

# COMMUNITY ACTION

GEF SGP in the EASTERN CARIBBEAN

SGP The GEF Small Grants Programme



THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME (GEF SGP)

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- 1.5 TO STAY ALIVE
- TROPICAL STORM ERICKA
- SGP GRENADA LAUNCHED

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## CIVIL SOCIETY IN BARBADOS PAVE THEIR ROAD TO PARIS

Leading up to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP21) in Paris, the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in collaboration with the Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC) and Pinelands Creative Workshop hosted the “Civil Society Climate Change Consultation”. The event brought together over 18 CSO representatives, including SGP grantees, to broaden their knowledge on climate change and to facilitate consensus on a strong civil society national position for COP21.

The UNFCCC COP21 is crucial in climate change policy discourse as it will craft a new legally-binding international climate agreement to reduce carbon emissions beyond 2020.

The UNDP Deputy Resident Representative for Barbados and the OECS, Ms. Chisa Mikami said, “Today is an opportunity for CSOs to contribute to the process and add their voices as key stakeholders who stand at ground zero of the effects of climate change.”

GEF SGP National Coordinator for Barbados, Mr. David Bynoe stated, “For SIDS like Barbados, climate change is not

a story. The sea level rise around our coastline, increased flooding and drought events, wide spread coral bleaching and the scorching temperatures we have been experiencing make climate change a reality and the reality of a changing climate means that we must change too.”

“GEF SGP UNDP remains committed to providing the catalyst required to foster metamorphosis of Barbadian civil society, along with civil societies in over 126 countries, as we partner to save the world taking community action that cumulatively has a positive global impact,” Mr. Bynoe stated.

Mr. Rodney Grant, Chief Executive Officer of Pinelands Creative Workshop, added, “We are not doing well in the governing space and we must insert ourselves in dialogues. Climate change is an issue that we cannot ignore as it reflects on our affinity and co-dependence on nature.” He stressed that we each have an individual responsibility to play a role.

Mr. Mohammed Degia, Senior Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade provided an overview of the COP process, its importance and the possible implications of



*Chisa Mikami, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative provides brief remarks on climate change, stressing the importance of CSO involvement*



*A cross section of participants identifying key issues for CSOs in the context of climate change negotiations/processes.*

the outcomes. He stressed that if we do not obtain 90% of what we will need, we will cease to exist.

At the end of the session, it was agreed that a communiqué expressing the concerns and the outcome of the consultation would be shared with the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Environment and Drainage. The CSOs present also committed to the further development of the Major Groups initiated in 2014. (KB)



## TOOLS AND TRAINING TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE



*Facilitators and Graduates of the Training along with GEF SGP NC*



*Radio Grenadines Studio*

*“Today twenty-one proud men and women sit across from me, now trained in Radio Broadcasting and Production.”*

*National Coordinator,  
Hayden Billingsy*



*National Coordinator, Hayden Billingsy cuts the ribbon to Radio Grenadines Studio*

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015 Radio Grenadines Inc. officially opened its internet studio and media facility and also graduated twenty one (21) persons who recently completed a certified training course in Radio Broadcasting and Production which was endorsed by the Association of Caribbean Media Workers (ACM).

Radio Grenadines Inc. a non-profit community organization is implementing a project that is funded by the Global Environment Facility, (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP), UNDP under the theme “raising awareness on climate change and environmental issues through the establishment of an Internet Radio and Media Facility in the Grenadines.”

As stated by one of the founders of the organization, Radio Grenadines operated out of a bedroom for over three years rendering it not suitable to host interviews and community discussions.

Under the project a fully equipped internet radio facility was setup on Union Island, St Vincent and the Grenadines to conduct a series of climate change and community talk shows as well as host interviews and discussions. The project also provided for a two week training course in

Radio Broadcasting and Production and four one day media workshops across the Grenadines.

The two week training course was conducted by the team Maxian Harry and Bernard Joseph both experienced and trained radio broadcasters. Bernard Joseph holds an Instructor’s Certificate in Broadcasting from the BBC as well as over 30 years of experience in the field. The training course received endorsement from the ACM which is a grouping of media professionals across the Caribbean.

