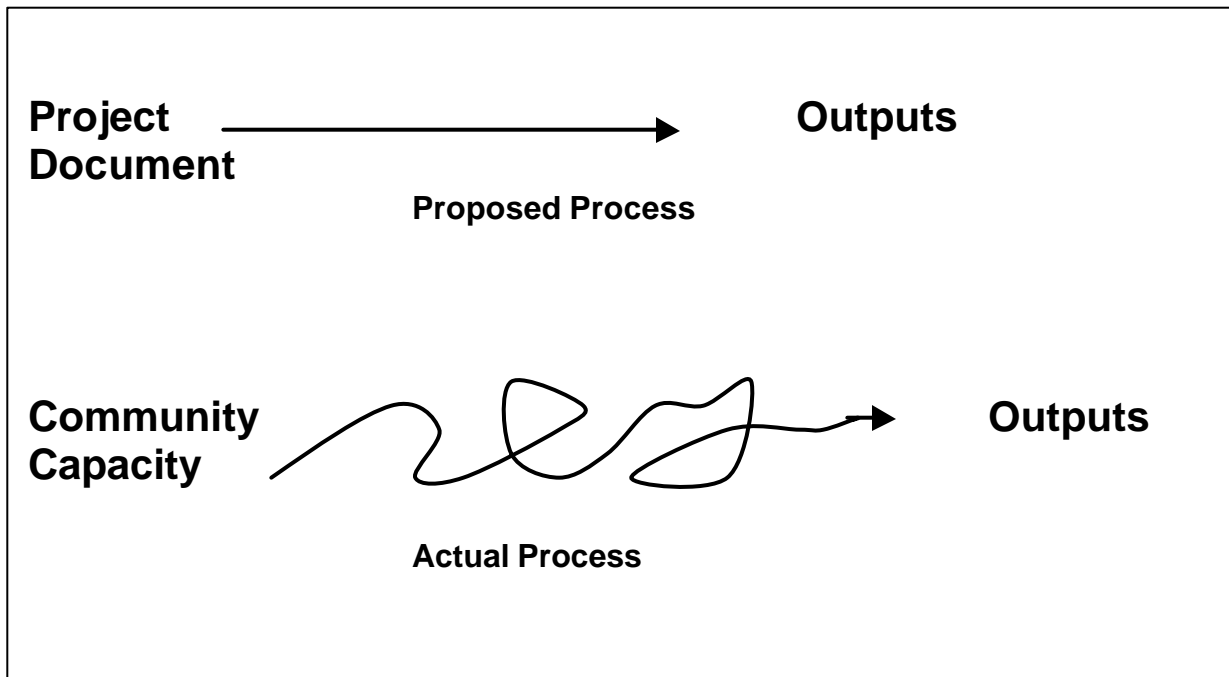


# CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH UNV SUPPORT IN THE CARIBBEAN



**An evaluation of the pilot project “UNV Support to Strengthening the Capacity of NGOs and CBOs involved with GEF Small Grants Programme and the UN System Integrated Approach to Poverty Eradication Programme in Barbados and other OECS countries, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and Guyana to respond effectively to critical Sustainable Development Needs”. PROJECT NO: RLA/98/VO1**

Floyd Homer  
10<sup>th</sup> October, 2003

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	7
ABBREVIATIONS.....	8
MAPS.....	9
INTRODUCTION.....	12
EVALUATION.....	14
FINDINGS.....	16
1. General Remarks.....	16
2. Status of the expected outcome.....	17
3. Underlying factors influencing the achievement of the expected outcome.....	18
4. Management of the Programme.....	20
5. UNV/GEF SGP's specific contributions.....	23
6. Host NGOs contributions.....	23
7. Partnership Strategy.....	24
8. Lessons Learnt.....	24
9. Regional Approach and Sustainability.....	26
10. Placement of Volunteers.....	26
11. NUNV Strengths and Weaknesses.....	27
12. Benefits of the NUNV approach.....	29
13. Volunteering.....	29
14. Gender Issues.....	30
CONCLUSIONS.....	31
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	32
APPENDIX I.....	33
APPENDIX II.....	34

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an evaluation of the pilot project “UNV Support to Strengthening the Capacity of NGOs and CBOs involved with GEF Small Grants Programme and the UN System Integrated Approach to Poverty Eradication Programme in Barbados and other OECS countries, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and Guyana to respond effectively to critical Sustainable Development Needs”.

Over the two-year period several NUNVs and one International UNV as Regional Coordinator were engaged in range of project activities around the region. The major activities included community mobilisation activities, local level workshops, regional Induction/Training and Mid Term Review workshops for the NUNVs and other stakeholders, international representation at the GEF SGP Global Workshop 2001, GEF SGP proposal development and implementation, programme monitoring and evaluation as well as promotional, advocacy and resource mobilisation activities at the national, regional and international levels.

The purpose of this evaluation was to: i) examine the relevance, performance (effectiveness and efficiency) and success (impact and sustainability) of the UNV programme to build capacity through providing support to groups engaged (or intending to engage) in the GEF SGP, and UNSIAPE and make recommendations for future programming of UNVs in the Environment; and ii) examine the capacity of the project to promote volunteerism, the role of volunteerism as a developmental agent of progress and the value added of a volunteer.

Much of the evaluation process involved the study of internal reports generated by the pilot project, including the mid-term review, periodic reports, and the end of assignment reports of the NUNVs and the Regional Coordinator. Interviews were also conducted with key stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, national steering committee members, SGP and UNDP staff, and host NGOs. These interviews encouraged project participants to discuss their experience with the project and to offer their assessment of the impacts and usefulness of the project interventions.

The major findings are summarized below:

### General

- The frequency of visits to the targeted communities by the NUNVs was generally constrained by the inadequate travel budget, the distance of these communities from the operational base of the NUNV, the initiative of the NUNV, and the level of support from the host agency.
- Baseline data on the status of the capacity of the targeted communities/NGOs or CBOs before the intervention of the NUNV were not systematically collected or documented.

- The NUNVs touched the lives of the majority of community project participants, in a manner that built self-esteem and developed some new skills.

