society associations and the lack of institutional frameworks which enable citizen participation<sup>34</sup>, while Belize has enacted NGO legislation that is being seen by some in the region as a useful model. While it is too early to judge the outcomes of these initiatives, they do constitute positive steps towards the development of legislative frameworks that enable a vibrant civil society.

- With regard to **legislative frameworks that create legal venues for citizen participation**, there are major disparities within the region. Despite a formal recognition of the importance of civil society participation demonstrated by CARICOM's Charter of Civil Society, the enabling legislation that would enable member states to act on the provisions of the Charter has not been put in place.

It is striking that the oldest framework adopted by CARICOM countries in the form of a declaration that enshrines a commitment to International Labour Office (ILO)

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<sup>34</sup> Programa de Fortalecimiento de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil, INTEC, 2002

fundamental labour standards<sup>35</sup> brings together in a “social partnership” state, private sector and labour representatives who meet in tripartite committees. The NGO community has lobbied effectively to be included in this forum. It should be noted that the NGO community has lobbied successfully to be included in this forum. However, although the framework is there, its effectiveness as a useful tool for dialogue on labour issues has been questioned.

More recently National Sustainable Development Councils have been set up in many Caribbean countries. These should provide another forum for citizen participation, but have, in some cases do not seem to have provided opportunities for active and “real” participation.

- The recent trend towards **decentralisation and local** governance has opened another space for citizen participation in national decision making. This is an integral part of the demand for democratic government, and a fundamental building block of the democratic process. This trend, however, goes against the predominant culture of centralised decision making and the process has therefore been slow and requires a substantial political and financial commitment to make it effective.

### **3.3. Organisational Context**

Civil society constitutes the primary locus of social capital within a society. Defined as the complex web of organisations, norms and values that create solidarity within and among citizens, numerous factors have contributed to decreasing and weakening social capital within the region. Civil society, as an expression of citizen involvement, is increasingly confronted by challenges at various levels. Among these factors are:

- **Lack of succession planning within key organisations**

The vibrancy of Caribbean civil society organisations which was so evident during the late 1980s, which contributed both to moving forward an alternative development agenda in regional and international forums and to building networks at national, regional and international levels, has declined. This generation of civil society leaders moved on to other areas of engagement and there was insufficient effort made to identify and nurture the succeeding generation of leaders.

**Limited institutional memory**

As a result of lack of succession planning and weakened institutional structures there is a sense that civil society organisations are not learning from the past in order to build on and refine the vision and objectives put in place by the previous generation of leaders.

- **Challenges of community mobilisation in an increasingly hostile environment**

The deterioration of the socio-economic situation within the region has stretched very thin the capacity of citizens to come together in solidarity: individuals and families are increasingly confronted by the challenges of daily survival, and – particularly in countries where there is the greatest disparity in access to and control over resources and services – civil society organisations are increasingly challenged to demonstrate how collective action can contribute to improving the situation of individual citizens.

**Limited human resource base**

The deteriorating socio-economic situation has led to increased levels of out migration and a resulting decrease in the human resource base including those interested in and committed to working within civil society organisations.

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<sup>35</sup> Most notably ILO Convention 144

**Increasingly complex and inter-related development challenges**

Civil society organisations are increasingly obliged to develop skills and capacities which were not necessary ten to fifteen years ago. The development challenges confronting the region require an ability to work at the micro, meso and macro level, and to look at the interconnectedness of development issues.

- **Increased need for professionalism**  
The growing complexity of issues which need to be addressed by civil society has created a need for organisations to become increasingly professional in their approach, sometimes at the risk of diluting the vision and commitment which characterised civil society activities in the past.
- **Changing patterns of financial support**  
Shifts in the focus of donor funding have translated into decreased financial support for NGOs in the region and have weakened the capacity of civil society to act effectively. Northern NGO donors who have traditionally supported Caribbean civil society organisations are increasingly providing support to other regions and countries. Core funding has largely been replaced by project based funding, with some projects being donor driven. Bi-lateral funding has, in many instances been replaced by multi-lateral funding.
- **Increasing competition among civil society organisations**  
Limited financial resources have increased the level of competition within the sector for whatever funding is available. Two major impacts at both the national and regional levels are: the disappearance of “non-competitive” organisations, and increased difficulty in creating the alliances and networks necessary for collective

### 3.4. *Geographical and cultural context*

It is important to note the diversity of the Caribbean region. In spite of efforts to build linkages which have their origin in the Pan Caribbean movement of the 1940's and 50's, the Caribbean is divided by linguistic and cultural differences, and by different political ideologies. Efforts to create a sense of regional unity have been made both at state and civil society level:

- **Efforts at state level** have tended to reflect the geopolitical reality of international, particularly US, influence that has limited both the scope and the effectiveness of these actions. Within CARICOM the inclusion of Haiti and the Dominican Republic as members in 2002 represent a move in the right direction, but CARICOM has still not addressed the issue of the inclusion of Cuba. This is congruent with the balance of power and strategic interests of states within the region, plus the high level of dependence on the United States as an important bilateral trading partner. The ACS attempts to redress this situation but remains handicapped by lack of political will and limited resources.
- **Efforts at the level of civil society**, though more numerous and more inclusive than those undertaken by the state, have also confronted major difficulties. The Caribbean People's Development Agency (CPDA) and the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) attempted to lay the groundwork for collective action around development issues confronting the region. The Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) and the Caribbean Network for Feminist Research (CAFRA) are also making notable efforts. The Assembly of Caribbean Peoples (ACP), formed in 1994, brings together a broad cross section of civil society representatives from throughout the region in order to define and advocate a vision of development which is grounded in Caribbean values, people-centred, and informed by the discourse on social justice, equality and autonomy. All of these initiatives have confronted myriad challenges and difficulties which have hindered both the scope and the impact of their work.

There is clearly a need to continue to work systematically towards the creation of spaces and structures that will facilitate the emergence of a Caribbean identity and vision. A common and shared vision is central to building the capacity of both state and civil society actors to define and implement development processes which reconcile economic development and environmental protection, and to put into place models of governance which provide leadership while creating spaces for effective citizen participation. This constitutes an enormous and compelling challenge.

This section has identified some of the key challenges facing state and civil society actors in their effort to create policies and institutions that favour civil society participation, and good governance. These various factors constitute the background against which the results of this study must be analysed, and the foundation on which future strategies must be built.



## 4. COMMONALITY AND DIVERGENCE

Before addressing the similarities and differences amongst the various organisations participating in this survey, prudence and rigour would suggest that three preliminary remarks are in order.

- Despite the relatively small number of organisations participating in the survey, they effectively demonstrate a broad range of organisational profiles, and diverse approaches to natural resource management. Despite the limitations of the survey instrument, their responses show the richness of the experience that can only begin to suggest the contours of an organisation and its practice. The analysis is therefore based both on what was written and on interpretation of what lies behind the words, and draws on a certain degree of knowledge of the context within which Caribbean organisations are evolving, and familiarity with the issues confronting civil society organisations in general.
- Every organisation is unique and it is therefore difficult to identify points of convergence and divergence. There are however common elements and differences that can be identified, at least among a certain number of organisations within the group.
- The line of demarcation between differences and similarities is often not that clear cut, but rather a question of degree, or perspective. It was thus decided to approach this section in a holistic manner that would assist in building bridges between organisations.

### 4.1. *Commonality and divergence: a question of degree*

When analysing institutional profiles and capacity, there are a number of characteristics which impact on the organisation's ability to both actively engage in resource management, and create opportunities for civil society participation in resource management.

This section will flag the most salient of these characteristics and raise questions about some of the implications for the work of organisations involved in natural resource management.

#### **Typology and Organisational Vision: Who are we and what do we believe?**

All organisations surveyed define themselves as being NGOs: a somewhat misleading definition which covers a diversity of organisational forms. A closer look reveals that within the universe of organisations defining themselves as NGOs, there are those which reflect both the period during which they were founded, and the way in which they were established.

A proposed typology of NGOs includes:

- Organisations whose membership is comprised of non-state actors (private citizens) who have come together to address a particular issue of common concern. These organisations constitute the overwhelming majority of the partners participating in this survey. In general, they are organisations created by a core group of individuals, very often professionals directly working in the area of environment or development, and who share a common vision and or interest.
- Organisations created by government and mandated by government to carry out specific functions and roles in the area of natural resource management or, in one case, to deliver services in the area of rural development;
- Organisations whose membership is comprised of both state and non-state actors, and who function more as a platform for concerted action.

- Organisations whose membership is comprised of community organisations, and who define themselves as a social movement rather than an NGO. The distinction here is that the NGO works on behalf of a third party or issue, rather than on behalf of its own membership.

These nuances go beyond a simple question of legal status, which is problematic given the lack of consistent and comparable legislative frameworks across the region.

If legal status is a secondary issue which is conditioned both by the available options and the complexity of obtaining a particular form of legal recognition, then the primary issue is the composition of the membership and its impact on the ability of the organisation to achieve its mandate.