The launching and graduation ceremony took place at the Eagle’s Nest in Union Island and was well attended by persons in the community, several speakers remarked on their experience with Radio Grenadines and the project.

National Coordinator for GEF SGP, UNDP Mr. Hayden Billingsy, gave brief remarks stating that the funding agency GEF, is proud to be associated with the Radio Grenadines project, he also recognized that the project contributed significantly to community empowerment and sustainable livelihoods.

Billingsy stated “today twenty one proud men and women sit across from me, now trained in Radio Broadcasting and Production and sixty two others across the Grenadines in public relations and media use, this is what we mean

when we talk about community empowerment”. These figures bring the total number of persons trained under the project to eighty three (83).

Maxian Harry in his remarks encouraged the graduates to always read and be in contact with their community. Bernard Joseph in his remarks gave an overview of the training course which he said was divided into three modules, understanding radio, radio production and performing. He also stated that a session was done on Media Law mainly on defamation which was lectured by Attorney at Law, Heidi Badnock.

Joseph expressed his confidence in the graduating class “I have confidence in you and I know you are going to have a good radio station and you’re going to have good career, you have transferrable skills.” Joseph said.

One of the founders of Radio Grenadines, Stanton Gomes in his feature address told the gathering about how the organization started off in two separate bedrooms in Toronto Canada and Union Island by co-founder Alwyn Alexander originally from Union Island and himself.

Gomes thanked several persons and organizations such as LIME, Nadia Young, Aubrey Mills, Roseman Adams, GEF SGP, UNDP and others whose contribution was instrumental in moving Radio Grenadines ahead. **(SGP SVG Team)**

## 1.5 TO STAY ALIVE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED AHEAD OF COP21

According to the Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN), St. Lucia is one of 20 nations most vulnerable to climate change.

As a result, CYEN partnered with the Ministry of Sustainable Development in St. Lucia, Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) and the Bank of St. Lucia to launch a regional campaign aimed at raising awareness regarding the dangers of climate change. The campaign was intended to build support for climate change negotiators ahead of the 2015 UNFCCC Conference



of Parties (COP21) to be held in Paris.

Describing the campaign, Virgine Sealys, President of the St. Lucia arm of CYEN, shared that the campaign's slogan 1.5 to stay alive was

devised in order to convey that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and other vulnerable regions cannot accept a climate change deal that will not maintain a temperature increase below

1.5 degrees Celsius.

Campaign development included public consultations across the island, production of videos, songs, art projects and 1.5 to stay alive pins. GEF Small Grants Programme and corporate sponsors were first to receive their pins.

St. Lucia was represented by a team at the UN negotiations headed by Minister for Sustainable Development the Honourable Senator James Fletcher, who is also the CARICOM Chief Negotiator.

**(PB)**

## A NOTE FROM RUTH ON HER EXPERIENCE AT COP 21



I felt really honored to have been a part of the Antiguan Delegation for the 2015 UNFCCC annual Conference of Parties (COP 21).

It was an exciting opportunity to meet with the Antiguan Diplomatic team based in NY particularly Hon Aubrey Webson and Tomasie Blair. The Antiguan team worked long hours and represented at COP21. Some of the highlights are presented below:

- Networking with many persons

from all over the globe, forming many new partnerships with agencies from the Nordic Countries and sharing the voices of the local Antiguan communities.

- Strengthening relationships with colleagues from the 5C's (Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre)
- Participating as a panelist on the OECS side event on "Civil Society in a Changing Climate"
- Media appearances and interviews with Desmond Brown of Caribbean News Service and Correspondent for Inter Press Service (IPS), Lance Gould of the Huffington Post, Stanford University Students- Charlie Jiang and Megan Shea of Class of 2017 and the local Antiguan Observer.
- Connecting with George Romilly of Romilly and Partners to finalize

the Crowd funding initiative.

