

The United Nations Development Programme



Trinidad & Tobago



Evaluation Report

UNDP Small Grants Programme

June 2011





United Nations Development Programme Trinidad and Tobago
Small Grants Programme.
Healthy Family Functioning: A Multi-pronged Approach
Encouraging Community Initiative

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June 2011

Note: The opinions expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Development Programme, its Executive Board or its member states

Acknowledgments

This evaluation was a joint effort every step of the way. It was a lively and participatory process that included scores of individuals, organizations, partners, community leaders, beneficiaries, stakeholders, and UNDP staff.

In line with UNDP practice, this has been an exercise in which stakeholders participated and helped to shape a continuous process of generating and applying evaluative knowledge, seeking to build an evidence base for future decisions and strategic partnerships. In this sense, it is both summative and formative.

Many people gave of their time and ideas to make this evaluation possible. Among the most important is the UNDP staff in the Trinidad and Tobago office, particularly Beverly Chase, Edo Stork, Stacey Syne, Beverly Charles, Sandra Baptiste-Caruth, and Marcia de Castro. Beverly Chase in particular took time and effort to assure that I met grantees, saw their work in action, and had many invaluable opportunities to ask questions, test my conclusions, air my concerns, and find the documents and data necessary to learn as much as I could as quickly as I could. National Steering Committee members Grace Talma and Sterling Belgrove were generous with their time and infectious enthusiasm, as were former programme coordinators Cherril Sobers, Anna Cadiz, and Richard Laydoo. As with all time-bound evaluations like this one, our days collecting data were full and our experiences were wide-ranging, sometimes unpredictable, and often intense. I was fortunate to have met with Pooja Joshi O'Hanlon of Rockefeller Philanthropic Advisors who provided publications and valuable insights at the beginning of this evaluation. Joseph Fernandes was a generous host in many ways, sharing stories of his family's philanthropic legacy and embodying that spirit of giving and engagement.

I wish to acknowledge the grace and patience I was shown by all, particularly the grantees I met, many of them in their communities. They kindly told me their stories, brought out paperwork, shared their complaints, gave me advice, fed me, and introduced me to those in their communities who had something to share. They told me what they were proud of and what they had hoped to do better. They shared their plans and dreams for the future. I also want to thank the many other people in Trinidad and Tobago who shared their kindred programmes, experiences, and ideas with me during this evaluation process. All of them are listed in Appendix 4.

Any misunderstandings or misrepresentations in this report are solely the responsibility of the author. I have chosen not to quote individuals by name when I do use their words, but I do hope that the energy and commitment I found from those words and from meeting them shine through in this report.

Foreword

In 2003, the United Nations Development Programme Trinidad and Tobago office initiated a small grants programme focused on social development and poverty alleviation issues under the theme of “healthy family functioning.” Support for this programme came from the JB Fernandes Trust through Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisers. The programme was administered and further supported with financial resources and staff from the UNDP office and a voluntary National Steering Committee hosted by UNDP.

Over the course of this small grants programme, 20 local organizations have received technical and financial support for projects aimed to improve the conditions for youth, for communities, and for households. We hoped also to contribute to national dialogues on the range of issues connected to grantee efforts and aims. Healthy family functioning touches on positive parenting, youth engagement and employment, scholastic excellence, music and art instruction, conflict mediation, violence reduction, computer literacy, income generation, social entrepreneurship, community cohesion, crime reduction, family life skills, and inter-generational communication. Grantees in this program addressed many of these issues in innovative ways, in ways designed and directed by local actors and beneficiaries. Nearing the end of its first funding cycle in 2011, we knew that much could be learned from looking closely at the experiences of the programme so we commissioned the attached evaluation. In line with UNDP’s culture of results-orientation and collaboration and learning, this evaluation involved many grant recipients, partners, and stakeholders. Dr. Mary Ann Burris, experienced in the management and funding of small grants programmes as well as the substantive content of healthy families and communities, undertook this evaluation for UNDP.

This assessment underscores the appropriateness of the programme focus on healthy family functioning for Trinidad and Tobago. It outlines the successes and challenges of partner organizations and managers, and suggests ways to build on the innovation, engagement, ideas, and successes of the programme so far.

I would like to thank Dr. Burris for her thoroughness and professionalism. I would also like to thank our grantee partners, National Steering Committee members, current and past, UNDP staff, and colleagues in the region. This has been a participatory effort. While pointing out shortcomings and challenges along the way, the evaluation suggests that our efforts have been well worth our collective contributions. For all who have played a role, we want to express our gratitude.

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Port of Spain, July 2011

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Photo References on Cover Page (Top left clockwise): La Sieva Village Council homework centre; Hope Shelter growbox farming; *birdsong* in concert; Orthopedic Unit, National Centre for Persons with Disabilities. Photos: *birdsong* and UNDP T&T. Background photo: Stacey-Marie Syne

Executive Summary

Small grants programs are field-building exercises. They provide a mechanism for identifying and funding innovative work on the ground and they also create capacity, connection, resources, knowledge, and relationships that amplify their benefits beyond the sum of their individual grants and grant outcomes.

The small grants program that is the subject of this evaluation (UNDP SGP) was established by UNDP in Trinidad and Tobago in 2003 with a \$300,000 three-year grant from the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust through Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors and supported through monetary and managerial cost-sharing on the part of UNDP. The program focuses on social development issues in Trinidad and Tobago under the theme, **“healthy family functioning.”** To date, it has supported twenty projects undertaken by twenty organizations, most of them local community-based groups.

This report answers the following questions about this programme:

- Does the vision of the programme match the needs of Trinidad and Tobago?
- Is the programme a good fit with UNDP’s mandates, skills, and mission? Did their participation add value to the work?
- What were the procedures established for managing the programme? What were the roles of the National Steering Committee and of UNDP and how well did they function to support the programme?
- Who were the grantees and what did they accomplish? What were their challenges along the way? What benefits were derived at individual, organizational, and community levels?
- How does the experience of this small grants programme align with experiences elsewhere in the country and globally? What expectations are appropriate? What lessons have been learned?
- What recommendations can be made to strengthen the programme going forward? What learning has resulted and how has it been shared?



Figure 1. National Steering Committee meeting.
Photo: UNDP T&T

Findings include the following:

- The vision and theme of the UNDP SGP are in alignment with national needs and government priorities in Trinidad and Tobago.
- The UNDP SGP fits squarely within the mandates and aspirations of UNDP in Trinidad and Tobago and globally, and offers compelling opportunities to link content areas, agencies, and levels of engagement by UNDP in the country.
- The procedures utilized to manage the programme were to establish a National Steering Committee and provide dedicated UNDP personnel to service the programme. Twenty grantees were identified and grants were awarded, managed, and mentored. Marketing and outreach were limited. The programme did not create or maintain effective communication strategies, build strong networks, or connect with national debates.
- The work accomplished by the twenty grantees of the programme is cause for celebration and pride. Together, they provide a useful frame for tackling the endemic and intransigent issues related to dysfunctional families and communities in Trinidad and Tobago. Grant projects demonstrate positive results at individual, organizational, and community levels, but progress was uneven and the learning from them has not yet been systematically documented or built upon. Systems for knowledge creation were weak.
- The lack of capacity in grantee organizations was a challenge to programme managers and to grantee projects and execution.
- The current limitations of national, non-profit, and for-profit social sector actors in Trinidad and Tobago make it difficult to scale up the programme, but some opportunities do exist to contribute to this larger capacity issue.
- Comparisons with other small grants programmes puts into perspective the high human capital and transaction costs of such programmes, and helps to ground expectations of success and the effort required in experiences elsewhere.
- Lessons from this programme point to the need:
 - for flexibility and responsiveness on the part of programme management
 - for over-all programme goals to be defined and refined throughout the life of the programme
 - for clear and appropriate guidelines for project execution to be defined in consultation with grantees and used by all as the projects are carried forward

- for benchmarks for project success and documentation to be established and maintained (even in the absence of baseline data)
 - for criteria of grant selection and assessment to be clear
 - for technical assistance to be thorough, consistent, and strategic
 - for indicators of programme accomplishment to reflect the realities of organizational capacity and the complexity of the issues being addressed
 - for effort to be given to creating strong relationships between grantees and grantee efforts, and
 - for aggressive and creative outreach and communication strategies to be established and vigorously utilized.
- Should a second iteration be undertaken, more strategic outreach and engagement mechanisms, more transparent and inclusive criteria for grant selection, and regularized procedures for providing technical assistance and building strategic alliances would be essential. This would result in more benefit to the country, to UNDP, to stakeholders, and to donors.
 - Learning from programme projects to date could still be leveraged to contribute to national discourse and also create more solid and visible linkages between UNDP programmes and national agendas. The documentary video of the UNDP SGP now underway offers one opportunity to share the work of the programme within the context of national need and UNDP's role in Trinidad and Tobago.

Expectations of a Small Grants Programme

At their best, small grants programs are field-building exercises. They provide a mechanism for identifying and funding innovative work on the ground and they also create capacity, connection, resources, knowledge, and relationships that amplify their benefits beyond the sum of their individual grants and grant outcomes. When the content focus of a small grants program is well matched to local needs and to the skills and interests of those managing it, such a program can provide invaluable avenues for exploration, experimentation, communication, and learning. Because they link work on the ground to systems and individuals operating at levels removed from direct community connection, small grants programs can enhance capacity at both ends of the program—to those who are recipients of grant monies, and to those charged with oversight and coordination. An effective small grants program can make substantive contributions to an issue, creating a community of practice around its concerns, linking those working on related issues, encouraging engagement by a wider range of actors, and establishing a more enabling environment for building on its experiences and successes.

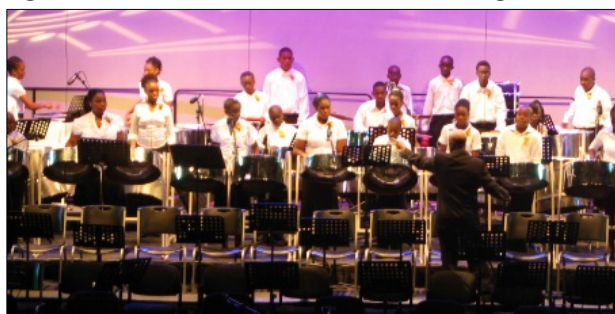


Figure 2. Youths of the *birdsong* music literacy programme practising. Photo: *birdsong*

Background to this evaluation

The small grants program that is the subject of this evaluation was established by UNDP in Trinidad and Tobago in 2003 with a grant from the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust through Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors. It has been supported throughout by financial and managerial inputs by the UNDP Trinidad and Tobago office. The program focuses on social development issues in Trinidad and Tobago under the theme, “**healthy family functioning.**” Within this rubric are included poverty reduction, developing capacity of civil society organizations, and a range of activities by community groups to support positive parenting, engage young people in pro-social learning and relationship-building, crime reduction, scholastic excellence, music and art exposure and instruction, anger management and conflict mediation, violence reduction, social entrepreneurship, computer literacy, income generation, sexuality education, family life skills, and inter-generational communication and support.

Methodology Utilized

This independent evaluation was commissioned by UNDP Trinidad and Tobago in November 2010 and is included in the office 2007-2011 evaluation plan. The terms of reference and supporting documents and materials were made available to the evaluator during this consultancy through websites, email, archival research, interviews, roundtable

discussions, and site visits. Given the time limitations, this evaluation took the form of a rapid assessment in which intensive interaction with key stakeholders substituted for prolonged fieldwork. The evaluation was designed as a participatory and consultative exercise, with a strong learning component. In accordance with UNDP's culture of results-orientation, learning, inquiry, and evidence based decision-making¹, this evaluation aims to support programme improvements by outlining lessons learned and building an evidence base for future decisions related to this and other small grants programmes. Also in line with UNDP guidelines, this evaluation was designed as an exercise in which stakeholders participate and help to shape a continuous process of generating and applying evaluative knowledge. Providing feedback to and stimulating ideas from grantees, NSC members, and UNDP staff was a continuous process characterizing the style and intent of this exercise.

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation are in Appendix 7.

Focus of this evaluation

This evaluation of the UNDP SGP focuses on the following aspects of the program:

- the vision driving the program and its relevance for Trinidad and Tobago;
- the match between this program and UNDP's capacity, mission and mandates;
- the processes and procedures established for realizing the vision;
- the scope of grantee projects and organizations and their activities, successes, challenges, and outcomes;
- knowledge created and relationships built through this program;
- an assessment of how this experience compares to other small grants programs;
- how to build from and improve this work into the future.

Vision: Does the programme match the needs of Trinidad and Tobago?

From 2003 to 2011: vulnerability increases

In 2003 when this programme was conceived,

Trinidad and Tobago was witnessing a rise in crime and insecurity that has only gotten worse in the intervening years. They were documenting rising school dropout rates, particularly of young males, unemployment, anti-social behaviour, and malaise in certain vulnerable neighbourhoods, and intransigent pockets of poverty in a nation boasting unusually high



Figure 3. Prison inmates participate in Vision on Mission's resettlement programme.

Photo: UNDP T&T

¹UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results (UNDP, 2009), p. 127.

per capita assets. Rising rates of murder, rape, and intra-familial violence were concerns of the population and its elected leadership, and they remain concerns today in 2011.

Poverty and inequality

At the end of 2005, the level of poverty in Trinidad and Tobago was estimated at 16.7%². Pockets of poverty and inequality are higher than expected for a high-income country³. Trinidad and Tobago, with a population of 1.3 million that is primarily of African (37.5%) and East Indian origin (40%), remains in the High Human Development category of nations. Poverty data suggest the youthful dimension to poverty in that persons within the 0-19 age range account for 53.1% of the indigent, 43.8% of the poor and 38.9% of the vulnerable⁴. Recent adoption of multi-dimensional measures of inequality and poverty has seen the Human Development Index (HDI) of Trinidad and Tobago drop by 2 points, showing a loss of over 15% in human development. The country is ranked 20 on the new Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) and ranks 48 on the new Gender Inequality Index. Particularly troubling is the fact that the maternal mortality rate in Trinidad and Tobago is on the rise. (65 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1994 and 160 in 2000). Current projections for the Caribbean region indicate that they will not meet the MDG goal of a 75% reduction in maternal mortality by 2015.

Gender

Trinidad and Tobago's record on gender equity is uneven. While secondary and tertiary data point to higher rates of school completion for women and girls than for men and boys, it remains the case that women have the most vulnerable forms of unemployment and dominate the informal sector. Further, male under-achievement in education is a worrying trend. There are high and apparently increasing rates of gender-based violence. A National Gender Policy has been in development for years. Rape, incest, and family dysfunction are increasingly troubling features of urban and rural realities. Nevertheless, Trinidad and Tobago has not submitted reports on the Core Human Rights instruments since 2003 or completed and promoted a National Gender Policy. Relative to other countries with such high rates of insecurity and tension, there is little rights-based language or spirit obvious in the national agenda or in national strategies for development.

HIV/AIDS

HIV takes advantage of the fault lines in societies, creating a roadmap of vulnerability linking self worth, family life, sexual practice, community coherence, service delivery, and economic condition. As the unpublished UNDP Trinidad and Tobago Human Development Report 2003 focusing on HIV/AIDS points out, the rising rates of infection are multi-causal. In Trinidad and Tobago, poor income distribution, high levels of poverty, high proportion of female-headed households, a culture in which norms of male dominance and female subordination is embedded, parenting standards in need of improvement, families and communities in which child abuse, incest, rape and violence

² Government statistics in unpublished Survey of Living Conditions, 2005

³ This is particularly true of the northeast and southwest areas of the island. In Nariva/Mayaro/Siparia and St. Andrew/St. David counties, the poverty rates reach 30% and 40% respectively. In 2009, the GDP was US\$21.2bn, most of it coming from its oil and gas reserves.

⁴ Trinidad and Tobago, Common Country Assessment, February 22, 2011, pg. 7

are prevalent, lack of trust in authority, uneven educational achievement and feelings of hope for the future, limited access to health services, little respect for confidentiality, all work together to create conditions ripe for HIV and AIDS. This same list describes the conditions that prevent healthy family functioning. There is a natural and strategic link between these two areas of work.

Goals of the national leadership

In May 2010, Trinidadians elected a new coalition party to power, replacing the former administration that held the reigns of leadership for over ten years. The new leaders, called the People's Partnership, has indicated its intention to reduce the number of poor by 2% per year. Many people interviewed describe this transition as more of a vote of no confidence in past leadership than it is a resounding vote of confidence in the new coalition or citizen solidarity around central tenets of power-sharing or issues of concern that often characterize coalitions of this sort.

The new People's Partnership administration is embarking on a "Framework for Sustainable Development" that sets seven aims:

1. Fostering people-centred development
2. Moving towards poverty eradication and promoting greater social justice
3. Ensuring national and personal security
4. Expanding the use and availability of information and communication technologies
5. Building a more diversified, knowledge intensive economy
6. Entrenching good governance
7. Presenting an accommodating foreign policy

Social sector spending and focus

Funding for the social sector is the largest public expenditure. (Transfers and subsidies estimated at 16% of total public expenditures in 2011). One of the stated concerns outlined in the government's 2011 budget was inclusive development and growth and a fairer distribution of income and opportunities. Larger government investment in public sector and State enterprise mechanisms is promised in 2011. (TT\$7 billion for each) The new Prime Minister, Trinidad and Tobago's first woman to hold this position claims a strong interest in promoting gender parity, women's leadership, and children's well being when she speaks in public. In April 2011 she invited General Colin Powell and his wife to launch the National Mentorship Programme designed to provide caring adults to children and youth in Trinidad and Tobago who are in danger of failing.

Crime

Another concern of national leadership is crime. The new administration has indicated its commitment to pursuing a multi-pronged approach to addressing the political, economic, social, technological, and managerial dimensions required to promote safety and security. (In consonance with these efforts, UNDP is soon to launch a Caribbean Regional Human Development Report on Citizen Security). While all reports and studies call for a pre-emptive approach to crime prevention, one that offers new opportunities that can provide a buffer for young people who are vulnerable to bad influence and living in poverty, policies and programs are unclear at present. Particularly relevant is the apparent connection between poor parenting and youth delinquency⁵.

Healthy family functioning at the centre

As one telling illustration of the timeliness of healthy family functioning to national concerns, on one day, April 1, 2011, the national newspapers carried stories underscoring its relevance. Newspapers on this day included coverage (with troubling photos) of a 57-year-old mother who brought the police in to help her fend off the repeated and life-threatening beatings of her 27-year-old son; a 24-year-old Petrotrin employee arrested for having sex a five-year old girl; a 35-year-old Baptist high priest sodomizing a 12-year old church boy; three gang-related shooting deaths, all of them men under 25; ten hospital staff suspensions resulting from the death of a 29-year-old woman in their care during childbirth⁶. Every day the newspapers, television, and radio decry crime and the problems that result when families and communities fail to offer avenues for achievement and engagement to their young people, and fail to insist on respectful relations between generations. Old people, who equal in numbers the youth in Trinidad and Tobago, also suffer from considerable degrees of abuse and abandonment. The family, long considered a private domain in Trinidad and Tobago life, is being interrogated for explanations of rising crime rates and the general feeling of insecurity characterizing the nation. A 2004 survey conducted in Gonzales, one of Port of Spain's more challenging communities (and the site of one of the UNDP SGP grants), reported that 52.7% of the community's problems were family-related⁷. Families matter and everyone seems to know this and also to feel overwhelmed in the face of the challenges of creating positive change in this contested arena.

