

Participating in managing forest

A guide to community forestry in the Caribbean islands



Produced in association with

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This guide was researched and written by Neila Bobb-Prescott and Hema Kumar with editorial support from Celeste Chariandy and is intended for use by rural communities interested in or actively practicing in community forestry in the islands of the Caribbean.

The content of this guide builds on two previous toolkits produced by CANARI. Namely, *Facilitating participatory natural resource management: A toolkit for Caribbean managers* and *Communicating for Conservation: A communication toolkit for Caribbean civil society organisations working in biodiversity conservation*, both of which are available online from CANARI's website.

CARIBBEAN NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE

GUIDELINES SERIES

Participating in managing forest

A guide to community forestry in the Caribbean islands

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GRTDO	Grande Riviere Tourism Development Organization
PV	Participatory Video
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Foreword

As forests provide multiple benefits to many different groups of persons many people have a vested interest in how these forests are managed.

Forests are natural systems; if left alone, they will develop towards an ecological equilibrium. Forest management is the art of consolidating what the people want from the forest with what the forest can sustainably produce. This is a process which requires the participation of many stakeholders. However the praxis shows: not all stakeholders have the same opportunities to participate. Even so the right to participate in forest management may be acknowledged by the forest authorities. Many forest users require the capacity to effectively participate in the management of the forest around their communities. These guidelines are written for them: to guide community groups to successfully communicate their needs and to articulate their ideas on how the forest they depend on should be managed.

The presented guidelines are a product of a long lasting partnership between CANARI and FAO, sponsored through a multi donor trust fund: the “National Forest Programme Facility” (between 2006 and 2012) and the “ACP-Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Support Programme” funded by the EU (between 2010 and 2012). Both projects supported participatory forest management by building the capacity for effective participation. The support was geared to strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations as well as Forest Authorities to facilitate participatory processes.

The presented guidelines are a stepping stone in the process to support participatory forest management and community forestry. FAO is proud to be part of this process and grateful to the support provided by the staff of CANARI and the forest stakeholders from the Caribbean who through their questions and comments contributed to the preparation of these guidelines. FAO remains committed to support the development of forest based livelihoods to protect the forest and to improve the life of forest depended people.

Claus-Martin Eckelmann
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Introduction

Rationale

In the Caribbean, many Governments, institutions and NGOs are working on and promoting **community forestry** as a way to conserve our forests while sustaining the livelihoods of our rural communities. **It involves participation by local communities (who live near to and use forests) in decisions about how forests are managed and used.**¹

Community forestry can be called by several other names - participatory forest management, community-based forest management, community-based forestry, and collaborative management (or co-management) of forests.²

In the Caribbean, the practice is very diverse: among the islands, participation, partnerships and characteristics of the engagement vary.³ Undoubtedly though, it is recognised that community forestry is contributing to improved forest management and conservation and is benefiting community livelihoods.⁴

Community forestry also promotes awareness of forest management issues, identifies opportunities to enhance livelihoods, builds the capacity of civil society organisations, contributes to building consensus on controversial issues and gives voice to civil society organisations.

1 The definition of community forestry was extracted from CANARI Policy Brief No. 11: Community Forestry in the Caribbean.

2 Extracted from CANARI Policy Brief No. 11.

3 Extracted from CANARI 2012a. 'Community Forestry: A regional synthesis.' Project Report.

4 Extracted from CANARI Policy Brief No. 11.

It however requires support – enabling policies, laws, structures, and processes are needed; sustained and long-term support and capacity building of the community and local organisations are required to enable them to participate effectively and facilitators of community forestry who tend to be government stakeholders also need to build their capacity to promote and sustain the process.⁵

Purpose

These guidelines are intended for use by community groups, that are engaged in community forestry or are considering it, to build capacity to engage successfully. It can help you to build key skills to:

- develop partnerships to benefit livelihoods;
- build the capacity of your group;
- communicate to influence policy; and
- communicate to build support in your community.

How to use these Guidelines

In each section of the guidelines, a step by step guide is provided and explanations for key concepts. Special tips and two case studies provide you with more resources to support your approach to community forestry. CANARI welcomes comments, suggestions and feedback to ensure that this guide meets the needs of community users in the Caribbean. Please send your feedback to info@canari.org.

5 Extracted from CANARI Policy Brief No. 11.

Building your group's capacity

What is capacity building?