#### Status of the expected outcome

- In Trinidad and Tobago several of the groups admitted that the NUNV helped them to better understand the requirements of the GEF SGP for the submission of proposals and believed that they no longer needed assistance for future proposal preparation.
- There was an increase in the number of SGP GEF projects funded during the pilot project interventions.
- Some capacity has been built within the CSOs in terms of the understanding of what has to be done, identification of the process to be undertaken, readiness (psychological and physical) to undertake the tasks, and the acquisition of technical information and building of knowledge related to the tasks.
- In terms of the host agency to which the NUNV was attached, having a skilled NUNV as an additional human resource enhanced the capacity of the agency.
- The project objectives guided the NUNVs assignments on the ground, and the objectives related to the SGP GEF were largely fulfilled, however, the financial resources mobilisation component was inadequate.
- The promotion of Volunteer community approaches was useful, needed and well received in the target areas.

#### Underlying factors influencing the achievement of the expected outcome

- There were several underlying factors that influenced the expected outcome; the most important of which was trust.
- The aptitude, interpersonal skills, enthusiasm, motivation and commitment of the majority of persons selected as NUNVs were largely responsible for the responsiveness of the communities and their achievement.
- Serious constraints to the scale of success of the outcome seem to be caused by administrative and funding issues within the regional programme.
- The effectiveness of several of the NUNVs could have been improved if there was closer supervision and greater emphasis was placed on implementation of the workplan.
- It took a very long time for the CSO to prepare and submit an application for funding to the SGP for a planning grant or project approval.
- In terms of the profile of UNV and UNDP in the region affecting the project outcome, there were mixed reactions across the various stakeholder groups.
- Many of the communities did not know of the existence of the UNV as an organisation before the NUNV's intervention and promotion of UNV during the International Year of Volunteers.

### Management of the programme

- The Regional Coordinator had overall responsibility for ensuring that workplans for herself and all NUNVs were prepared on time and approved in consultation with the SGP National Coordinator and Host Agency.
- Major decisions affecting the implementation of the pilot project was made by ARLAC without any consultation of the UNV Regional Coordinator and the SGP in Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados.
- Several key project participants felt that the orientation given to NUNVs at the start of their assignment was inadequate; especially in terms of the policy and procedures of the programme they were expected to support.
- Several of the NUNVs did not initially have the requisite training or experience in community or organizational development that was required to effectively assist in building the capacity of the CSOs.

### UNV/GEF SGP's specific contributions

- The roles and responsibilities among the project participants seemed clear, however the expectations of the host agencies and NUNVs for timely delivery of programme support, were largely unmet in the OECS.
- The level of resources provided was inadequate to build permanent capacity of the target groups within a 2-year time frame.
- The UNV support programme has contributed to the building of national capacity.

### Host NGOs contributions

- The Host NGOs (GRENCODA and Conservation International-Suriname), provided supervision of their NUNV, assess to computer equipment, administrative support and contributed some funds to facilitate in-country travel of the NUNV when the pilot project budget for travel was used up.

### Partnership strategy

- The partnership strategy of UNDP/UNV/GEF SGP and Host NGO/UNV/GEF SGP helped in creating access to SGP funds by many CSOs that would not have normally benefited from the SGP.

### Regional Approach and Sustainability

- None of the project interventions could be considered as already sustainable because the project time frame and contact hours of the NUNV were too short.

### Placement of Volunteers

- Different agencies and NGOs had different views on the best placement for the NUNV, however many felt that the NUNV should be placed wherever the SGP Unit is housed (either UNDP or Host NGO) to minimise operational difficulties.

### NUNV Strengths and Weaknesses

- The specific strengths and weaknesses of using NUNVs to build the capacity of NGOs and CBOs in the Caribbean, identified by project participants were based on the individual NUNV and his/her ability.

### Benefits of the NUNV approach

- If funding is available to the CSO to hire a person to provide the kind of support that was required of the NUNV, then there is no perceived advantage of going through the UNV.
- The UNV networking among the UN agencies and support services may offer some strategic advantages in project implementation.
- To become more effective, most of the host agencies indicated that several NUNVs per country would be required, with each of the NUNV supported by several Field Workers.
- There is no evidence to suggest that use of an NUNV had any significant advantage over the employment of a consultant, if a donor for the hiring that person provided resources.
- All of the NUNVs felt that the experience was positive and each derived benefits that assisted in their personal development.
- One issue of concern among the NUNVs was the inadequate branding of the UNV.

### Gender Issues

- None of the project participants felt that there were any gender issues that arose out of, or constrained the implementation of the pilot project.

The 2-year pilot project had an impact on the lives of the project beneficiaries, particularly in helping them to get information and training that better equipped them to access SGP funding. In many cases the NUNV interventions led to enhanced CSO cohesion, elevated self-esteem, building of a network of resource persons/agencies, hope that some of their livelihood issues could be addressed, and in a few cases acquisition of financing for implementation of projects. The pilot project has been a success in initiating capacity building of community groups in the Caribbean, and demonstrating that Volunteering is a good mechanism for making a significant difference to the development of CSOs and marginalized rural communities in the absence of host agency funding to recruit such persons.

The following recommendations are offered to guide future programming in this area:

