

# THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

Trinidad and Tobago Newsletter, February 2018



**SGP** The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme

**25**  
YEARS



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.

# WELCOME!

Dear Readers,

Welcome to another edition of the GEF SGP Trinidad and Tobago Newsletter. 2017 was indeed a year of transition for the GEF SGP- globally and locally. We welcomed our new GEF SGP Global Manager, Ms. Yoko Wantanabe with over 20 years of professional experiences working on biodiversity and natural resources management in close partnership with civil society and indigenous peoples. 2017 also launched the celebration of the GEF SGP 25th Anniversary and rebranding of the SGP logo. The logo symbolizes GEF SGP's renewed commitment to supporting the innovative solutions of communities and civil society organizations on global environment and sustainable development issues.

Ms. Rissa Edoe transitioned to the position of National Coordinator after serving as Programme Assistant for 4 years; and we welcomed Ms. Terry Ince as Chairperson of the National Steering Committee, who has been a strong advocate of the GEF SGP for the last 5 years. The SGP office funded 5 new Operational Phase 6 projects in 2017 and implemented several capacity building initiatives.

So as we celebrate these achievements, we invite you to read our newsletter and be inspired by our amazing grantee-partners working towards achieving environmental sustainability!

Happy New Year and Best wishes from the GEF SGP T&T Office for 2018!

## **About the GEF SGP:**

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since 1992. SGP grant making in over 125 countries promotes community-based innovation, capacity development, and empowerment through sustainable development projects of local civil society organisations with special considerations for women, youth and indigenous peoples. SGP has supported over 20,000 community-based projects in biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, prevention of land degradation, protection of international waters, and reduction of the impact of chemicals, while generating sustainable livelihoods.



# Vetiver in Paramin

---

With financial support from the GEF SGP UNDP, the Vetiver Education & Empowerment Project (VEEP) was implemented from August 2016- September 2017 by the Paramin Development Committee (PDC) in partnership with Vetiver TT Ecological Engineering Solutions.

The Project's main objective was to reintroduce vetiver grass to the Paramin Community as a simple but powerful tool for climate change adaptation. The plant's deep and dense root system allows it to serve as a tool for slope stabilization, erosion control, and soil and water conservation. With most

of the participants being farmers on steep hillside farming lands, the project allowed them to implement this climate smart agriculture technique to their lands.

Due to this project 2.5 ha of land is now under sustainable land management in Paramin. 25,000 vetiver plants were installed, 4 community nurseries we set up, 12 craft workshops trained community members on how to make products such as craft baskets, mats and fragranced soaps using vetiver leaves and roots, educational brochures were created and distributed, and a short film called 'Metiver in Paramin' was produced. A solid foundation has been laid by VEEP to enhance resilience to climate change in the hillside farming community of Paramin.

Click [here](#) to read more, and [here](#) for a video link.



# Preparing You!

---



Persons with Disabilities are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change in a SIDS context. With a focus on addressing this gap, over 2015-2017, the Digicel Foundation embarked on a capacity building and infrastructural upgrade initiative called “Preparing You! - A Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Evacuation Project for persons with special needs.” This Project received funding from the AusAID and was implemented by the GEF SGP UNDP.

“Preparing You!” supports climate change adaptation for persons with disabilities across Trinidad and Tobago. Through public private partnerships with National Disaster Offices and local Regional Corporations, the Project has trained 350 persons with special needs, as well as 50 educators/caregivers in disaster preparedness and climate change adaptation. The project also upgraded facilities at 8 special needs schools, which includes emergency alarm systems and life-safety equipment. Additionally, public education has been facilitated through 2 project videos, 4 hazard instructional videos, 1 blog and various posters.

This life changing intervention has been a critical step in climate change adaptation for persons with disabilities in keeping with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework.

Click [here](#) to read more, and [here](#) for a video link.

# Community Recycling in Success Laventille

---

The community of Success Laventille, in East Port of Spain, is often identified as a vulnerable community with high levels of socio- economic deprivation. To address some of these social gaps the Success Laventille Lions Club was established to empower volunteers to serve the community, meet humanitarian needs and encourage peace and promote international understanding through the spirit of ‘Lionism’. The Club has been doing projects in the Success Laventille and Beetham area since 1992.