Two remarks can be made with regard to the typology of organisations participating in this survey: the first is with regard to grass roots organisations per se and the second is with regard to the emergence of a new type of organisation bringing together state and non state actors.

- **Grass roots organisations:** The survey sample was determined by CANARI and comprises CANARI's primary civil society partners. Intermediary organisations – whose role is to facilitate and build bridges between the state and primary resource users - are dominant. The absence of grass roots organisations within the sample is striking. Does the relative absence of grass roots organisations within the sample reflect the fact that the level of social capital within the region is relatively low, or that the level of institutional development of grass roots organisations is relatively low ? While this question is certainly open to debate and discussion, and structures bringing civil society and government together are emerging, it does place responsibility on intermediary organisations to put in place processes which facilitate the emergence of a regional voice, and the strengthening of grass roots organisations. This observation will have an impact on the analysis both with regard to internal mechanisms to facilitate the emergence of a regional voice, and the linkages that exist between intermediary and grass roots organisations.
- **Hybrid organisations:** In the case of natural resource management – traditionally a function attributed to the state, it is interesting to note the emergence of hybrid organisations which bring together state and non state actors: a new type of organisation that requires closer examination.

One would be tempted to conclude that these hybrid organisations would in fact constitute a new locus for governance and that they would have a comparative advantage in promoting participation and in putting into place institutional mechanisms which would favour this. The information collected does not, however, support this conclusion. In focusing specifically on those organisations which include state representation among their membership, or who are specifically mandated by the state to assure conservation and preservation functions, it is difficult to conclude that the integration of government representation within the membership structure has led to greater levels of civil society participation in national decision-making – perhaps because the government agencies are themselves peripheral to the decision-making process ? This will be further explored in the section dealing specifically with issues related to participation and governance.

Just as this hybrid form of organisation may create opportunity for dialogue, it may also limit the types of action the organisation may undertake. None of the hybrid organisations included in the survey sample engage in advocacy: this suggests that the hybrid nature of the organisation may lead to a more conservative approach which impacts negatively on its ability to effectively engage in advocacy.

### **Key Characteristics**

- *Lack of consistent non profit legislation within the region obliges organisations to seek various types of legal status thereby hindering attempts to arrive at a common analysis based on legal status*
- *Marked absence of community based organisations among the principal natural resource management organisations within the region*
- *Emergence of hybrid organisation bringing together state and non state actors and creating in theory an new locus for governance around natural resource management*

Clearly who we are impacts on what we believe, but conversely, what we believe also informs how we organise ourselves, and the types of organisations which we put into place. The mission of an organisation defines the way they position themselves within the world, and the way they define their work. What part does “Participation” play in the mission and objectives of the various organisations surveyed? The following groupings can be identified:

- **Participation as a means:** organisations which define their mission as one of conservation and preservation of natural resources, with a primary focus on the technical requirements of resource conservation. For these organisations, the concept of participation is a means of achieving the technical goals of their mission. In other words, participation is subsidiary to the conservation goals and does not constitute a goal in and of itself.
- **Participation as an end in itself:** organisations that define their mission with regard to a holistic and people centred approach to development. Most of these organisations are NGOs coming out of the social justice movement of the 1980's, where the notion of citizen participation and empowerment is central to their vision. The focus on environment is secondary to the issue of participation that is posited as an objective in and of itself.

**Participation as a means and an end:** organisations which are informed by the discourse on sustainable development, in which citizen participation constitutes a goal in itself even though the notion of participation becomes a method of achieving sustainability. These organisations define their work within a framework that seeks to reconcile both process and results.

This would suggest that within the sample, there are world-views which have points of convergence although the point of departure is radically different. This has an impact both on discourse and practice.

Each organisation is, however, moving toward a position where there is recognition that both process and results are important. For some it is more comfortable to remain within an approach which is familiar, and within which the rules are clearly defined. This shift in perspective presents particular challenges for each of these organisations and creates a space in which exchanges can and should take place.

For those organisations coming from a purely technical approach, the issue is one of power and control. When process becomes a goal in itself, the level of control exercised by the organisation decreases, and power is shared with other stakeholders. For those organisations with a focus on process, the need to demonstrate tangible results which impact on people's lives presents challenges on how to monitor and measure progress in a manner which captures the impact of empowerment on people's lives.

- **Emergence of rights-based approach:** particular mention should be made of one organisation that posits their work within a rights-based approach. A comparatively new trend among development organisations and social movements, the introduction of a rights-based approach changes both the focus of the work and the nature of the relationship between the various social actors. One of the predominant characteristics of this approach is that it is informed by the notion of universal rights as defined in international and regional conventions **and** international and national environmental law. This represents a major paradigm shift in the way in which stakeholders are viewed: moving from a passive role of beneficiary of services and programmes to a pro-active role invested with inalienable rights and obligations. The implications of this shift will be further discussed in **Section 6. Issues arising**.

#### **Key Characteristics**

- *Natural resource management organisations come out of different backgrounds with differing world views and with differing views on participation*
- *Tendency amongst some organisations to focus on the technical aspects of natural resource management and participation becomes a means toward an end*
- *Tendency amongst some organisations to focus on development issues within a social justice perspective and participation becomes an end in and of itself*
- *Newer generation of organisations reconciles both visions by embracing a sustainable development discourse in which participation is both a means and an end*

#### **How do we access and mobilise resources to achieve our objectives ?**

In order to accomplish their missions, organisations need to mobilise the necessary human and financial resources required. This is one of the key survey areas in which both similarities and differences clearly emerge.

The information suggests that this constitutes a vicious circle: because of limited financial resources, the human resource base is limited and because the human resource base is limited there is limited staff time to engage in fundraising. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Given the nature of civil society organisations and the important role assumed by volunteers, it is appropriate to address first of all the characteristics of the human resource base.

All of the participating organisations have a diverse human resource base composed of volunteers and paid staff. But the place accorded to each type of human resource varies greatly within the sample. Two major groupings can be identified within the sample:

- **Small organisations with limited resource base:** Given the importance of voluntary action among civil society organisations, it is not surprising to note the important contribution made by volunteers, particularly among small organisations with a limited resource base. This would suggest a high level of participation and ownership in the organisation. But it also creates a level of vulnerability within the organisation, as it depends primarily on the availability and willingness of people to contribute to achievement of the organisation's goals. As one participant in a recent forum stated: *"The ability of citizens to effectively engage in voluntary action is becoming increasingly compromised by the declining socio-economic situation of the region. It becomes a trade-off between taking care of yourself and taking care of others."*

While group action may be a way to help you take care of yourself while taking care of others, in this trade-off, the ability of NGOs to mobilise their membership becomes increasingly difficult. For the most part, those organisations who continue to count on high levels of voluntary contributions tend to come out of the social justice movement where participation in an NGO becomes a manner of demonstrating a political commitment. The negative aspect of this situation may be a comparative loss of efficiency and performance and, given the profile of the voluntary resource base, a lack of technical expertise in specific programme areas.

- **Larger organisations with a technical focus:** Among larger organisations with a primarily technical focus, the role of volunteers remains important, but programme functions are increasingly assumed by paid staff. This decrease in volunteer action is accompanied by the challenge of a lethargic membership that is under-involved and does not demand accountability. The organisation becomes disconnected from its membership and becomes accountable more to its donors than to its constituency.

**Permanent paid staff:** When looking at permanent, paid staff, the first observation is that the resource is very limited, both in terms of its absolute size but also in terms of its skill base. Notwithstanding this preliminary remark, there are two major groupings that emerge within the sample:

- **Small staff structure:** The vast majority of organisations function with a very small staff structure. This creates incredible pressure on both staff members and the membership, to deliver programme objectives. With the majority of organisations having a permanent secretariat of less than 8 people, and one third with less than five persons, one of the first questions is to examine the level of consistency between the stated programme objectives and the institutional capacity of the organisation. The information would suggest that there is a major discrepancy between the stated programme goals and the resources that can effectively be brought to bear to achieve those goals.

Some organisations have adapted particular strategies to address this issue. The prevalent strategy is to leverage support through building alliances with other social actors around particular issues. This would suggest that examining the issue of linkages is important in assessing the compensatory mechanisms used by organisations to address the issue meeting ambitious goals with a limited human resource base.

**Gender equality:** There is a preponderance of women in paid positions in organisations with a small staff structure: as the size of staff becomes smaller, the number of women tends to increase. Are women more efficient in terms of programme delivery, or are they more willing to accept lower salaries and higher levels of responsibility than men? The information suggests that women are more obliged to accept lower paid positions and a higher degree of job insecurity than men.

- **Larger staff structure:** The organisations with a staff of 10 or more persons, are those that have been vested with the management of large park areas and which receive substantial support from government and or para-statal organisations or foundations. They are the minority within the survey.

**Gender equality:** With regard to gender distribution within these organisations, the information provided would suggest that there is an equitable representation of women in terms of absolute numbers. However the survey does not provide insight to the role and place accorded to women within these structures and a closer examination of the distribution of roles and functions is needed.