1. The UNV, GEF SGP and UNDP headquarters should collaborate to access resources and develop a five-year UNV support programme in the Caribbean that builds on the outcome of the pilot project.
2. This five-year support programme should ensure that at least two NUNV Specialists and six NUNV Field Workers are deployed per country, wherever feasible.
3. The UNV, GEF SGP and UNDP should ensure that adequate budget lines are allocated for UNV training, in-country travel and at least one regional meeting of NUNVs and Field Workers per year.
4. The GEF SGP Unit and UNDP Country Office should select the host agency for deployment of the NUNVs on a country-by-country basis. This should be based on strategic advantage and institutional capacity to offer adequate administrative and technical support to the NUNVs.
5. The Host Agency and UNDP/GEF SGP/UNV should ensure that the terms of reference for deployment of the NUNVs, clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each party.
6. The induction of the NUNVs, Field Workers and their Supervisors should ensure that all parties understand the objectives, terms and conditions of the assignment, the policy and procedures of operation, and the need to identify and document the baseline conditions of the target groups before the interventions.
7. The GEF SGP and UNDP must ensure that resources for the project are released in a timely manner to prevent the target communities becoming disenchanted with more broken promises.
8. A programme of monitoring should be developed by the project sponsors in collaboration with the host agencies to ensure that changes in the baseline conditions of the target communities are noted and that the probable causes of these changes are recorded.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I am grateful for the cooperation and hospitality of the staff at UNDP (Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Suriname), Conservation International-Suriname, and GRENCODA during this assignment. Special thanks are due to the former UNV Regional Coordinator, all of the former NUNVs, GEF SGP National Steering Committees, and members of the community groups, who took the time to share their concerns and experiences on the pilot project. I am indebted to the UNDP Country Office in Trinidad and Tobago for assisting with the logistics, particularly Carol Robinson and Belinda Isaac-Baptiste who were very effective in tracking down participants and reorganizing the schedule as required.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ARLAC	Arab Region Latin America and the Caribbean (at UNV Headquarters, Bonn)
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GRENCODA	Grenada Community Development Agency
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NUNV	National United Nations Volunteer
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SVF	Special Volunteer Funds
SWOWO	Stichting Wederopbouw en Ontwikkeling Witagron en Omgeving
UNSIAPE	UN System Integrated Approach to Poverty Eradication
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
VLA	Voluntary Living Allowance

## MAPS



Figure 1: Map of the Insular Caribbean

Note: The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is comprised of Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, and The British Virgin Islands. The UNV support to the GEF Small Grants Programme did not include the British Overseas Territories in the Eastern Caribbean and therefore excluded Anguilla, Montserrat and The British Virgin Islands.



Figure 2: Map of Suriname with Adjacent States



Figure 3: Map of Grenada



Figure 4: Map of Trinidad and Tobago

## INTRODUCTION

In June 2000, UNV began implementation of a regional Capacity Strengthening programme in the Caribbean. The programme was funded through UNV Special Volunteer Funds (SVF). The programme concept arose after UNV ARLAC identified critical capacity issues for the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) programme in the Eastern Caribbean. Consultations with GEF SGP National Coordinators in the region confirmed the niche role UNV intervention could bring to the GEF SGP and a partnership between the GEF SGP and UNV was proposed. On the recommendation of the Resident Representative in UNDP Barbados & the OECS, the United Nations System Integrated Approach to Poverty Eradication (UNSIAPE) was also included in the project document.

The final SVF programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) and Civil Society Organisations (CSO) engaged in the GEF SGP and UNSIAPE programmes. The objectives were to:

1. Strengthen the capacity of the GEF/Small Grants Programme particularly in providing to recipients enhanced skills in:
  - Business planning, organisational management, institutional monitoring.
  - Needs assessment for capacity building.
  - Skills in project formulation, management, monitoring and evaluation.
  - Resource mobilization (financial as well as non-financial).
2. Strengthen the process of implementation of the UN System Integrated Approach to Poverty Eradication (UNSIAPE) project in Barbados & the OECS by:
  - Mobilizing community members for their participation.
  - Setting up community management structures to enhance community cohesion.
  - Providing training for leadership development within the community, and facilitate participatory monitoring and evaluation of activities.
  - Creation of CBOs to manage community activities and consistent liaison with other stakeholders (relevant NGOs, government extension officers, etc.).
3. Demonstrate the added value of promoting Volunteer Community Approaches for programs like GEF/SGP and UNSIAPE which support small community-based projects, under a Poverty Eradication context.

The programme approach was to engage one National UNV per country, with a strategic NGO Host Agency or other key national partner, to support the GEF SGP and UNSIAPE programmes. The NUNVs would serve as core resource personnel to assist in accessing funding, building local capacity, networking, promoting and facilitating all phases of the GEF SGP and UNSIAPE project cycles.

A Regional UNV Coordinator was recruited in June 2000, initially on a 2-year contract, and based in the Trinidad & Tobago UNDP Country Office. The UNV Regional Coordinator was responsible for: establishing the modalities for recruiting National UNV Specialists for each country; executing the recruitment process with pertinent UNV Programme Officers as well as subsequently providing technical assistance; training; monitoring; a communications network; programme promotion; resource mobilisation; and providing support to UNDP Country Offices as required.

Once the UNV Regional Coordinator was engaged, seven NUNV posts were developed in conjunction with local government agencies, Host NGOs, UNV and GEF SGP National Steering Committees as well as with the critical guidance of the GEF SGP National Coordinators and UNSIAPE Specialist in the respective countries. The countries were: Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, Guyana, Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada, St Vincent & the Grenadines and St Lucia. The National UNVs were placed on the UNSIAPE programme and/or the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) and the Guyanese Green Fund in Guyana.

NUNVs were only placed on the UNSIAPE programme where such a programme was operational. The UNSIAPE programme was functional in several countries within the OECS but also included Barbados. NUNVs based in the OECS region (St Vincent and Grenada) therefore covered two programmes, the GEF SGP and UNSIAPE. Four of the NUNVs were focused exclusively on the GEF SGP (Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, Antigua & Barbuda, and St Lucia). The NUNV in Guyana was engaged on a capacity building programme funded by the UNDP and administered by the Guyana Environmental Protection Agency.

Due to the pilot nature of the programme and its mandate to build local level capacity, the placement strategy was to test a variety of options. The NUNVs, with one exception (Trinidad & Tobago), were not placed within the UNDP Country Office. Instead, NUNVs were placed within local NGOs (Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada and St Lucia), nationally operated international NGO (Suriname), quasi-government agency (Guyana), and in one instance, a CBO (St Vincent & the Grenadines). The decision on specific placements was made with GEF SGP National Coordinators, local counterparts and Steering Committees using the UNDP/UNV recruitment process to ensure transparency. The Resident Representative in the UNDP Trinidad & Tobago Country Office largely determined the placement of both the UNV Regional Coordinator and the Trinidad & Tobago NUNV.

Over the two-year period where the NUNVs have been engaged, a variety of project activities have taken place around the region. These included community mobilisation activities, local level workshops, regional Induction/Training and Mid Term Review workshops for the NUNVs and other stakeholders, international representation at the GEF SGP Global Workshop 2001, GEF SGP proposal development & implementation, programme monitoring and evaluation as well as promotional, advocacy and resource mobilisation activities at the national, regional and international levels.

