Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31st October)

Project Ref. No. 17-004

Project Title Building civil society capacity for conservation in the Caribbean UKOTs

Country(ies) Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks &

Caicos)

UK Organisation Commonwealth Foundation

Collaborator(s) Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (project leader Sarah McIntosh)

Project Leader Vijay Krishnarayan

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Project website

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

General

There has been little activity during the six-month period except for planning activities, mainly because CANARI received no funding from the Commonwealth Foundation during the period. (Afternote: the Quarter 3 and 4 payments for Year 1 and Quarter 1 payment for Year 2 were sent to CANARI on 6 October 2010).

The Commonwealth Foundation programme officer responsible for this project, Junaid Habib, left the Commonwealth Foundation at the end of July. The project will now be managed by Vijay Krishanarayan, Deputy Director.

In anticipation of these funds being received, the following activities were initiated or completed by CANARI (more details under specific Activities below):

- contracting of a consultant, Gilllian Cooper, to coordinate the study visit and produce the related case study;
- contracting of the same consultant, Gillian Cooper, to oversee the small grants programme since applications to date have been disappointing;
- drafting of an issues paper: Community participation in natural resource management: lessons from Caribbean small island states, with co-funding from the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation.

A meeting of the UK Advisory Group was held on 10 September 2010 while the CANARI Project Manager, Sarah McIntosh, was in the UK and this also served to introduce UK partners to Gillian Cooper. Regular contact was maintained with the UK partners whose current activities complement those under this project, notably RSPB and JNCC.

There has also been intermittent contact with the Caribbean Action Research and Learning Group, related mainly to:

- soliciting feedback on the March ARLG meeting report and its findings;
- encouraging them to submit small grant applications;
- discussing with National Trust of the Cayman Islands (NTCI) and Turks and Caicos Islands National Trust (TCINT) who they will select as a partner organisation for future ARLGs and other project activities.

Activity 1.1. Moblise 10 CSOs: Only 8 CSOs attended the March 2010 ARLG meeting but both TCINT and CINT are close to finalising partnership arrangements with Rotaract and Rotary respectively. Since the private sector is inadequately integrated into conservation efforts at present, and indeed in several cases is contributing to its degradation, these partnerships should prove useful

Activity 1.2.: Mobilise partners and establish Technical Advisory Committee and hold inception meeting: The *UK Action Learning Group* met on 10 September, with four UK partners in attendance as well as CANARI and Commonwealth Foundation representatives. The draft minutes of the meeting are attached.

Activity 1.3: Establish project team and refine project workplan: The CANARI project team has been expanded to include former CANARI staff member and now independent consultant based in the UK, Gillian Cooper, to coordinate the study visit, write up the related case study, and oversee the small grants. Since Gillian is based in the UK, she also provides an accessible point of contact for UK partners. At the suggestion of the LTS reviewer, discussions are also underway with NTCI to hold a national stakeholder meeting, similar to the ones held in the other territories. If this comes off, it would mean an adjustment to the workplan, but should be feasible since some savings were made on the first ARLG meeting as a result of not having the full complement of attendees.

2.3 Plan, facilitate and report on second ARLG meeting and training workshop
Participants are being consulted on possible dates in March 2011 and discussions are
underway about location and focus. It had been envisaged that the meeting would be held in
Montserrat and focus on participatory planning, with Nicole Leotaud, now CANARI Executive
Director, co-facilitating, since she was integrally involved in the Centre Hills planning process.
Sarah McIntosh will write up the case study on the Centre Hills planning process and will cofacilitate the meeting with Gillian Cooper.

3.2 Study visit to Bermuda

Following consultation with ARLG members, UK partners and the LTS Advisor, it was decided that Bermuda was not the best place for a study visit. It has now been decided that the study visit will focus on the former Netherlands Antilles (in the process of being restructured) and will be conducted in partnership with the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) to examine:

- DCNA's institutional set up structure, funding and capacity;
- DCNA's role, functions and achievements in the area of conservation;
- the challenges that DCNA and the Netherlands overseas territories face in terms of biodiversity conservation
- how the relationship between the OTs and the Netherlands has helped or hindered biodiversity conservation in the Dutch Caribbean.

There will also be opportunities to meet some of the organsiations that form DCNA's membership with a particular focus on the CSOs that are managing or co-managing protected areas.

5.1 Develop communication strategy for the project

Some discussion of this took place at the ARLG but it has not been fully fleshed out. One communication activity (5.7 see below) has been completed. It is anticipated that the full strategy will be completed, including the project webpage and intranet by the end of 2010.

5.7 Develop and print guidelines on civil society development and management

During the period, CANARI drafted and had peer reviewed a publication entitled "Community participation in natural resource management: lessons from Caribbean small island states", which was produced with co-funding from the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation under the Going from strength to strength project which CANARI is implementing in tandem with this project and using similar methodologies. The paper also draws on lessons from projects funded by the European Commission's Programme on Tropical Forests and other Forests in Developing Countries and the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation's National Forest Programme Facility. This has been published as the first of a new CANARI series of Issues Papers, rather than as a Guideline, with the primary target audience being

government, donor agencies and NGOs that support that support community-based organisations (CSOs) and the secondary audience being the CBOs themselves. Although the majority of the lessons are drawn from outside the UKOTs, they are highly relevant to the situation identified during the national visits and should certainly be of value to both the Trusts and their partner agencies within and outside government. It is primarily intended for circulation in electronic format (see attached) but 300 copies have been printed for distribution at CANARI workshops and conferences.

- 6.1 Design small grant and peer mentoring programme and discuss at first ARLG
- 6.2 Refine design of small grant and peer mentoring programme
- 6.3 Invite small grant applications

The small grant programme was designed and launched at the first ARLG meeting in March but to date, and in spite of several reminders, there has only been one application (from the Montserrat Small Business Association) and that did not meet the criteria. In the light of the challenges which the participants appear to be having in identifying and applying for grants to meet their organisational development needs, CANARI has contracted Gillian Cooper to oversee this programme. She will use the opportunity of the study visit to discuss in more depth with participating organisations what have been the challenges and work with them to identify possible projects.

7.1 Participatory development of project monitoring and evaluation framework

A broad framework for monitoring and evaluation was discussed at the first ARLG meeting but this has not been further refined. CANARI will develop this further for discussion and piloting at the second ARLG.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

As mentioned in the introduction the main challenge has been the slow disbursement of first funds. CANARI has now taken on additional capacity for this project through the contracting of Gillian Cooper.

At the level of the OTs themselves, there is continuing concern that the majority of the organisations are not dealing strategically with the admittedly difficult situations in which they find themselves, notably uncertain or reduced funding. This concern is shared by other UK partners, such as RSPB, with whom we continue to strategise. It is hoped that the intensified focus on getting the small grants off the ground can stimulate some more strategic activities.

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

A Defra representative attended the most recent UK ALG meeting. CANARI also spoke to the former LTS contact, Rob Wild, prior to that meeting, as he was unable to attend.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: no / yes, in...... (21/10/2009)

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: no / yes, in.....(21/10/2009)

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

N/A