**Fit between human skill base and technical mission:** A second set of observations relate to the fit between the human skill base and the technical mission of many of the organisations participating in the survey:

- There is a discrepancy between the technical mission of most organisations and the human skill base. Less than half of the organisations within the survey have in house technical support. Given the lack of permanent technical support how do these organisations mobilise the necessary skills to address the technical issues that are part of their mandate ? The information suggests that the primary strategies used to address this issue are: short term consultants, collaboration with other organisations, and mobilising volunteers.
- The lack of a technical resource base not only limits the ability of organisations to effectively achieve their programme objectives, but also to monitor, evaluate, and document their activities. Given the role of many participating organisations is to educate and mobilise support for natural resource management and participatory processes, this also limits their ability to effectively demonstrate the relevance of these issues. This is also reflected in the areas of weakness identified by participating organisations.

#### **Key Characteristics**

- *Important role played by volunteers both as a means of encouraging member participation and as a strategy to compensate limited staffing*
- *Limited permanent human resource base and as a consequence an over extended staff*
- *Preponderance of women staff members in organisations with a staff of five or less persons*
- *Preponderance of generalist staff members and a lack of technical in house expertise*
- *Discrepancy between mission and mandate of organisation and staff profiles*

**Financial resources:** With regard to financial resources, there is a certain degree of coherence across the sample: all organisations, regardless of the diversity of their funding base, do not have access to levels of funding which enable them to ensure organisational stability and programme continuity. It is also clear that there are differences of degree: if for some, the issue is to leverage increased funding in order to expand programmes, for others, the issue is one of basic organisational survival.

- **Basic survival:** Those organisations for whom it is a question of organisational survival appear to be primarily those organisations whose mission is more process oriented and less focused on the technical aspects of natural resource management. For these organisations the notion of core support becomes critical. The shift in donor priorities as well as the way in which funds are now allocated have had an impact on these organisations. With the retreat of many of the traditional donors who supported the emergence of the NGO movement within the region, and who themselves were process oriented, these organisations are facing a fundamental challenge of how to adapt to a new environment where tangible and concrete results are increasingly emphasised and the mode of funding is more analogous to contractual rather than partnership arrangements.
- **Increased funding to expand programmes:** While the survey did not address the issue of levels of funding, which was judged to be an issue internal to each organisation,

the survey clearly demonstrates again that there are certain groupings that emerge within the sample:

By using donor diversity as a partial proxy for levels of funding, most organisations have secured between three and five sources of funding, which would suggest a considerable effort to diversify. But while there has been a move towards diversification, this has very often taken the form of sourcing several different donors rather than a diversification of the type of funding source which would assist in increasing self reliance. For most organisations, northern NGOs are the primary funding source. Given that the range of organisations actively involved in funding within the region is limited, and those involved in funding natural resource management even more limited, this creates competition between organisations and vulnerability to shifts in donor priorities.

- Organisations that have succeeded in diversifying both number and type of funding sources are few and include both larger organisations with a technical focus and some of the smaller and younger organisations with high performance levels. Among larger organisations the importance of NGO donors is far less than among the rest of the sample and the shortfall in funding is offset by successful income generation or by accessing monies from an endowment: an exception within the sample.
- Most organisation show a high level of donor dependency and are therefore vulnerable to shifts in the funding environment as they have limited room to manoeuvre. Those organisations that are less vulnerable have invested energy in developing their income generating capacities as well as diversifying their funding base.
- Given the level of donor dependency, there are risks that organisations may in fact become donor driven rather than demand driven. While the information within the survey suggests that some organisations are conscious of the risks, and some are clear that their programmes are to a certain degree donor responsive, for the most part this issue is not addressed directly by respondents. Given the risks of what one respondent characterised as an *opportunistic approach*, the need for a strategic planning: a clearly articulated mission, vision and objectives becomes crucial in order to maintain focus.
- The apparent disconnect between ambitious programme planning and limited levels of funding emphasises the need for careful strategic planning.

#### **Key Characteristics**

- *Shifts in the donor community have created funding shortfalls for organisations and have fostered a shift from partnerships to contractual agreements changing both the nature of the relationship and the type of funding provided*
- *High level of donor dependency among natural resource management organisations*
- *Certain effort toward diversification of donor base without diversification of funding sources*
- *Limited donor base creates competition both among NGOs involved in natural resource management and between NGOs and government*
- *Funding crisis creates the risk of opportunistic approaches which may compromise organisational vision and goals*
- *Chronic funding crisis impacts on institutional stability, performance and programme results*
- *Discrepancy between programme objectives and financial resources available to natural resource management organisations*

### ***How do we connect with other social actors within our society ?***

One of the functions of the organisations within this survey is building understanding of and consensus around environmental issues and as part of this focus, building linkages with other organisations within society to move this agenda forward is a key element.

**Linkages:** The majority of organisations have developed various types of linkages with other civil society actors within their societies. However beyond this initial observation there are distinct differences within the sample both with regard to linkages with individual resource users, and community-based organisations and with regard to other NGOs within and outside the environmental movement.

- **Individual resource user linkages:** Most organisations link with individual members of the general population and with particular social groups, such as farmers and fishermen, through broad-based public awareness and education initiatives. In terms of resource users identified as a particular social group, many organisations also work with individual fishermen or farmers.
- **CBO linkages:** The term “community organisation” does not provide insight into the profile of the organisation or its constituency. They often reflect the existing power relations within a community and also either exclude or marginalize certain social groups – youth, or women for example. In terms of developing linkages, how representative are community organisations of the constituency in a given community ?
- **NGO linkages:** If the majority of organisations also maintain linkages of various types with other NGOs within their countries, there are marked differences within the sample. Those organisations that tend to define their mission primarily in technical terms and focused on conservation and preservation issues, have developed linkages only with those organisations who are working within the same area. While this may present advantages in terms of facilitating exchange and collaboration, the risks are that natural resource management issues remain the purview of only a small group of organisations and do not get integrated into the discourse and practice of other organisations concerned by development or social justice issues. In the same manner, environmental or natural resource management organisations are also marginalized from the broader discourse and analysis on development and social justice issues.
- **Sustainable development/community empowerment organisation linkages:** Those organisations working within a framework of sustainable development and or community empowerment, tend to be linked to a wider variety of organisations that are more representative of the various groupings within civil society. The advantages to this approach are the possibilities of building broader alliances and through these alliances to gain greater strength and voice on development and natural resource issues.
- **Regional/international linkages:** At the regional and or international level, most organisations are affiliated to an association or network. However, affiliation tends to follow the trend identified at the national level. The majority of organisations tend to belong to environmental networks and associations- which is congruent with the focus on information and skills development. The survey however does not provide insight into how affiliation to these networks has in fact contributed to strengthening the capacity of its member organisations or building consensus around certain issues or themes related to natural resource management.
- **Network linkages:** Those organisations with a broader focus also tend to be linked to diverse types of networks bringing together organisations with different perspectives and



areas of focus. Two of the organisations involved directly in natural resource management are also members of a wide range of other networks or organisations.

- **Isolation:** While most organisations are part of a broader network of organisations mobilised around various causes, surprisingly several organisations are working in virtual isolation from other civil society actors within their countries. While this is not indicative of the entire sample, or even of a significant portion, it is sufficiently striking to warrant attention. In one case, this appears to be due to an image of self-sufficiency and a tendency to work in relative isolation from other actors at both the national and regional level. In the other case, it can be interpreted as a direct consequence of the political isolation that has been imposed on the country.

Using linkages as a proxy for both the degree to which an organisation is anchored in its institutional environment, and for the manner in which it views other social actors, the sample also demonstrates two extremes. Those organisations who, either by choice or necessity:

- are part of a web of networking at various levels with other civil society actors.
- evolve in relative degrees of isolation.

Given the mandate of natural resource organisations, and the need to mobilise wide spread support for their actions, this raises the question of who are the other actors within civil society in each of these countries ? Some organisations within the sample cited the fact that there is a dearth of civil society organisations in their countries, while others stated that there was a need to strengthen those that exist. Both of these statements appear to be true. Both represent significant challenges. In those countries where civil society and social capital is weak, there is a need to actively encourage citizens to organise both around natural resource issues and around other issues of national importance. In those cases where existing organisations are weak, there is a need to develop their capacity to actively participate in various processes.

#### **Key Characteristics**

- *Linkages at the community level may not represent all the various interest groups within that community.*
- *Linkages with other civil society organisations tend to be limited to other organisations working directly in the area of natural resource management and environmental issues*
- *Linkages weak with other social actors limiting the possibilities of developing a broader view of natural resource management issues and mainstreaming these concerns into other sectors of civil society*
- *Regional linkages tend to be limited to technical associations and networks limiting both the perspective of the natural resource management organisations themselves and decreasing the possibility of creating a common position around the issue of natural resource management, development and civil society participation*
- *Efforts to broaden linkages in a manner which is inclusive tends to be found among those organisations coming out of a social justice/community empowerment tradition and the newer generation of organisations involved in natural resource management*

#### **Internal Governance**

Given the importance of promoting civil society participation in the management of natural resources, which directly addresses the issue of public governance, a related issue is to examine internal governance within the organisations surveyed. Internal governance can be looked at from various perspectives:

- the relationship between structures that exist within the natural resource management organisation in order to look at issues of accountability and participation in decision-making,
- the relationship between natural resource management organisations and the communities or organisations with whom they work.