Capacity can be defined as the “ability of a person or organisation to participate effectively in the process in which he/she/it is engaged”.⁶ Capacity encompasses a range of elements which need to be considered collectively. These include: world view/philosophy, culture, structure, adaptive culture and strategies, linkages, skills, knowledge and abilities and material resources. To build the capacity of your group which is engaged in community forestry, involves more than improving skills and handing over material resources. It requires that you give attention to strengthening the world view of the organisation; building a culture for success; ensuring that your group is structured, transparent and accountable, is able to respond to change and has the ability to relate and link to others to be able to achieve its goals (adapted from Geoghegan, 2004).

Steps to take in building the capacity of your group

Step 1: Assess your group's current capacity⁷

As a community group, where do you start to build your capacity? A good first step is to assess what you already have. As a group, discuss your skills, resources and structures along with the networks you have access to:

- **Skills:** What knowledge, abilities, and competencies do you possess?
- **Material resources:** What technology, finance, and equipment do you have access to?

⁶ Concepts taken from the PNRM Toolkit, (CANARI, 2011).

⁷ Concept adapted from CANARI (2008a)

Capacity is the ability of a person or organisation to participate effectively in the process in which he/she/it is engaged

- **Structure:** Within your group, do you have a clear understanding of roles, functions, lines of communication, and mechanisms for accountability and transparency?
- **Linkages:** Who are the persons and organisations of influence that you have relationships with respect to your goals? With whom do you work?

Then ask some harder questions:

- **Adaptive strategies:** If your external situation changed, do you have the skills, plans and procedures within your group to adapt, respond and survive?
- **Culture:** Does your group have the belief, willpower and motivation to achieve your objectives and make a difference?
- **World view:** How do you perceive your place in society? Do you feel disenfranchised or empowered to act? Where do you fit with other organisations involved in forest management?

(questions adapted from: Geoghegan, 2004)

Step 2: List your capacity needs

From the above analysis, you have identified the organisational needs of your group. Forest managers and groups engaged in community forestry in the Caribbean have identified the following organisational skills as crucial to sustaining organisation:

- Facilitation of community visioning and strategic planning, preferably using independent facilitation
- Training and mentoring in basic organisational management (management of human and financial resources, proposal development etc)
- Training and mentoring in conflict management and effective communication; developing new leaders and succession planning

- Training and mentoring in micro-entrepreneurship and financial management
- Be able to assess risks and plan for the unforeseen

(adapted from: CANARI 2008b and CANARI 2007a)

Group similar needs together into categories for example, if you need to build a visitor centre and purchase a vehicle, you can categorise these as material needs. If you need training in nursery science and nature interpretation, label these as skills training

Step 3: Develop a plan and a means of evaluating the plan

Since you grouped your needs into categories in the step above, you can be strategic in your planning to take advantage of opportunities. Remember capacity building can be just as effective informally and should not be limited to formal training opportunities (CANARI, 2011). Your group should ask the following questions and use the first five columns of Table 1 (following) as a guide when developing your group's plan.

- Have we determined clear capacity targets?
- Did we identify opportunities to address capacity needs?
- Who are the potential donors and partners who can help?
- Have we developed a timeframe for achieving the targets?
- Is there a need to prioritise our actions?

After you execute activities that contribute to building capacity, be sure to evaluate your progress against your master list of needs. Go back to your capacity building plan and record what capacity was developed. Use the last column of Table 1 as a guide. Also, add any new capacity needs to your master list, and seek opportunities to have these built through your partnerships. Revise your capacity building plan as needed.

“Seek opportunities to build capacity through partnerships”

Table 1: Creating your capacity building plan

Identify clear capacity targets	Look out for opportunities to address capacity needs	Identify potential donors and partners	Determine a timeframe for achieving the targets	Determine which activities should be prioritised	Evaluate if capacity was built
Get training in nature interpretation and small business development	Review regional projects on forest management, improved livelihoods and poverty reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government departments e.g. Forestry, Community Development Regional NGOs e.g. CANARI 	Next six months	#2 After we build membership, we can engage in capacity building	Ten persons trained in bird watching in May 2012 by Forestry Dept.
	<p>Review programs offered by government departments</p> <p>Review calls for proposals by funding agencies for your area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible donors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o UNDP GEF small grant o CEPF small grants o Community Development grants 	This month		5 persons to be trained in small business development in first quarter of next year.
Increase membership	Set up table at village fest to promote our activities and build interest in the work of our group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village councils Local religious organisations Local community groups Festival committees 	Year long	#1 This activity should be carried out first; so that we can increase participation in our organization before we build our capacity.	<p>Participated in five village festivals. Had a booth and kids' activities.</p> <p>Local priest volunteered the use of the church for meetings.</p>
	Get free interviews on local radio morning talk show	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business places in the community 	As soon as possible		Membership doubled after six months and includes school children and teachers.