The project was administered from the Trinidad & Tobago UNDP Country Office, with all expenditures authorised by ARLAC at UNV Headquarters. The financial administration of NUNVs was the responsibility of all UNDP Country Offices involved in the project. By the end of May 2003 all of the NUNVs and the UNV Regional Coordinator had completed their assignments and the pilot project had ended.

## **EVALUATION**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this evaluation will be to:

- i) Examine the relevance, performance (effectiveness and efficiency) and success (impact and sustainability) of the UNV programme to build capacity through providing support to groups engaged (or intending to engage) in the GEF SGP, and UNSIAPE and make recommendations for future programming of UNVs in the Environment.
- ii) Examine the capacity of the project to promote volunteerism, the role of volunteerism as a developmental agent of progress and the value added of a volunteer.

The information gathered will provide feedback on achievements, the programme's relevance, outputs, the role of the UNVs, the 'ripple effect' of Volunteering, the benefits UNVs bring to the socio-environmental sector, as well as recommendations for future programming with the UNDP, GEF SGP, UNSIAPE and other partners.

### **2. Scope of Evaluation**

The Evaluation will assess the specific impact and added value of the UNV approach to building local level capacity in the Eastern Caribbean, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. It will address the following subject areas as well as any matters arising during the course of the Evaluation, in particular:

- Status of the expected outcome.
- Underlying factors influencing the achievement of the expected outcome.
- Management of the Programme.
- UNV/GEF SGP's specific contributions.
- Host NGOs contributions.
- Partnership Strategy.
- Lessons Learnt.
- Regional Approach and Sustainability.
- Placement of Volunteers.
- NUNV Strengths and Weaknesses.
- Benefits of the NUNV approach.

- Volunteering.
- Gender Issues.

### **3. Pilot Country Selection**

The pilot countries were selected by the UNV Regional Coordinator based on the following criteria:

- Their representation of the Eastern Caribbean (mainland South America, the OECS and other).

<u>Mainland South America:</u>	Suriname and Guyana.
<u>OECS:</u>	St Vincent & the Grenadines, St Lucia, Grenada, and Antigua & Barbuda
<u>Other:</u>	Trinidad & Tobago.

- To ensure representation of the 2 main programme areas - the GEF SGP and UNSIAPE.

<u>GEF SGP:</u>	Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Antigua & Barbuda and St Lucia.
<u>GEF SGP and UNSIAPE:</u>	St Vincent & the Grenadines and Grenada.
<u>Other:</u>	Guyana.

- Representative host agency arrangements (GEF SGP, Quasi-government agency, International NGO and local NGO).

<u>GEF SGP:</u>	Trinidad & Tobago.
<u>Quasi-Government Agency:</u>	Guyana.
<u>International NGO:</u>	Suriname.
<u>National NGO:</u>	St Lucia, Grenada, St Vincent & the Grenadines and Antigua & Barbuda.

To gain a geographical spread, evaluate both programme areas as well as obtain a cross-section of hosting arrangements, the following countries were included in the programme review: Suriname, Grenada (or St Vincent & the Grenadines) and Trinidad & Tobago. Grenada was selected in preference to St Vincent & the Grenadines due to the lower costs of travel and Daily Subsistence Allowance.

### **4. Evaluation process and methodology**

Much of the evaluation process involved the study of internal reports generated by the pilot project, including the mid-term review, periodic reports, and the end of assignment reports of the NUNVs and the Regional Coordinator. The list of documents consulted is

presented in Appendix I. Interviews were also conducted with key stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, national steering committee members, SGP and UNDP staff, and host NGOs. These interviews encouraged project participants to discuss their experience with the project and to offer their assessment of the impacts and usefulness of the project interventions. The list of persons interviewed is contained in Appendix II.

## **5. Challenges in meeting key project participants**

Securing appointments with key stakeholders dispersed over four countries, within six weeks, presented a challenge because there were several regional workshops and national events such as Carnival, taking place during the period and many of these stakeholders were involved in these events. Additionally, the logistics, budgetary constraints and high cost of trying to meet major project participants in the interior of Suriname prevented greater participation from several of the project beneficiaries. For example to get to Galibi (a major project site and location of the community based organisation), and back to the capital Paramaribo, within 1 day would cost US\$2,500 by helicopter. Traditional access by road and canoe would have taken about 4 days for a return trip. Only four days were allocated for fieldwork in Suriname.

# **FINDINGS**

## **1. General Remarks**

Most of the rural communities in receipt of assistance from the NUNV were often neglected by central government and most development assistance projects because of their relatively distant location from major administration centres. Many of the communities were considered poor, with relatively high unemployment and poor infrastructure.

**The frequency of visits to the targeted communities by the NUNVs was generally constrained by the inadequate travel budget, the distance of these communities from the operational base of the NUNV, the initiative of the NUNV, and the level of support from the host agency.** For example, in Trinidad and Tobago, visits to communities in the northeast of the country required a six-hour return trip by car, several of which were made per month by the NUNV during the early stages of the project. In Suriname, a return trip to Witagron by road and canoe can take about four days; and a return trip to Kwamasalamutu can take about four weeks by road and canoe, unless a light aircraft is chartered for the purpose, then the travel time to the village is two hours at a cost of about US\$2,400. Many of these were facilitated by Conservation International-Suriname, the host NGO.

**Baseline data on the status of the capacity of the targeted communities/NGOs or CBOs before the intervention of the NUNV were not systematically collected or documented.** However, internal project reports suggested that most rural community organizations lacked adequate skills in organizational development, project planning and project proposal preparation to meet specific criteria.

**The NUNVs touched the lives of the majority of community project participants, in a manner that built self-esteem and developed some new skills.** The process of engagement by the NUNVs also gave many of the groups hope that some of their long neglected and priority needs could be addressed, and that their livelihoods could be improved.