The vision and focus of the UNDP SGP is then in perfect alignment with national needs and current government policies, and could in future create improved opportunities for partnerships and good work on the ground. The UNDP SGP theme of "healthy family functioning" brings together the concerns of crime and insecurity, poverty, male and youth socialization, healthy sexuality, and the weak link between needs on the ground and data, policies, and programmes that reflect or address those needs. The UNDP SGP programme, in both theme and execution, offers a valuable opportunity to

⁵A 2007 youth survey for Trinidad and Tobago undertaken by Arizona State University found that the Form Three and Four students surveyed from 22 schools and 5 districts found that 49.5% reported parental attitudes that favoured anti-social behaviour and 48% reported high family conflict. 1997 Ministry of National Security data claim that 30% of "youth offenses" were "having no parent or other fit person to provide" for them. Youth are clearly victims of family dysfunction.

⁶The daily papers in Trinidad and Tobago are the Guardian, Newsday, Express.

⁷Draft Gonzales Community Development Plan (February 2006) undertaken by community stakeholders and the Canadian Institute of Planners.

identify and support locally designed ways to address these difficult and deep issues of dysfunction. The SGP system has the patience and flexibility to allow grantees to stumble, learn from their mistakes, and then step up to begin to meet these challenges. Such an approach is essential to tackling the endemic problems that result in vulnerability and insecurity, lack of trust or a coherent sense of connection to family, community, or to nation.

Many of the UNDP SGP grantees use family metaphors to describe their work: *"The band becomes family,"* said one of the directors of *birdsong*, *"It is a safe haven."*

"I am like a father to these boys," said the senior facilitator at the YMCA Men Touring Project. *"What's the greatest success for me? Seeing some of these boys turn their lives around despite their family situations. There is no price for that. At our last graduation, only two family members showed up—one mother and one brother—but we were all there."*

"I like it here," said one of the boys in the program at the YMCA, *"We get to make good relationships—better than in school. We find how to treat each other with respect."* *"Where I am from, you are supposed to be bad,"* said one of the girls, *"but we don't have to be bad here."*

"My son completely changed after participating in our programme," said one Village Council leader, *"before he would not speak or help anyone in any way. Now, he has become a leader in his own right. He is applying to medical school and is helping others in our community with his new computer skills."*

UNDP: Does the SGP match the mandates, skills, and mission of UNDP?

The UNDP SGP is very much in line with current interests and expertise of the UNDP Trinidad and Tobago office, and the UN globally. This has contributed to the success of the SGP to date, but could be more consciously built upon and expanded. These natural alliances and capacities could be strengthened, thereby helping to build stronger inter-office coordination and more effective substantive connections to private sector partners, bi-lateral representatives, non-profit actors, academics, and government allies.

Basic framework and focus areas

The most recent United Nations Development Framework for Trinidad and Tobago (UNDAF 2008-2011) stated a central aim as encouraging public participation in all levels of government by implementing inclusive and rights-based social and economic policies that empower and protect vulnerable groups. Focus areas include gender, access to information, greater civic participation, accountability, fairness, transparency, and efficiency. Special emphasis is placed on addressing parenting skills, creating protective environments for children, women, and other vulnerable groups, improving Caribbean household surveys, and developing community media. The SGP focus on healthy

households and vibrant community actors is fully in line with these mandates and priorities. It has funded projects that share these aims, implementing them at local levels.

In addition, the UNDP Country Programme Document establishes aims of building civil society capacity through the “creation of an enabling environment for inter-organizational coordination for service delivery” and “increasing NGO and CBO capacity to plan and execute programmes at local levels”⁸.

Into the future

The next programming cycle for the UN system in Trinidad and Tobago is 2012-2015 and in this cycle the UN will focus on joint programming, with the UN contributing mainly technical expertise to inform policy, build capacity, and support program implementation. In late 2010, the UN Country Team agreed to focus specifically on two joint programs: poverty alleviation and wealth creation (MDG1) and social statistics. They will continue to convene and participate in joint teams on HIV and AIDS, gender, MDGs, communications, emergencies, and common services.

Potential of the Trinidad and Tobago UN System

The UN system in Trinidad and Tobago comprises 13 entities, 9 of which are based in-country, so that UNDP has access to expertise, programs, and strategic relationships that encompass the issues and interest groups with potential to contribute the UNDP SGP focus on healthy family functioning. Throughout the world, one of the challenges of addressing family-centred issues, from crime to teen pregnancy to unemployment, is the need for a multi-sectorial and multi-faceted approach. Regional assessments of the Caribbean Community’s achievements in terms of the MDGs conclude that one clear need is to effect more systematic linkages between the goals and the sectors and circumstances most responsible for meeting, or failing to meet, them⁹. The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) could provide a framework for fostering these connections in policy and the UN system, and other international organizations could work with government to realize these linkages in programs on the ground. Likewise, the UNDP SGP could contribute to connecting agencies with the UN system, building another grounded avenue for fostering the strategic linkages called for in the Caribbean MDG assessment.

The UNDP SGP also has resonance for two more recently developed efforts of the UNDP Trinidad and Tobago office: citizen security and corporate social responsibility and volunteerism.

Citizen security

Citizen security is a subset within the broader concept of human security. Human security, according to UNDP’s 1994 Human Development Report, can be assessed along seven dimensions: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security. A recent study prepared by UNDP Trinidad and Tobago as background to UNDP’s Caribbean Human Development

⁸ UNDP: Country Programme Document for Trinidad and Tobago 2008-2011.

⁹ “Regional Report on the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the Caribbean Community,” UNDP, 2004

Report on Citizen Security concludes that a preventive as opposed to a reactive approach to reducing violence may be most effective for Trinidad and Tobago. Particularly important to understanding crime in Trinidad and Tobago may be the breakdown of family structures coupled with a sense that family life is private, and therefore not a comfortably recognized site for intervention. Asked what she had learned from a UNDP SGP-supported project to encourage improved parenting skills in the Five Rivers Parent-Teacher Association, one PTA leader said, *"I have learned that good parenting can be taught and that we can change the relationships between parents and their children in real ways. We can see the differences here in our school. It is not easy, but we are sure we have had an impact, one child and one family at a time."*

Gangs are a particular area of concern to those working to improve citizen security; again, this paper recommends that a comprehensive approach that addresses antecedent factors at the individual, community, and national levels would be most effective. Interventions aimed to reduce crime and insecurity, the report concludes, should focus on community and societal cohesion. *"The homework centres and computers give young people a place to be and new things to learn and share with each other.*

They also create a sense of family, a sense of belonging, especially for young people with difficult situations at home and little adult supervision," claims one leader at Four Roads Tamana Village Council,

talking about the work the UNDP-SGP was supporting in her community.



Figure 4. Four Roads Tamana Village Council homework centre.
Photo: UNDP T&T

Democratic governance

Through its aim to build a stronger civil society, the UNDP SGP is linked to the village council movement and is therefore aligned with UNDP's governance focus. A third of the grants were to unit councils or allied community based organizations (CBOs) to support activities aimed at improving healthy family functioning while also strengthening the councils or CBOs themselves. The programme encouraged communities to evaluate their needs and their local assets and design projects to engage a wider group of their members. It groomed local leaders. The benefits of participation were realized at individual levels while also building community solidarity and coherence. The last grant awarded to St George East Branch Association is expressly designed to build the capacity and confidence necessary so that these unit or village councils can become stronger advocates and actors. Referring to the potential of the village council system to build local governance practice in Trinidad and Tobago, one expert notes, *"Democracy is alive in any community when the people hold the ruling power directly or through elected representatives, on the basis of the principle of equality of rights and opportunity"*¹⁰. The UNDP SGP, by supporting these local actors to increase their understanding of and engagement with their communities, has contributed to this democratic aim.

¹⁰ "The Council's Guide Understanding the Constitution of Village and Community Councils: An Emerging Paradigm for Social Justice," Sterling and Marcia Belgrave, 2008, p. 2

Private sector partners: corporate social responsibility and volunteerism

UNDP Trinidad and Tobago recognizes the critical role that the private sector can play towards the development of the country, particularly through the practices of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Corporate Volunteerism. In 2004 UNDP launched a Public-Private Partnership Strategy and in 2007 it organized an extensive review of the sector. This review showed that CSR was still in its embryonic stages, largely driven by foreign companies and characterized by a lack of planning, engagement, or strategic alignment among local entities. The majority of programmes were not in line with national development plans or Vision 2020, the goals of the former administration. Limited coordination, small geographic focus restricted to fence-line communities, duplication of efforts, and lack of attention to issues of sustainability, monitoring and accountability describe the sector at the present time. The assessment identified a number of entry points and outlined recommendations for building the CSR culture in Trinidad and Tobago. These include improved targeting and the strengthening of partnerships. It was determined that the private sector, through the practice of CSR, has a great potential to contribute to the socio-economic development of Trinidad and Tobago. In the four years since the CSR review, UNDP has continued to be engaged with private sector initiatives in an effort to encourage a more enabling environment for effective policies and programs in their areas of work. Their latest publications include two booklets on corporate volunteerism that suggest strategies for encouraging business involvement with community efforts¹¹.

The SGP fits squarely within the mandates and aspirations of UNDP in Trinidad and Tobago, and offers what could be an invaluable tool for identifying and engaging new leaders, connecting with local-level issues and groups, engendering new ideas and models of community engagement. It also provides avenues for building bridges between grantees, between grantees and donors, and between the SGP and relevant government programs and ministries and for communicating the work of UNDP in compelling ways to partners and the public.

¹¹"Roadmap to Corporate Volunteering in Trinidad and Tobago: Six Steps Towards Developing an Employee Volunteer Programme," and "Corporate Volunteerism: Developing A Business Culture of Caring in Trinidad and Tobago," UN Volunteers and UNDP, 2011.

The UNDP Small Grants Programme: Processes and Procedures

Substantive goals



Figure 5. Agricultural training at the Hope Shelter for vulnerable women in the community. Photo: UNDP T&T

Through discussions between JB Fernandes Memorial Trust representatives, UNDP, and government representatives, the idea of establishing a small grants program that would tackle the difficult social issues that were beginning to show themselves as obstacles for development in Trinidad and Tobago was vetted and approved in 2003. Crime was on the rise, gender-based and intra-family violence was high and getting higher, gangs were proliferating, poverty statistics showed that pockets of society were falling behind, and families and social systems were having trouble providing the nurturing

environments necessary for healthy socialization and integrated community growth.

To build an effective small grants programme to make positive contributions to these realities, the following objectives were drafted to guide programme development:

- Broaden the scope of grantee to civil society organizations
- Provide support to civil society in a more holistic manner by addressing broader issues and focus in on linkages among the issues
- Integrate the upstream and downstream approaches to sustainable development by the inclusion of civil society in the decision making process at the policy level
- Address poverty through measurable improvement in the standard of living of the poor and excluded
- Build capacity at the basic level of the community - the family, to strengthen that unit's capacity to effectively contribute to the sustainable development of the larger units within society
- Enable UNDP to address development needs in project development at the community level within the UNDP Common Country Framework and facilitate down streaming from policy levels
- Expand the GEF SGP criteria to add community sustainable needs and build capacity at a community level for development needs

An envisioned three-way partnership

The UNDP SGP was originally envisioned as a tripartite arrangement whereby UNDP would administer the grant program, and JB Fernandes Memorial Trust through Rockefeller Philanthropic Advisors and relevant Trinidad and Tobago government ministries (particularly the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs) would contribute matching funds and reliable engagement as the program took shape. Unfortunately, the government did not meet its promises through cost-sharing or active support of the program. No written record exists of an agreement outlining the role that the government was to play in the UNDP SGP, so subsequent efforts on the part of UNDP staff and NSC members had to be based on personal connections and entreaties - which, in the end, amounted to little¹². As this report will show, there are several instances of successful pairing of grantees with government schemes and programs, but the UNDP SGP **as a program** did not benefit from consistent participation or financial inputs from the government of Trinidad and Tobago in ways anticipated and expected. To their credit, UNDP was able to build a body of work and seed an impressive and varied array of organizations and projects without these inputs. Government inconsistency, however, has continued to be a challenge to UNDP SGP and to the grantees of the programme.

Links to a pre-existing small grants programme

The UNDP SGP was designed to take advantage of and partner with another small grants program in the UNDP Trinidad and Tobago office, the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP). Established in 1992, the year of the Rio Earth Summit, the GEF SGP channels financial, technical, and capacity-building support directly to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) for activities that conserve the environment while enhancing people's well being and livelihoods. The GEF SGP in Trinidad and Tobago was established in 1995 using grant support from the McArthur Foundation to leverage admission to the global GEF partnership. The TT GEF SGP is part of a vibrant global partnership that sets agendas, provides support, oversees evaluations, and operates according to mandates and procedures established for the entire system. Since 1995, the TT GEF SGP has funded 74 projects totalling almost \$1.4m (\$2m in co-financing). The GEF SGP grant budget for 2011 is \$450,000¹³. UNDP provides overall management of the GEF SGP. Project execution is under the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), with supervisory and technical support provided by a Central Programme Management Team at UNDP New York. GEF is the single largest earmarked source of income for UNDP, contributing approximately \$286 million per year, 50% of the UNDP budget for environmental programming and projects¹⁴. In terms of financial assets and programme coherence and support, the GEF SGP is considerably stronger than the UNDP SGP.

¹²One notable exception is the payment of \$59,000, half of a promised contribution to the UNDP SGP on the part of the Ministry of Social Development, earmarked for particular projects.

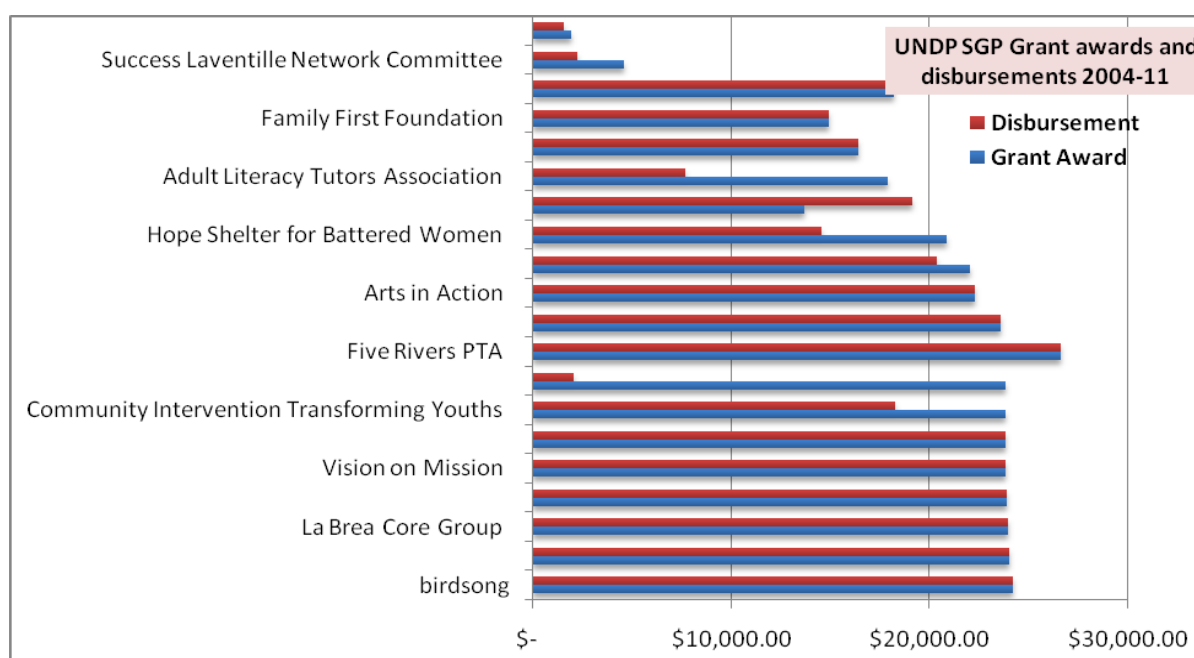
¹³ Globally, the GEF SGP had 51 national and two regional programs, covering a total of 63 countries as of 2002, with grant totals exceeding \$56 million. GEF SGPs now exist in over 100 countries.

¹⁴ Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Environmental Management for Poverty Reduction: The Poverty-Environment Nexus," UNDP, 2010, p. 9.

A need for increased time and effort

From 2004 to 2010, the UNDP SGP awarded twenty grants. Original awards ranged in size from \$1,905 to \$26,642, as the table illustrates.

Original grant awards differed from disbursement in some 30% of the grants. In the case of 8 grantees, additional funds were mobilized from sources other than JB Fernandes (namely, UNDP and the Ministry of Social Development). In six cases, grantee organizations failed to utilize all funds available. The picture is one of making adjustments throughout the life of grants to meet the requirements and capacities of grantees and the success of projects funded.



Throughout the UNDP SGP, payout has been slow. In no year were funds fully expended, and there remains a small balance at the time of this evaluation. To date, 17 of these projects have closed, two were cancelled due to implementation challenges, and one is on-going. The last two grants the NSC approved were awarded in June 2010. Most grants had to be extended, all but one with no additional cost¹⁵. Original grant awards, extensions, project aims, and project results can be found in the table above and in Appendix 1. While these tables do not demonstrate this, the mentoring of grantees has continued beyond the close date of UNDP SGP grants. Many relationships built between UNDP and these grantees are still alive. They could be further invigorated and built upon if increased time and effort were allocated.

Small grants programmes by their very nature are time-intensive and transaction heavy. Because the efforts are explorations or pilots and those carrying them out at community levels often lack experience and capacity, extra inputs from all stakeholders are usually required. The NSC and the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust did provide the flexibility necessary to accommodate grantees that needed more time and extra attention. It is

¹⁵ BARCAM's award was increased to enable them to complete their video.

difficult to know if a more coherent grant identification and support strategy would have resulted in fewer extensions or delays in pay out, but it speaks well of all partners that they never abandoned grantees mid-stream and they were always willing to approve extensions when asked. The UNDP SGP was faithful to its grantee partners and patient with their processes. The results were usually worth the wait.