Special tips

- **Build your leadership skills** - Lack of leadership has often been cited by stakeholders as a source of critical failure of groups and their initiatives. Succession planning is so important to ensuring sustainability of groups and projects that even if external support is unavailable, groups should engage in a process of involving members in taking on certain responsibilities, regardless of their current level, thus building their confidence over time, (CANARI, 2008a).
- **Go for small grants** - These are a useful stepping stone to build your capacity and confidence to execute other and bigger projects in the future. Successfully implemented small grants help increase your attractiveness to potential partners. (CANARI, 2008a) and (CANARI, 2009a)
- **Get help** – Include the use of a mentor when planning your projects, especially if you are a new group, if you are embarking on a new type of project or if you are starting a large project, (adapted from CANARI, 2010)
- **Explain your needs** - Point out to partners that it is worth the effort to train you to sustain yourself after the life of the project to ensure on-going success, (CANARI, 2012a).
- **Be alert to internal problems** - Community disunity and internal dissension in your group due to political rivalries, economic inequality and ethnic divisions can destroy an organization. Consider using external independent partners to mediate conflicts, so that affected members can meet, air grievances, and problem-solve until you can develop those skills yourselves. (adapted from CANARI, 2012a).

Remember that **Capacity building takes time** - If your group is in the start-up stage and your capacity is low, expect that you will need long term support. The onus is

on you to develop and maintain relationships with partners so that you can obtain the support you need. Expect too, that as your capacity increases, your needs also change and your group will need further capacity building in a wider range of competencies. (CANARI, 2009a)

Generating support within your community

Why is it important to get community support?

Your community is a key stakeholder that shares your rights to, responsibilities for and interests in your nearby forests. Community members can impact either negatively or positively on what you want to achieve. It is critical that you keep them informed of what is happening, aware of the factors that prompted your work, ensure that they recognise the legitimacy of the people and organisations that are working together, and that they are encouraged to become involved (adapted from Geoghegan et al. 2004).

Steps to take in building community support

Step 1: Understand your audience

To understand your audience [in this case, your community], you need to find out and understand what its interests and beliefs are, and if your audience has an agenda concerning the issue you are addressing. Find out what the audience already knows about your issue.

Step 2: Decide what you want your community to know and how you hope it will act

Create an objective for your communication with your community: for example, you may want to build commu-

nity support for the actions your group is proposing. This is the change you want to achieve. Check that your objective is SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound). Your objective links ahead to desired outcomes and the change you would like to see effected.

Step 3: Determine what you will communicate to achieve your objective

After developing your objective, determine your message. This is what you want to communicate to your audience. It 'sells' your objective so it needs to be clear, concise and unambiguous. Observe the 5Cs of communication in developing your message, be:

Clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language must be simple, consider the age range, literacy level and interest of your audience. • Consider communicating your message visually, in writing or verbally.
Concise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you use too many words or your information proceeds on a long and winding path, you lose your audience's interest and its understanding of your message.
Correct and Credible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate your information and obtain it only from credible sources. • Misconceptions should be dealt with directly. • Understand the issues before you pass them on to others.
Comprehensive and make a connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use plain language and eliminate technical words that may not be widely understood. • If technical terms are introduced, explain them with the support of examples that are familiar to your audience.
Consistent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency reduces misinterpretation.

Use a variety of channels, activities and materials to get your information out to your audience. Keep in mind your level of resources, including your budget, manpower, opportunities and networks when working through this step. The following is a broad list of channels, activities and materials that you can consider when interacting with community members.