## **2. Status of the expected outcome.**

**To determine the extent to which capacity was built, it is necessary to outline the range of activities undertaken by the various NUNVs with the community groups;** these included: training in organisational management (helping the group to determine it's vision, mission, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and defining administrative procedures and accountability), project cycle management (including project planning and proposal preparation), and as well as other skills including pastry making, crafts, and cultural talents. The NUNVs also spent much time with the CSOs providing technical assistance in the form of personal development including building confidence and self esteem, securing grants for education of selected adolescent community members, initiating networking with state and private sector agencies, sourcing and provision of information, facilitation of community planning meetings, assistance with report and letter writing, participation in official functions at the request of the groups, and assisting in problem solving with the groups.

**In Trinidad and Tobago several of the groups admitted that the NUNV helped them to better understand the requirements of the GEF SGP for the submission of proposals and believed that after the training they received, they no longer needed assistance for future proposal preparation.** In Grenada, the Coast Guard community group was rejuvenated by the intervention of the NUNV and the self-esteem was built to a level that encouraged some community members to seek further education and others to identify and refine ideas for livelihood improvement. In Suriname, SWOWO, felt that they were better able to understand the details and range of actions that were required to address the objectives of their community project and hence redevelop their initial project proposal. They also felt that they no longer needed help to write project reports or draft official letters to state agencies and the UNDP.

**There was an increase in the number of SGP GEF projects funded during the pilot project interventions.** The number of GEF SGP projects funded between 2001 and 2003 in Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname increased to 27 in comparison to the 12 projects funded during the period 1998 to 2000. In Barbados and the OECS 15 projects received funding through the GEF SGP during 2000-2003 in comparison to three that were funded

during the period 1998 to 2000. The increase in number was in part due to the efforts of the NUNVs reaching more CSOs and in part to previous marketing activities and technical assistance of the GEF SGP National Coordinators.

**Some capacity has therefore been built within the CSOs in terms of the understanding of what has to be done, identification of the process to be undertaken, readiness (psychological and physical) to undertake the tasks, and the acquisition of technical information and building of knowledge related to the tasks.**

Whether or not this capacity is temporary or permanent could not be assessed during the period of this assignment. One aspect of capacity that was lacking in several of the NUNV interventions, was the lack of financial resources to implement the activities contained in several SGP proposals and the activities identified for poverty alleviation in several communities.

**In terms of the host agency to which the NUNV was attached, having a skilled NUNV as an additional human resource enhanced the capacity of the agency.** This helped in the implementation some of the host agencies activities, but more so to demonstrate the agencies ability to help address some key needs in target communities. In the case where the host agency was UNDP, it was seen as the UNDP providing direct technical assistance to the communities/CSOs; such direct help is not often employed by the UNDP.

**The project objectives guided the NUNVs assignments on the ground, and the objectives related to the SGP GEF were largely fulfilled, however, the financial resources mobilisation component was inadequate.** In the UNSIAPE project, community mobilisation and enhancing community management structures required most of the effort of the NUNVs and were quite successful. However, the lack of financial resources to implement the follow-up community activities severely undermined the enthusiasm and goodwill that was built in those communities.

**The promotion of Volunteer community approaches was useful, needed and well received in the target areas.** However, unless support systems are in place to follow-up in a timely manner with activities planned by the CSO, then there is a loss of faith and trust in the agency/persons bringing the promise of support. Additionally, some key community members became discouraged in further participation and can lead to uncooperativeness in future ventures, as in the case of Grenada and other OECS countries. Many of these communities have in the past received many empty promises of assistance from persons and agencies that have engaged them in various consultations. In Suriname for example, some of the village leaders will ask; “Are you here for your business or are you here to help us?”

### **3. Underlying factors influencing the achievement of the expected outcome.**

**There were several underlying factors that influenced the expected outcome; the most important of which was trust.** In Grenada and Suriname for example, the host

NGOs already had a reputation of trust and timely assistance with several of the targeted communities. In Trinidad, the NUNV was introduced to the villages in the northeast of the country by Forestry Division staff already working with the villagers on a related project. In these cases, the time taken for the community to trust and respond favourably to the NUNV and the pilot project agenda was considerably shorter, than would have been the case if the NUNV did not have such support. To further illustrate the importance of trust in gaining access to a community, especially during the initial phase of the SGP, the Surinamese village of Witagron provided a good example. Here it took the SGP Coordinator almost one year and more than three visits to the village to gain the trust of the village leaders, before they would allow him to help them through the SGP.

**The aptitude, interpersonal skills, enthusiasm, motivation and commitment of the majority of persons selected as NUNVs were largely responsible for the responsiveness of the communities and their achievement.** Many of the NUNVs worked way beyond the number of hours per day expected of them, spent as much time in the field as the community needed, and performed several tasks for the communities that were important to the communities, but not necessarily part of the SGP or UNSIAPE agenda. These tasks and the time spent with the communities, built further trust and demonstrated that the NUNVs really cared about the well being of these communities.

**Serious constraints to the scale of success of the outcome seem to be caused by administrative and funding issues within the regional programme.** The absence of a GEF SGP National Coordinator for Barbados and the OECS for about 18 months (caused by the resignation of the former Coordinator and the failure of timely recruitment of a replacement) meant that there were no disbursements of funds for approved proposals submitted by CSOs. In the UNSIAPE project, no funds were available during the period of the NUNV intervention. The lack of funding for community proposals or activities led the community members (especially in Grenada), to lose confidence and hope that anything will be done to help address their concerns, particularly as it affected their livelihoods. Their investment of time was seen as wasted.

**The effectiveness of several of the NUNVs could have been improved if there was closer supervision and if greater emphasis was placed on implementation of the workplan.** All work plans were developed and agreed upon by the UNV Programme Officer, the UNV Regional Coordinator, Host Agency and the NUNV. This situation was particularly noticeable in Suriname and some of the OECS countries, where the NUNV was given additional duties that were the priority of the host agencies and in some cases spent as much as 30% of their time on these host agency activities. Additionally, the low amount of the travel budget (US\$500 per year) allocated for the assignment was very much inadequate. The distance and relatively high cost of travel to the various communities restricted the frequency of field visits and hence the number of direct contact hours with the communities. This factor was significant in the larger countries and more so in Suriname and Guyana. In Suriname, the GEF SGP and host agency was eventually able to assist in providing some resources for project related travel.