My trip to COP21 would not have been possible without funding and accreditation from the Department of Environment, Ministry of Health and the Environment, Antigua and Barbuda. Thank you for the opportunity and continued support to GEF SGP. **(RS)**

*Ruth Spencer is the SGP National Coordinator for Antigua & Barbuda.*





# CLIMATE CHANGE...ARE WE PREPARED?

## TROPICAL STORM ERIKA



*The Path left by landslides in Petite Savanne*

On Wednesday August 28<sup>th</sup> 2015, the waters of Tropical Storm Erika descended on the Nature Isle of Dominica causing massive destruction, mudslides and severe flooding. The days ahead were grim as Dominicans came to grip with what Erika had left behind: loss of homes, major damage to the islands infrastructure and the loss of life. But in two communities with GEF SGP initiatives there was hope, Calibashie and Bagatelle.

With support from the Australian Aid (AUSAID) through the Small Island Developing States Community-based Adaptation (SIDS CBA) project implemented by SGP, storm drains were constructed in these two communities which reduced flooding significantly. Residents from Calibishie complimented on the construction of the storm drain which carried the water away from the village to the sea reducing the volume of water during the flooding. The Project entitled "Adapting to Climate Change in the Community of Calibishie by increasing community Resilience to Flooding and Sea Level Rise" was implemented by the Calibishie Progressive Group who received a grant of US \$47, 500 from SGP Dominica.

In Bagatelle, the Bafond Pointe Development Committee with a SGP

grant of US \$47, 500 implemented their project "Incorporating Environment Protection Measures and Alternative Livelihood Activities for Climate Change Adaptation in Bagatelle." Residents of the community and the nearby villages testified that if it were not for the newly constructed 1600ft drain, during Tropical Storm Erika they would have been a repeat or worst disaster than the Bagatelle Landslide of 1977 which claimed the lives of 13 persons. Congrats to the Dominican SGP Team for having the foresight to support these two projects. (TP)



*The Storm Drain Constructed in Calibishie*



*A Collection of Photos from the Infrastructural Damage left by Tropical Storm Erika*





On July 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 the GEF SGP Country Programme for Grenada was officially launched to complete the transition of the previous SGP Sub-Regional Programme to National SGP Country Programmes in the Eastern Caribbean. The launch which was hosted at Spice Basket Grenada and was well attended with over forty persons including project beneficiaries, key project stakeholders and partners. Remarks were made by Mr. Timothy Antoine, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Energy, Economic Development, Trade and Planning and Mr. Stephen O'Malley UNDP Resident

Representative and UN Resident Coordinator (Barbados and the OECS).

In the feature address given by Honourable Roland Bhola, Minister for Agriculture, Lands, Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, he highlighted some of the projected impacts that climate change could have on Grenada including increase in rain fall, intense downpours resulting in flooding, erosion, major infrastructural damage and possibly the loss of life. The Minister expressed a high degree of optimism with SGP as the programme seeks to address climate change and other environmental challenges by building the capacity of community groups to manage their natural resources.

Ms. Simone Lewis, the National Coordinator of GEF -SGP UNDP Grenada, provided an overview of the programme achievements since she took office in July

2014. In particular she mentioned the approval of the Grenada National Steering Committee (NSC) and the Grenada Country Programme Strategy (CPS) which governs the implementation of the local programme. She was also pleased to announce the first cohorts of SGP Grenada grantees - a total of nine (9) non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisation (CBOs) who received a total of US\$290,641 In funding from GEF SGP and AUSAID. Representatives of the nine NGOs were all on hand to receive their cheques from Mr. Stephen O'Malley for the implementation of their projects.

Three (3) grantee representatives: Ms. Judy Thomas, Grenada Community Development Agency;

Ms. Paula Burdick, Cocoa Farming Future Initiative and Mr. Dexter Miller, Petite Martinique Farmers' Cooperative all expressed gratitude to GEF SGP UNDP for supporting their community initiatives and shared their excitement of starting to implement their project activities. The evenings proceeds came to a close with melodic tunes of little Joshua Noel on the steel pan. **(TP)**



Mr. Stephen O'Malley UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative (Barbados and the OECS) Presents Grants to Local Grantees

## NEW RIVER FARMERS COOPERATIVE LAUNCHED 1<sup>st</sup> SIDS CBA PROJECT ON NEVIS

October 31<sup>st</sup> 2015 saw the launch of the much anticipated AUSAID SIDS CBA project by the New River Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited. The project dubbed the Restoration of the New River Spring in Nevis, is one of great importance to the farmers and members of the New River community.