Channels	Activities	Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass media including radio, television and newspapers • Internet including social media networks • Face-to-face communication at events hosted either by you or by others • Use of intermediaries and partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings, workshops and presentations • Exhibitions • Walkabouts and processions • Media opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ interviews by reporters, ◦ letters to the editor, ◦ appearances on television talk shows, radio call-in programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass media including radio, television and newspapers • Internet including social media networks • Face-to-face communication at events hosted either by you or by others • Use of intermediaries and partners

Step 4: Evaluate the effectiveness of your communications

It is important to evaluate the success of your plans so that you can learn from the experience and apply the lessons learnt to your future communications activities. During planning, you should decide how you will measure if you were successful in achieving the change desired. Consider the following types of indicators and the measurement ideas described:

- Simple indicators: base these on the steps in your process.
- Activity indicators:
 - number of people targeted by an activity
 - number of topics covered

- Short-term result indicators:
 - o number of people who heard about a particular issue
 - o number of actual participants in an activity (as opposed to the number of those invited)
 - o number of articles or news items published or aired in a month or week
- Medium to long-term result indicators:
 - o number of persons who have made lifestyle or other changes as a result of your campaign
 - o number of persons who have become ‘champions’ or change agents’ as a result of your campaign
 - o policy changes: new or changed policy to support the ideas put forward in your campaign

Special tips

- Community members (and supporters at local and national level) must perceive that there are benefits from a project, though these may not necessarily be financial. This is critical for building sustainability, buy-in, and to influence the formal institutional framework, (CANARI, 2007b).
- Community participation enhances the success of any project. The chance of success is greatly increased if community members understand the project aims and objectives, how it impacts and benefits them, and feel some ownership of the project, (CANARI, 2010).
- Keeping the community’s interest up by identifying what’s in it for them and how they can be involved [is important], (CANARI, 2008b).
- Forest-based livelihood projects have the potential for developing community spirit, (CANARI, 2009b).

Successful partnerships are often based on trust, equality, and mutual understanding and obligations

Developing partnerships to benefit livelihoods

What is a partnership?

A partnership is a relationship between two or more entities. Successful partnerships are often based on trust, equality, and mutual understanding and obligations. Partnerships can be formal, where each party's roles and obligations are spelled out in a written agreement, or informal, where the roles and obligations are assumed or agreed to verbally (Boase, 1997).

Why are partnerships beneficial?

Partnerships allow groups engaged in community forestry to achieve concrete and intangible benefits that may be challenging to accomplish on their own or which could simply take too long. Through partnerships, your group can gain increased access to resources including material assets and funding for forest conservation and livelihood-supporting activities. Directly or indirectly, by partnering with others, groups engaged in community forestry gain knowledge, build skills and increase their experience in activities that can help them to improve and maintain their surrounding natural environment and protect their way of life. Partners can help your group to communicate its activities, to engage with other stakeholders, gain recognition for your work, and build your group's reputation.

CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY FORESTRY: A PARTNERSHIP WITH MUTUAL BENEFITS⁸

Grande Riviere is a small tranquil village on Trinidad's rugged north-east coast. It is a popular ecotourism destination offering nature-based attractions and the opportunity to view endangered Leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*), and Piping Guan (*Pipile pipile*), an endemic bird, known locally as the pawi. This has resulted in Grande Riviere having high levels of employment in comparison with surrounding communities, with reduced community reliance on extraction of forest resources for livelihood purposes. There are several active community-based organisations (CBOs) that manage conservation and ecotourism projects and a government-funded reforestation programme.

A number of factors have shaped forest management arrangements in Grande Riviere. Legislation and policy provide protection for state forest and the national park. However, there is limited capacity to patrol and police the forest in Grande Riviere so Forestry Division and National Parks officers have grown to depend on the community for information about illegal forest activities. "The community are our eyes," said one officer, although there is limited official recognition for this important support role.

Based initially on training for turtle conservation, the Grande Riviere community has benefited from over 15 years of capacity building in conservation skills, environmental awareness and other aspects of community development. The community has developed technical and forest management skills and a number of effective community-based organisations (CBOs), such as GRTDO, which advocate nationally and locally for local development based on the conservation of natural resources.

Livelihood benefits, for Grande Riviere community, as a result of forest management activities include:

- increased employment and training opportunities for men and women;
- empowerment of those participating in the reforestation project, resulting in the confidence to pursue higher education and training opportunities;
- enhanced physical infrastructure for ecotourism (Visitor Centre);
- an improved natural environment for recreation and protection of ecosystem services;
- effective CBOs that are seeking to drive development in a locally-appropriate way; and
- increased influence with, and recognition of, Grande Riviere CBOs by government agencies and other forest stakeholders.