**It took a very long time for the CSO to prepare and submit an application for funding to the SGP for a planning grant or project approval.** This was due to the initial lack of capacity of the CSO to clearly define their objectives and identify the details of activities required to implement the objectives. The constraints of group cohesion, local politics, village squabbles, and limited organisational development further contributed to the delays. In many cases the preparation time (even with NUNV assistance) took up to one year and in a few cases as much as 18 months. It is important to note that these CSOs are voluntary organizations with no full-time responsibility for following up administrative or programming matters. Most members are occupied with their livelihood and domestic issues and meet as needed; which in some cases can be in intervals of three or more months apart.

**In terms of the profile of UNV and UNDP in the region affecting the project outcome, there were mixed reactions across the various stakeholder groups.** The rural communities and CSOs generally perceived the NUNV as staff of the host agency and not as a UNV. However, government departments and the private sector with whom the NUNV interacted, saw the NUNV as either a UNV or UNDP member of staff. As UNV or UNDP staff, the NUNV had easier access to senior officials of the private sector and governmental agencies, and in some cases sponsored training activities. In Trinidad, some community groups felt that if the UNDP was taking an active interest in their meetings (NUNV participation or facilitation of some meetings) then they (the community members) should make an effort to attend. This perception did increase the levels of participation in several communities. In Grenada and Suriname the perception that the NUNV was GRENCODA staff and Conservation International staff respectively, was apparently more useful than their UNV/UNDP connection.

**Many of the communities did not know of the existence of the UNV as an organisation before the NUNV's intervention and promotion of UNV during the International Year of Volunteers.** Despite awareness activities on UNV in the early stage of the pilot project, some CSOs were still unaware of the UNV as an agency and of the NUNV as an agent of the UNV. This was due to inadequate or inconsistent marketing efforts. In some CSOs in Trinidad and Tobago, even the Project Coordinator did not know about the UNV, and believed that it was direct UNDP technical assistance they were receiving. The profile of the UNV as an organisation seems limited and is overshadowed by that of the UNDP.

#### **4. Management of the Programme.**

**The management of the programme was at several key levels, namely: between the NUNV and the CSOs; between the Host Agency and the NUNV; between the UNV Regional Coordinator and the NUNV, UNV Programme Officer, Host Agencies, and UNDP; between the Regional Coordinator and the GEF SGP and UNSIAPE; and between the Regional Coordinator and UNV ARLAC.** Initially there was some confusion in the reporting direction but this was eventually sorted out. It was not clear if there was any direct reporting relationship between UNV headquarters and SGP

headquarters on the pilot project. Some NUNV activities in the pilot project were captured in the SGP periodic reporting to SGP headquarters, but these did not capture the full scope of involvement of the NUNVs.

**The Regional Coordinator had overall responsibility for ensuring that workplans for herself and all NUNVs were prepared on time and approved in consultation with the SGP National Coordinator and Host Agency.** These workplans had adequately captured the range of activities and outputs projected, with generally realistic timelines and means of verification. The Regional Coordinator also had the lead role for monitoring the implementation of the workplans and reporting on the NUNVs activities. Some assistance in monitoring the activities of the NUNVs was also provided by the Host NGOs. A programme monitoring system was developed by the Regional Coordinator, based on the GEF SGP bi-annual reporting format and was discussed with the NUNVs who were encouraged to use it. This reporting format was designed to capture more details than the periodic UNV reporting format, especially in terms of project implementation against the approved work plan and should have been submitted every 6 months. However, most NUNVs did not complete the monitoring form despite promises to do so when requested. Many NUNVs felt that the monitoring report (in addition to the periodic UNV report) was too time consuming to write up and apparently did not really understand its purpose or relevance and subsequently assigned little importance to this task. The monitoring missions of the Regional Coordinator and UNV Programme Officers and the on-site review of progress may also have contributed to the feeling that the additional formal reporting was not essential. Specialised training on the monitoring of these projects and the use of the monitoring report may have helped in making this aspect of the programme more useful and could have led to a better designed monitoring format.

**Some CSOs in the OECS and Suriname felt that it took too long to get a response from the SGP (up to two months).** Additionally, in several instances it took up to one month from the date the request was sent by UNDP to get authorizations from ARLAC for replenishment of project funds. This contributed to some delay in project activities. The GEF SGP office in Trinidad & Tobago, the UNV Regional Coordinator and the UNV Programme Manager in Barbados appeared to provide excellent administrative and financial back stopping to the pilot project. On the initiative of the Administrative Assistant at the SGP office in Trinidad, the SGP financial tracking process was utilized for the UNV components when financial arrangements were not in place at the start of the pilot project.

**It was difficult to determine if the UNV reporting system was adequate.** This depends on the purpose of the reporting and how the information will be used and by whom. The current reporting system does capture a wide range of information, but should include a section that requires the identification of the issues affecting the community or target group. This should help to guide interventions that truly address the target group's priority needs. Generally, it seems that the NUNVs do not provide sufficient details in the reporting forms and leave out some useful information on the impacts of their intervention and the capacity of the target communities; this was evident in several of the

End-of-Assignment Reports reviewed. The electronic reporting system may be adequate with the comments section serving as a capture-all for aspects not included elsewhere, however, it may be more useful to include a 'comments' section after each question.

**Major decisions affecting the implementation of the pilot project was made by ARLAC without any consultation of the UNV Regional Coordinator and the SGP in Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados.** For example, nine months before the end of the project, the Terms of Reference of the Regional Coordinator was changed by ARLAC to focus on an exit strategy but with no initial budget for advocacy and resource mobilization. The transition to operations under the new Terms of Reference could have been smoother if there were discussions and participatory planning among the key stakeholders, before the decision was made by ARLAC.

**Several key project participants felt that the orientation given to NUNVs at the start of their assignment was inadequate; especially in terms of the policy and procedures of the programme they were expected to support.** In some cases in the OECS, inadequate supervision of the NUNV at the field level and a lack of technical assistance restricted the effectiveness of project management. This perhaps reflected the inadequate capacity of the host agencies and a weakness of the regionally coordinated programme. Logistical and budgetary constraints limited the Regional Coordinator's direct input to the NUNVs field operations, especially in the OECS.