Grantee Partners: The Flesh and Muscle of the Program

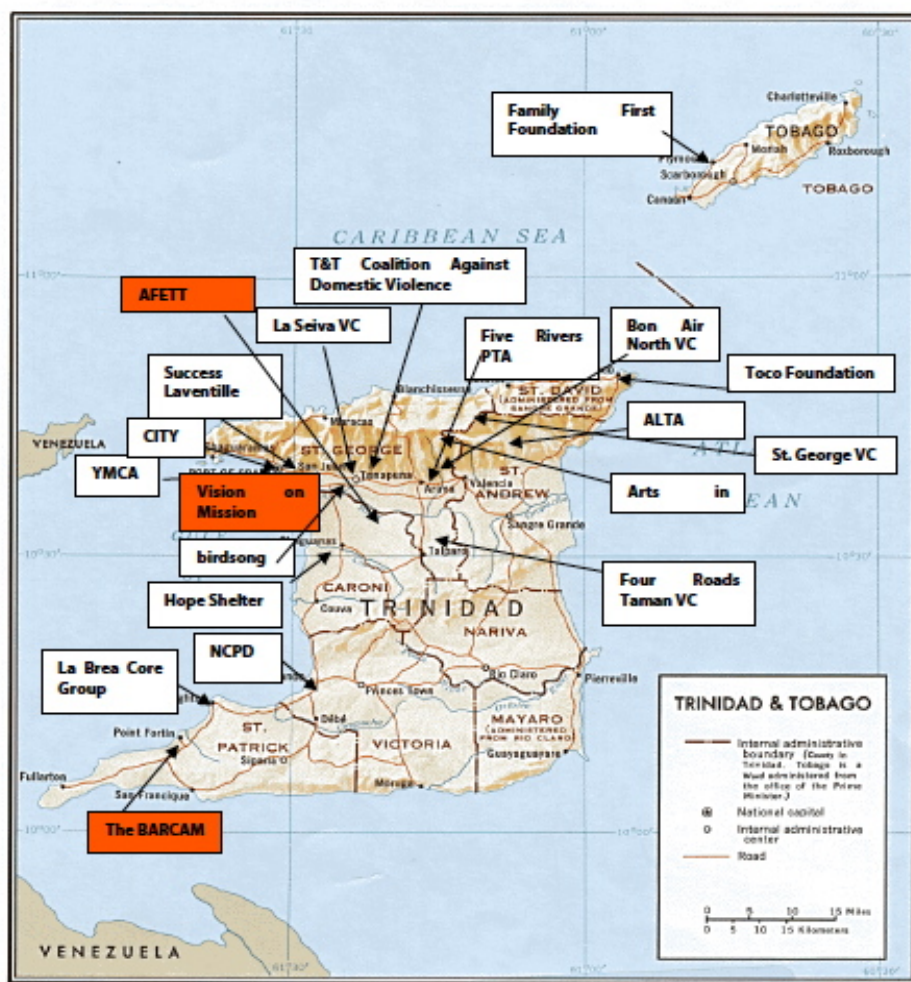
Multi-faceted strategies required for this endeavour

The thorny issue of healthy family functioning can only be effectively approached from an inclusive and experimental frame, a frame recognizing that change happens simultaneously at the level of the individual, the family, and the community, and also recognizes that the ambitious and very private and entrenched nature of some of the changes hoped for take time, patience, and flexibility to achieve. Outcomes are rarely fully captured in quantifiable indicators, nor are they instantly obvious. Consequently, interventions designed to affect positive impacts on a topic such as this one must be understood and judged against these realities.

The variety of projects and the quality of outcomes encompassed within the 20 grants awarded by the UNDP SGP describe a multi-faceted strategy for addressing the issue of healthy family functioning. In geographic reach (see map) and substantive endeavour, the story is one of grounded work responding to a range of problems identified by local people and being addressed by local people.

It is a story of building alliances and opening doors to new opportunities, competencies, and relationships. **The programme has much to be proud of in these regards.**

Appendix 1 has a listing of the 20 UNDP SGP grantee projects and Appendix 2 has notes from the consultant's interviews with 13 of them. From these we see that the range of project aims include parenting skills, violence reduction, skills training and social enterprise, community census, homework centres, cyber cafes and computer training, leadership development, conflict mediation, literacy and libraries, values clarification, sex education, creative teaching, refurbishment of homes, unemployment, cooking classes, community clean-ups, child care, elder care, inter-generational communication and support, sports, music and arts exposure and training, agricultural enterprise, appropriate aids and income for the disabled, safe houses for victims of abuse, and rehabilitation for ex-prisoners. The last grant awarded supports a programme to re-enliven village committees of the 15 unit councils within the St. George East Branch Association and make them stronger actors and advocates for personal, family, and community change and empowerment.



Base: PS378 5-09
Map of Trinidad and Tobago



SGP Induction session for the St George East Branch Association of Community and Village Councils.
Photo: UNDP T&T

Most of the proposals requested and received support for more than one activity. Realizing that community development is rarely accomplished through a single focus or event, these grantees took on a creative array of local problems and addressed them through a multi-pronged set of activities. For example, the Family First Foundation in Tobago, in its efforts to increase support for women and children vulnerable to violence and abuse, trained police officers and community leaders, set up seven community-level responses to reports of gender-based violence, produced a parenting manual, and produced a radio programme. Four Roads Tamana Village Council, in their efforts to strengthen

community cohesion and better serve their population, provided training in cooking, grow box agriculture, garment construction, family budgeting, and home décor while also establishing a homework centre and computer laboratory for children and youth, working with THE BARCAM to use theatre to raise sensitive issues about fathers and responsibility, and building stronger bridges between the UNDP SGP-funded project and a local government-sponsored micro-enterprise loan scheme. One of the students in the home décor training went on to receive a small loan and set herself up in business. *"We were able to really touch lives,"* said one leader, *"The Village Council felt proud of what we did."* When asked about writing the reports required by UNDP, another Council member said, *"To me it was a learning process. While I was doing it, I was learning. We were happy that our work brought new people in. One woman who never spoke is now able to communicate with her neighbours."* *"We have become a strong family,"* remarked a third, *"but we do still have trouble getting more people to take responsibility, to lead."* Projects like these are iterative, one thing informing the next, and cumulative, the sum of the parts is often greater than or different from what was originally intended. The fact that the UNDP SGP was able to provide the opportunity for so many local groups to experience these kinds of successes, however small they seem, is consequential and impactful.

Challenges faced by grantee partners

Interviews by the consultant pointed to the considerable challenges faced by almost all of the grantees of the UNDP SGP programme as they carried out their projects. At the same time, their work demonstrated considerable perseverance, flexibility, creativity, and commitment to accomplishing their goals. During the years of their grant projects, many organizations had leadership changes or community challenges that disrupted their work. Few organizations had people in place who knew how to write reports or track finances. They had little sense of how to document their successes or their learning. Almost none had dedicated staff to take responsibility for these things. Rather, nearly every group relied wholly on volunteers, whose personal responsibilities often had to take first place, meaning the organization suffered. Activities were postponed, people who promised to show up did not do so, local buy-in and enthusiasm wavered, leaving the same few individuals holding responsibilities they had hoped would be

"We had lost our spirit after the last elections and the distrust that had developed here," reported one La Sieva Village Council participant, *"Our Council President had already drafted her resignation letter when this project came along and helped us find our way again."*

shared. Many organizations seem to have stayed alive through the efforts of unemployed or retired women. Almost everyone talked of the challenges of getting people to commit to work and, even when promises were made, to come through when called upon. Nevertheless, all who completed their grants were proud of themselves for having accomplished as much as they did. They report that the experience benefitted them personally, helped their organizations to grow, and brought new energy and effort to their communities and beneficiaries. **Also important, most of them have clear ideas about the next steps they wish to take. Many have clear plans about how they might scale up work funded by the UNDP SGP, and a few projects offer opportunities for replication beyond their own communities.**

No one is getting paid: volunteerism and its consequences

Throughout this evaluation exercise, the need for Trinidad and Tobago to focus on developing a professional cohort of non-governmental leaders and workers was pronounced. While volunteerism is a laudable marker of a caring society, it is also true that salaries demonstrate the importance that a society gives to certain activities. We do not expect our doctors or accountants to work without pay. An exclusive reliance on unpaid labour will unlikely result in the kinds of capacity building that the NGO and CBO sectors so clearly require at this point in time. If this small grants programme, or other private or public sector mechanisms, could be brought in to address this fact (by funding directors of community organizations, project coordinators, internship programmes, and the like) some of the local capacity issues which continue to plague those trying to promote the establishment of local initiatives would be better solved.

Documenting the work as it takes place: links inside and outside

Benefits of the programme are often invisible in the reports and log frames that list activities and beneficiaries, often in a numerical fashion, so it behoves UNDP SGP staff and NSC members to find ways to record and honour the successes accrued at individual, family, organizational, and community levels, while also helping the grantees to do a better job of documenting and learning from their own work. One simple way to do this would be to require that “documentation” be a line item with a work plan and a dollar amount assigned to it in every proposal. This documentation effort would become central to grant assessment and reporting as well as reflection and sharing by grantee organizations, building on indicators of success agreed upon in the initial grant award process. Technical assistance would be provided to assure that this happens. One possible approach would be to organize a system whereby one or two youth from each grantee organization or community are chosen as key correspondents. They are brought together and trained and charged with documenting the work by interviewing participants, filming or photographing events, keeping diaries of activities as the work unfolds. Together they produce newsletters and press releases, thereby building their own capacity and connection while systematically documenting the learning and sharing the work on the ground.

Some grantees did produce videos of their work, and most of them did take pictures of activities, but the UNDP SGP does not seem

As one long-standing NSC member puts it, “Small and deep is better than big and shallow.”

to have yet done much to create opportunities for them to share these documentation efforts amongst themselves or more widely, nor has a path been visibly cleared to help

them use this work to build a collective voice to advocate for changes they feel are called for or to attract new partners to their efforts. There was little connection made between work on the ground and debates or policies at the national or regional level.

Benefits to individuals: experience leveraged

Not only did individuals continually report that they felt that they had personally benefitted through their participation in UNDP SGP-funded projects, but grantees when probed also reported individual indirect benefits to beneficiaries. One young man who learned to play pan and clarinet at *birdsong* now has a job at the fire department that he got because of his musical skill. (Others at *birdsong* have gotten jobs through music with the police department.) Another young woman from a poor family who was a tutor at one of the community homework centres was able to secure a scholarship for her university schooling because the Village Council President wrote a letter about her selfless and dedicated contributions to her community. In many cases, improved skill and confidence meant new opportunities for youth and community members who participated.

Benefits to organizations: doors opened

Similarly, introductions made by UNDP SGP staff or NSC members brought new funding opportunities to many of the grantees. Through such introductions, the YMCA received UNFPA support for a youth photography project called Shoot 2 Live. The Association of Female Executives of Trinidad and Tobago is likely to receive UNICEF support for a follow-up meeting to discuss their White Paper on Child Care Situation in the country. Several grantees of the UNDP SGP have received direct grant support from the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust through the Rockefeller Philanthropic Advisors since their awards from this programme. In all cases, the grantees felt that the UNDP SGP had opened doors for them that were important to their organizations and to their efforts to better serve their communities. And yet, one of the common complaints of grantees was the fact that there were so few donors or corporates interested in funding the logical next steps of their projects.



Students of the birdsong academy learning music theory. Photo: UNDP T&T

Benefits to communities:

Each grant report lists the numbers of people who attended trainings or participated in community clean-ups, cooking classes, parenting classes, homework centres, skills training, music camps, street theatre, and the other activities funded under the UNDP SGP programme. Much of this is reflected in the table of grantees included in Appendix 1 to this report. This information is important for tracking the use of funds and the organization's adherence to its work plan, but it does not tell the deeper stories of change at community levels. Almost every organization had a story to tell about how their work engaged new community members, how people who were previously unwilling or unable to share or connect became more active members of their communities, about how working together had helped them overcome differences that had split them in the past.

Some of the grantees had as one goal identifying community members in need¹⁶ and helping them to take advantage of existing food, employment, or home refurbishment projects, or connect to micro-lending schemes. Many of these individuals found new resilience through these relationships while also contributing to the larger collective. Some programs began by identifying young people or elderly people in need and working with them. In the same ways that the UNDP SGP set out at the programmatic level to mentor and engage civil society organizations, many grantee organizations set out to mentor and engage their own constituents. Experts analysing Trinidad and Tobago's crime problems universally cite the lack of "social cohesion" as a cause for criminal activity and increasing citizen vulnerability and unease. In its small but significant ways, one village council or one community group at a time, the UNDP SGP is working to address this important issue.

The National Steering Committee: Heart of the Programme

The National Steering Committee is the heart of any small grants program. They are expected to bring technical expertise, knowledge of content and policy areas, as well as professional connections, relationships, and resources to grow the program beyond a list of grants and partner activities. They create a community of practice and a set of knowledge products that allow a small grants programme to claim big impact. If they are strong, focused, and engaged, the programme is also likely to be so.

Twinning two programmes

The GEF SGP in Trinidad and Tobago had an established National Steering Committee (NSC) that made award decisions and oversaw grant projects dealing with conservation and livelihoods. The newer UNDP SGP was to focus on social, familial, and community dimensions of development, linking with (but not limited to) a focus on environmental concerns. The idea was to combine forces and utilize the mechanisms developed by the GEF SGP to service this additional small grants program. This was a decision based on expediency of execution as well as an articulated goal of bringing social development issues and the people addressing those issues more concretely into projects dealing with environmental degradation. Both programs see themselves as supporting promising pilots and bringing new actors into the field, and it made sense to combine forces in substantive as well as administrative ways. A June 2005 draft of NSC Procedures encourages synergy between the two programmes, but also ensures that discussions of grantees of the two SGPs be separated during NSC meetings. Funds were not merged and discussions needed to clearly delineate the two different programmes. There are few



Project in Bon Air which received grants from both GEF-SGP and UNDP-SGP. Photo: GEF-SGP T&T

¹⁶One, La Brea Core Group, undertook an ambitious community-wide census that, while it remains unfinished and unpublished, taught them a lot about the 3,600 households in their area.

instances of co-funding by GEF and UNDP SGP, and grantee communities largely remained separate. Given the different themes of the SGPs, this was not unexpected. Nevertheless, some NSC members felt that it was a shortcoming of the programme, a missed opportunity to link environmental issues to social and community issues in inventive ways on the ground.

Membership and staffing

To facilitate the additional content areas and communities brought forward by the inauguration of the UNDP SGP, the National Steering Committee (NSC) which oversaw GEF grants was expanded to include members, from civil society and government, who brought social development experience into the group. They coined the term “Community Outreach and Response Initiative” to highlight the holistic nature of their approach to the issue of families, poverty, and civil society engagement and to environmental concerns. A single NSC has worked together to assess and mentor both sets of grants and both programs (GEF and UNDP). Membership in the NSC has varied slightly over time.

Year	NGO	Research	Private	Trusts	Govt	UNDP	Total
2005	6	2	2	2	4	1	17
2006	5	1	2	2	4	1	15
2007	4	1	2	1	4	1	13
2009-11	4	1	1	1	4	1	12

Many NSC members have participated in the programme for the life of the UNDP SGP. Of the NGO members in the four NSCs represented in the table above, three have been members since 2005. The single NSC member from a research background has been the same person throughout; the consistent trust representative is from JB Fernandes. The Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Commerce has provided the single remaining representative from the private sector (the individual changed in 2009), and the same four government ministries (Environment, Social Development, Community Development and Tobago House of Assembly) have continued to send representatives, though individuals have changed slightly. The UNDP member has usually been the Deputy Resident Representative, signalling the importance UNDP has given to this work. When an NSC is pro-active and engaged, this kind of consistency is a good thing. When they are not, it can stifle growth, enthusiasm, and change. Clearly, the NSC has benefitted from the energy and commitment of two or three real champions of the programme, but many other NSC members have not been as active or consistent.

Originally, the National Coordinator of the GEF SGP oversaw both programs with the help of a Program Assistant. By 2005, a UNDP SGP Program Coordinator (Programme Associate) was hired to focus on the UNDP SGP grantees, administration, and technical assistance. In 2006, she left and was replaced by another full-time UNDP staff who is still responsible for the programme.

UNDP staff has been responsible for organizing the NSC meetings, setting the agendas, preparing background documents on grants, and stimulating the appropriate inputs from NSC members. They have some other responsibilities at UNDP, but the SGP is to take the majority of their time.

Rules of participation

All members of the NSC act in a voluntary capacity, although government representatives are assigned by their ministries to participate in the NSC. Remuneration is only approved for reimbursement for travel costs incurred during field visits. A Conflict of Interest policy was eventually drafted to assure that NSC members not benefit from sub-agreements from SGP grantees for the provision of technical assistance or workshop expertise. This was deemed necessary because many NSC members offer these services in their private professional lives, and are key players in this growing community of actors in Trinidad and Tobago who offer technical support to non-profits and for-profits. Links between NSC members and some grantees are long-standing and close.

A need for systems

While the body of work undertaken by grantees of the UNDP SGP over the years has clearly made important contributions to individuals, communities, and organizations, the lack of systematic stewardship on the part of the NSC has created shortfalls in the programme's success overall. It seems the NSC may have been slightly more successful regarding the GEF SGP, but much of this could be due to its relationships to global GEF systems and expertise. A second iteration of the UNDP SGP would call for corrections in these regards. Given the power of the work accomplished on the ground, it would be well worth the investment. While there is no "one-size-fits-all" when dealing with the exigencies of local organizations and pilot efforts, some degree of standardization is necessary for the program to function and to have an evidence-base to judge its successes.

NSC Minutes over the six years of combined operation record acceptable attendance by the NSC members, but do not demonstrate that they put in place the structures, selection guidelines, content-focus, marketing, resource mobilization, systems of learning, or enthusiastic outreach needed to ensure that this programme meet its full potential.

In 2005, an evaluation of the NSC was conducted by a consultant who presented recommendations for improvements¹⁷. Based on a survey of returning NSC members, the report underscores a concern about the transparency of grant selection and the process for electing the NSC Chair. It further provides a number of targeted recommendations to improve the efficiency of NSC meetings, field visits, grant progress reviews, and learning. One suggestion was to extract key learnings from field visits, discuss them at NSC meetings, and use them to evolve more responsive and appropriate guidelines, reporting systems, and indicators of success. Another recommendation was to select substantive themes and focus on these thematic areas both in NSC meetings and in calls for proposals. Her report calls for the development of a point system to evaluate incoming proposals, a matrix for assuring geographical reach, and regular feedback solicited from grantees about their own assessments of the SGP processes. Finally, the evaluation strongly urges the NSC and UNDP to market the impacts of the programme to the public to raise awareness of the programme.

In addition to these very useful recommendations, this evaluation would suggest retaining an open-date acceptance of proposals (meaning grantees can submit proposals

¹⁷Kate Bevins, Small Grants Programme: Recommendations for the Reform of the National Steering Committee, PowerPoint presentation, 2005.

throughout the year), but cluster those proposals vetted by UNDP staff into two or three meetings each year in which NSC members would make awards decisions. Clustering vetted proposals would provide time for UNDP staff to prepare background documents to enable the NSC to make their grant award process smooth, timely, and accountable. It also would bring a useful comparative perspective to discussions of grant merit and reach. The other regular monthly NSC meetings would then be freed to discuss on-going grant reports and requirements, building in a consistent focus on the larger picture aspects of the grant programme (media, knowledge creation, documentation, engagement with experts and other actors, field-building). Many of these things were weak in an NSC process that was overly reactive and somewhat unstructured.

Reactive or proactive?

While NSC Minutes do indicate some degree of reflection of the problems particular organizations were encountering or that UNDP was encountering in getting complete reports from grant recipients on time, there seems to have been no regularized system for building on these reflections. Discussions were reactive and limited to particular projects at hand, so there was a missed opportunity to build a body of knowledge and practice that could contribute to improvements to the programme over time. Anyone who has managed a small grants programme of this nature recognizes the challenge of soliciting high quality inputs from a volunteer steering committee; nevertheless, systems were suggested by this evaluation that would have contributed to the UNDP SGP had they been acted upon at the time. A survey questionnaire that was used in this 2011 evaluation to gauge NSC members' assessments of the programme confirm that they recognize that the weakest aspects of the SGP were its success at building a larger enabling environment for grantees beyond the funds received, and connecting the programme to larger national issues of healthy family functioning, poverty, and community agency and ability. (See Appendix 5). All NSC members report high levels of personal satisfaction from their participation in the programme and feel that the programme warrants continuation, particularly if NSC mechanisms and standards are clarified and strengthened. They further recognize that improvements could be made to grant management processes.