All organisations participating in the survey have defined internal governance structures. While the form may vary, all distinguish between oversight and implementation functions. The information collected does not allow a thorough comparison of oversight functions, but information relating to membership participation provides some insight into this area:

- **Membership participation:** With regard to membership participation, most organisations state clearly that this is an issue. While the organisations in the survey use a variety of means to maintain contact with their members, the effectiveness of these various methods is questioned by the organisations themselves. This would suggest the need to explore alternative methods to sustain membership participation, and ensure accountability to the constituency. While some organisations have begun to experiment with alternative strategies, they remain the minority.

Those organisations which appear to maintain higher levels of participation are those which have a very small secretariat where members are obliged to ensure implementation functions. It would seem that increasing institutionalisation often gives rise to an increasing distance between the organisation and its membership.

- **Succession:** A related issue of governance is the question of succession both at the board level and at the level of executive secretariat.

**Board level** - While there is no information specifically related to succession at the board level, the information available with regard to member participation would suggest that it is difficult to identify new members who are willing and available to invest time and energy into the organisation.

**Staff level** - The information in the survey suggests that the issue of succession at the staff level is a concern to natural resource management organisations. Related to the issue of staff succession is the question of the ability of organisations to attract and to maintain motivated and qualified staff members, who in time can ensure management responsibilities within the organisation.

There appears to be a disconnect between advocacy on good governance in the public arena, and the need to build good governance in the private arena. Only one organisation made the important and necessary linkage between the two, implicitly suggesting that in order to be both effective and legitimate advocates, NGOs must practice what they preach.

#### *Key Characteristics*

- *All organisations have defined structures and procedures to ensure internal governance and accountability.*
- *Difficulties in ensuring member participation may compromise internal governance and impact on both participation and accountability*
- *Institutionalisation while creating more structured organisations also run the risk of increasing the distance between the membership and the executive structure*
- *Insufficient attention paid to the need to develop good internal governance within the private arena in order to ground and legitimate demands of improved governance in the public arena*

**Nature of relationship between natural resource management organisations and the communities and organisations with which they work:** The survey instrument unfortunately did not create the necessary opening to address this issue systematically. This constitutes a weakness of the survey instrument, but it is important to flag the issue as an area that should be further explored with participating organisations.

Of those organisations who did provide information which could be used to analyse the nature of the relationship between organisations involved in natural resource management or other related areas, there are certain examples which suggest the contours of this relationship.

- **Integrated relationship:** Two organisations surveyed have integrated CBO representatives into their internal governance structure. This suggests that these representatives participate in the decision-making process and have access to the information necessary to informed decision-making.
- **Consultative relationship:** Other organisations noted that they consult with CBO partners through various structures and mechanisms. It can be assumed that the process of consultation influences and impacts on decision-making processes.
- **Informed relationship:** A third category of organisations have a relationship based on the transmission of information to concerned groups, but do not state if the information flows both from the organisation to the concerned groups and from the concerned groups to the organisation and, whether this information impacts on the decision-making process.

When examining the governance systems in place between natural resource management organisations and organised resource users, the analysis necessarily focuses on the notion of participation. Given that the concept of participation may vary from one organisation to another, it is useful to refer to a framework that examines participation within the discourse of empowerment. One of the more interesting frameworks was developed to look at gender relations, but can be used to analyse power relations between organisations, between social groups, or within an organisation:

Decision-making					
Consultation					
Information Sharing					
Beneficiary					
Passive Beneficiary					
	<i>Welfare</i>	<i>Access</i>	<i>Conscientisation</i>	<i>Participation</i>	<i>Control</i>

*Source; Adaption of the Longwe Framework on Women's Empowerment, March et al.*

This framework clearly establishes a direct link between the nature of the relationship between two entities, and their respective position or status. One could also extrapolate that as the nature of the relationship moves from one of passive beneficiary and recipient of largesse, toward a relationship which is based on information sharing and/or collective decision-making, the relative status of the subordinate party will shift and become increasingly equal to that of the dominant partner.

In examining the notion of participation from this point of view, it raises issues about the way in which organisations work with their partners, and the degree to which they work consistently toward the empowerment of their partners.

The framework also echoes the typology developed by Korten with regard to what he refers to as the four “generations” of NGO organisations. Korten’s analysis could be used to analyse the historical development of the NGO movement and the ensuing shift in world views and operating styles, or to analyse the current spectrum of NGO positions. :

	First Generation NGO	Second Generation NGO	Third Generation NGO	Fourth Generation NGO
<b>Parameters</b>	Relief and welfare	Community Development	Sustainable Development	People’s Movements
<b>Problem Definition</b>	Shortage	Local inertia	Institutional and Policy Constraints	Inadequate Mobilising Vision
<b>Time Frame</b>	Immediate	Project life	Ten to twenty years	Indefinite
<b>Scope</b>	Individual or family	Neighbourhood or village	Region or nation	National, regional or global
<b>Chief Actor</b>	NGO	NGO and community	NGO and relevant public and private institutions	NGO and loosely defined networks
<b>NGO Role</b>	Doer	Mobiliser	Catalyst	Activist Educator
<b>Management Orientation</b>	Logistics management	Project Management	Strategic management	Strategic management Coalition building Self managed networks
<b>Development Orientation</b>	Starving children	Community self help	Constraining policies and institutions	Interdependent world
<b>Organisational Structure</b>	Organisation and membership	Organisation	Organisation	Organisation and membership

Source; Korten (1989) and Icart (2002)

While recognising that this framework was developed to analyse the development of NGOs, and that the context has changed somewhat since the early 1990’s, it remains a useful frame of reference for examining how an NGO positions itself on a number of key questions. Within the survey, the majority of organisations appear to function within a third generation approach, while a few others appear to combine third and fourth generation approaches, and an even smaller group appear to combine second and third generation approaches.

#### **Key Characteristics**

- *Lack of systematic and clear information indicating the actual level of participation of community based stakeholders in the relationship with the natural resource management organisation;*
- *Proxy indicators would suggest that levels of participation vary greatly amongst the various organisations with the consultative mode being the most prevalent form of interaction. However the degree to which consultation informs decision-making is not clear*
- *Few organisations are found at either extreme of the spectrum of participation.*
- *In general, this would suggest that work needs to be done to put into place policies and mechanisms which institutionalise participation not just as a consultative mechanism but also as a way of integrating stakeholders into decision-making processes.*
- *The majority of organisations fall within the classification of third generation NGOs. In general this raises the issue of whether or not the characteristics of third generation NGOs fit with the goals of promoting citizen participation in natural resource management and other decision-making processes*

## Public governance as interface between the state and civil society

The issue of civil society participation in decision-making processes in general, and in natural resource management in particular, is central to this survey, and constitutes an ongoing preoccupation for CANARI.

It is useful to examine governance from two perspectives: first through the lens of citizen participation in natural resource management as one locus for participation, and then through the lens of participation in governance processes in general.

## Public governance: Civil society participation in natural resource management

The first striking characteristic of the survey is that it brings together organisations that have three different types of relationship to natural resource management:

- **Those vested with management authority:** who are directly involved in natural resource management for a given resource and/or geographic area. This corresponds with hands on experience in natural resource management but does not necessarily include actions aimed at increasing the level of participation of community based resource users.
- **Those informing the process by building capacity:** who are indirectly involved in natural resource management by facilitating citizen participation in decision-making processes. Here the focus is on organisation and training.
- **Those providing a technical approach to building capacity:** who stimulate the demand and support for responsible environmental management and citizen participation in the national decision-making process by offering capacity building of a technical nature for natural resource management agencies rather than an awareness building role for the general public.

While these three categories are not discrete, with some organisations playing two or three of the roles, what is striking is that in those cases where the organisation is only focusing on one role, the linkages with organisations involved in the other areas is not immediately apparent. While this does not suggest that these linkages do not exist, it does suggest that these linkages are not sufficiently important - in the eyes of some of the participating organisations - to be pointed to as a method of achieving the goal of citizen participation.

Arrangements for interfacing with government vary depending on the functions performed by civil society:

- For those directly involved in natural resource management, the interface is permanent and institutionalised.
- For those organisations whose primary function appears to be to create space for public participation, the relationship appears to be more *ad hoc* and responds to an analysis of context and openings/opportunities for participation.
- For those who provide technical input to improve the quality of participation, the relationship tends to be either *ad hoc*, in response to emerging needs as identified by actors within civil society, or contractual if the technical assistance is provided to the state or to organisations mandated by the state to manage the natural resource base.