⁸ This case study is extracted from "Conserving the Grande Riviere watershed: The case of collaborative forest management in north-east Trinidad" researched in 2008 and published by CANARI in 2010.

Steps to take in creating partnerships

Step1: Determine what you need

As a group engaged in community forestry, your first step should be to discuss proposed activities with members in your group, the ideas you all want to pursue or the problems that you need to address. Work out what assets your group already possesses; then detail what skills and resources are needed to bring your proposal to fruition or solve your problem.

Step 2: Know who your stakeholders are

Your success could depend on the actions of others who could impact either negatively or positively on what you want to achieve. These are your **stakeholders** and they have rights to, responsibilities for, and interests in your nearby forests. Some stakeholders may be easy to identify but to generate a more complete list, ask yourselves these questions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who has responsibility to manage the forest?• Who uses the forest?• Who benefits (or potentially benefits) from the use of the forest?• Who wishes to benefit from the forest but is unable to do so?• Who impacts on the forest positively or negatively? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who would be affected by a change in how the forest is managed?• Who makes decisions that affect the use and status of the forest?• Who is interested in how the forest is managed, even if they are not directly using or managing it? (CANARI, 2011)⁹ |
|--|--|

⁹ These questions are adapted from Concept sheet 4: Identifying who is a stakeholder on Page 13 of *Facilitating participatory natural resource management: A toolkit for Caribbean managers*, developed by CANARI.

Step 3: Determine who your partners should be

Whether negatively or positively, some stakeholders are more likely than others to affect your work or be affected by the outcomes of your actions, and these are your **key stakeholders**. From the list of stakeholders you developed in Step 2, ask the following to determine which stakeholders are key.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are their purpose, focus, interests and mission highly relevant to the management of the forest?• Do they have a large stake in the outcomes of your work?• Do they have a high level of power, authority and influence?• Do they have a low level of power, authority and influence, and are therefore at risk of being marginalised? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the scope of their involvement high (for example, this is or should be a key area of work for them)?• Do they have the capacity to address the needs your group has identified?:<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Can they provide special or unique skills or knowledge?o Can they participate in meetings with other stakeholders and effectively express their ideas?o Do they have the time and resources to engage in the partnership(CANARI, 2011)?¹⁰ |
|---|--|

From your key stakeholders, identify your potential partners. **Your potential partners are those key stakeholders who would be specifically interested in your success.** In addition to the questions above, you can: talk to others, search online, use social media, read the newspapers and listen to the radio to find more information on who can offer the support you need.

Step 4: Engage prospective partners

Be creative on how you engage each potential partner and develop a strategy to help you. For each:

- Determine what type of interaction would give you the

¹⁰ These questions are adapted from Concept sheet 4: Identifying who is a stakeholder on Page 14 of the PNRM Toolkit.

best opportunity to present yourself and your ideas.

- Determine how to initiate contact with the prospective partner to gain the desired interaction.
- If within your control, determine when to execute the interaction.
- Decide on the type of follow up you should use.

Keep in mind what is most appropriate for you and what will work for your potential partner. You should consider the following:

- To initiate a meeting (**what**) with a government organisation, you may need more than an e-mail communication (**how**); remember that government officers may not be able to visit on a weekend (**when**) which might be most appropriate for you; in your **follow up** action you may be asked to send in a formal letter of invitation and you may need to call to confirm attendance.
- Don't consider actions for engagement that would put your group out of pocket.
- Some techniques used by other civil society organisations to get the attention of key stakeholders include: face-to-face and one on one meetings, attendance at relevant events to network, invitations to visit the community, leveraging on publicity from events, spokespersons, writing letters and e-mail messages to the stakeholders or to the media and developing participatory video on problems they face.

Once you start engaging potential partners, record the responses you receive and assess what worked. If your strategy for engaging a particular potential partner did not work, try to figure out why, ask for help from stakeholders who are familiar with that potential partner, and change your strategy as needed. It is important to evaluate how successful and effective your attempts were so that you can learn and share your experiences with others.