Identifying potential grantees

In the beginning, the NSC was pro-active in its attempts to identify appropriate grantees and projects. It continued largely to utilize its own networks to share the programme with prospective grantees and invite interest in the SGP. Most participants were introduced through a previous relationship with UNDP, the GEF SGP, or an NSC member. There was some value placed on opening the process beyond the circles already part of NSC



NSC Meeting. Photo: UNDP T&T

networks. A brochure on the Community Outreach and Response Initiative was produced that included both the environmental focus of GEF and the social development focus of UNDP SGP and provided instructions to prospective grantees interested in applying.

In 2005, the Coordinator placed an advertisement in the newspaper announcing the program's intention to reach vulnerable rural communities and 80 organizations responded, though very few of these eventually became grantees. Records provided by the UNDP SGP Coordinator indicate that between August 2005 and 2010, the UNDP SGP had some 48 applicants, half of them NGOs and half of them CBOs. Most of these were either multi-focal or dealt with poverty; 4 were related to HIV/AIDS and one to democratic governance. 20 of the 48 were from Port of Spain. NSC Minutes do not record discussion of many of these concept notes, so it is not clear which ones were rejected and why, or how the criteria for selection might have changed over time. UNDP staff did all initial vetting of inquiries, concept notes, and proposals.

In essence, the process used to promulgate the program and engage new grantees was largely based on personal networks and/or past engagement with UNDP or with NSC members. While Trinidad and Tobago was repeatedly described to this consultant as a "highly networked" society and one in which such a personalized recruitment approach is appropriate, a more open and publicized strategy would have at once brought new grantees forward and let others know that the programme was taking place. It could have engendered improved recognition of the initiative.

"Yes, Trinidad and Tobago is a culture of networks, but the networks themselves do not interconnect," remarked a 22 year resident who manages a bilateral grant fund here.

"We don't take the trouble to reach beyond the groups we already know, but if we did I am sure we would discover good people trying to do good work that we are unaware of," replied a manager of a government poverty reduction programme.

Making award decisions

Despite mention early on in the NSC Minutes of a score card and a set of criteria for selection of grants, and a matrix of NSC members and the geographical areas they were to be responsible for, if these were ever developed, they was not used systematically by the NSC to determine who got grants or who would mentor which grantees. There was little articulation of standards—who, when, how much, for what, and no overt focus on particular themes. Decisions about how much grant money to award might have been made as a result of NSC members' familiarity with a prospective grantee's work and capacity, but there were no guidelines established to track these decisions. When the NSC elected to reduce the amount of money granted from the money requested in proposals, grantees later complained that they got only a percentage of the funds they asked for but received little guidance on how to reduce their activities and expectations to match the resources awarded. Some were quite bitter about this. They felt it caused them to falter and fail.

Due to the absence of the government's funds and the lack of success in resource mobilization generally to increase the grant monies available to the programme, many promising projects remained in the "pipeline," awaiting decisions but never awarded.

Providing technical assistance: UNDP Leads, NSC Assists

UNDP and the NSC organized a capacity building and proposal-writing workshop in 2004 hosted by Creative Parenting for the New Era and invited twelve prospective grantee organizations to participate. The majority of these eventually became the first set of grantees of the UNDP SGP. In 2007, in response to their observation that grantees in the UNDP SGP were having trouble implementing their work plans and reporting on their activities, the NSC organized a workshop for 16 grantee organizations to discuss project sustainability¹⁸. The NSC were disappointed that most grantees did not send people in leadership or program management positions to attend. The 34 participants were largely auxiliary personnel with little influence in their respective organizations and limited knowledge of the history of the projects supported by the UNDP SGP.

Outside of the funded workshops offered to grantee organizations, technical assistance generally took the form of personal exchange between grantees and the UNDP SGP Coordinator or NSC members. UNDP staff report one on one formal capacity development interventions with four grantee organizations (Hope Shelter, YMCA, CITY, and Vision on Mission) that included team building, training in logical frameworks in preparation for project documentation, and proposal preparation. Continuous informal skills-building interaction with groups was carried out as needed. While NSC members did sometimes participate, the burden of this technical assistance effort fell on UNDP. To demonstrate this, a table in Appendix 3 attempts to capture the inputs from grantees and UNDP during the course of a single grant. The numbers of phone calls, emails, visits, reports, revisions to reports, discussions concerning payment and budget are difficult to capture in such a lifeline, but they are important to recognize. Constant communication was required by some of these projects and organizations. As the turn-out to the 2007 workshop attests, volunteers in these organizations were not always available to participate in larger training or capacity-building exercises, and the technical assistance feature of the programme seems to have evolved to these more personal and individual reactions to requests for help, combined with UNDP's need to satisfy reporting requirements. Accountability was labour-intensive; technical assistance was continuous, but un-coordinated.

The final grant in the programme offers another possible pattern for engagement—that of funding umbrella organizations to in turn provide technical assistance to grantees. Some NSC members feel this could relieve UNDP of some of the need for “hand-holding.” While this may be true, several grantees value their direct relationship with UNDP and do not want their engagement with the programme to be managed by others. Some balance could be struck between these in future.

Extending the timeframe, adjusting expectations

The consistent experience of the UNDP SGP and the NSC overseeing the programme was of a shortfall between the expectations placed on grantee organizations and their capacities to meet those expectations. Almost all grants were extended more than once. Reasons for the extensions included leadership changes, in-fighting, slow uptake by community members, insufficient support from other actors, and poor planning. It is important to note that these problems are common features of this type of work and

¹⁸ Workshop invitations went to 21 grantee organizations (all 14 UNDP SGP grantees and 7 GEF SGP grantees). 16 grantee organizations attended.

these types of organizations. Reaching a balance between flexibility and support and responsiveness to local needs and realities, on the one hand, and clarity of expectation and attention to detail, on the other, is a constant challenge.

Many conversations with government ministries and within the NSC highlighted the “lack of capacity” in community groups receiving grants. While both the NSC and UNDP endeavoured to address this capacity issue, it continued to plague the programme and create frustrations on both sides. Given these realities, the UNDP SGP should be favourably recognized for its perseverance in continuing to work with grantees beyond the timeframes initially agreed upon, taking time to explain reporting requirements, answering questions, and supporting the groups as they found ways to do the work they wanted to do. This is an important feature of small grants programmes everywhere. “Small” does not mean fast or easy.

The Role of UNDP: Circulation System and Brain

UNDP’s contributions to the successes of the small grants programme are pivotal. UNDP has provided staff to the programme, organized and minuted the meetings of the National Steering Committee, hosted and updated an internal website for NSC members, overseen communication between parties, participated in the NSC,¹⁹ marketed the programme, organized workshops, hired consultants to provide technical assistance to grantees, hosted field visits, provided assistance and support to grantees from the proposal writing process through the work of the grant and its reporting, provided financial and managerial oversight every step of the way, brought in new supporters and stakeholders, cleared paths to government programmes, and contributed funds and manpower to undertake this evaluation. Transaction inputs have been considerable. Just as the heart pumps blood through the circulatory system, the NSC described above is intimately connected to UNDP and its ability to oversee the programme and to engage intellectually and substantively with its content.

The difference a good reputation can make

It was clear from this evaluation that the good reputation of UNDP in Trinidad and Tobago was of considerable consequence to grantees of the UNDP SGP. They felt pride in having been acknowledged by a respected global entity such as the United Nations and some of them commented that this recognition was as important as the resources provided. It mattered greatly to them to have been a part of a UNDP programme. And, while many of them complained about the stringent reporting procedures and financial systems, the pressure to perform, and the incentives to act in a timely manner, they also felt that their capacity as individuals and as organizations benefitted from the learning and the interaction with UNDP. This is important.

¹⁹The Deputy Resident Representative is a permanent member of the NSC.

The balance between independence and dependence

UNDP staff was attentive to grantee needs, responsive to requests for assistance, and participated as much as possible in grantee events. There was a sense of comfort and partnership established between the UNDP SGP Coordinator and most grantee organizations. Nevertheless, it does seem that the degree of dependency on and decision-making power of UNDP staff was higher than might be optimal. One of the aims of the SGP is to strengthen civil society organizations by building their capacity to identify the needs of their communities and more firmly establish their organizations so that those needs can be met at local levels in ways designed and implemented by local people. The balance between encouraging local agency and capacity, even when it might mean things fail, and providing advice and assistance from outside, is a difficult balance to find.

It is clear that there are capacity issues with most of the grantee organizations who are a part of the UNDP SGP. It is also evident that participating in the UNDP SGP did help build capacity in many of the organizations beyond the life of the grant. All donors and managers of other development efforts in Trinidad and Tobago interviewed in this evaluation process commented on this lack of capacity. Many people referred to the need to “hold hands” with civil society groups if they are to succeed. Given that most of the grantees that are part of the UNDP SGP are run solely with volunteer labour and comprised of local membership, that balance is likely to continue to be a challenge. It has been essential to some grantees that they have someone to ask or commiserate with as they undertook the work that was funded. Active listening is central to a local capacity-building programme such as this. The question to continue to ask and put into practice is how to build local agency, when to speak and when to remain silent, and how to systematically build on what is being learned and experienced.

Capacity Development

As mentioned above, UNDP SGP Coordinator held primary responsibility for building the capacity of participating organizations outside formal workshops that engaged professional consultants. This took the form of trainings and informal exchange, prompted by grantees and by UNDP itself. Without clear guidelines for this technical input or organizational benchmarks to judge its success, it is difficult to be sure how effective these inputs were beyond building capacity to meet the grant reporting and execution requirements. Grantees do report that they are stronger after participating in the programmes and learning how to report on their work. Many have gained skill and confidence. However, organizational capacity and sustainability can only be truly measured if the organizations themselves have participated in defining their organizational goals and determining the indicators they will use to measure meeting those goals.

“UNDP was our gateway,” claims a leader of birdsong Steel Orchestra, “It forced us to develop disciplines that gave us access to others later.”

Resource mobilization

UNDP and the NSC had limited success mobilizing additional programme-level funds for the UNDP SGP. When approached, government ministry staff were reported to have said

that they did not feel a need to contribute to this programme when they were managing their own programmes²⁰. UNDP was successful, however, in bringing resources and new relationships to grantees on an individual basis. These included introductions to government programmes and linking corporate donors who contributed computers and airline tickets. Many of these examples are described in the interview notes in the Appendix 2. In addition, the fact that UNDP made substantial financial investments in the form of staff salaries, staff time, and managerial costs must be noted. Over the six years of the programme, these costs almost match the \$300,000 in grant funds contributed by JB Fernandes through Rockefeller Philanthropic Advisors²¹.

The match with UNDP's Standard Operating Procedures

UNDP has administered this programme within its mandated national and global financial systems and reporting requirements. In some instances, there has been room for flexibility to take into account the particularities of grantee partners, but in general larger in-place UNDP systems of accountability have been used to manage this programme.

During the life of the UNDP SGP, UNDP adjusted its methods of disbursement. During the earlier years of the programme, UNDP advanced money to grantees in a manner familiar to practices accepted by private philanthropies (and used in the GEF SGP). Disbursements were made, grantees reported quarterly on their work and expenditures, and then subsequent disbursements were released based on an agreed-upon work plan and acceptance of their reports. The UNDP SGP Coordinator reports that this system was difficult to manage and grantees would often retain funds while they postponed activities and failed to report on time. There was never any suspicion or indication of misuse of funds in any aspect of this programme; nevertheless, the new system was brought in to create more stringent monitoring and reporting practices. This change from payments to organizations against their budgets to reimbursements of funds already spent and direct payment to vendors was in part a reaction to the slow rate at which grantees were accounting for the funds they had received. The resulting adjustment to disbursement procedures, however, acted to further encumber some grantees in their efforts to complete their projects. Some grantees complained that they had trouble finding the money to spend first so they could then seek reimbursement. When the focus of the grant was a workshop as in the case of 2010 grant to the Association of Female Executives of Trinidad and Tobago (AFETT) who were organizing a meeting to table their report on child

"This small grants programme is a well kept secret," said one NSC member, "and it shouldn't be. More people should know what we are doing and what the grantees have done."

care, the grantee was happy to have UNDP pay its vendors directly. This forgave them from handling grant money. In that particular case, this new system matched the work plan, but resulted in under-spending of the grant. However, most grantee projects in the UNDP SGP were

multi-faceted, on-going, and community-focused. Such a direct vendor pay-out system does not serve to build local capacity for managing and accounting for funds or programs. Rather, it externalizes those responsibilities to UNDP staff and systems, failing to create capacity within organizations to manage their own affairs.

²⁰ Interview with UNDP SGP Coordinator Ms. Beverly Chase.

²¹ The UNDP SGP Coordinator salary devoted to the programme over 7 years totals \$220,000; other UNDP contributions over that time total \$69,000 (ranging from \$32,170 in 2004 to \$166 in 2010), for an estimated UNDP financial contribution of \$289,000. After 2008 when Trinidad and Tobago became a Net Contributor Country, the UNDP SGP was no longer eligible for the same amount of core UNDP funds.

The need to communicate

The remit of the single-country social development UNDP SGP in Trinidad and Tobago is to program outside the focal areas of the GEF, yet the UNDP SGP has largely developed as parallel in spirit and in management style to the GEF. While the UNDP SGP certainly benefitted from the pre-existing systems set up to administer the GEF SGP, the twinning of the two programs may also account for less innovation and experimentation with systems, less pro-active communication strategies focusing on its issue of “healthy family functioning,” or more tailored and effective technical assistance that might have been the case if the program were independent. More conscious efforts to communicate the work and the learning from the UNDP SGP on its own terms could certainly be accomplished, even under a joint NSC system such as this one.

Knowledge creation and scaling up

There are a host of ways in which communication and knowledge creation opportunities of the UNDP SGP were under-utilized. Little effort was made to collect, archive, or systematically share the products of grantee partners, their work as it was taking place, or the successes and learning resulting. There is little evidence of attempts to market this good work to the public or other potential stakeholders,²² or to leverage it so that it could contribute to national policies and discussions. An evaluation of the Trinidad and Tobago GEF SGP and its success in achieving closer linkages on poverty and environment programming found that there was a weak framework for scaling up best practices and a disconnect between the policy orientation of UNDP programming in Trinidad and Tobago and achieving these linkages²³. This evaluation of the UNDP SGP found similar weaknesses.

Despite discussion of a “Media Policy” for the UNDP SGP at NSC meetings (and funding allocated at one time to implement it), work to engage the media seems not to have been an implementation priority. Nor was much effort devoted to bringing to the table more of the scholars and experts from the region whose work on family dynamics, gender, violence, leadership, crime, and community cohesion is well known. Given the deep resonance of the work of grantee partners to national priorities and UNDP mandates, this oversight is unfortunate. Part of this may be due to the political environment of the country and a limited interest in statistical analysis, evidence-based programming, or engagement with global instruments that measure development. Many Trinidad and Tobago national development indicators show stagnation; many more lack up-to-date data or analysis that could be used to shape policies and programmes. UNDP’s



Trainees at work in the Orthopedic Unit at the National Centre for Persons with Disabilities. Photo: UNDP T&T

²²There are several examples of individual connections being made between government ministries and grantee efforts, and some made with other donors, but could have been a more consistent and systematic feature of the programme.

²³ “Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Environmental Management for Poverty Reduction: The Poverty-Environment Nexus, UNDP Evaluation Office, 2010, p.66

efforts on other issues, such as its regional analysis of citizen security and MDG report on HIV/AIDS, provide positive and noteworthy exceptions to this apparent rule. These same capacities could be brought to bear on healthy family functioning, taking this issue to its next steps.

Any future iteration of this small grants programme would need to focus more attention on the field-building aspects of this work, on up-streaming lessons and experience so that they contribute to national development. Many lessons learned and experiences garnered were not fully acknowledged or shared. Good work does not speak for itself beyond the confines of its own process and place. Attention has to be given, resources allocated, and expertise utilized for this to happen.

Making a video of the SGP

While this evaluation was taking place, a contract was signed with a local video production company to put together a documentary film of the UNDP SGP. There were several videos made by grantees during the grant process, some of them funded directly by programme funds²⁴. A few of them are excellent, but few of them have been well utilized.

This new video offers an exciting opportunity to link the work in the UNDP SGP over the past seven years to issues of national importance and to the vision and mandates of the United Nations, showing the inspirational stories of the grants and challenging all who watch to realize that this work is work in progress. It requires a multi-pronged approach and some risk-taking. To succeed, we all need to pitch in with ideas, resources, time, and effort. Such a video, perhaps accompanied by a compelling handbook introducing the work of grantees and a PowerPoint presentation to use in conference settings, would be an excellent way to disseminate the lessons of the UNDP SGP, or even launch a second phase of this programme. Bringing in scholars or activists to help brand this work, linking it to other efforts in the country and in the region, could quickly build a stronger community of support and recognition. A production outline for the video is provided in Appendix 6.

Creating a Community of Practice

Further effort should be dedicated to more consistently and inclusively creating a community of practice or a learning network between grantees. While some relationships did form around certain projects like THE BARCAM theatre project or the St George East Branch Association, it was not a consistent goal of the programme. Creating virtual ways to share, as well as hosting regular meetings of all grantees two or three times a year, inviting speakers to share ideas about healthy family functioning, hosting a “show and tell” exhibition, or simply a party helps people to form their own networks of support and offers them the chance to see what others are doing. Several NSC members complained that UNDP SGP grantees often failed to mention the support they had received from the programme once the grants had closed. An active alumni network would help to remedy this situation. Producing a regular newsletter on the work of the programme would also contribute to a sense of pride, solidarity, and improved communication within and

²⁴THE BARCAM, National Centre for Persons with Disabilities, *birdsong*, Arts in Action, Stop Elder Abuse Now, and the YMCA have produced promotional videos of their work.

beyond the grantee pool. Articles written by grantees (see the key correspondents' suggestion above) could be at the heart of this.

How Does This Compare?

Lessons from Other Programmes, Lessons From This One

It is useful to contextualize the UNDP SGP within the larger experience of small grants programmes both within Trinidad and Tobago and globally on at least two dimensions: the costs of execution, and the expectations for, and indicators of, success.

Transaction costs and actual costs

A review of several small grants program conducted by USAID in 2007²⁵ found that all small grants programs in the study created more work than program managers anticipated. All of the programs were management-intensive and required full-time staff to ensure that the grants were properly managed. All reported significant administrative burdens attached to the program. Most of them underestimated the capacity building and mentoring aspects of their programs, and had originally failed to allocate time or resources to these parts of the program.

All of them found that, while success at accomplishing the original grant objectives was often wanting on technical, output, and reporting criteria, the benefits to grantee organizations, to the larger field of work, and sometimes also to the managing organization, were worth the effort. At least one of these programs had a capacity building and training program that was mandatory for getting grant support. This included sessions on strategic planning, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, and networking. The NGOs that completed these sessions were able to “graduate” from the training and then apply for a small grant. Recommendations of this large study include the following:

- Allocate resources to create a small grants program team
- Train grantees prior to application
- Ensure grantees receive sufficient technical assistance
- Create a monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination plan for grantee projects
- Tailor small grants to different grantees
- Make adaptive changes as the program is implemented



Hope Shelter's dasheen bush production provides a source of income.