The project is aimed at rehabilitating a longstanding water source thus increasing water flow to farmers. This would result in increased crop

production and sustainable livelihood enhancement for the members of the cooperative, their families and the surrounding communities.

The importance of this project cannot be underestimated at a time when the environment is changing and the term "climate change" is on everybody's lips.

SGP National Coordinator, Ms. Ilis Watts, encouraged the famers to do a good job, and if

at the end of the day, the cropping season can be extended by two months thereby providing food for the people of St. Kitts and Nevis, increasing food security while also combatting the effects of climate change, then the project can be deemed a success. **(IW)**



President of NRF Cooperative, Merla Isles & SGP NC, Ilis Watts Unveil the Project Sign



# A Knowledge Product of the GEF SGP Country Programmes in the Eastern Caribbean



## GEF SGP UNDP

UN House  
Marine Gardens  
Hastings, Christ Church  
BARBADOS

**Phone:** (246) 467-6000

**Fax:** (246) 429-2448

**E-mail:** [tracy.phillips@undp.org](mailto:tracy.phillips@undp.org)

Community Action Global Impact

## CONTACT US

### ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

**Ms. Ruth Spencer**  
National Coordinator  
Hodges Bay, P.O. Box 846,  
St John's, West Indies  
Phone: +(268) 783-7286  
Email: [ruths@unops.org](mailto:ruths@unops.org)

### BARBADOS

**Mr. David Bynoe**  
National Coordinator  
UN HOUSE, Marine Gardens,  
Hastings, Christ Church  
Phone: +(246) 467-6011  
Fax: +(246) 429-2448  
Email: [davidby@unops.org](mailto:davidby@unops.org)

### DOMINICA

**Ms. Agnes Esprit**  
National Coordinator  
Dominica Save the Children Fund  
Building, Bath Estate, Roseau  
Phone: +(767) 440-4345  
Fax: +(767) 440 4349  
Email: [agnese@unops.org](mailto:agnese@unops.org)

### GRENADA

**Ms. Simone Lewis**  
National Coordinator  
Public Workers Union Building  
Tanteen, St. George's  
Phone: +(473) 440-7445  
Email: [simonele@unops.org](mailto:simonele@unops.org)

## EDITORIAL TEAM

**Ruth Spencer**  
GEF SGP National Coordinator  
(Antigua & Barbuda)

**David Bynoe**  
GEF SGP National Coordinator  
(Barbados)

**Katherine Blackman**  
GEF SGP Programme Assistant  
(Barbados)

**Agnes Esprit**  
GEF SGP National Coordinator  
(Dominica)

**Ilis Watts**  
GEF SGP National Coordinator  
(St. Kitts & Nevis)

**Giles Romulus**  
GEF SGP National Coordinator (St. Lucia)

**Hayden Billingy**  
GEF SGP National Coordinator  
(St. Vincent & The Grenadines)

**Penny Bowen**  
National UNV Communications Associate  
UNDP (Barbados & the OECS)

**Stephen O'Malley**  
UN Resident Coordinator  
UNDP Resident Representative  
(Barbados & the OECS)

**Producer**  
**Tracy Phillips**

GEF SGP Sub-Regional Programme Associate

### ST. KITTS & NEVIS

**Ms. Ilis Watts**  
National Coordinator  
Conaree Village, St. Kitts  
Phone: + (869) 662-3135  
Email: [iliswatts@unops.org](mailto:iliswatts@unops.org)

### ST. LUCIA

**Mr. Giles Romulus**  
National Coordinator  
P.O. Box 8206 Choc,  
CARILEC Building, Sans Souci  
Castries, Saint Lucia  
Tel: +(758) 452-4900  
Email: [GilesR@unops.org](mailto:GilesR@unops.org)

### ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

**Mr. Hayden Billingy**  
National Coordinator  
Orange Hill Village, Sandy Bay  
P.O. VCO204, St. Vincent & the Grenadines  
Phone: +(784) 532-8438