Looking at those organisations directly involved in natural resource management, it is difficult to place them within a framework that classifies different types of natural resource management regimes:

Participation in natural resource management: a continuum				
Full control by state agency with authority		Control shared between stakeholders		Full control by natural resource users
Consulting	Actively seeking consensus	Developing and deciding on specific agreements	Sharing authority and responsibility formally	Transferring authority and responsibility completely
No or few inputs from natural resource users		Less or no inputs from state agency with authority		
<div>←-----→</div>				

CANARI, adapted from Borrini –Feyerabend (1996)

While civil society involvement in natural resource management is not equal to participatory approaches to management, this framework can be used as a way of defining levels of civil society participation and degree of devolution of control to community based resource users:

- The majority of organisations with hands on experience are involved in a management regime that falls near the middle, but falls towards the left of the continuum. From information collected, some of the marine parks are clearly situated within a management regime with limited inputs from natural resource users.
- A smaller group of organisations have developed an approach that is closer to the model of control by direct resource users. The most striking example is the case of Saltos de Limon in the Dominican Republic. From the information available within the survey, it would appear that the management of the site is ensured directly by the natural resource users themselves.
- One related question for which the survey does not provide insight is whether or not the type, and status of the resource, impact on the type of management regime put into place.
- In looking at those cases where the participating organisation is not directly involved in natural resources management, but where other examples of participatory resource management experiences are provided, the information would suggest that the predominant model is where the state continues to exercise full control even though there may be some consultation of stakeholders involved.

In looking at the quality of the relationship between the state and various civil society organisations involved -either directly or indirectly - in natural resource management, the following matrix can be used:

Typology of the types of relationship between state and civil society		
	Interdependence	Competition
Collaboration		
Conflict		

Civil society tends to have a positive response to the idea of collaborating with the state - unless the government lacks legitimacy – and recognises the interdependence between civil society and the state. In reality, however, the competition for resources and recognition as a provider of services impact negatively on the practice of collaboration.

### **Key Characteristics**

- *Three distinct profiles emerge with regard to experiences in natural resource management; direct management, and two forms of indirect involvement.*
- *Linkages are weak between organisations with complementary areas of experience and expertise*
- *Direct involvement in natural resource management tends to be an institutionalised arrangement governed by contractual relations*
- *Indirect involvement usually evolves through ad hoc processes which are opportunistic and issue driven*
- *Trend toward shared control with stakeholders as the prevalent management regime challenged the weight of tradition and practice*
- *Few examples of control exercised by primary stakeholders*
- *Links between the resource base and the type of management regime put in place need to be further explored*
- *Relationship between the state and civil society tends to be based on model of collaboration and co-operation.*
- *In those case where this is not prevalent, the lack of legitimacy of the state is one of the major causative factors.*
- *Underlying competition between state and civil society in most countries creates an inherent contradiction with the discourse of collaboration, and undermines efforts to build truly collaboration structures and processes.*

### **Public governance: Civil society participation in decision-making processes**

Analysis of the survey responses suggests certain areas of convergence that can be identified with regard to civil society participation in decision-making processes in general. The areas are:

- **Governance:** For some organisations – and interestingly they are all within the Commonwealth Caribbean, the notion of “governance” is equated with “government.” For many this translates into the view that governance is the exclusive purview of the state. This view creates a distance between those who govern and those who are governed and places the citizen in a passive role as an object of governance, rather than someone actively involved in decision-making. A larger group of organisations surveyed define “governance” more broadly - as the way in which decisions are made within a society. Most see governance as a mechanism for participation and accountability, but recognise that this will be a long term change.
- **Who is driving the participation process?:** Survey results show that the process is being driven by both external and internal factors – externally by the international community, and internally by increased demands from civil society organisations.

**External factors** - For most organisations, the driving force behind the participation process lies within the international community. This demonstrates the important role played by the international community in defining the terms of engagement for international cooperation, but also provides an opportunity for tactical and strategic alliances to develop between international agencies and national organisations. Clearly internal demands are important, and internal demands for participation may be growing, but as long as the primary impetus for change is external the process is

put at risk as the international community perceives participation as a very fragmented and diverse process, and therefore a risky process.

**Internal factors:** Internal demand by non governmental organisations and other types of citizen groups also plays a role but it appears, in most countries to be secondary to that played by the international community. The level of demand varies with regard to the level of organisation and the density of social capital within civil society. In most countries, the capacity of civil society to effectively sustain this demand and to ensure follow up is mitigated in part by the capacity of organisations but also by the willingness of the state to actively engage with other social actors.

If there appears to be a convergence of interest in the fact that the demand is both internally and externally driven, the underlying world view is quite different:

Demand from the perspective of the international community appears to be clearly grounded in the view that in the provision of services, the role of the state should decrease and the role of the private and social sector increase. Decentralisation is also viewed as a desirable trend which may be approached in various ways:

**Four approaches to decentralisation:**

- Devolution of authority to local units of government. Under devolution, local units of government are autonomous, independent and have legally recognised geographical boundaries. Financial autonomy is not normally a feature of devolution.
- Delegation generally refers to the transfer of government decision-making and administrative authority to semi-independent local units who may still be legally accountable to central government.
- Deconcentration customarily involves a very limited transfer of authority and financial management to local units such as district offices, which are outposts of the central government.
- Divestment involves the transfer of planning and administration functions to voluntary, private or non-governmental organisations.

UNDP as cited in Graham et al (2003)

Internal demand is grounded primarily in the view that citizens have a right to participate in decision-making. It is primarily a political demand for empowerment, but also relates to demands for increased efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

**Opportunities for increased participation:** The openings for participation appear to be most prevalent in the social arena. This is consistent with the fact that the impetus for increased civil society participation is part of the discourse on less state intervention and more social sector and private sector involvement in the provision of basic services to the population. This suggests that state and international interest in participation is motivated by concerns related to increased efficiency and service delivery, rather than increased empowerment of civil society.

**Form of participation:** The form of participation appears in many cases to be limited to the beginning and end point of policy and programming. Up front participation may take the form of a consultative role feeding into policy formulation, although there is little indication that the consultation process actually informs policy formulation but is rather an exercise in which civil society is invited to approve policies that have already been drafted. The end point may take the form of service provision where the non-governmental organisation is in a contractual agreement to deliver a specific service. Again what is striking is that



“participation” does not necessarily translate into sustained and institutionalised participation throughout the policy or programme cycle. It would be interesting to further analyse the form which participation takes.

**Regulatory framework for participation:** Most countries do not have regulatory frameworks in place and the process of participation, with the exception of the ILO basic labour standards tripartite committees, is rarely institutionalised. While the tripartite committees may have difficulties carrying out their mandate, the regulatory framework is at least in place, which is not the case in most other sectors where the requirements for participation are too stringent, or where participation - when it occurs - is by invitation and not by right.

#### **Key Characteristics**

- *Differing views on and understanding of governance which impact on institutional position; for some it is the purview of government thereby creating a distance and placing citizens in a passive role while for others it concerns all citizens*
- *Civil society participation is driven primarily by external demands which put the process at risk*
- *Internal demands though important vary greatly from country to country*
- *Convergence between the two positions but informed by very different visions*
- *Internal demand is primarily political while the external demand is primarily concerned by efficiency and effectiveness within a neoliberal framework*
- *Social arena as the primary locus for citizen participation congruent with the reduced role of the state in the provision of social services*
- *Participation is often stripped of its transformational and political dimension and becomes a method of achieving greater efficiency and efficacy.*
- *Participation often limited to the beginning and end of the policy/programming cycle; consultation at one end of the cycle, and implementation at the other end.*
- *Dearth of regulatory frameworks ensure that participation occurs by invitation and not by right.*
- *When frameworks exist, requirements are too stringent and limit the opportunities for effective participation by stakeholders.*

#### **4.2. Capacity Building for “ Good ” Governance**

In the context of this study, the issue of capacity building must be looked at in relation to the issue of natural resource management and good governance. These two themes provide the entry point and circumscribe the nature of the discussion.

CANARI developed a framework to look at the issue of capacity building. Using the work of the Community Development Resource Association (CDRA), CANARI identified seven parameters of capacity building - as they relate to participatory natural resource management:

	Capacity Building needs for Participatory Natural Resource Management						
	World view	Culture	Structure	Adaptive strategies	Skills	Material resources	Linkages
<b>Non-state partners and resource users</b>	Need to make linkages between livelihood concerns and sustainability issues	Need for respect between stakeholders	Need to acknowledge power relations within community structures	Need for processes that facilitate necessary organisational changes	Need for access to technical knowledge about resources	Need for communities to have power over decisions related to resources	Need for linkages outside of immediate community
<b>Resource management agencies</b>	Need to make a paradigm shift towards participatory management	Need to have benefits of participatory approaches demonstrated	Need for new internal structures	Need for emphasis on processes as well as products	Need to develop skills for facilitating processes and negotiating with stakeholders	Need for longer funding cycles that allow processes to develop	Need for synergy across departments and disciplines
Applicable to all resource management partners	Near for clear and explicit vision including conservation and livelihood issues  Need for facilitated processes that bring stakeholders together for planning and review	Need for positive experiences of participatory approaches  Need for participatory processes to be presented in a non threatening way	Need for institutional and organisational mechanisms that do not undermine existing structures		Need for specialist training, models, examples and case studies to transfer skills  Need for Organisational skills		

Source: CANARI: Assessing Capacity for Participatory Natural Resource Management, 2002

The framework will be used as a guide to analyse the responses within the survey, and perhaps the survey can be used to enrich the framework.