Photo: UNDP T&T

All evaluations reviewed by this consultant pointed to the need for considerable effort up front, long before proposals are completed or grants are funded. They also point to the

²⁵SGPs included in this study were programs overseen by the World Health Organization, Interagency Gender Working Group, Constella Futures, and the Population Council. All were multi-year and multi-country programs. “Assessment: FRONTIERS Small Grants Program,” KoliBanik, March 2007.

high costs of running a small grants programme correctly. The GEF SGP, as one example, reports management costs as 37% and 31% respectively of total expenditure during Operational Phases 2 and 3 (1997-2002; 2003-2007), noting that “projects underestimate the time it takes to make a well-functioning small grant disbursement mechanism operational” and also claiming that “compared to their full-size and medium-size projects, a slightly higher proportion of SGP projects are rated in the satisfactory range for project outcomes and sustainability”²⁶. So, inputs are considerable, but outputs testify to the value of small grants programmes.

Benjamin Todd Jealous, President of the Rosenberg Foundation, writes about the effort they put into grant prospecting, “The perpetuation of ‘desk-and-conference’ grant making rather than high touch, deep community involvement is often justified by a focus on keeping administrative costs low. The rub is that when your philanthropic goal is to promote social justice, such banal insularity and penny pinching often means that conditions in the real world continue to get worse”²⁷. Clearly, he would feel that the investment in time and connection is worth it, up front. This, too, is a way to build the field and invigorate strategic relationships. Non-financial assets are as important as financial ones. Good work is not just about giving away the money, but seeding conditions for change.

What is success?

Another finding common to many evaluations of small grants programme is the need to adjust definitions of success and develop indicators that better capture them, while also realizing that 100% return is neither to be expected nor desired.

Peter Goldmark, Director, Climate and Air Program at Environmental Defence and former CEO of the *International Herald Tribune*, claims that because the product we are producing in good philanthropy is change, you have to think about success in dimensions very unlike those of business. “In philanthropy, you have to win only one out of five times, and sometimes less. You have only to achieve breakthrough, to create traction, and to see things begin to change just one-fifth of the time. If you look at the grants you have been involved with and if one out of five attained the very tough goal you had set, while the others did no harm but fell short of that mark, you should be very happy. One out of five can be considered a success because the value of that one can be so great in a world where we do not understand change well, where we do not understand all the factors and forces at play, and in which we aim so high”²⁸.

A Canadian resident in Trinidad for 22 years who has managed a small grants fund for CIDA here since 1994 remarked, *“You can do good things in manageable ways with a small grants programme and make a difference at a meaningful level. It keeps your feet on the ground. But you have to see success where it comes and how it comes. We partnered with the GEF SGP in Speyside (Tobago) once. The project was to create community kitchens in this rural area. This project was a failure on our books. It fell apart completely, but one or two ladies changed their lives because they were a part of that project. They began to see themselves*

²⁶Joint Evaluation of the GEF Small Grants Programme, 2008.

²⁷ “You Get What You Pay For,” Diversity & Inclusion: Lessons From the Field, RPA, 2008, p12.

²⁸ “Issues and Innovations for 21st Century Philanthropy,” *Power and Innovative Ideas for Grantmakers, Investors, and Nonprofits*, RPA, 2006, p7.

differently. One of them went on to study nursing. When she stood up that day to speak and she thanked me for having helped her, it brought tears to my eyes. We are still in touch. I count that as a great success."

One challenge shared across many SGPs is the fact that it is hard to evaluate outcome when there is no baseline data. A comparison with a harm reduction and HIV programme in Lithuania²⁹ highlights the lack of baselines or clear benchmarks of success in most small grants programmes. Few of the Trinidad and Tobago SGP grantees had any statistical understanding of the problems they were addressing at community levels. There were rarely agreed-upon or standardized measurements or data collection processes using common indicators of success. Where they did exist, benchmarks were localized and often inarticulate, so establishing lines of communication were all the more important to programme coherence and success. Innovation may have occurred and local capacity built to meet problems that were not being addressed by national actors, but this lack of clear data often also means less potential to leverage learning beyond the accomplishments of individual grants.

Lessons from Trinidad and Tobago UNDP SGP share many of the same findings of evaluations of other small grants programmes. They point to the need for;

- Flexibility and responsiveness on the part of programme management
- Over-all programme goals to be defined and refined throughout the life of the programme
- Clear and appropriate guidelines for project execution to be defined in consultation with grantees and used by all as the projects are carried forward
- Benchmarks for project success and documentation to be established and maintained
- Criteria of grant selection and assessment to be clear
- Technical assistance to be thorough, consistent, and strategic
- Indicators of programme accomplishment to reflect the realities of organizational capacity and the complexity of the issues being addressed
- Effort to be given to creating strong relationships between grantees and grantee efforts
- Building a larger base of stakeholders beyond grantees
- Aggressive and creative outreach and communication strategies to be established and vigorously utilized.

²⁹ "Evaluation of UNODC Small Grants Programme in Lithuania, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, 2008.

In sum, a comparative eye on this programme lets us see that the intensive inputs and attention required in the UNDP SGP are similar to those elsewhere.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As this report has shown, the UNDP SGP was successful in its support of innovative pilot projects across the nation. While better marketing would have probably strengthened the grantee pool, the work that was funded provides a heuristic local roadmap for addressing the issue of healthy family functioning. This is an important contribution.

"We cannot abandon these grantees now," declared one NSC member, "I feel it as a moral and a practical imperative that we continue somehow."

Any future iteration of this programme would need to more strategically and consciously bring its lessons and experiences to bear on national and regional concerns, build stronger relationships between all who participate, and take advantage of the opportunities to create and share knowledge regarding healthy family functioning in Trinidad and Tobago. If more people know about the programme and are engaged by its vision, funds and visibility would more likely result.

Taking the lessons from these years and leveraging them into something clearer and stronger would be worth the effort. To close the programme now would be to lose the potential synergies between bodies of work and organizations, levels of engagement, UNDP, other stakeholders, and the government.

Recommendations Looking Forward

- Build on the match between the programmatic focus on healthy family functioning and national priorities of the current administration in Trinidad and Tobago. Engage the media to cover the issue and reach out to government actors to inform them of these efforts and these findings. Invite scholars who study related issues to participate.
- Take internal stock of the learning that the programme offers concerning potential linkages between UN agencies in country, and between UNDP and community-level actors. Evaluate the potential for more flexibility of execution for such programmes while still adhering to UN mandates for accountability and reporting. Use this learning as a case study for building stronger inter-office coordination.
- Link efforts aims to strengthen civil society organizations undertaken in the UNDP SGP to larger aims defined by the UNDP Country Programme Document. The Toolkit for capacity building of NGOs and CBOs and coordination mechanisms listed in that document could provide useful benchmarks to assess organizational sustainability and capacity, and the partners indicated in the framework provide a useful list of potential stakeholders and participants.

- Focus attention on capacity building in the non-profit sector. Convene, fund, and brainstorm around ways to create a cadre of competent non-volunteer staff in community organizations and/or provide technical assistance to them³⁰. Work with all stakeholders and partners, in government and outside government, to evaluate and address these shortfalls in capacity. Discuss ways to create opportunities for community organizations to locate the funds and support necessary to help them grow to the next steps³¹. Engender recognition and discussion of the connection between the capacity of the non-profit sector and democratic governance and inclusive development.
- If the programme is reinvigorated, invite new members onto the National Steering Committee and see that clear criteria for the selection and mentoring of grantees are established and agreed upon. Establish mechanisms so that learning is strategically shared beyond the NSC itself. Improve outreach and communication strategies. Create a newsletter, host events, convene discussions to build on the work of individual grantees and establish a community of practice between them.
- Produce a compelling video that shares the importance of healthy family functioning and the progress represented by this small grants programme. Show how these local efforts provide a useful frame for tackling endemic and intransigent issues related to dysfunctional families and communities in Trinidad and Tobago.
- Make more visible the projects undertaken and the organizations supported by UNDP and by JB Fernandes Memorial Trust (Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors) under this small grants programme to date. Do this not for self-congratulation, but to make a contribution to the thinking, the programmes, and the funding that continues to be warranted. Aim the conversation towards new synergies and relationships that could contribute to social cohesion in Trinidad and Tobago.

The programme objectives originally drafted to guide the UNDP SGP were ambitious. They enunciate a vision reaching considerably beyond the support of individual grantees to do their own work in communities, however valuable that work may be. They describe relationships between levels of engagement and multi-directional learning. Contributing to policy, downstream and upstream linkages, reducing poverty and building the capacity of families, are laudable aims. In local and meaningful ways, some of these objectives were met by grantees in their families and communities. In future, the connection between the community-level work and other arenas where power resides and knowledge is created should be clearer and stronger. One small grants programme may not visibly change the world or even change Trinidad and Tobago, but if it is strategically linked to other efforts and actors, it can make a difference that matters.

³⁰ Current plans to assign apprentice accountants to organisations is one such programme.

³¹ Discussions between United Way and this consultant indicate that United Way is interested in pursuing a relationship with the UNDP SGP and may be able to help grantees secure additional support.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 UNDP SGP Grants List 2011

Time Frame Proposed and (Actual)	Amount (US\$)	Grantee & Location	Project Title	Goals of Project	Results
10/2004 - 6/2006 (2010)	19,138	The BARCAM/ Pt. Fortin	Theatre Education An Alternative Method for Lifting Community Spirit (TEAM Spirit)	Build capacity within the BARCAM for stronger community interventions; establish partnerships with communities and assist them through dramatic intervention to mobilize and implement healthy family functioning initiatives; build capacity to deal with family issues, HIV; Gender Based Violence (GBV)	21 members of the Barcam trained in effective community intervention; organisation's intervention in communities more effective; partnerships established with four communities; drama used to mobilize community for a total of 6 community programmes including parenting, and personal development; over 250 persons were reached directly: DVD produced and capacity to produce DVDs developed
10/2004 - 2/2006 (9/2006)	14,952	Family First Foundation/ Black Rock, Tobago	Family and Community Capacity Upliftment Project	Increased protection and support for women and children at risk; produce community radio programmes; families life skills increased; engage community in multi-generational focus; Roots Creative Centre; Man to Man programme	Functional Community Supportive Network Established and support given to at least 30 victims; 70 Community Leaders and Police officers trained to address GBV issues; 7 Communities supporting community responses to GBV; Training manual on parenting produced; Radio Programme on GBV developed and implemented
10/2004 - 2/2006 (6/2007)	26,643	Five Rivers PTA/ Five Rivers, Arouca	Developing and Maintaining Healthy Lifestyles Through Empowered Parents	Establish a Resource Centre; improve parental skills; identify youth in need; strengthen capacity in the area of parenting; establish national need for parenting centres in public schools by sharing successes	Parent Resource Centre established; good parenting training sessions conducted with over 115 persons; two executive members trained in parenting techniques to conduct training sessions at PTA meetings; members of other PTAs exposed to project through outreach
10/2004 - 4/2007 (9/2007)	16,413	Four Roads Tamana Village Council/ Four Roads Tamana	Healthy Family Functioning and Sustainable Livelihoods	Develop Skills Training Programme; link to micro-credit programme; implement a literacy programme; establish a homework and resource centre; provide social and health services to needy households; refurbish derelict houses; broaden community engagement	Skills training implemented in 7 areas. Learning Resource Centre and adult literacy unit established; 30 persons exposed to Family Life intervention programme; capacity and community relationships strengthened; local businesses established; increased familiarity with local needs; needy in the area were served and engaged; better utilization of government programmes

10/2004 - 2/2006 (12/2006)	23,959	La Brea Core Group/ La Brea	Community Outreach Producing Employment	Community census to learn about skills and employment needs of local households; establish community employment agency; internet café; street theatre; build stronger links between CBOs	Conducted a census of the area (3610 households); trained 22 persons to conduct the census; coding, editing, entering data accomplished; project had data input, computer virus, theft problems - census never completed; Internet café and employment agency disbanded; individual capacity strengthened
10/2004 - 2/2006 (9/2007)	12,858	La Seiva Village Council/ Maracas St. Joseph	Creative Learning Foundation	Establishment of a library, multi-media learning studio and cultural arts training facility; homework centre set up; events to build community cohesion hosted; leadership strengthened	Community library established for use by local children and adults – total membership 102, book count 1500; computer lab established (4 computers); homework centre set up; tutors identified; student progress evaluated; vacation camps run; council outreach strengthened; leaders and community engaged; plans for expansion underway
10/2004 - 2/2006	4,567	Success Laventille Network Committee/ Laventille	Family Development Programme	Improving parenting skills of residents; building trust between community stakeholders	12 parents (1 male) participated in parenting programme; project had implementation challenges and was discontinued.
11/2005 - 6/2007 (2010)	17,896	Adult Literacy Tutors Association/ Arima	Rural Literacy Improvement Programme – Valencia to Toco/	Establish adult literacy classes in rural districts of North East Trinidad; link with government food security programme; integrating life skills into literacy training; establish new skills and procedures for working with rural adults.	Expansion of programme to 5 centres in Valencia, Matura, Carapo and Brazil; recruitment of 26 tutors; recruitment of 75 students, 15 of whom improved literacy skills by one level. Logistical and buy-in challenges caused closing of this project, learning has contributed to current rural work.
1/2006 - 5/2007 (12/2007)	22,293	Arts in Action/ St. Augustine	DRAMATHICS	Expose teachers in primary schools in the North of Trinidad to teaching geometry using drama; support their uptake of the approach; improve mathematical skills of students, produce documentary film of the programme	48 teachers exposed to the methodology via demonstration using a total of 269 students from 10 primary schools, from Lanse Noir in the East to Port of Spain in the North. A smaller group of 25 teachers were trained in teaching mathematics using drama by Arts in Action and supported to continue; engaging video of programme produced.

11/2005 - 6/2007	24,229	<i>birdsong</i> Steel Orchestra/ Tunapuna	Empowering the Next Generation of Steel pan Musicians	Train youths in music literacy and playing of instruments, one of which must be the pan; mentoring at-risk boys, discipline-building and confidence-building for youth; establish a summer music school; enact a "pre-emptive approach to poverty alleviation" by opening doors to employment based on musical skill	Music Academy established - over 300 youths trained in music theory and playing of instruments; 132 youths successful in Grades 1-3 music; 33 youths successful in grades 4-6 music theory; students performed successfully in the national music festivals; 7 students enrolled in tertiary level music programmes; youth secured employment; organization touted as national model; relationship with university solidified; inclusive admission supports relationships across class divides; ambitious plans made for future growth
11/2005 - 6/2007 (7/2007)	23,599	National Centre for Persons with Disabilities/ San Fernando	Re-engineering and development of orthopaedic aids	Upgrade and expand orthopaedic unit; develop a group of persons to manufacture and repair orthopaedic aids; generate production and marketing material; produce a video	Orthopaedic unit upgraded with welding equipment and steel bender; higher quality products being manufactured and a shipment exported; 8 persons with disabilities trained in production of orthopaedic aids (2 are now employed); brochures and a promotional DVD on the centre produced
2/2006 - 1/2007 (5/2007)	24,052	T&T Coalition Against Domestic Violence/ Port of Spain	SEAN Link (An Intergenerational Sensitization Project between Secondary Schools and Elder Care Facilities)	Establish inter-generational links to improve contact and understanding between the community and elders in residential care facilities; create a mentoring programme between older persons and students to engender two-ways support and empathy; raise awareness of elder abuse and its consequences	54 secondary school students participated in workshops related to elderly interaction and partnered with the elderly from 3 elder care facilities; the two-way mentoring aspect of the project was not established due to the level of frailty of residents at the home; youth report that the programme changed their attitudes; compelling video on youth-elder project and the subject of elder abuse produced and aired
2/2006 - 1/2007 (9/2007)	23,889	Toco Foundation/ Toco	In-school Peer Education Intervention on HIV/AIDS in Communities of the North Eastern Region of Trinidad	Behaviour change interventions in primary and secondary schools to improve knowledge of sexual life and decrease the potential to engage in behaviours which will lead to the acquisition of STDs especially HIV and AIDS; establish a peer education and advocacy programme.	23 students from 8 primary schools trained as Peer Activists and 24 students from 3 secondary schools trained as Peer Educators; peer to peer training manual completed and in use; Information to youths in schools disseminated; improved comfort with addressing sexual issues

3/2006 - 3/2007 (6/2010)	22,045	YMCA/ Port of Spain	MenTouring	Contribute to a reduction in violence by male youths; establish a cadre of male volunteers to mentor youths	Over 34 volunteers including 3 teachers from 1 school trained to be mentors; Workshop series held with 150 boys on issues of violence, conflict resolution and self esteem; Toolkit developed for mentors conducting workshops with youths
12/2007 - 11/2008 (12/2009)	23,835	Vision on Mission/ San Juan (worked in the Prison system)	Employment for Sustainable Reintegration and Employment	Assist prisoners in achieving self sufficiency on their release and maintaining a law abiding lifestyle by providing counselling, temporary housing, savings, and employment support.	Employment office established; pre-release training of over 300 prisoners; post-release training of over 120 ex-prisoners; secured employment for 80% of ex-prisoners. Achieved a recidivism rate of 10% of ex-prisoners; provided auxiliary counselling and support; attracted government funding and attention
1/2008 - 7/2009 (12/2010)	20,865	Hope Shelter for Battered Women/ Chaguanas	Sustainable Development of the Hope Shelter for Battered Women and Children	Develop agricultural enterprise to sustain shelter and further engage clients and build their confidence and skill while at the centre; conduct agricultural training for vulnerable women in community; reduce dependence	Agricultural enterprise developed; reliable markets established for dasheen leaf; capacity strengthened; plans to cultivate more land underway; training of women undertaken; newly built shelter scheduled to open soon; National Association of Shelters now forming
5/2008 - 4/2011	23,809	Bon Air North Village Council/ Bon Air North, Arouca	Integrated Sustainable Community Development Programme for Bon Air North, Arouca	Establish a Social Development Plan for the community (Joint programme with GEF/SGP); develop a more self-reliant community; foster trust and improve security and ecology; carry out community needs assessment	Preparation of a survey instrument and mobilization of community started. Problems of squatter community land tenure. Housing support and reforestation projects stalled. Project cancelled due to implementation challenges.
11/2008 - 2/2010 (9/2010)	23,809	Community Intervention Transforming Youths/ Gonzales	Reinforcing the Pillars in Gonzales	To provide a programme of support, mediation, leadership training and capacity development in a community where challenges of social conflict and unrest exist; "Literacy for Peace" programme; Pamper the Elderly Day established; deal with stigma of the area and deep levels of insecurity and lack of self respect and confidence	Family Mentorship programme with 26 families; sessions on parenting held; leadership group comprising 30 persons trained and functioning; career Development ; conflict resolution training; remedial education and homework sessions hosted; street theatre programme held; workshops on drug abuse and crime; work with gang leaders to reinvent themselves in positive roles; current focus on building local business

3/2010 - 9/2010	1,905	Association of Female Executives of TT/ Port of Spain	Child Care Solutions	To develop multiple solutions to child care challenges; raise awareness of need for improvements; lobby stakeholders to participate in process	Stakeholder's forum completed; White Paper redrafted; 2nd larger workshop to be held funded by UNICEF - aim for national budget submission
6/2010 - 6/2011	23,810	St. George East Branch Association of Village Councils/ St. George	Capacity Development Programme	To establish mentoring unit; To develop community plans in 4 communities; To promote fund development activities	Workshops held with participating unit councils; AGMs held and work plans vetted and shared; stronger village councils and improved linkages between them. Being considered as model for other areas

Appendix 2 Notes from field visits and grantee interviews

Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Men Touring Programme (\$22,045)

The YMCA program funded by the SGP aimed to establish a group of male volunteers to mentor youths and institute a training program designed to reduce violence between young men, and between young men and women, by stimulating learning about friendship, respect, and communication. As the program unfolded, they began to include young women in their cohort as well. According to Ernest Nurse, Senior Facilitator of the Men Touring Programme, their aim was to “help young men realize that it is ok to be soft, to cry, to feel.” He feels that their program could provide the tools to young men and women to change their lives, but that the households, schools, and group homes where these young people spend much more time are not as committed to reinforcing what they learn in the Men Touring Programme as he would have hoped. The YMCA organizes programs for schools and group homes that, in addition to experiential training in better ways to relate and communicate, also include arts and crafts, sports, and photography. A companion programme called “Shoot 2 Live” funded by UNFPA brought the photographic dimension into the YMCA Programme. YMCA staff attribute their relationship with the UNDP SGP with opening the door to their recognition by, and support from, UNFPA.