Step 5: Working with partners

Once you have the attention of your prospective partners, you have an opportunity to discuss your needs and state what is your intended goal for the partnership. Some points to remember:

- Your partner must understand the benefits [to them] of working with you; it will be useful, therefore, to think about this before meeting with them.
- Be prepared to write out and explain your proposal, keeping in mind how to suit your partner's needs. Some of your suggestions could include collaborative projects, one-off or continuous training, mentoring, internship opportunities, small business promotion and advertising and grants for the purchasing of big ticket items such as land/vehicles/building of structures.
- Use as many opportunities within the design of the process to build capacity. Capacity building can be just as effective informally and should not be limited to formal training opportunities (CANARI, 2011).
- Ask for help if you think you are not on the right track.
- It is okay to start with small steps, especially when working with a new partner. This allows you to build your capacity to do more and gain the trust of your partner. In turn, their risk of partnering with you is lower and they may want to work with you more (CANARI, 2008a).
- It is possible that the partner you selected may not be able to provide the help you are seeking. If this is the case, ask them to recommend other partners to you and assist you in networking.
- Consider having a joint work plan for each partner to help in ensuring that both sides know what is expected and what they are each responsible for.¹¹
- Remember that building partnerships takes time!

11 Concept adapted from Mayers and Vermeulen, (2002).

CASE STUDY: PARTNERING FOR GROWTH AND SUCCESS

Dominica Essential Oils and Spices Cooperative is made up of 560 farmers in south east Dominica who harvest bay leaves and bark and distil bay oil for export. Cultivation of bay trees and oil extraction is a hundred year old multigenerational practice in an area that is not suitable for other types of agriculture and the farmers are able to meet 65% of the world's demand for bay oil.

Coming together as a group and acting collectively and supportively was necessary to ensure the enduring success of the industry. The cooperative has developed and sustained relations with stakeholders that ensure success including the Cooperative Development Division for assistance with administrative matters, the Division of Agriculture for assistance with disease prevention, and the Bureau of Standards for assistance with evaluating the quality of the bay oil for export. It is a large cooperative and the participation of members varies from participation for material incentive to self-mobilisation.

The Cooperative has experienced growth and is now able to financially support their members in educating their children as well as in distributing old age and disability grants to community members.

Communicating to influence policy

Can you influence policy?

Even though environmental policies and laws may exist for forest management, we find that in our islands these laws and policies may not be actively enforced or are quite dated and do not fit with our changing circumstances. On the other hand, the laws and policies may exist but the "way of doing the work", the practice, is quite different. When these kinds of situations prevent your community group from achieving its intended goal, an opportunity for your group to become an advocate arises.

Advocacy is a very powerful role for your group to perform and involves leveraging and building support for critical actions to be taken by policy makers and key stakeholders to address current and emerging threats. You will be promoting proactive rather than reactive action and some ways to strengthen your position include: using scientific facts; promoting success stories from the field and; sharing your country's international obligations to sell the importance of your point of view.

Remember that while you are targeting decision makers, it is important to gain the support of others. You can do this by ensuring that in your communications you show how your point of view benefits all very explicitly (CANARI, 2012b).

Steps to take in developing an advocacy programme

Step 1: Facilitate participatory problem analysis.

As a group, brainstorm and discuss the problems you are seeking to address through advocacy. Ensure that there is consensus on what the real problems are and get to root causes. Do this by creating a problem tree that identifies the causal, core and effect problems using the following steps:

- Write each problem on a separate piece of paper.
- Find out how each problem relates to each other, consider one problem at a time and ask:
 - o 'What problem causes this?'
 - o 'What problem does this cause?'
- Arrange the problems around a selected problem to show relationships by putting causal problems below and problems that are a result above the selected problem. Show the connections between problems with string, tape or wool.

Box 1: Definition of a problem

Real problems are not the absence of something but an existing negative state. For example, the absence of a management plan is not a problem; the problem is that management is taking place in a haphazard way without clear priorities and direction.

(CANARI, 2011)

- Repeat with the other problems to get a web or tree of problems ('problem tree') that is interconnected by string, tape or wool.

The result can be quite a complex web of inter-related problems and you can interpret your results as follows:

- The problems that cause other problems will be at the bottom of your tree (these are, the roots or the causal problems).
- Problems in the middle of the tree are the problems that you need to focus on. (the trunk of the tree or the core problems).
- Problems at the top of your tree are symptoms caused by the core problems (the leaves of the tree, or effect problems).

Step 2: Prioritise the results of your problem tree

After you develop the problem tree, vote to determine priorities. For each priority problem identified, remember that a successful advocacy campaign will also try to address core problems of what you may be advocating for. Remember to keep your own capacity to advocate in mind. Reach out to partners for support if addressing some problems may be beyond your capacity (CANARI, 2011).