**Several of the NUNVs did not initially have the requisite training or experience in community or organizational development that was required to effectively assist in building the capacity of the CSOs.** There was no training budget allocated to equip the NUNVs with the basic skills required, because the expectation was that people with such skills would have been recruited. However, some of the NUNVs used their initiative to access the required training at their own cost or through sponsored events.

**One event that appeared to have built camaraderie among the NUNVs and UNV Programme Officers was the Mid-term Review Workshop held in June 2002.** The purpose of the workshop was to provide the UNV and UNDP stakeholders with a forum to collectively review progress of the project, identify concerns affecting implementation and to agree on the way forward. This workshop had the added benefit of boosting morale, reinforcing the UNV identity, direct information exchange and experience sharing among the NUNVs and other project participants, as well as promoting a recommitment to the project purpose. At the end of the workshop there was agreement on: the priorities for the annual work plan, improved communication between the Regional Coordinator and UNV Programme Officers, joint monitoring missions of the Regional Coordinator and the UNV Programme Officers, increased efforts to ensure that host agencies provide the NUNV with the necessary equipment and means to travel, and streamlining the procurement process between UNV, UNDP and NUNVs in the field.

## **5. UNV/GEF SGP's specific contributions.**

**The roles and responsibilities among the project participants seemed clear, however the expectations of the host agencies and NUNVs for timely delivery of programme support, were largely unmet in the OECS.** The major programme support required were: supervision, technical assistance in the field, and funding of proposals or disbursement of planning grants. This situation was largely due to the vacant position of GEF SGP Coordinator for the OECS and Barbados during an 18month period, inadequate in-house capacity of the host NGOs and lack of resources from UNV for technical assistance. Several project participants in the OECS, Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname felt that additional resources from UNV Headquarters should have been negotiated, especially for the provision of technical assistance for the field operations of the NUNVs and training in basic community development skills for many of these NUNVs.

**The GEF SGP and UNDP provided some supervision of the UNV Regional Coordinator and the NUNVs in Trinidad and Tobago, and Suriname.** The GEF SGP in Trinidad and Tobago contributed some funds to the NUNV's travel budget, provided access to a computer, printing and photocopying facility, and administrative oversight.

**The level of resources provided was inadequate to build permanent capacity of the target groups within a 2-year time frame.** In the context of rural communities and CBOs with little or no capability to access GEF SGP funds and implement a project, it requires at least four to five years of consistent engagement of these groups before significant and lasting capacity can be built. In terms of the UNSIAPE project, it is unthinkable to expect that significant and lasting impacts on poverty reduction could be accomplished within two years, in communities without strong organisational structures and lacking in resources.

**The UNV support programme has contributed to the building of national capacity.** This was especially significant among the NUNVs who received some additional training and increased their expertise in community development. They became more valuable to their current agency and prospective employers within the region.

## **6. Host NGOs contributions.**

**The Host NGOs (GRENCODA and Conservation International-Suriname), provided supervision of their NUNV, assess to computer equipment, administrative support and contributed some funds to facilitate in-country travel of the NUNV when the pilot project budget for travel was used up.** GRENCODA contributed to the NUNV's National Insurance Scheme, health insurance, and pension. GRENCODA also provided resources to the community for achievement of selected tasks under the UNSIAPE project, e.g., books and uniform grants for some children in the Coast Guard community, a bursary for local study, and funded community workshops.

## **7. Partnership Strategy.**

**The partnership strategy of UNDP/UNV/GEF SGP and Host NGO/UNV/GEF SGP helped in creating access to SGP funds by many CSOs that would not have normally benefited from the SGP.** The structure of the SGP country programmes does not provide for the kind of community development work that is required to help enable these, often marginalized groups to access SGP funds. The use of NUNVs and perhaps UNV Field Workers in support of the GEF SGP can be an effective mechanism to help address global issues at a local level, but more importantly, to build local capacity so that communities can help themselves with less outside intervention. This approach can only be effective if adequate resources are provided in a timely manner to facilitate project implementation and fulfil the community's expectations. The host NGOs that were already working in the field on related SGP and UNSIAPE issues, also gave credibility and some degree of trust of the NUNV that greatly assisted in gaining access to the communities.

## **8. Lessons Learnt.**

Below are the major lessons learnt or those that should be learnt, as identified by the project participants interviewed:

### Trinidad and Tobago

- i. Helping groups understand the challenges they face and what is required of them to achieve their goals is a necessary step in project formulation.
- ii. Helping groups understand how to implement things themselves rather than always depending on outside help is a major step in capacity building.
- iii. Building personal relationships and trust are the key elements to successful achievement of important tasks and takes a lot of time.
- iv. Having someone whom the community trusts and respects, introduce the NUNV, facilitated the relationship building between the NUNV and the community.
- v. UNV headquarters needs to have a more consultative approach with the UNDP Country Office in the implementation of such programmes.
- vi. The use of young university graduates as NUNVs was positive, because it helped to give them exposure and experience; a mechanism for investing in youths and to build local capacity for development work.
- vii. A two-year period is too short for a pilot project of this nature; a duration of at least 5 years is needed.
- viii. The short timeframe of the project was inadequate for people to sufficiently develop cohesion and skills to solve immediate problems or to plan and implement projects without external interventions.
- ix. Greater efforts are required to ensure that the NUNV understand their roles and conditions of the job at an early stage.

- x. The NUNV was the direct interface between the communities and the UNDP; perceptions of UNDP by the community were based on the NUNV's professional conduct, ability and information disseminated....UNDP's image was enhanced.

#### Barbados and the OECS (including Grenada)

- i. The NUNV served as a catalyst for community development and is a useful low cost mechanism.
- ii. The use of a local NUNV is preferred, since they have a better understanding of the local situation and are best placed to help the community, instead of a non-local candidate.
- iii. CSOs need to maintain reporting discipline in order to continue documenting the processes and issues that evolve so as to have a record or evidence of the communities development.
- iv. Agencies need to document the baseline condition/starting point before an intervention; to include the capacity and socio-psychological issues as well.
- v. The NUNV must have access to adequate resources to address the major issues in support of the SGP and UNSIAPE.