Program outputs include a toolkit for working with young people, 34 volunteers trained as mentors, an on-going workshop series addressing violence and relational skills, increased experience using arts, crafts, and sport to engage young people in modelling good behaviour, and some strengthening of links to local schools and group homes.

The YMCA programme was extended beyond its initial work plan due to staff changes, problems meeting reporting requirements, and the challenges encountered trying to execute their original plan of bringing the Men Touring Programme to schools in the area. During the period of SGP support, the program was totally dependent on SGP funds. There were no other donors to this project and, because their swimming pool was under repair, they did not have the funds they normally had from entrance fees. Failure to report and thereby receive disbursements from the SGP resulted in their having to use overdrafts to cover expenses. When the payment system of the SGP programme changed to direct payments to vendors, the time lags in that system caused additional problems for them. YMCA senior staff felt that there should be support for overhead and administration costs related to project activities and organizational needs.

“This programme is important to me because we get to really make good relationships here—better than in school. We talk about how we feel and how we treat one another.” 14 year-old girl in the programme

“Ernest is a good listener. He cares about us.” 15 year-old boy in the programme.

La Brea Core Group Community Outreach Producing Employment (COPE) (\$23,959)

Founded in 1998 as an umbrella group encompassing local community organizations, the La Brea Core Group received a grant of \$23,959 from the SGP in 2004 to undertake an ambitious survey of the 3,600 households in the area so that they could learn more about the social needs and skills of their community. They felt that in order to apply for support and to better serve the whole community, they needed to know more about who lived in the area. With SGP support the La Brea group hired a census expert as a consultant who helped them design forms and train some 28 local enumerators, many of them young people, to carry out the survey. They also hired a data analyst to help them input the data into computers. The group had a series of problems seeing this project to completion including bad choice of consultant, stolen computers, computer virus problems, and incompatible software. The soft data has now been lost to the group (although it might still be in possession of their consultant), but the

Coordinator still has all of the survey forms. The La Brea Core Group applied to the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust for support for an employment agency that grew from their recognition of high unemployment, an assessment of local skills that was part of their census exercise, and the recent revitalization of the LABIDCO industrial site nearby which was bringing in new opportunities for employment. This community employment agency project was in operation for some three years until political changes forced their eviction from their premises. It is not clear how effective the agency was or how this unforeseen circumstance could have been averted.

While those interviewed regretted the fact that they were unable to see the survey project to its logical outcomes, they felt that their relationship with the UNDP SGP program helped to introduce them to new skills and new sponsors. They credit the SGP for giving them a more realistic awareness of what it takes to organize at the community level. They feel that their inability to complete the census project was in part due to the fact that the budget in their original proposal was only funded at 50% and they feel that neither they nor the SGP recognized that their strategy of canvassing all of the households in the catchment area (instead of a sample of them) was unworkable within the confines of the funds awarded. They are proud of the fact that they used international data collection standards and were able to train a number of young people in computer and interview skills, and they do feel that these skills have provided new opportunities to some of the people they trained. However, the La Brea Core Group is currently in a much-weakened state. What was once a vibrant and interactive collective of some 22 groups now has only 9 that are functioning. The Coordinator attributes this to the self-interest and political turf issues related to a recent power shift.

The former Coordinator said that he would not be willing to lead such a project with so many actors to bring together in the future. "I could do it then," said the young woman who is the group's secretary, "I feel that I have the skills now." Her training as an enumerator and her participation in the employment agency had made her feel that she could take now on a leadership position in her community.

Hope Shelter for Battered Women

Sustainable Development of Battered and Low-Income Single Women (\$20,865)

The Hope Shelter for Battered Women was founded by Dr. V Jeelal in 1999. He attributes his desire to set up the shelter to an experience he had as a district medical officer. Called to the local police station to care for a two-year old girl who had been raped by her father, he noted that the frightened and wounded child was held in the police station for three days before the system could locate a safe place for her to go. For the first several years of the shelter's existence, Dr. Jeelal used his own funds and small contributions from well wishers to support the facility. In 2007, he approached the SGP with an idea for training shelter residents and local single mothers in agricultural skills that would increase their confidence and independence and, at the same time, produce regular and reliable income to sustain the shelter. While the initial proposal and work plan listed several additional proposed activities, the SGP elected to support two: dasheen leaves production and growboxes. Due to slight over-reliance in the plan on the free labour of residents of the shelter and the increased cost of labour, the two projects took more time than envisioned to carry forward. The grow box project appeared to be dormant when the consultant visited the shelter, but the acre of dasheen is, after several mishaps and replantings, now seeing success. Links to the Trinidad and Tobago Agribusiness Association encouraged through SGP contacts has brought a lucrative contract to sell 1,000 pounds of the leaves per week, netting \$ 2500 TT per week (\$2100 TT of this profit). In addition, a direct grant from the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust has secured 45% of the costs needed to construct a new and improved shelter next door to the original structure (which is now acting as a storehouse and a residence for one battered woman and her two children).

Unfortunately, Hope Shelter's new construction project has seen a closure of the existing shelter facilities, so for many months they have had to refer women and children in need of their services elsewhere. Now that this is back on track, they aim to re-open the shelter in June of 2011, feeling confident that their dasheen project can expand to a second acre of land nearby. Hope Shelter staff is in the process of helping to organize a national network of shelters called the Trinidad and Tobago Association of Shelters.

“Without the Small Grants Program,” says Jamila Ali, Secretary to the program, “we could not have done this. Just look, the shelter project still alive - just as these plants are alive! They will now support the shelter that supports women and children in need.”

St George East Branch Association Community Development Programme (\$23,810)

This is the last grant awarded during this phase of the SGP. The goal is to create systems to re-enliven the village councils in the St George East district. Despite the fact that the village council system has been in operation in Trinidad and Tobago for some 43 years or more, many of these councils are moribund and dysfunctional. Citizens have become accustomed to unfulfilled promises, and feel disconnected from this local structure offering invaluable opportunities for self-governance and community cohesion.

After undertaking a three-year process to build the village councils in the region from 12 to 65 active councils, the Rose Foundation introduced them to IBB (International Business Brokers) and St George East engaged IBB as Program Manager. With a combination of financial support from the SGP grant and in-kind contributions from IBB staff, St George East Branch and member village councils have begun to use a creative empowerment and training system called Freedom Flight to build from empowered individuals knowing their responsibilities to self, family, and community, armed with improved self-esteem and communication skills, to collectives capable of articulating their vision and making realistic plans for reaching that vision. Participants related story after story of individuals who grew in confidence and skill, changing the ways they were with themselves, loved ones, and neighbours. The first 5 consecutive Saturday sessions saw 58 out of the original 60 attend all sessions.

One goal of this process is to shift the paternalistic paradigm whereby citizens and councils expect the government to step in to help at every corner, to one in which new kinds of leaders emerge to invigorate the village councils so that they serve their communities on their own terms building from their own energy and skill. The program has clear benchmarks that measure increased participation and resources, helping the designated 16 officers mandated by the council structure to know their roles and step into them. This program is already receiving attention from other district councils interested in replicating the Freedom Flight methodology.

“We were really struggling before,” says Monica Ferguson, St George East Branch Association President, “and now we are on the road to recovery. SGP seeded this project, making an investment that no one else was willing to make.” “My son changed completely after participating in Freedom Flight,” said Elvira, “Before, he would not speak or reach out in any way. After this program, he has become a leader in his own right. He is applying to medical school and using his computer skills to help others and the community.”

Four Roads Tamana Village Council Healthy Family Functioning (\$16,413)

The Four Roads Tamana Village Council received support from the SGP in 2004 to build its capacity to serve its community in a number of ways: establishing a library; implementing an adult literacy class; undertaking skills training in garment construction, stove repairs, tile laying, home décor and grow box production; engaging in street theatre and workshops to encourage healthier parenting and communication skills and responsibility within families; and establishing a homework and resource centre. The consultant met with eight village council leaders and beneficiaries of the project. From this interaction, it seemed clear that the SGP grant has contributed to creating a more vibrant and responsive community centre, with improvements at individual and collective levels. One woman has created a home goods business from the tailoring training she received and a micro-credit loan she qualified for, and another man talked about how participating in the cooking class had helped him take better care of himself. There was a strong link between the pre-existing micro-lending program (MEL) overseen by UNDP at the time of award (now overseen by the Poverty Reduction Programme under the Ministry of Social Development), a food hamper distribution system (SHARE) providing food to 100 poor households in the area, and the SGP training and outreach. The community has been able to realize tremendous benefit from these synergies. Council members reported that they felt the SGP grant was a “ground-breaker” for them. Although they found the report writing,

editing and re-submission processes of the SGP daunting, it was a learning process they feel has served them in other ways and with other partners. They would have liked clearer guidelines and help with documenting their progress along the way, but they felt they benefitted from the accountability expected of them by the SGP.

“Our personal resumes have changed,” one of the leaders remarked, “we have something to show for ourselves and for our community. We are now like the mother of the nearby councils.”

The UNDP SGP Coordinator was able to link the Four Road Tamana Village Council to a company that wished to contribute used computers to a worthy group, so the Community Centre received two computers and is now planning to build a special room to house them and create a small cyber-café for residents, particularly the young people in the community who do not have computers at home.

“In spite of the money being over, our project never really ended,” remarked Monica De Four, Program Coordinator, “we remain a strong family. We have built new and stronger relationships and brought in people who never used to join in.”

***birdsong* Steel Orchestra**

Empowering the Next Generation of Steel Pan Musicians (\$24,229)

birdsong Steel Orchestra is a community-based initiative that supports three related institutions: the Academy, offering training in musical literacy to young men and women; the Steel Band itself, and an income-generating scheme that functions as a social enterprise offering employment in garden-related work. In 2005 *birdsong* received support from the SGP to strengthen their summer school, “the Academy,” and broaden it to include training in music literacy throughout the year. The training program has been a clear success, and *birdsong* has far more requests from schools and community groups than they can meet. Over 300 young people have been trained in O-level music theory and at least one instrument. Every year they add some 50 new students to their roster for the summer school. Parents and children line up at 4 am for their registration which opens its doors at 8 am. The surrounding community takes pride in *birdsong*’s work—three neighbours let them use their back yards for practice. Dennis “Charlie” Phillip, Trustee, remarked that “UNDP was our gateway. It forced us to develop disciplines that gave us access to others later.” Through SGP, *birdsong* was able to receive direct support from the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust. Over time, they have strengthened their relationships with the University of West Indies (which has committed to paying a full-time Administrator for *birdsong* from 2009 to 2012, and which allows them to use their classrooms, performance spaces, and shuttle buses during the summer school). They are also pleased that government agencies and others are referring to the “*birdsong* model” as a way to replicate their successes in other communities.

At the present time, *birdsong*’s greatest desire is to build a new teaching facility. They complained that they have yet to find donors who will support them beyond a single event or a single one-year grant. Therefore, it is only possible to create a strategic framework, not a strategic plan looking reliably into the future. “There are no avenues for graduating,” they said, meaning there were few sponsors or partners willing to help them move to the next step.

birdsong remains grateful to the SGP and to the UNDP SGP Coordinator for her support in linking them to others. They were beneficiaries of donated computers, and her introduction resulted in one of their most promising students receiving a plane ticket to Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. When asked about the procedures of the SGP, they did feel that the reporting system was cumbersome and sometimes ill timed. Milestones were not clear and they were asked to return again and again to their records to produce acceptable reports. They were particularly concerned about the need for an additional closeout report long after the grant was over.

Raymond Edwin Haynes, Coordinator of the Boy’s Program which received direct support from the SGP, commented that, “Something is going on here 24/7. The band becomes a family. We have created a safe haven for boys who do not have that anywhere else.”

Fiver Rivers Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

Healthy Lifestyles Through Empowered Parenting (\$26,643)

In 2004, the Five Rivers PTA received support from the SGP to establish a Parent's Resource Centre at the school and to engage 1,000 local parents in a program designed to improve parenting skill, enhance communication between parents and their children, teach anger management and positive parenting, share ideas about effective discipline, and focus on teenage sexuality. This project was instituted just as the secondary school was changing from a double shift system to a single shift system, and as special needs students were being mainstreamed in the public education system. Originally, the focus was on helping the parents of special needs students to cope with the issues facing them. After the first year of the program, the PTA elected to open the program to all interested parents. Despite tremendous effort in identifying parents of children they thought exhibited the need for special attention, and a series of home visits and regular outreach, the project was able to engage fewer than 100 participants in their parenting program—less than 10% of their original target group. While this disappointed them, the Five Rivers PTA leaders who met with the consultant, believe that the program has had a lasting impact on the school environment and on the individual families who participated. They boast that they continue to have the only Parent Resource Centre in the public school system. Next year, the campus will move next door to new premises, and the PTA continues to lobby for its own space in the new building. As with other SGP recipients, the Five Rivers PTA counts the improvement of individual capacity and the identification of new leaders as successes. The present Chairman of the St George Region PTA is a product of their training. One mother of a student, who participated in the parenting program to help her deal with difficulties in raising her son, is now an engaged member of the local School Board when before she never participated in school or community activities at all.

"A school is always a lot of support systems," says June Bridgewater, former Principal and Chair of the PTA. "We were hoping to catch more in the net," said Patricia Borneo, PTA Secretary, "but for those who came it made a difference in their life. It still makes a difference."

The BARCAM

Theatre Education An Alternative Method for Lifting Community Spirit (TEAM Spirit) \$19,138

THE BARCAM grew from a youth group to a community organization. It was established in 1989 by its then-15-year-old Founder and Director who still runs the organization. Initially, their single focus was to apply arts to community development. From 1998 to 2000, they were a grantee in UNDP's Partners in Development Programme (\$50,000) for a project called "Second Chance" that provided training opportunities to young people who have had conflict with the law. Today, THE BARCAM have 7 full-time paid staff, 42 part-time staff, and 120 resource personnel, and three divisions: training and development; arts for development, and events management. They maintain a "makeshift office," meeting clients in their places of work and renting venues for events when necessary.

THE BARCAM's engagement with the SGP was through the invitation of the Coordinator who invited THE BARCAM to participate in their 2004 prospecting and training retreat. "This weekend re-energized us," says the Director, "We met local community organizations who wanted what we had, who were willing to invite us into their communities to use theatre to stimulate discussion and change." THE BARCAM became a grantee of the SGP directly, and also had sub-agreement contracts with four other SGP grantees for work in their communities. Partner organizations interviewed by this consultant relayed an excitement of working with THE BARCAM. They found their "invisible theatre" approach of staging a conversation about a sensitive topic (men as absent parents, for example) engaged them and challenged them to start to talk about long-silenced issues usually relegated to private and family domains. The plan was never to train community youth to do their own theatre, so there was no direct training impact on THE BARCAM's partners in this regard. Rather, their aim was to "soften up the environment."

THE BARCAM staff felt that the community interventions funded by the SGP were very successful; however, they reported considerable frustration around the production of a DVD to share their approach and their work more broadly. Their original proposal requested some \$200,000TT, but the NSC awarded a grant of \$85,000TT. This created an imbalance between expectations and resources. The video suffered, causing THE BARCAM grant to require extensions for four years, making them the only grantee that the SGP granted additional funds (to enable

them to complete the video). In turn, this created some sense that they were not supported by SGP in the manner in which they would have liked.

Today, THE BARCAM's largest contract is with the Family Planning Association for 12 interventions related to stigma and HIV/AIDS. "Over 50% of our theatre work has been in the field of 'Healthy Family Functioning,' and much of this was encouraged by that first workshop organized by Joan Bishop and Creative Parenting that the SGP invited us to. Also, we are still connected to some of the communities where we did those theatre projects and we sometimes volunteer there even today."

Vision on Mission

Employment for Sustainable Reintegration and Employment, \$23,835

Vision on Mission Resettlement and Re-Integration Programme started in 2007 under the support of the SGP. Their focus was to assist inmates to prepare for life after prison through assistance in employment and living arrangements, counselling in the adjustments to life after prison and re-establishing relationships with their families. The program is led by ex-convicts whose personal experience lends a level of authenticity to the project. Today, most full-time counsellors at Vision on Mission are young women without any personal experience of prison life or readjustment to life after incarceration. Nevertheless, the prison outreach event to which this consultant was invited clearly demonstrated an impressive comfort with and acceptance by the prison population of these female counsellors and interns.

In its grant reports, Vision on Mission claims that recidivism among the population they have served was 10%, as compared with a national figure of 65%. They further claim to have found jobs for 80% of those who participated in their program. One of their challenges has been to engage those men leaving prisons to participate fully in their programs, to establish themselves in the world of legitimate work and to begin to save part of their earnings. Part of this challenge has to do with their self-confidence and willingness to step beyond the reactions learned and relationships formed while in prison, as well as those that landed them in prison in the first place. The very-engaging pep talk by the Vision on Mission leader at the prison included discussion of how to treat family members, why they should help the women in their households, and how they can develop the patience and perseverance to navigate this difficult transition. The speaker acknowledged that the inmates' ideas about "manhood" and their insecurities about their new post-prison environment made it difficult for them to ask for help, or to step outside their comfort zones. He shared real-life examples of the challenges they would undoubtedly face during the first weeks and months in civilian life. "Money without responsibility will cause us to crash," he warned, "How do we plan with our money so that it helps ourselves and our families, so that it doesn't bring us down?"

Throughout his talk, inmates lined up to register with the program and to share their stories and their ideas about their futures with the counsellors present.

Vision on Mission was also a GEF SGP grant recipient. The pilot they developed under UNDP SGP programme has resulted in their receiving core government support today. Nevertheless, they continue to find it difficult to write their final report to the SGP after one of their founding leaders left the organization.