Step 3: Get the facts right and keep them current

To build and retain your reputation while you conduct your advocacy campaign, ensure that you have the facts at your fingertips. Get these from reputable sources and keep up to date. Some examples of documents and sources that can help:

- Local laws and policies related to your work
- Researchers, scientists and institutions working in the field in which you are interested

- Non-traditional information sources such as the work done by other NGOs and communities
- The internet is a useful source to help you get the facts and keep up to date, (CANARI, 2012b)

Step 4: Develop a communication plan

A communication plan will be the basis of your advocacy programme and will help you to clarify what change you want to bring about; who you want to influence; what you want to say; the most effective ways to target each audience; your plan of action, the outcomes you desire and how you measure results (CANARI, 2012b).

A rough guide of steps includes the following:

- **Identify your communications objective**

Your objective links to the change you would like to see happen; create objectives that are SMART - specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound.

- **Identify your target audiences**

Understand your audience; can you break it into distinct groups? For each, what are their interests, beliefs and, what is their agenda? Doing this will help you to fine tune your messages.

- **Develop your messages**

From your objective, develop messages to engage each target audience. Use the 5Cs; keep your messages clear, concise, correct/credible, comprehensive and consistent.

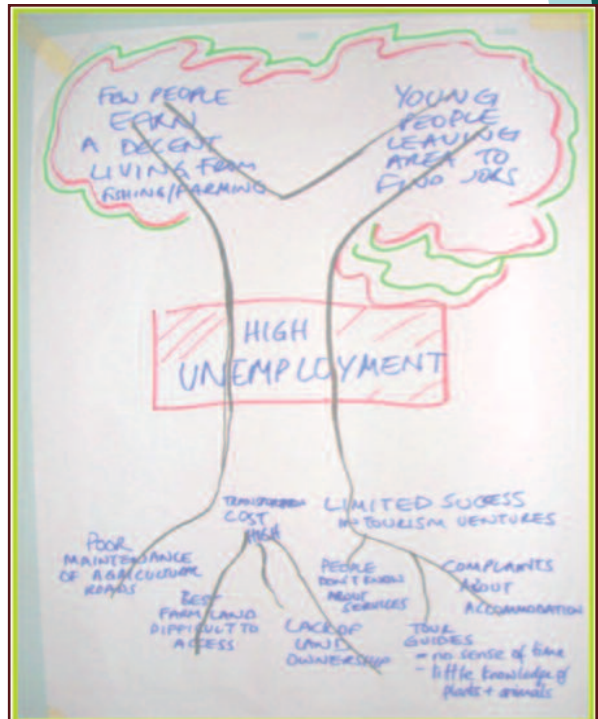


Figure 1: Example of a simple problem trees drawn on flip chart paper, showing root problems, the core problem, and effect problems. Photo credit: CANARI

- **Package and deliver your message**

Understand the interests and preferences for your target audiences, then decide on the **product** and **channel** or **pathway** for delivering messages to each. Your selection is also dependent upon your available resources, practicality, opportunities, networks and your budget.

Table 2: Examples of target audiences, possible products and pathways

Audience Type	Products	Pathways
Policy makers	Policy and information briefs Participatory video Case studies/research findings	Meetings Presentations Media presence
Media	Popular version case studies Newspaper articles Video documentaries News releases	Meetings Coverage at events Interviews Blogs E-mail

- **Determine the timeframe for your advocacy action**

Some activities will need to happen before others and some need to occur together. Creating a plan will keep you on top of what needs to be done.

- **Decide on means of evaluation**

Identify some checkpoints at which you can monitor progress. Use these as opportunities to troubleshoot and improve.

- **Implement and evaluate**

Execute your plan and assess its progress and outcomes. Learn from your work as your ability to develop a good plan should improve with experience.

In addition to your target audiences, your communication plan should include a general education and awareness component to gain public support.