**World View:**

***A coherent frame of reference that the organisation...uses to interpret the environment it operates in and define its place within that environment. This should include a clear vision and mission, providing a rationale for all other aspects of capacity.***

Based on their vision and mission statements, the survey participants appear to have varying world views. While all see the need to balance sustainable livelihood and natural resource management issues, some see participation as an end in itself, while others see it as a means of achieving other objectives.

Those organisations which have developed an explicit and shared world view have a strong organisational base from which to develop programmes and fund raising strategies, and to engage other stakeholders.

When there is no clearly defined world view, the risks of becoming donor driven and opportunistic are greater, messages transmitted are unclear and therefore less effective, there is a negative impact on the ability to network – although short term tactical linkages can be developed without a shared world view, it is harder to develop the kind of long term strategic linkages necessary to bring about institutionalised participation in decision-making.

***Institutional Culture:***

***A way of doing things that enables the organisation or group to achieve its objectives and a belief that it can be effective and have an impact.***

The survey does not provide an opportunity to address the issue of institutional culture in a direct manner. How organisations do things can perhaps be inferred from other indicators linked to structure or linkages, but there is not sufficient information to develop this point. As such it constitutes a potential area for future discussion with partner organisations.

***Structure:***

***A clear definition of roles, functions, lines of communication and mechanisms for accountability.***

The survey would suggest that in general all participating organisations have in place procedures that clearly define the role and function of various bodies within the organisation. Whether or not these structures are all conducive to implementing participatory approaches is however another question. While some organisations provide specific indicators of the types of structures put into place to facilitate participation, others do not.

Available information does not allow an examination of lines of communication within the organisations surveyed other than in relationship to external lines of communication with the membership. Many organisations have developed various mechanisms to share information with their membership, but it is not clear whether or not these strategies are effective.

Accountability is an issue for some of the participating organisations. Based on the premise that membership is lethargic or, as one organisation put it “*accountability is not demanded*” then this is an area that merits attention. The question of “to whom are you accountable ?” is perhaps also an area that needs to be explored. It would seem that organisations have various types of accountability: to their own membership, to the communities that they serve, and to their donors who provide financial resources. The information would suggest that for multiple reasons accountability tends to be most developed in regard to donors. If in fact this is the case, there is also a need to explore how to strengthen accountability to other social partners.

***Adaptive strategies:***

***Practices and policies that enable an organisation to adapt and respond to changes in its operating environment***

The vast majority of organisations do engage in planning processes. This is certainly one aspect of the range of policies and practices that an organisation can develop to respond to a changing environment although planning is not in itself necessarily an adaptive strategy.

An organisation needs to undertake periodic assessments of its operating environment in order to develop adaptive strategies. In most of the organisations surveyed lack of resources do not allow for this kind of review.

CANARI notes that there needs to be equal emphasis on adapting top changes in both process and product, and the survey clearly demonstrates that there is a need to develop monitoring and evaluation tools to track both quantitative and qualitative results. The challenge becomes one not only of the need to measure change but how to measure both types of changes. While some participating organisations do measure change in quantitative terms - tracking for example changes in the resource base, it would appear that others have not put into place the necessary benchmarks to ensure this.

Across the sample, it appears that the more qualitative aspects are more difficult to measure. As one organisation put it “ *how do you measure change in terms of values and perceptions ?*”. This becomes even more important if working within a framework where participation is both a methodology and a result. Measurement tools are needed in order to advance the case for participation

***Skills:***

***Knowledge, abilities and competencies***

Most organisations stated that skills development was their main capacity building need: highest priority was fund raising, followed by monitoring and evaluation, and lobbying.

***Material resources:***

***Technology, finance, and equipment***

The majority of organisations identified fundraising as one of the most important priorities in terms of capacity-building. For most organisations, accessing or generating funds is the key issue. Whether the problem is defined as the lack of funding, or the degree of donor dependence, the issue is critical to all participating organisations. The funding crisis impacts on both the organisational stability and the sustainability of programmes. It also forces organisations to make hard decisions about where to invest limited financial and human resources.

***Linkages:***

***An ability to develop and manage relationships with individual, groups and organisations in pursuit of overall goals***

The majority of organisations surveyed have developed linkages with other groups and organisations, although there is a tendency to stay within a small circle of like-minded organisations, thus missing an opportunity to create greater legitimacy within the wider community. This lack of connectedness may create and maintain the illusion that environmental issues are marginal to the debate on development, when in fact they are at the centre of the debate. It may also create the perception that environmental organisations are elitist, only interested in talking to themselves, and disconnected from other social processes.

## **5. ISSUES ARISING**

While many issues were flagged in the previous section, the analysis needs to take into account those which are perhaps most relevant to promoting increased civil society participation and improved governance in natural resource management.

Eight issues have been identified that appear to represent potential areas around which CANARI and their partners could engage:

1. *Repatriating and repositioning the issue of participation*
2. *Promoting a rights-based approach to participation*
3. *Public governance; from discourse to practice*
4. *Internal governance; advocacy through example*
5. *Demonstrating that it works*
6. *Building linkages*
7. *Building institutional capacity*
8. *Challenging the disconnect between rhetoric and practice*

These issues constitute a challenge for natural resource management organisations and other civil society actors who would like to promote greater citizen participation in decision-making processes in general.

### **5.2 Repatriating and Repositioning the Issue of Participation**

The work of NGOs, coupled with the failure of traditional top down development approaches, has put participation centre stage in the development process, where it is placed clearly within the political context of increased involvement of citizens in the decision-making process. The shift in perspective from seeing the citizen as subject and actor - rather than mere object - is potentially transformational, because it questions the way in which power is shared within society.

For many organisations the requirement for participation is often addressed through "consultation", but this often becomes a stylistic exercise, or a mechanism for developing projects, and the information collected does not inform decision-making: the dominant culture in the region does not provide a framework for participation.

Thus one of the challenges for the NGOs working in the area of natural resource management is repatriating and repositioning the issue of participation. There is a need to clarify understanding of participation in civil society organisations, emphasising its potential to assist in transforming society by developing strategies to enable decision makers to recognise the need for participation both as an inalienable right and as a means of ensuring the success of initiatives.

### **5.2 Promoting a Rights-Based Approach**

The study has clearly shown that the predominant approach to participation is coloured by considerations of efficacy and efficiency. While these are certainly important and should be among the criteria for action, there are also other principles that should be brought to bear on the culture of decision-making and modes of governance.

The advent of a rights- based approach to participation has created an opportunity to link the demand for greater citizen participation with human rights laws and conventions. A rights-based approach to participation includes the following elements: It

- *Is explicitly linked to human rights.*
- *Is accountable.*
- *Empowers.*
- *Is equitable.*

A rights-based approach to development differs from a more traditional approach in that it offers:

- Enhanced accountability – the development process becomes an obligation.
- Higher levels of empowerment, ownership, and free meaningful participation by putting beneficiaries in charge of development.
- Greater normative clarity and detail.
- Easier consensus, increased transparency and less “political baggage”.
- More complete and rational development frameworks.
- More effective and complete analysis; and finally,
- A more authoritative basis for advocacy and claims.<sup>36</sup>

Legal frameworks that invest citizens with a number of fundamental and inalienable rights already exist: for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights. The exercise of these rights fundamentally changes the nature of the demand for greater citizen participation and, as a result, the nature of the relationship between state and civil society.

Though initially limited to civil and political rights, subsequent advances in human rights law have extended the concept to the social, economic and cultural arena. International human rights laws have also influenced and been integrated into several of the international conventions and agreements dealing with environmental issues:

- The Rio Declaration clearly states its vision of sustainable development as being people centred and, by extension, the importance of citizen participation.<sup>37</sup> Agenda 21 provides the operational framework for the implementation of Rio obligations.
- The SIDS Programme of Action accords an important place to citizen participation in planning processes and in implementation<sup>38</sup>. While it is regrettable that the specific language is not stronger and more in keeping with other international conventions and rights, it does provide a framework for demanding “active, free and meaningful” participation.
- The OECS Declaration on Principles for Environmental Sustainability provides a framework and clear guidelines for citizen participation in decision-making processes<sup>39</sup>. Among the key phrases in this declaration is the following: “establish, strengthen and promote structures for the broad participation of civil society in the design, implementation, and evaluation of decision-making processes and programmes, facilitate the **right** of everyone to seek receive and disseminate clear and timely information...”<sup>40</sup> While the evaluation of the degree of compliance by the State is beyond the scope of this study, this declaration does provide a rights-based framework that can serve as a foundation for advocacy and participation in natural resource management.

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<sup>36</sup> UNCHR (2002)

<sup>37</sup> Rio Declaration, World Summit on the Environment (1992)

<sup>38</sup> Barbados Plan of Action (1994)

<sup>39</sup> Saint George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability (2000)

<sup>40</sup> Principle 4, Ibid.