Adult Literacy Tutors Association (ALTA)

Rural Literacy Improvement Programme – Valencia to Toco, \$17,896

ALTA responded to a newspaper advertisement in 2005 that publicized the aims of the SGP to reach into remote and rural or vulnerable neighbourhoods. Their approach was suited to the aims of the SGP because they use life skills as the content for teaching literacy, thereby also exploring issues such as domestic violence, addiction, parenting, anger management, goal setting, budgeting, the environment, diet and health which are covered in such a way as to encourage better choices and constructive behaviour patterns.

At the time they saw the advertisement, ALTA had recently been contacted by SHARE, a government food basket distribution programme, because they were finding high rates of illiteracy amongst the rural communities where they were distributing food hampers. The original idea was to use the time when local people came to collect their hampers to engage them and invite them to participate in literacy classes. By the time the SGP award was made, the SHARE program had switched from distributing food to sending out cash cards, so there was no longer the easy access to these communities that ALTA had expected. "We really had no community partners," said the CEO of ALTA, "We had trouble recruiting local tutors with the literacy levels required, so we lowered our expectations. The training for them was fine, but we still were unsuccessful at getting people into the classroom." Adults who could not read were too embarrassed to let others know. Transportation and security made things difficult for their volunteers, in fighting, and weak links to the communities they had hoped to serve, resulted in their abandoning the project partway through. Their original two-year plan was extended once to three years, but ALTA ended up not spending the entire grant. The Director commented that she felt that the SGP systems made it easier to pay for things than to pay for people.

When asked what, if anything, ALTA had learned from the SGP experience, the Director noted that she felt they had a much more realistic appreciation for what it takes to reach rural communities in Trinidad than they had previously. The more urban experiences shaping their outreach strategies, tutor recruitment, and class retention strategies did not work the same way in these areas. She also felt that they gained experience in how unwise it is to graft their work onto government systems and programs, which change frequently and are often irregular.

Since the SGP grant, ALTA has found ways to work in rural areas. They have received support from British Petroleum and Atlantic LNG and are using more effective strategies for linking to new communities. They feel their work is a particularly good match for private sector support, particularly in areas where the businesses operate and have a vested interest in the skill base of the labour pool. They have a more realistic sense of how important community ownership is to their aims, and they report renewed understanding of the importance of engaging local gatekeepers from the beginning.

Success Laventille Network Committee Family Development Program, \$4,567

The parenting project that Success Laventille wished to institute was initially supported through a \$45,000TT grant from the Ministry of Social Development. It was envisioned as a three-part program, but problems with timely and smooth implementation meant that their government support was withdrawn. Working in consonance with the Ministry, the SGP then stepped in to help Success Laventille buy some equipment - a camcorder, scanner, and copier that they are still using, and a digital camera that has since been stolen.

Due to implementation challenges, some in fighting in the community, and leadership issues, the project was discontinued. The two representatives from Success Laventille with whom the consultant met, felt that the government and the SGP had been unsupportive. They were particularly suspicious of the Ministry; which they felt would take note of good programs on the ground and then co-opt them for themselves. They said they thought community organizations were often used in this way, to the point that they now felt it was important NOT to share their good work and good ideas with government counterparts. "Instead of working with us so that we can accomplish what we want, they come in to tell us what they think we need."

Two Success Laventille community leaders and two consultants attended the meeting with this consultant. They had hoped to discuss a proposal they had recently submitted to UNDP to produce a documentary film of their community.

Pride in Gonzales

Community Intervention Transforming Youths (CITY), \$23,809

Pride in Gonzales operated under the rubric of the Catholic Commission for Social Justice and the Holy Rosary/St Martin de Porres Parishes. CITY started in 2003 as a pastoral response to the high levels of crime and violence in the East Port of Spain communities. Their aim was to launch five projects: community clean up; football competitions; community blackboards, after-school developmental adolescent programme; internet café. Previous to this project, the group had instituted an after-school programme in partnership with Families in Action, and was putting a gang mediation project into effect. In 2007, the Prime Minister recognized Pride in Gonzales as a programme with “outstanding initiative for bringing about peace, and recommended that other communities follow their model.” Their initiative seeks to take into account not only the need to address gang activity, but also the need to qualify community members to act as socializing influences, enabling the community to deal with some of its own issues on its own terms and in its own ways.

A profile of Gonzales conducted in 2004 claimed that 52.7% of the community’s problems were family-related. When CITY was established, they realized the need to help develop local leaders whose core values supported peace and prosperity for the neighbourhood and everyone living in it. “Our community leaders have traditionally been the baddest men,” said one community member, “we don’t look up to nice.”

Because of its high profile as an incubator for gangs and crime, Gonzales has received considerable attention from an array of government agencies and programs, most recently the Ministry of National Security’s Citizen Security Programme. “It’s hard to structure our real needs to fit a project framework,” said another community leader. They all appreciated the mediation training that was provided to youth in the community through the SGP programme, and one young woman at the meeting said that her peers were hoping for a refresher course so that more of them could put these peace-building skills into practice. Notes from the workshops indicate that the Dispute Resolution Centre that ran these seminars had to tailor their approach to deal with “severe self esteem issues, tragedy, and family conflict. We had to deal with more personal and life skills issues,” says their report.

Lively discussion by ten community leaders, young and old alike, revealed that they would now like to focus on building a better environment for local business to flourish. They want to make it possible for young people in their community to have real alternatives to a life of crime or inactivity.

La Sieva Village Council

Creative Learning Foundation, \$12,858

La Sieva Village Council was invited to submit a proposal to the NSC in 2004.

The SGP grant to La Sieva helped them to establish a community library, a computer lab, and a homework centre. All three of these projects are still alive despite the fact that grant monies have long ago been exhausted. 15-20 children from age 7 to 12 come every afternoon to study and be tutored by college students, some of them residents of La Sieva. They told the story of one young male student whose mother had given up on him. “Our programs helped him to focus and her to be a better mother,” said the Education Director. “We live in a place where many fathers are not present and, when they are, they sometimes drink and do not provide good examples to their children,” she said. “Having a relationship with the children gives us a relationship to the parents, too.” Since UNDP funds have been spent, La Sieva relies on Rotary Club and their local fund-raisers to pay the stipends for the tutors. They are now hoping that their proposal to the Commission for National Self Help where they provide labour and the government pays for materials will enable them to expand their premises and set up a dedicated computer lab. They have a long-standing relationship with the family of a former Canadian resident who has linked them to Libraries Without Borders. They applied to them for help with the library, but their project was not funded. They intend to try again.

Village Council leaders report very low morale leading up to and after recent elections in 2010. They felt that the community was splintered and their work to engage community members across the divide was becoming almost

impossible. “Last year’s election almost broke our spirit,” she said, “but our Homework Centre never closed.” The President of the Village Council had already written her resignation letter when they were invited to participate in the Freedom Flight seminars supported by the SGP’s grant to the St George East Branch (of which La Sieva is a member). They found the experience buoyed them personally and gave them a sense of collective accomplishment and focus they were lacking. Still, it is hard to get people to volunteer and some of their elected officers have dropped off. When asked about the relationships formed through the process and the successes they might not have expected, they talked about being able to help their Head Tutor, a young woman from the community, to obtain a scholarship to attend university by writing a letter describing her long service at the Homework Centre. They felt their experience with the SGP was wholly favourable. They found the reporting confusing and challenging, but they felt UNDP staff were approachable and helpful, and that the practice of learning how to account for the SGP grant will serve them well in future.

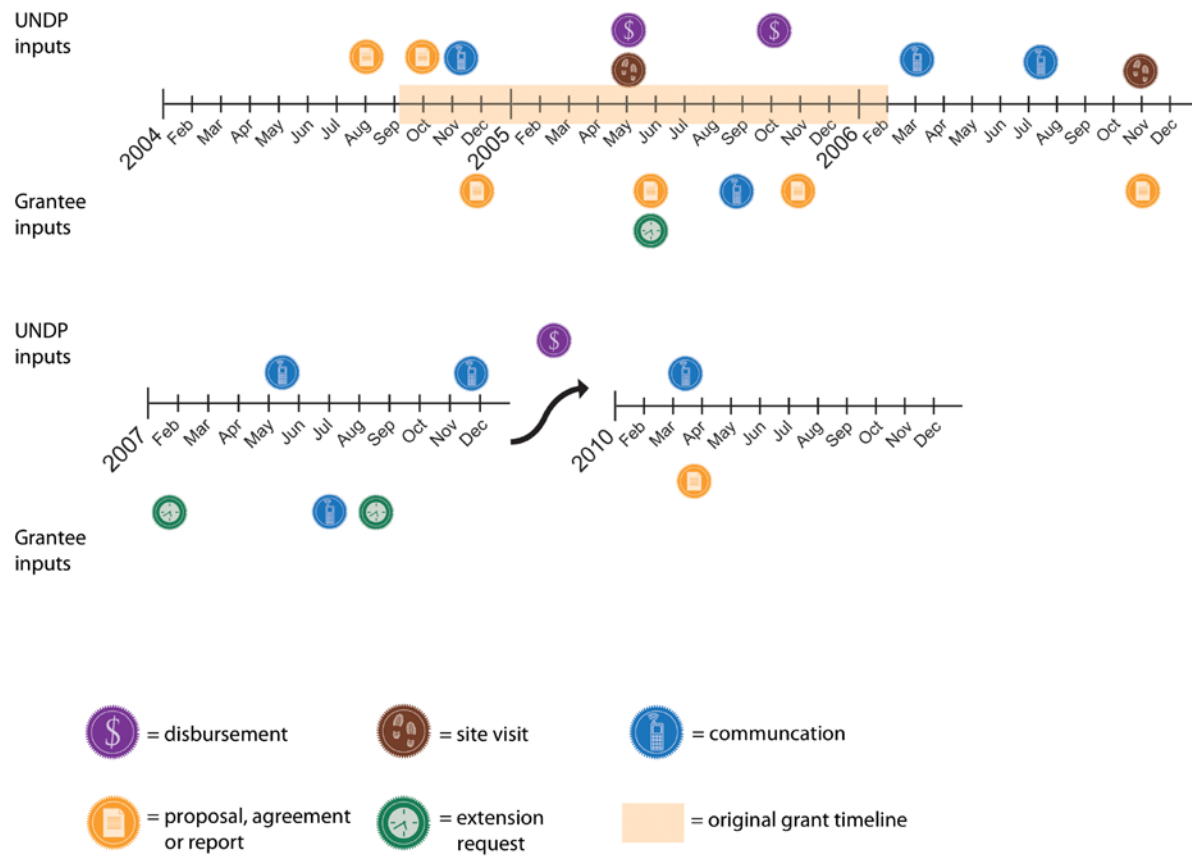
Association of Female Executives of Trinidad and Tobago (AFETT) Child Care Solutions, \$1,905

AFETT was founded in 2002 by three women who felt that businesswomen in Trinidad and Tobago needed their own forum for networking, mentoring, and professional development. Membership is over 90 women, all of them volunteers, from a range of industries and professions. AFETT learned about the SGP through one of the NSC members. They applied for support to discuss a White Paper on Child Care they had been working on for some time. Their idea was to host a forum to invite University of West Indies Gender Studies experts, ILO, and others to review their paper before presenting it to the government. While they found UNDP staff helpful and responsive, they did also find the process of applying and reporting a bit daunting. The process used by the UNDP SGP of providing direct payment to vendors and suppliers, while cumbersome in ways, was appropriate to a one-off event such as the one they were planning. Because of the SGP’s focus on local initiative and community-level initiatives, AFETT was encouraged to widen their invitation list to include participants from communities like the ones supported by SGP grants. The AFETT proposal links the troubling statistics on child murders, child abuse and rape, and missing children to inadequate child care options for all socio-economic classes of society. Theirs is clearly a focus on “healthy family functioning” which includes the larger society as also being responsible for the protection and nurturing environment we provide for our children.

The event was attended by 50 participants, including the UNICEF representative. Local community participation was low, but AFETT was generally pleased with the discussions and the revised White Paper that resulted. AFETT is now expecting to receive a grant from UNICEF to host a second discussion of the childcare issue and the document. The tentative date for this is set for 17 May 2011. The aim of this second gathering is to ready the document in time for budget discussions in Parliament. The White Paper recommends multiple solutions for meeting the childcare needs described by their research—homework centres in offices, flexi-time for parents, improved transportation, increased regulation of private providers, facilities shared by a number of employers, etc.

AFETT credits their relationship with the SGP for their newer links to UNICEF and this second opportunity to improve this project. They did not spend the budgeted amount of their modest SGP grant. Though the grant has closed, they wish to explore whether it may be possible to dedicate all remaining funds to their second conference.

Appendix 3 Lifeline of one grant



Appendix 4 Interview list

UNDP

1. Beverly Chase, Programme Associate, UNDP (referred to as the UNDP SGP Program Coordinator)
2. Marcia de Castro, Resident Representative, UNDP
3. Edo Stork, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP
4. Beverly Charles, Resource Analyst, UNDP
5. Stacey-Marie Syne, Acting GEF-SGP National Coordinator and Communications Assistant, UNDP / UNOPS
6. Sandra Baptiste-Caruth, Programme Specialist, Poverty and Social Development, UNDP

UNICEF

Augustine Agu, Head of Office and Social Policy Advisor, UNICEF

Rockefeller Philanthropic Advisors

Pooja Joshi O'Hanlon

National Steering Committee Members

1. Grace Talma, Current Chair (742-0603; 623-4094)
2. Sterling Belgrove, Past Chair (628-2557)
3. Diann Cooper-Mark, Ministry of Social Development
4. Melanie Richards, private sector, CSR Solutions Limited
5. Stephen French, alternate for Carrall Alexander
6. Carrall Alexander, Past Chair
7. Edo Stork, UNDP

SGP Grantees

1. **YMCA:** Ernest Nurse, Senior Facilitator of Men Touring (735-0742); Cindy Ann Currency, Coordinator (498-5078); Roger Ramnath, YMCA Accountant (759-4316)
2. **La Brea Core Group:** Michael Griffith, Project Coordinator (399-7175); Cindy Farrell, Group Secretary (331-8835)
3. **Hope Shelter:** Dr V. Jeelal, Founder and Director (672-5620); Jean Jeelal, wife and Program Manager; Jamila Ali, Secretary to the Project; Mohamed Ali, volunteer
4. **St George East Branch Association:** meeting at the offices of International Business Brokers (IBB): Gillian Wall, CEO, IBB; Tony Farnum, Consultant, IBB; Lorraine Villaroel, Goodwill Ambassador & Service Quality Facilitator, IBB; Monica Ferguson, President, St. George East Branch Association; Elvira Matroo, Asst. Secretary, St. George East Branch Association; Sterling Belgrove, Vice President St. George East Branch Association and Founder and Chair of The Rose Foundation; Marcia Belgrove, The Rose Foundation; Anisa Oliviel, The Rose Foundation

5. **birdsong:** Dennis “Charlie” Phillip, Trustee; Raymond Edwin Haynes, Coordinator of Boys Programs; Amanda Joseph, Administrator; Prof. Clement Imbert, Chairman of the Foundation; four young participants in Saturday program and one tutor
6. **Five Rivers Junior Secondary School Parent Teacher Association:** Patricia Borneo, Secretary (774-3125/646-6856); June Bridgewater, Chair (360-6128/640-1531), Ms. Ramkisoan, Trustee
7. **THE BARCAM:** Selvyn Lewis, Foundation and Director (765-6889; 779-7778)
8. **Vision on Mission:** Mr. Chance, Director; Larry Austen, Ex-convict and program manager; four female social workers and one university intern
9. **Success Laventille:** Oba Kileme, Coordinator (768-6813); Vernon St Lyr, Member (338-1722); Esuseeke Griffith Ololade, Consultant to documentary film project (868 766-5113)
10. **Adult Literacy Tutors Association:** Paula Lucie-Smith, Founder/Chief Executive Officer
11. **La Sieva Village Council:** Mrs. Selvin, Education Officer; Rhoda, Homework Centre tutor; Liz and Kelvin, students
12. **Pride in Gonzales:** Andrea, Program Coordinator; nine community members (Curtis, Denise, Herwald, Steve, Wyncynette, Rhea, Anne Marie, Judy, James)
13. **Association of Female Executives of Trinidad and Tobago:** Lara Queunall-Thomas, member and CEO Regency Recruitment, Ltd. (868-678-2181)

Others

1. **Ministry of Social Development, Poverty Reduction Programme:** Belinda Isaac-Baptiste, Senior Program Officer
2. **Organization of American States:** Riyad Insanally, Representative
3. **European Union:** Stylianos Christopoulos, Charge d’Affaires
4. **Canadian High Commission for Trinidad and Tobago:** Karen McDonald, High Commissioner; Elizabeth Brown, Senior Development Officer
5. **JB Fernandes Memorial Trust:** Joseph Fernandes, son of JB Fernandes
6. **United Way of Trinidad and Tobago:** Pamela Francis, CEO
7. **Green Fund:** Richard Laydoo, Project Coordinator (former GEF SGP National Coordinator)
8. **CANARI:** Anna Cadiz (former GEF SGP National Coordinator)
9. **Cherril Sobers** (former Project Coordinator UNDP SGP)
10. **Veniapwann:** Ruthann Ramchanan-Ramoutar, Executive Director

Appendix 5 Interview questions

5.1 Interview Questions for NSC members

Who? How? What? With what outcomes?

1. What years were you on the NSC?
2. What did you personally give to the SGP? What did you get back by participating?
3. What is/was your personal vision or hope for the SGP?
4. How do you describe the link between that vision or hope and the procedures the NSC put in place for realizing that vision?
5. Is there anything you would do differently next time? Do you believe the SGP program could or should be replicated?
6. What did SGP provide in Trinidad and Tobago that other programs do not provide? How is SGP similar to other programs you know of in the region?
7. How would you rate the working relationships within the SGP?
8. How would you rate the effectiveness of the NSC as a steering committee for the SGP?
9. How would you describe the overall benefit of the SGP to the organizations receiving funds? (Monetary and non-monetary)
10. How would you describe the overall positive impact of the work of the SGP grantees on their beneficiaries - on the people and communities involved?
11. How would you rate the success of the SGP on achieving or contributing to the broader goals of addressing poverty, encouraging healthy family functioning, bringing about positive change in the lives of vulnerable groups in Trinidad and Tobago? Compared to what?
12. Please tell me one story of an NSC intervention in the grant as it was unfolding. What does this story show about the program?
13. Many of the MOA's had to be extended. Do you consider this a problem? What does it indicate about the grantees or the program?
14. What was the greatest challenge?
15. What was the greatest joy?

Appendix 5.2 Ten Questions for the National Steering Committee

Please rank each of the following on a scale of 1 to 10:

(10 being exceptional and excellent; 5 being satisfactory and adequate, 1 being wholly unsatisfactory)

- 1) Vision/Goals of the Social Development UNDP Small Grants Program.
- 2) Grant processes put in place to realize this vision: NSC
- 3) Grant processes put in place to realize this vision: UNDP
- 4) Experience for me personally of serving on the NSC

Results of the SGP, in terms of the following:

- 5) Accomplishments of the grantee projects funded by the SGP
- 6) Benefit to the grantee organizations of being a part of this program
- 7) Contributions to the larger national issues of healthy family functioning, poverty, and community agency and ability
- 8) Benefits to those who managed and ran it
- 9) Success at creating avenues beyond/outside the SGP for grantees ready to graduate, for grantees in need of other inputs. Building an enabling environment.