Table 3: Tools for use in advocacy (adapted from CANARI, 2012b)

General tools	Mixed tools	Specific advocacy tools
<p>News Releases News releases are useful means of getting your message out to a wide general audience. They help to report on your activities, successes and failures in the media.</p> <p>Make sure your release gets to the point and answers the 5Ws and the H: who, what, where, when, why and how.¹²</p> <p>Radio Drama and Radio Magazines Use creative storytelling in the form of audio-only drama to present issues to general audiences.</p> <p>Distribute via radio, a popular form of media in the Caribbean.</p>	<p>Participatory Video Participatory video is a facilitated process that helps stakeholders to tell their story using video. It is a strong advocacy tool that is used to communicate with key decision makers and also alerts wider audiences to key or localised issues.</p> <p>Video can be easily shared using internet tools such as YouTube and Vimeo.¹³</p>	<p>Policy Briefs A policy brief reports on the status of very public issues by combining facts, arguments for change, reasonable solutions and strategic recommendations.¹⁴</p> <p>You can use policy briefs for initiating discussion with key decision makers.</p> <p>Case Studies In a case study you can present a real issue, the process you followed in addressing the issue and lessons learned. The takeaway will be that the process can be adapted to similar scenarios. Share case studies with peers and policy makers.</p>

Find more tips and explanations in CANARI, 2012b.

¹² Find out more about preparing news releases from Communicating for Conservation: A communication toolkit for Caribbean civil society organisations working in biodiversity conservation. (CANARI, 2012)

¹³ See Section 2 **Developing partnerships to benefit livelihoods** for an example of participatory video and links for further information.

¹⁴ See an example of CANARI Policy brief at: <http://www.canari.org/pubcat16.asp>

Special tips

- There is no simple model to follow when seeking to influence policy. You must understand how your society mobilises in the face of adversity, the state of national and local politics and your culture (Brown, 2000).
- Advocacy processes are often unique, so what may have worked for one situation may not work for another problem in another place. Learning therefore requires documentation and evaluation of your actions and the results of your work (Chapman, 2002).
- Whatever the outcome, advocacy can have beneficial effects beyond the lobby issue, one of which could be capacity building in local communities (Brown, 2000).

Note that advocacy is a long term process and policy reform can be slow (Chapman, 2002).

Seeking to influence policy can have political consequences and your relationships with others can be affected (Chapman, 2002).

CASE STUDY: FISH FOR GAS

In 2011, 11 fishers from Blanchisseuse, a small fishing village at the north coast of Trinidad used Participatory Video (PV) to share some challenges with stakeholders who could assist in addressing the problems the fishers faced.¹⁵

Components of the process included: identifying and prioritising problems faced (including no access to fuel for their boats in the community, no ice storage for their fish and wholesale buyers who traded gasoline and ice for fish at lower than market prices); developing a storyboard for the video; capturing and editing video with the support of facilitators and identifying the target audience of key stakeholders who could assist the fishers in solving the problems identified.

¹⁵ The project was led and facilitated by CANARI in partnership with the University of the West Indies (UWI) mFisheries Team and Raynaldo Phillips (of the Forestry Division who is also a videographer and experienced facilitator), who provided technical advice. Funding was provided by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the smartphones used to capture the video were donated by British Gas Trinidad and Tobago (BGTT).



Figure 2: Title screenshot of the participatory video developed by fishers from the Blanchisseuse community. View the video online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SFnazhiu9Y>

Once the video was completed, CANARI hosted a meeting of fishers and the key stakeholders that involved presentation of the video and a follow up facilitated discussion.

‘Fish for Gas: The Challenge of Fishing in Blanchisseuse’ and the process of producing it was empowering, as fishers felt more confident in articulating their challenges and discussing solutions with the key stakeholders. The video clearly presented the complex issues and gave the fishers the opportunity to voice their challenges and recommendations in their own words to key stakeholders. As a result of the project,

fishers were able to form partnerships with organisations that could help develop their fishing industry and the video attracted several offers of assistance. The Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs has agreed to provide a pump for regular gas and ice is now available for use by the fishers in the community at a much lower cost.

Forests in the Caribbean are critical resources for economic development and many rural communities depend on the forest goods and services to support their livelihoods. Many forests in the Caribbean have already been cleared and continue to be lost or seriously degraded. Community forestry is a key strategy in addressing challenges of forest management in the Caribbean and can play an important role in developing sustainable livelihoods. Community groups engaged in community forestry or are considering it, must have the capacity to engage successfully in the management of forest on which their livelihoods depend.

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The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) is a regional technical non-profit organisation which has been working in the islands of the Caribbean for over 20 years. Our mission is to promote and facilitate equitable participation and effective collaboration in the management of natural resources critical to development in the Caribbean islands, so that people will have a better quality of life and natural resources will be conserved, through action learning and research, capacity building and fostering partnerships.



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