- In addition to the conventions and declarations presented above, international agreements and conventions such as the World Heritage Convention, the Convention on Biodiversity, and the Ramsar Convention also provide an opportunity to work from a rights based perspective.

The work done by the International Centre on Governance around the issue of protected area management already points in this direction and suggests some of the ways in which this approach might be applied in the area of natural resource management<sup>41</sup>.

One of the more interesting contributions is their analysis of the links between governance and human rights. Based on an extrapolation of their initial work to include regional conventions and agreements such as the CARICOM Charter for Civil Society, it provides a framework for a rights- based approach to development in the regional context.

<b>Framework for a rights-based approach</b>			
<b>Principles of good governance</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>International Declaration of Human Rights</b>	<b>Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community<sup>42</sup></b>
<b>Legitimacy and voice</b>	<b>Participation:</b> all men and women should have a voice in decision-making through legitimate intermediate institutions	-Freedom of opinion and expression -Freedom of association - Right to participate in government - Duties to the community	-Freedom of opinion and expression -Freedom of association - Right to participate in government - Duties to the community
	<b>Consensus orientation :</b> mediation of differing interests to identify what is in the best interest of the group	- Will of the people - Exercise of all rights and freedoms	- Will of the people - Exercise of all rights and freedoms - Genuine consultation among the social partners to reach common understanding on and support for objectives, content and implementation of national programmes
<b>Performance</b>	<b>Responsiveness;</b> responding to and serving all stakeholders		-Ensure responsiveness to the needs of the people as consumers in the delivery of goods and services -Further the participation of the people in the democratic process through effective systems of ongoing consultation
	<b>Effectiveness and Efficiency;</b> processes which achieve results while making the best use of resources		- Cost effectiveness in their operations
<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Accountability;</b> mechanisms for ensuring reporting to constituents		- Implementation of mechanisms to ensure good governance which is accountable
	<b>Transparency:</b> free flow of information guaranteeing accessibility		- Implementation of mechanisms to ensure which is open
<b>Fairness</b>	<b>Equity;</b> a method in order to attain equality of opportunity and chance	- Free and equal in dignity and rights - Inherent dignity and inalienable rights	-Implementation of mechanisms which are just
	<b>Rule of law;</b> fair frameworks which are impartially applied	- Equality before the law	- Independent, impartial, and effective judiciary

The CARICOM Charter for Civil Society states in its preamble that it was a response to several imperatives:

<sup>41</sup> The International Centre on Governance has completed research that provides both a framework and a challenge not only to protected area agencies but to any organisation working on the issue of natural resource management, and has made an invaluable contribution to this survey.

<sup>42</sup> Adopted in 1997

- The need to enhance public confidence in government;
- The need to ensure continuing respect for internationally recognised rights;
- The need to uphold the right of people to make political choices and to create a truly participatory political environment propitious to the genuine consultation in the process of governance.
- The need to improve governance and sustain such governance through mobilising action for change.

The CARICOM Charter clearly makes the link between human rights, governance and participation, and recognises that the modes of governance which have characterised Caribbean society need to change in order to both create confidence in, and increase the legitimacy of, government while creating avenues for effective participation<sup>43</sup>.

While the Charter clearly presents an ideal toward which signatory states aspire, it also provides a framework that civil society organisations can use to further demands for participation and a framework against which progress can be measured.<sup>44</sup> This becomes another tool that can be used to support demands for effective participation through clearly defined mechanisms and processes.

### **5.3 *Public Governance: from Discourse to Practice***

Good governance is on the agenda of both civil society organisations and the state within the region, but there are significant contradictions and gaps between the discourse and the practice. The study has shown that there are a number of factors which contribute to this difficulty:

- Decision-making is highly centralised and top down, making it difficult to make the leap from campaign promises to putting in place policies, programmes and institutions which facilitate citizen participation and good governance.
- Participatory processes are seen as a threat to the state, implying loss of control and a decrease in power.
- The focus on a short term mission and objectives limits the ability of the state to put in place long term processes, such as developing a participatory approach to decision making.
- The fragile nature of civil society organisations hinders their ability to articulate for participation.

There will have to be a rethinking of the concept of political power before the state is able to reconcile discourse and practice in moving towards public governance: the state will have to move from a position where power is viewed as a means of domination over people, to a position where power is viewed as the power to act in concert with civil society for the common good.

By engaging local government in new forms of collaboration and practice at the local level, civil society can act as a catalyst in creating space for new forms of government at the local level.

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<sup>43</sup> One would assume that the reference to government is a misnomer and in fact implies the state.

<sup>44</sup> It is interesting however to note that the Caribbean Charter of Civil Society, while clearly stating the determination to uphold and defend the rights of citizens in the civil and political sphere, limits the rights in the economic and social arena by making them contingent on the availability of resources. This would appear to be an area in which NGOs should focus attention because for some observers; there is a dialectical relationship between these two generations of rights. One cannot advocate for adherence to the underlying values of rule of law (civil and political rights ) unless citizens can also enjoy its benefits( economic and social rights)



#### **5.4     *Internal Governance: Advocacy Through Example***

In order to build examples at the local or micro-level, non-governmental organisations in general, and natural resource management organisations in particular, need to become examples of good governance. The study has shown that this also constitutes a challenge for civil society organisations.

While advocating for better governance at the state level, organisations also need to be certain that their own houses are in order – to “practice what they preach. Most notably, the challenges are in the following arenas:

- An enabling voice: strengthening and putting into place mechanisms which ensure active, effective and real participation both within organisations, and between organisations and their partner communities and community based organisations;
- An equal voice: strengthening and putting into place policies which ensure equity, including gender equity, and inclusion.
- Vision: developing a strategic vision grounded in the context in which they work;
- Accountability to constituents: strengthening and putting into place systems which are transparent and ensure accountability to both their constituents and partners;
- Good performance: strengthening and developing institutional capacity to carry out effectively and efficiently their mandates.

#### **5.5     *Demonstrating that it Works***

One of the major challenges facing NGOs involved in participatory natural resource management is to provide evidence that this approach works. This will require increased attention to systematising the work (processes, methodologies and tools) and to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the work.

Monitoring and evaluation will need to become more rigorous and systematic but above all it will need to respond to two fundamental criteria:

- **Outcomes:** A focus on outcomes rather than outputs. For the most part, current methodologies tend to focus on outputs; what was done, rather than outcomes which refer more broadly to what changes were brought about by what was done.
- **Processes:** A focus on measuring processes and other qualitative factors in addition to measuring quantitative factors. Current monitoring and evaluation methodologies, when used, are more focused on quantitative factors related to outputs and less on both qualitative and quantitative indicators related to outcomes.

If the purpose is to promote citizen participation in natural resource management as a means not only of improving the sustainability of the natural resource base but also a tool to contribute to the empowerment of citizens in decision-making processes, then monitoring and evaluation methodologies must focus on both of these parameters.

The literature on participation and empowerment provides some insight into both indicators of empowerment but also and more importantly tools that can be used to monitor and evaluate progress or change in this domain.

## **5.6     *Building Linkages***

In addition to the challenge of demonstrating that “it works” natural resource management organisations and other civil society organisations committed to promoting citizen participation in decision-making must look for, develop and strengthen their linkages in order to bring their concerns centre stage. The study has shown that while there have been significant accomplishments in this area, there remains much to be done in terms of developing broader alliances.

There is a tendency to remain within a closed community rather than reaching out and developing strong linkages with other social actors. This reticence may be linked to the reluctance to engage in direct advocacy work that for some may appear too “political” and not relevant to a mission that is technical in focus. This has handicapped the ability of some organisations to move the participation agenda forward and has isolated them from other groups who are mobilised around broader development issues.

There is a need to develop linkages with other civil society organisations- most notably with non-governmental organisations working on development issues, with organised community based organisations and with other social actors who have a stake in national development.

Above all there is the need to recognise that encouraging citizen participation in natural resource management has a political component: while part of the work is technical in nature, any commitment to social change is political in nature.

There is a need among natural resource management organisations to “*depoliticize*” politics, to take it out of the arena that is the exclusive purview of political parties, and to place it within the arena of citizen engagement. By recognising the political nature of the work at hand, and their role as change agents, natural resource management organisations will be better equipped to develop the needed capacities, the appropriate strategies and the most effective tools to achieve their objectives.

## **5.7     *Building Institutional Capacity***

Capacity building has traditionally focused on transferring specific management skills such as accounting or project management. While useful, this approach needs broadening in order to achieve development objectives. Smillie’s work on capacity building provides a helpful framework to broaden the interpretation of capacity building and demonstrate the complexity and the various parameters that need to be considered:

Concepts of Capacity Building			
Locus or targets of capacity building	Parameters for and objectives of capacity building		
	Means	Process	Ends
Building the capacity of an organisation: organisational development	Strengthens the organisation's ability to perform specific functions	Builds coherence within internal operations; develops the possibility of continuous learning and adaptation	Improves the organisation's viability, sustainability and impact in relation to its mission
Building the capacity of an institutional subsector: sectoral development	Strengthens the ability of the sector to improve its overall impact	Develops mutually supporting relations and understanding within the sector and subsector	Achieves confident and meaningful interaction with other sectors and social actors based on shared strategies and learning
Building the capacity of civil society : institutional development	Improves the ability of the primary stakeholders to carry out activities to solve problems	Enables and stimulates better interaction, communication, conflict resolution in society, enhancing social capital	Increases the ability of the primary stakeholder to engage with and influence the political arena and the socio-economic system in accordance with their interests

Source: Smillie, I, 2001. Patronage or partnership: local capacity building in humanitarian crises. Kumarian Press, Bloomfield, Connecticut, US.