Prospects for the Future:

- 10) Should there be second phase of the Social Development SGP?

Any other comments, things we should be grading or asking?

Appendix 5.3 Interview Questions for Grantees

HOW (structure, reporting, etc.); WHAT (the work supported and the impact on your organization); RESULTS (how you judge success)

1. How did you learn about the SGP?
2. What year did you first apply for funds? Who wrote your proposal? What year did your grant close?
3. When did you first receive funds? Did the NSC set conditions for funding your project, or change your proposal or work plan in any way? If so, how?
4. At the time when your organization received support from the SGP, did you have other donors? If so, who were they? What percentage of your budget for the year(s) you received funds did the SGP grant represent? Less than 25%? About 50%? 75%? 100%?
5. Simply stated, what was the goal of the program SGP supported? How do you measure its achievement?
6. Was the project a continuation of work you had already done, completely new work, or some combination? Explain.
7. Did you receive any technical assistance from the SGP? If so, what kind? What did you most need from them?
8. How often did you communicate with or see members of the SGP? Under what circumstances? With whom? Was this a positive or negative experience?
9. Did your organization benefit from links or relationships built through your participation in the SGP? (To individuals? To other organizations?)
10. Who prepared your reports for the SGP? Were they helpful? Cumbersome? How would you change them?
11. What is your greatest challenge in running your organization and achieving your goals? Besides funds, what other problems make your work difficult?
12. If your organization has had other donors, how did your experience with SGP compare to those other donors and their procedures and expectations and support?
13. What difficulties did you encounter during the grant period? Did these result in changes to your original plans or timing?
14. What was your greatest joy or success during the SGP program?

15. How would you rank the work of the SGP as you experienced it?
16. How would you rank your organization's success in implementing the program that the SGP supported?
17. How did your grant from SGP change your organization? What lessons learned or experiences that have since affected how your work, who you work with, where you get support, etc?
18. What kinds of materials did you produce during the grant period? (DVDs, brochures, curriculum, etc)
19. Did you request extensions to your MOA with the SGP? How many times? Why?
20. If we were going to establish another SGP in Trinidad and Tobago, what advice would you have for us?

Appendix 6 Video on the UNDP SGP

Suggested approach for video documenting UNDP SGP and efforts to promote “Healthy Family Functioning” in Trinidad and Tobago

The key to producing a good video documentary of a programme such as this one would be to develop a story line connecting the larger issue of healthy family functioning to four things:

- its resonance for TT today and the problems we are facing;
- the fact that we must approach this issue comprehensively, at many levels and through varied strategies;
- the ways in which projects under the UNDP SGP have realized this approach and begun to see results;
- the need for everyone to continue to support and participate in these efforts in the future.

The film would be more of an advertisement for the issue than the programme, though it would present UNDP SGP as ground-breaking, experimental, and exciting. (And, for purposes of clarity, you may want the UNDP/NSC spokesperson to show the map of all of the projects to ground the stories in the larger picture). With or without the map, that spokesperson should describe the range of things done under the programme by grantees, again to give a sense of what is not going to be covered as well as what is. (It is not wise or necessary to talk about the process of grant awards, reports, etc. in this video).

The video would use examples from the programme projects to show what has been done, what is possible, and also what still needs to be done. **It would acknowledge agency in local hands and responsibility in all hands.** It would show that the work can be difficult, but that it is important to all of us. It would applaud UNDP for sticking with organizations as they found their ways. It would acknowledge that there is no single right way or right program, but many rights ways and right programs. All of them, in their own ways, are contributing to healthy family functioning in Trinidad and Tobago.

One way to accomplish this would be to interview two or three experts or spokespersons who would set the stage for the thesis regarding the importance of the work, the current realities of TT, the fact that all generations have to be involved if families are to change, the fact that there are many ways to approach the issue. One or two experts could be from the UNDP or the NSC, the other(s) could be academics, media personalities, government leaders who are able to speak clearly about family dynamics, community engagement, or crime. You use segments of these interviews to introduce the work done in particular projects. You could edit by a focus on age (segments on activities focused on children, youth, parents, elders) or by type effort (training, arts, income generation, community events), or simply select five or six examples and weave the interview segments to introduce those. This can be decided based on the quality of material you are able to collect or produce. If you can get compelling and clear descriptions of what is needed if we are to change family functioning in TT, you can simply follow a statement by an expert by one or two examples of the ways in which the programme has taken this issue on. For

example, after the expert talks about the need for adult role models, you cover the YMCA and *birdsong*. After the expert talks about parents needing skill, you talk about the PTA, ALTA, Pride in Gonzales.

The other people featured would be from the pool of grantees and beneficiaries of the programme. Some of the more obvious candidates from grantee organizations might include some of the following:

- the La Sieva Community Council leaders who can talk about how they are enacting their mission to “create a community of people who are holistically educationally, environmentally aware, mentally and physically fit, and spiritually strong”—and what family problems they see where they live and how they think they can be improved, AND have been improved through their project
- Ernest Chance at the YMCA who can talk about fathering boys who need role models and helping young people - male and female - form relationships despite difficult family situations, and about the conditions in group homes for youth in TT
- Edwin Hayes of *birdsong* who talks about the band becoming a family that creates a safe haven for boys who do not have that anywhere else to go and how the discipline of learning music transfers to other areas of life for young people, while also offering them the possibility of employment and community
- The woman leader from TT Coalition Against Domestic Violence in film on elder abuse and the youth-elder work of SEAN who can talk about the ways older people in TT are treated and her strategy of bringing in young people to spend time with them
- Four Roads Tamana leaders on changes they have seen and how all ages have been included—how helping a child helps a parent and vice versa, how local people can become local experts
- Gonzales community leader who talks enthusiastically of working with gang members so that they become positive leaders in the community, and how pride in where you come from manifests in individual behaviour and attitude more broadly
- 5 Rivers PTA leader who talks about how parenting can be taught, and how changes in once-silent parents and children also brings changes to the school and community as well as to the individuals reached directly
- BARCAM founder, on what family issues they tackle in their street theatre programme and how they know if it works
- Family First in Tobago who can talk about their multi-pronged approach for dealing with violence, vulnerability, poverty, and poor parenting

- Vision on Mission leader who can talk about the fact that ex-convicts, too, deserve a chance and the way they re-integrate into family and community life has a lot to do with crime and stopping crime—that dysfunctional families may have landed them in prison in the first place.

You would prompt them to talk about inter-generational communication, the current state of families in their communities, the ways in which changes in individuals can make a difference in families and communities, the fact that you have to approach this work in a holistic fashion and at a pace that makes sense for those involved. Results may seem small, but they are significant. Not only can they make a difference to individuals who are touched by this work, but together they can recast the way our society recognizes and takes on the power to create something better for everyone.

Family is the bedrock of society. If families are strong, if they nurture and support everyone to grow in healthy ways, if they offer hope and values, if they build trust, then society will also be strong. If we were poorly parented, we have to learn to parent differently when we are adults. Change will not happen without working to change.

Some of the take-aways you would aim for, the things you want your audience to hear, see, and remember could include the following. These could be used as prompts during interviews, or given to people as suggestions of what you would like them to say on camera:

- Healthy family functioning is an important issue in Trinidad and Tobago today. For families to be fully functional, individuals, families, and communities must be strengthened. This is not only a focus on young people. It is a focus on everyone.
- Family is considered a private domain in Trinidad and Tobago. We do not like to talk about what is not working at home—at personal levels or at policy levels. But, we have to talk about this because we need to change things. What role models do our young men have who can help them make good choices? What chances do our women and girls have to be safe in their homes and on our streets? How do we treat our elderly? Do our communities create spaces for interaction, for learning, for engagement? These things are connected.
- There are many ways to approach healthy family functioning, and only through combined strategies can we accomplish real change. Change cannot be orchestrated from above, though appropriate policies and constructive engagement by government is important. Change happens one person at a time and one family at a time, so there is something that everyone can contribute to this. This is not the concern only of experts or of government, but of everyone. We are all experts in our own lives and we all have the power to affect change close to home. This programme was about making change close to home, where it matters.

- There are many kinds of poverty, not only economic poverty. All of them are in evidence in Trinidad and Tobago and all of them affect families. There is physical poverty causing ill health(created by unhealthy living conditions and behaviours); mental poverty resulting from lack of education and knowledge; cultural poverty which is the lack of coming together in society (to honour our roots and nurture what is good in our traditions); spiritual poverty caused by a lack of feeling of togetherness or a connection larger meaning of life and the values we need to make good choices; political poverty which is a lack of understanding of how systems work and how to make them work for us (how to be represented and how to represent ourselves); and, there is societal poverty, lack of social connectivity and cohesion. The UNDP SGP focused on alleviating poverty, and we recognize all of these types of poverty in our work and in our vision. (Some “poor” families provide better parenting than “rich” families.)
- The UNDP SGP has, for the past 7 years, supported work that tackled a wide range of the issues that experts, practitioners, government, communities, and citizens know to be related to dysfunctional family settings and the negative impact this has on our society. The small grants programme has done this by supporting local groups and organizations in communities to experiment with strategies for affecting change and to engage local people in making a difference in their own lives. Some of the changes desired take time to be seen; others show almost immediate results. None of them are simple. To change a family is not the same as taking a pill. It is about attitudes, skill, confidence, community, trust, and responsibility. Together, the work that people in their communities have done under UNDP SGP support provide a roadmap for local change that can help us create a nation in which all of our citizens are protected, feel heard, and have real opportunities to lead meaningful lives.
- AND, the work was fun. There was music, theatre, song, colour, parades, parties, community signboards, radio programmes, film along with training and research and loans and community meetings.
- Criminality is a great concern in Trinidad and Tobago now. Experts agree that the best way to deal with this is to go to root causes—to look at what causes criminal activity—poverty, lack of opportunity for honest employment, lack of confidence in the systems that are supposed to be supporting us, lack of role models to help us choose healthy ways to live, lack of support as we are growing and developing, lack of mentoring along the way, a weak sense of community and belonging, conflicts between older and younger family members, poor communication, few outlets for expression, etc. The UNDP SGP projects focused on all of these things—at local levels, with local people in control.
- Our approach was sometimes to deal head-on with problems—gang members in Gonzales, elder abuse, gender-based violence, unemployment, poverty. At other times, we worked to create better skills for parenting, for reaching out to older people, to provide ways to earn a living or engage with others. We also supported training

opportunities for all ages, libraries, homework centres, and computer labs in communities that needed them. We often started with one thread of the problem and that took us to pick up other threads.

Of course, a short film should not attempt to do all of this, but the ideas and perspectives above can inform interviewers as they seek to find the skeleton (and get the quotes!) on which to hang the larger story. Any of these could serve that purpose. The trick to this will certainly be in the editing. The transitions between segments need to be smooth, but they needn't be direct. Some stories can speak for themselves without the "expert" talking first; others can be used to back up something that your "experts" say.

If you are able to get good interview footage from a well-spoken young person (or a parent and child together) who can tell their own stories, you could use that to ground programme strategies in a compelling way. One possible example of this would be Elvira from the St George East Branch who talks about how participating in Freedom Flight changed her son, changing their relationship and also changing the way he engages with his community and his peers, and how it has altered his goals for the future (he is hoping to go to medical school now). Another might be to talk to Gonzales youth who participated in conflict mediation training. A third would be to interview participants in the Five Rivers PTA parenting programmes. How has this skill helped them in their families, with friends, in their community?

The video should leave the viewer with something to think about and something to do. UNDP leadership and the film makers will need to decide what this focus should be—a generalized sensitization to the issue, the work on the ground and its challenges, the vision and power of this particular programme—or some combination of these. When the works speaks for itself, it is most engaging.

I would suggest trying to leave the viewer with an upbeat feeling that change is possible and that **change is already happening**. Because the people speaking and the work seen come mostly from the grantees of the UNDP SGP, this video would market the programme while also documenting parts of it and highlighting its importance.

Appendix 7 Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT: 00015010“UNDP Small Grants Programme”

BACKGROUND OF THE UNDP SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME The UNDP Small Grants Programme (UNDP/SGP) is a complementary programme to the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF/SGP) in the Trinidad and Tobago country office. While the GEF/SGP focuses on the environment, the UNDP SGP which commenced in 2004 focuses more directly on social issues and the intention is to support NGO/CBO initiatives inclusive of and beyond the GEF environmental focus. In this regard the UNDP/SGP supports projects which address income generation, literacy and numeric skills, HIV and AIDS and Democratic Governance. To date the UNDP SGP has committed over USD 300,000 to 20 organizations with funding being provided by the JB Fernandes Memorial Trust I, the Ministry of Social Development and UNDP. With each project it is anticipated that replication can take place at the community level and/or at the national level at some future time. The SGP can therefore be considered to be one which provides an opportunity for testing new ground with the anticipation that the resulting outcome will be successful and in this regard encourage acceptance at the national policy making level.

OBJECTIVES OF THE UNDP SGP The overall goal of the UNDP/SGP is to ensure an improvement in the quality of life enjoyed at the family, community and national levels and to ultimately address poverty reduction at the community level in Trinidad and Tobago through awareness, education, the promotion of sustainable livelihoods, and capacity-building. More specifically the stated objectives of the UNDP/SGP are to:

- i. Broaden the scope of grantees to civil society organizations
- ii. Provide support to civil society in a more holistic manner for example, by addressing broader issues and focusing on linkages among the issues
- iii. Integrate the upstream and downstream approaches to sustainable development by the inclusion of civil society in the decision making process at the policy level
- iv. Address poverty through measurable improvements in the standard of living of the poor and the excluded
- v. Build capacity at the basic level of the community – the family, to strengthen that unit’s capacity to effectively contribute to the sustainable development of the larger units within society
- vi. Enable UNDP to address development needs in project development at the community level within the UNDP Common Country Framework (CCF) to facilitate

down streaming from policy level; and

- vii. Expand the GEF/SGP criteria to address community sustainable development needs and build capacity at a community level for development needs.

ADMINISTRATION The Programme is managed by the UNDP SGP Coordinator (Programme Associate) in UNDP with the National Steering Committee (NSC) as the policy and decision making body. The NSC comprises volunteers from the private and public sector as well as Civil Society. Monthly meetings of the NSC are held to review and make decisions on reports submitted by grantees as well as new proposals submitted for funding. The NSC also provides advice and direction on initiatives to ensure the efficient and effective execution of the programme. Monitoring and evaluation of the individual projects is achieved through the quarterly financial and technical reports submitted by the groups as well as intermittent site visits undertaken by the UNDP SGP Coordinator and members of the NSC.

OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION The programme has completed 5 years and it is necessary to conduct an evaluation to assess its performance and impact to date and in so doing, to draw lessons learned from its implementation. The information gathered by this evaluation will be used by UNDP to plan for future programming including possible continuation of the programme activities. More specifically the evaluation seeks to assess the programme's impact in terms of its potential:

1. to develop capacity to address developmental needs at the community level
2. to influence positive change in the lives of vulnerable groups in Trinidad and Tobago
3. to promote healthy family functioning
4. for replication of projects at community and/or national level

METHODOLOGY The consultant can propose their own methodology but it is expected that the evaluation will be implemented mostly through document review, key informant interviews and/or focus group meetings. UNDP encourages a participatory method of evaluation and expects that some aspects of gender and capacity development be considered in its analysis. ANNEX 1 further details the general scope of works for the evaluation.

DURATION 4 weeks

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE The team and/or individual must possess the necessary qualifications and experience in conducting evaluations of this nature. There must also be expertise which includes:

- Post Graduate degree from a recognized university in the field of social science, development studies, or other comparable fields.
- Competence and at least eight years of experience in the area of community development programmes, preferably with focus on community groups and nongovernmental organizations.
- Experience and familiarity with the small grants environment of Trinidad and Tobago.

- Experience in conducting participatory evaluations
- Ability to speak and report in the English Language

OUTPUTS The following outputs are expected:

1. A work plan –inclusive of the methodology to be used - for the evaluation activity
2. An initial draft evaluation report for review,
3. A final evaluation report (including an executive summary)

The final report should be comprehensive and provide details of findings of activities. The report shall make recommendations based on the findings on if and how the programme can evolve to further strengthen CBOs and NGOs to effect greater and more widespread positive impact on development needs. Further, the report should propose factors which can aid in the sustainability and evolution of the projects and by extension the grantee organization.

ANNEX I SCOPE OF WORKS The evaluation will cover the life of the project up to December 2009, the implementation of its activities and the delivery of the expected outputs. In addition, the evaluation will measure any effects of the project on the target population - those deemed more vulnerable in our society. In this regard some of the questions which the evaluation should seek to answer are:

1. Efficiency • How efficient has the implementation of the UNDP SGP been? • Has adequate support been provided by UNDP and the NSC to grantees? • What are the potential challenges that may prevent projects from producing the intended results
2. Sustainability • Are the projects sustainable? • Do the interventions have a potential for scaling up or replication? • How should UNDP encourage the continuation of benefits achieved from its assistance when the funding assistance stops?
3. Lessons learned • Are there any lessons learned from UNDP provided assistance? • Identify key lessons that can provide a useful basis for strengthening UNDP's and donors (cash and in-kind) continued support to the development of CBOs and NGOs. • Highlight features to be considered as good practices at national, regional and international level for learning and replication.
4. Effectiveness • To what extent have the projects achieved their stated objectives? What are the reasons for achievement and non-achievements? • What are the positive and negative, intended or unintended effects of the SGP on people, communities and organizations?
5. Relevance • Is the UNDP SGP relevant to the needs of the country and in meeting the UNDP's country programme objectives and by extension UNDP's strategic objectives?

The following provide further details of expected evaluations activities:

1. Review of Documentation

A review should be undertaken of (but not be limited to) the following documents:

- The Project Document
- Reports of Grantee Organisations
- Reports to Donor Organisations
- Documentation on similar type programmes being implemented locally (for example, by the Community Development Fund Secretariat of the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, the Poverty Reduction Fund of the Ministry of Social Development, CIDA, etc.)
- Any other documents on best practices in the Caribbean and Internationally

2. Interviews/Field Visits/Questionnaires:

The following stakeholders can be approached to provide relevant information:

- Representatives of the UNDP;
- Representatives of the Ministry of Social Development

- Representatives of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (JB Fernandes Trust Fund)
- Representatives of the Grantee CBOs and NGOs
- Participants and/or other stakeholders of projects
- Members of the National Steering Committee (Past and Present)
- Other small grant programme providers in Trinidad and Tobago

3. Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the strategy employed in the implementation of this programme, paying particular attention to, but not limited to the following:

- The organizational structure governing the management of the programme which comprises:
 - o UNDP
 - o The National Steering Committee
 - o The Grantee organizations
- The monitoring and evaluation of the grantee organisations' implementation of the projects
- The processes involved in sourcing projects and grant approvals
- The support systems available to grantee organisations to effectively develop, implement and report on project

4. Evaluate the extent to which projects have the potential for the replication by other similar organizations or at the national level.

5. Assess the impact of the programme on the
- Direct targets of the projects
 - Grantee organizations
 - The NSC members