One of the environmental issues that frequently plagues the nation’s capital is flooding due to indiscriminate dumping of garbage, waste and plastics into roadways and drainage systems (among other factors). Against this backdrop the Success Laventille Lions Club implemented the “Recycling and Re-Using Plastic Bottles: Contributing to Food Security” project with funding from the GEF SGP UNDP between 2015-2016. The Project benefited students from the community who were engaged in information sessions on waste, recycling and responsible consumption. They also participated in the collection and recycling of plastic containers through inter-school waste collection competitions. Additionally, the Project contributed to local livelihoods by providing women in the community with an opportunity to learn new skills and generate food for their households, by re- using plastic bottles as growing containers. Through this Project, the Success Laventille Lions Club also developed important partnerships with other NGOs and local actors, such as the Solid Waste Management Company Ltd, the Ministry of Agriculture, Unit Trust Corporation and Plastikeep.

Click [here](#) to read more.



# Forest Check with E.R.I.C.

---

The Main Ridge Forest Reserve, Tobago is the oldest forest reserve in the Western Hemisphere and is of significant conservation importance. As part of their GEF SGP UNDP funded project, the Environmental Research Institute Charlottesville (ERIC) launched Forest Check in August 2017. Forest Check is an innovative, globally unique initiative that offers tourists the opportunity to work with local tour guides and make direct and tangible contributions to improving conservation and co-management of the Main Ridge Forest Reserve. Through this initiative, visitors can collect invaluable data leading to improved conservation management. Additionally, this initiative supports the sustainable livelihoods of communities that are inherently dependent on healthy forest ecosystems in North-East Tobago.



This GEF SGP project is also linked to the IFPAM (Improving Forest and Protected Area Management in Trinidad and Tobago) project currently being implemented by the Government of T&T in collaboration with the GEF and UN Food and Agriculture Organization. Under IFPAM, the Main Ridge has been earmarked as a national Protected Area to be co-managed by the surrounding communities. As such the activities being implemented by ERIC are currently building the capacity of several CSOs and community members to be engaged in meaningful and effective co-management of the shared resources within this ecosystem.

Click [here](#) to read more, and [here](#) for a video.



# Project R.I.D.E: A Solution to E-Waste

---

When electronics end up in landfills, toxic persistent organic pollutants (POPs) like lead, mercury, and cadmium leach into the soil and water and can result in serious environmental and health consequences. With a solution to this problem in mind, Restore A Sense of I Can (RSC) embarked on an e-waste project with support from the GEF SGP UNDP.

RSC is a non-profit organization with the goal of “Effecting change through technology and education.” In April 2017, RSC launched the R.I.D.E. (Reduction of Indiscriminate Dumping of E-waste) project which seeks to educate the public at large using school based RSC IT clubs, on the dangers of indiscriminate dumping of hazardous material and e-waste. The project also provides an avenue for recycling of E-waste, refurbishment of IT equipment, and distribution of re-modelled systems to NGOs, communities in need and other vulnerable groups. RSC has also solicited the assistance of other major stakeholders/beneficiaries like TTMA (Trinidad and Tobago manufacturing association), TTCSI (Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Service Industries), the Energy Chamber and the Environment Management Authority (EMA).



Over the period of one year the project will establish at least 20 new IT clubs in line with the RSC model, develop a POPs E-waste educational programme, and disseminate this information through partnerships with all major stakeholders. By highlighting the issue of indiscriminate dumping of e-waste, there will be a reduction in further soil and water contamination, and eventually can result

in public participation and advocacy for proper disposal facilities and legislation to assist with this problem.

Click [here](#) for a video.

# UN Oceans Conference

## SDG 14 - Life Below Water



The world's oceans – their temperature, chemistry, currents and life – drive global systems that make the Earth habitable for humankind. How we manage this vital resource is essential for humanity as a whole, and to counter balance the effects of climate change.

Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods. However, today we are seeing 30 percent of the world's fish stocks overexploited, reaching below the level at which they can produce sustainable yields.

Oceans also absorb about 30 percent of the carbon dioxide produced by humans, and we are seeing a 26 percent rise in ocean acidification since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Marine pollution, an overwhelming majority of which comes from land-based sources, is reaching alarming levels, with an average of 13,000 pieces of plastic litter to be found on every square kilometre of ocean.

Preserving the world's marine resources was the focus of the UN Ocean Conference which took place in New York during 5-9 June 2017. As a lead up to the conference a team from UNTV visited T&T to learn about some of the initiatives happening on the ground.

The GEF SGP National Coordinator spoke to UNTV about SGP's work with local communities and conservation groups, and highlighted their work on turtle conservation and the 'ridge to reef' approach to ecosystem conservation.

Click [here](#) to learn more about what SGP T&T is doing to #saveourocean



# Capacity Building with GEF SGP

Over 2017 the SGP office facilitated several capacity building initiatives with SGP grantee partners and CSO audiences. Individualized Proposal writing sessions were held with Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development, SHIFT! Caribbean, Restore a Sense of I Can, Toco Foundation and Habitat for Humanity. SGP outreach sessions were conducted with the University of the West Indies, Green Screen and SustainT&T, IAMovement and the 'Climaton' initiative. The SGP National Coordinator also lead sessions and participated on panel discussions on the core components of turning ideas into projects at the JB Fernandez NGO Conference in June 2017 and the EMA Proposal Writing and Grant funding Workshop in November 2017.



# With Sympathy - Mr. Richard Laydoo

## February 1955 - January 2018

---

Mr. Richard Laydoo was the first GEF SGP National Coordinator for the T&T and Suriname offices and served from 1995 to 2008. He was indeed instrumental in the Programme's establishment and its success to date. He was well known for his great sense of humour and laid-back charm, and was well loved by his regional and global colleagues. He was an SGP champion, and true stalwart for community development and environmental advocacy.



On behalf of the GEF SGP Global Family, we would like to offer our deepest condolences to his wife, 2 daughters, and loved ones. Richard's legacy will forever remain in our hearts and memory.

## Welcome Rudo!

### SGP Programme Assistant

---



Rudo Udika joined the SGP team in 2018, as a National UN Volunteer. She is passionate about people and the environment. She is particularly keen on working with community groups for the sustainable use of resources, within the nexus of climate change.

A Trinidad and Tobago national with a passion for Caribbean SIDS, she has worked within the region (Trinidad, Tobago, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines) on projects related to disaster risk reduction, water resources management, biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation. Further, she has volunteered in

various roles including humanitarian relief projects in Dominica after hurricane Maria.

Rudo has qualifications in MSc. Hydro Science and Engineering, Technische Universität Dresden- Germany; Graduate Certificate in Destination Development, Royal Roads University- Canada; and Bachelor of Science in Geography, University of West Indies- Jamaica Campus.

Rudo can be reached at [rudo.udika@undp.org](mailto:rudo.udika@undp.org)

# Photo Wall



Spring Village Council Composting Project



South-South Exchange in Belize



UWI Chemistry Department  
Aquaponics Project in Guanapo



Arts in Action Biodiversity Awareness Project



Special visit with Mrs. Adriana Dinu, Executive  
Coordinator, UNDP - Global Environmental Finance

**SGP** The GEF  
Small Grants  
Programme

**25**  
YEARS

COMMUNITY ACTION  
GLOBAL IMPACT



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

THANK  
YOU!

Contact Us at:

UN House,  
3A Chancery Lane,  
P.O.S

Email: [rissa.edoo@undp.org](mailto:rissa.edoo@undp.org)  
or  
[registry.tt@undp.org](mailto:registry.tt@undp.org)

Phone: 623-7056 ext 254

Website: [www.sgp.undp.org](http://www.sgp.undp.org)  
[www.tt.undp.org](http://www.tt.undp.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/  
GEFSGPTT](https://facebook.com/GEFSGPTT)

Youtube Page [here](#)