Based on the previous issues that have been targeted in this section, it is clear that capacity building requirement of natural resource management organisations must go beyond simply strengthening an organisation's ability to perform specific functions. This is congruent with Smillie's position that capacity building is complex and must take into consideration both the various parameters and the various levels at which capacity can be built.

One of the definitions of the purpose of capacity building which provides the juncture between civil society participation and the issue of capacity building is the following: "...*building on the capacity and potential of concerned populations, enabling them to move from object to subject, from victim (or passive observer) to actor, to the possibility of being*".<sup>45</sup>

The challenge facing natural resource management organisations committed to promoting citizen participation is that of moving civil society from the margins to the centre of the decision making

Re-examining the framework proposed by Smillie through the specific lens of participatory natural resource management and improved governance provides some insight and direction into what are the specific capacity building needs required to achieve these objectives:

<sup>45</sup> Mangones in Smillie *et al.* (2001)

Capacity Building for Civil Society Participation in Natural resource Management			
Locus or targets of capacity building	Parameters for and objectives of capacity building		
	Means	Process	Ends
Building the capacity of an organisation: <i>NRM organisations and CBOs</i>	Strengthens the organisation's ability to perform specific functions	Builds coherence within internal operations; develops the possibility of continuous learning and adaptation	Improves the organisation's viability, sustainability and impact in relation to its mission
	-Skills in technical areas of expertise -Skills in monitoring and evaluation	-Skills in developing participatory structures and a sense of ownership within organisations -Skills in developing and implementing a research/action agenda which informs the vision and practice	-Skills in fund raising -Skills in the area of communication and public relations
Building the capacity of an institutional subsector: <i>organisations concerned with sustainable development and environment</i>	Strengthens the ability of the sector to improve its overall impact	Develops mutually supporting relations and understanding within the sector and subsector	Achieves confident and meaningful interaction with other sectors and social actors based on shared strategies and learning
	-Skills in the area of communication and advocacy	-Skills in the area of networking and coalition building -Skills in the area of communication -Skills in the area of monitoring and evaluation with an emphasis on process indicators	-Skills in the area of networking and coalition building -Skills in the area of information sharing
Building the capacity of civil society : <i>civil society's capacity to organise, participate in and influence decision making processes</i>	Improves the ability of the primary stakeholders to carry out activities to solve problems	Enables and stimulates better interaction, communication, conflict resolution in society, enhancing social capital	Increases the ability of the primary stakeholder to engage with and influence the political arena and the socio-economic system in accordance with their interests
	-Development of new policies and procedures which strengthen CBO participation in NGO governance -Skills in the area of community empowerment and organisational development of CBOs	-Skills in the area of networking and coalition building -Skills in the area of conflict management and negotiation	-Skills in the areas of strategic analysis and planning -Skills in the area of advocacy and mobilisation -Skills in the area of implementing a rights based approach - Skills and capacities in developing procedures and tools which facilitate participation

While this framework identifies skills which were defined by the participating organisations themselves, it places them within another context and clarifies their focus and purpose. However the issue of capacity building is not limited exclusively to natural resource management organisations, their community-based partners, and other civil society actors.

Given that the long-term focus is on increased citizen participation in decision-making processes in general and to natural resource management in particular, the aim is one of changing both the culture of decision making and the institutional arrangements which reflect that culture.

This is a commitment to stimulating a process of organisational change within the state. While there is support for these changes at the level of political discourse and state obligations, it will entail reconciling rhetoric and reality, and making the connection between principles and practice. In a classic approach to organisational change, the process moves through progressively complex stages going from: enabling people to access skills and information, to gain knowledge, to change their attitudes, to change their behaviour, and finally to change organisational behaviour and practice.

Time Line for Organisational Change				
Skills and information				
	Knowledge			
		Attitudes		
			Individual Behaviour	
				Organisational Change

Source: Fowler in Smillie (2001)

As the survey results show, Caribbean natural resource management organisations have invested in the process of organisational change at the level of the state. Progress has been made, but there is more to be done and the challenge is to move the process forward strategically and consistently.

## 5.8 Challenging the Disconnect Between Rhetoric and Practice

The major challenge here is to turn words into action. The results of the survey, as well as the analysis of the regional context, have provided some insight into the opportunities and spaces that exist for moving forward with this agenda. Through being strategic and having a clear focus on the overall goal, several organisations have begun to use the international and national discourse on participation as an entry point for advocating and practising more active and effective participation.

Parameters	Participation as a tool for efficiency	Participation as a tool for equity and inclusion
<b>Origin of the demand</b>	External	Internal
<b>Principal proponent</b>	Donor driven	Nationally owned: State and/or civil society
<b>Principal underlying vision</b>	Efficiency and efficacy	Equity, efficiency and efficacy
<b>Institutional mechanism</b>	Ad hoc	Institutionalised
<b>Nature of convocation</b>	Invitation	Right based
<b>Nature of participation</b>	Consultation	Decisional
<b>Nature of relationship</b>	Executor and Implementation	Partnership and Co management

This table suggests that the categories are mutually exclusive or consistent across parameters, but the survey results suggest this is not the case. Areas where there is cross over and synergy can be used to move the process forward by building alliances, and facilitating the emergence of policies and institutional frameworks and processes which embed participation within a rights-based approach.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

This survey was initially designed to examine the profile and experiences of a group of organisations involved with promoting civil society participation in natural resource management issues in the Caribbean. It became a study with broader implications, and provided an opportunity to look at more general issues of participation, governance and institutional capacity.

The issue of natural resource management, though central to the study, in the final analysis has become a sphere in which broader issues can also be analysed and addressed. While some of the findings and analysis are perhaps only relevant to natural resource management, it appears that the findings and issues are of broader relevance. The patterns and practices surveyed are fluid in nature and influenced by both internal and external factors. It is this process of change that gives purpose to citizen

At the outset of the study, a number of hypotheses were formulated concerning the issue of civil society participation in natural resource management and its impact on governance. These hypotheses were:

1. *The socio-economic and socio-political context, at both international and national levels may influence the ways in which these issues are or can be addressed;*
2. *While the notion of participation may be considered as valuable and necessary across the region, concepts of good governance and experiences of governance may vary as widely as the realities within the region.*
3. *Good governance is built on two pillars; a structured and strong civil society and a state apparatus which is committed to developing structures and methods which ensure accountability and which engage citizens in decision-making processes.*
4. *And finally, that good governance in one area or sector creates examples and models that can be adapted to and applied in other areas of collective interest.*

**Socio-economic and socio-political context:** the study suggests that the national and international context has created certain impediments – such as loss of sovereignty at the national level, and also opportunities – such as existing international conventions on human rights and civil society participation, to the way in which governance and participation has been approached.

**Participation:** While the notion of participation is widely accepted and plays out in similar ways throughout the region, participation means different things to different people.

**Good governance:** In theory there is general consensus that good governance requires strong civil society and a state which is accountable and supports participatory processes. There is, however a “reality gap” between theory and practice.

**Influence in other sectors:** Civil society participation in the area of social policy has had more influence on public policy and programming than participation in the area of natural resource management

Co-management of natural resource remains a relatively new concept within the region, but participating organisations firmly believe in their ability to influence and improve public policy, indicating that concerned citizens are fundamental actors in social change processes.

What is clear is that both the state and civil society organisations are convinced that the consolidation of democratic processes and the challenges of sustainable development require a new partnership between the state and civil society. Despite the fact that the points of departure

and the vision may be radically different, this point of convergence provides a testing ground for new forms of governance and a new approach to power in which it is no longer power over civil society and individual citizens but rather the power to act, in concert and in partnership with civil society and citizens, for the common good of Caribbean societies.

The extent to which natural resource management organisations, and other civil society organisations can effectively contribute to the emergence of new forms of governance within Caribbean societies will not only contribute to achieving goals of sustainable development but also to deepening democratic processes through mechanisms of inclusion and equity.

“Civil society can exist where there is no democracy, but democracy cannot exist where there is no strong civil society”<sup>46</sup> This statement is elaborated on in a précis of the qualities of governance which citizens are demanding, “The new consensus for the next millenium is thus about responsible citizenship and responsive participatory democracy. The two are mutually reinforcing and supportive.”<sup>47</sup>

This is the fundamental challenge facing not only CANARI, and its partner organisations, but also all other civil society organisations within the region.

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<sup>46</sup> Edward Broadbent, 1993

<sup>47</sup> Colin Ball (1999)

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