



## Development of the Experience Nariva Ecotourism Cluster

2022

The development of an ecotourism business cluster was initiated to consolidate the offerings of the Small and Micro-Enterprises (SMEs) involved in ecotourism activities in the Nariva Swamp Protected Area (NSPA) as part of the [Experience Nariva](#) project executed by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) and funded by the Inter-American Development Bank. This Experience Nariva project component was completed in November 2022 and included the following activities:

- Market research and a needs assessment of the SMEs/cluster members through the following methods:
  - Initial focus group at a community meeting in Nariva (Figure 1)
  - Online market survey via Google platform
- Formation of a Cluster Management Team
- Development of a:
  - Training plan
  - Business plan
  - Marketing plan
  - Financial plan
  - Draft bye laws including Vision and Mission for the cluster (Figure 2)

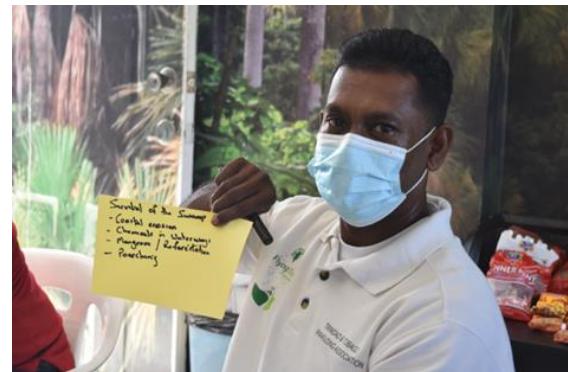


Figure 1: Cluster Needs Assessment exercise, Community meeting Nariva (Photo Credit CANARI)

The business model of choice by the cluster was the co-operative. As such the intended Cluster Management Team was renamed the Co-operative Management Team by cluster members. The Co-operative Management Team assigned through a democratic process accepted the responsibility, to complete the required documentation necessary for registration and commencement of operations working with an assigned officer of the Co-operative Division of the Ministry of Youth Development and National Services. While the business cluster has been established, the transition to a co-operative is in progress. When operational the co-operative will focus on:

- marketing of members' products and services via website and other promotional strategies;
- sale of co-operative merchandise;
- activities and events for protection of the Nariva Swamp;
- training and education of members; and
- generating income through avenues like festivals.



*Figure 2: Cluster members drafting their vision, mission and bylaws  
(Photo Credit CANARI)*

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**For more information on the Experience Nariva project, visit: <https://canari.org/experience-nariva-creating-a-community-driven-sustainable-cluster-and-brand-to-transform-ecotourism/>**

**About CANARI:** The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit institute which has been working across the Caribbean islands for 30 years. Our mission is to promote and facilitate stakeholder participation in the stewardship of natural resources in the Caribbean. Our work focuses on Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Equity and Justice, Participatory Governance, and Resilience. See here for more information: [www.canari.org](http://www.canari.org)

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