#### Suriname

- i. The project needs to ensure the NUNV is well equipped to carry out his tasks, in terms of training, physical and financial resources.
- ii. Team building with the host agency and SGP is essential to smooth operation of the project.
- iii. Closer attention to selection of the NUNV is needed to ensure that community development and other required skills are not lacking in the candidate.
- iv. A programme of capacity development for the target community should be developed.
  - v. A training programme for the NUNV should be developed to build the capacity of the NUNV.
- vi. One NUNV is not enough for adequate coverage of and contact time with target communities in Suriname.
- vii. More structured monitoring system of the NUNV intervention and community capacity is needed.
- viii. These small project interventions make a large difference to the lives of the target community.
- ix. Communities develop high expectations, some of which can best be met through other UNDP programmes, such as the poverty programme.
  - x. A forum is needed to meet and share the experiences of NUNVs in the region; an exchange programme of NUNVs would also be helpful.
- xi. The UNV system of support is positive but longer contact times with some communities are needed to improve effectiveness of the intervention.

## **9. Regional Approach and Sustainability.**

**There were some administrative and financial management challenges when the project was initiated because details for these arrangements were not clear at that time.** However, the arrangements were resolved and there seemed to be no undue difficulties. No major aspects of the project were identified that could significantly reduce the transaction costs. There was no evidence to indicate that the regional approach was more effective than a national approach to addressing community level capacity issues during the project period.

**None of the project interventions could be considered as already sustainable because the project time frame and contact hours of the NUNV were too short.** Almost all of the NUNV interventions have potential for sustainability in the long-term if further technical and financial support are administered in a timely manner. The NUNV interventions in the GEF SGP were focused primarily on enabling groups to prepare and submit proposals for approval. None of the groups had yet started the implementation of projects in the approved proposals. Sustainability requires that adequate resources are put in to build the capacity of the CSOs to a level where they can plan a project in detail, apply for and secure the required funds, implement and properly manage the project, while maintaining group cohesion and consensus. Many of the groups are still a long way from this ideal situation and would need at least three more years of the UNV type of support they received over the past two years.

## **10. Placement of Volunteers.**

**Different agencies and NGOs had different views on the best placement for the NUNV, however many felt that the NUNV should be placed wherever the SGP Unit is housed (either UNDP or Host NGO) to minimise operational difficulties.** It should be noted that initially the NUNV in Suriname was placed at UNDP while the SGP Unit was housed at the Conservation International-Suriname; the local chapter of an international NGO. Later in the programme, the NUNV was relocated to the SGP Unit.

**The Host NGO in Grenada felt that the NUNV was best placed in an NGO that already had the credibility and network in the field related to the work of the NUNV.** The placement of the NUNV in a CBO was considered unworkable because the CBOs often did not have the institutional capacity to provide the administrative and other support required for the NUNV. In Suriname, SWOWO felt that the NUNV could have been based at their office in Witagron, so that the NUNV would be able to spend much more time helping their community. However, SWOWO does not have equipment or adequate administrative capability, and electricity is available only for about 4 hours in the evenings. Reliable communications in and out of Witagron is also slow and difficult because of its location in the interior.

**In Trinidad and Tobago, it was suggested that the NUNV could be placed with an NGO in a particular geographic region but with responsibility for CBOs in that**

**geographic region.** This would significantly reduce the travel time and cost to get to the CBOs, increase the number of contact hours for direct intervention, facilitate bonding and building of trust.

**Placement within UNDP did confer advantages to the NUNV in Trinidad and Tobago, in terms of the importance that her interventions had in many communities, and the enhanced access to senior decision makers in government agencies and the private sector.** In Suriname, when the NUNV was initially placed with UNDP, people felt that the UN was taking an interest in their problems, which improved the community's participation. The UN was also seen as a non-partisan and neutral agency, hence making it easier to trust its staff. Placement within the UNDP also meant that there were more procedural rules and little flexibility than in an NGO that can quickly respond to changes in field conditions with less restraint.

**In Suriname and Grenada, placement of the NUNV in an NGO that was trusted and had a reputation of providing timely assistance to communities, facilitated the NUNV's access to those communities.** If the NUNVs were placed in a governmental agency or seen as a government employee there was likely to have been greater suspicion of the motives and a much longer time would be required to build sufficient trust in the NUNV.

## **11. NUNV Strengths and Weaknesses.**

The specific strengths and weaknesses of using NUNVs to build the capacity of NGOs and CBOs in the Caribbean, which emerged during the pilot project, are given below. It should be noted that much of what was identified by project participants were based on the individual NUNV and his/her ability.

### **Strengths**

- i. The technical ability, experience and network of the NUNV facilitated access to information and linked the CSO to other agencies or groups and helped the CSO understand the processes and procedures required to facilitate project activities.
- ii. The use of a local person as the NUNV with an understanding of culture and protocols and good interpersonal skills, minimised the chance of conflicts between the NUNV and the CSO.
- iii. The use of a local person as the NUNV who was aware of local traditions and priorities, and who was able to integrate these into local problem solving, improved the community's confidence in the NUNV.
- iv. The NUNVs were generally an interface between an urban-based institution and a rural community, and were able to quickly address the information and advisory needs of the target groups without bureaucracy.

- v. The ability and mode of operation of the NUNV, that is, working in and with the communities, at the convenience of these communities, ensured that groups felt comfortable with pursuing the SGP grant process. This was especially important for groups that would not have normally been able to access the SGP or for those that did not know how to access resources.

### Weakness

- i. Some candidates did not initially have adequate NGO/CBO experience, organisational development and capacity building skills, which minimised effectiveness in the early stages of engagement of the communities.
- ii. The workload was too heavy for one person to effectively carry out, especially in the countries with both the SGP and UNSIAPE projects, which minimised the number of communities that could have been assisted and the number of contact hours or technical assistance provided.
- iii. The inadequate programme support (both technical and financial) for implementation of activities in the OECS, put undue strain on the Host NGO and the NUNV. In the context of a large and consistent effort to mobilise the community, creating raised expectations and then a failure to deliver on promises, led to a breakdown in trust and disinterest in the project.

**In terms of the conditions of service, the major issue was the monthly Voluntary Living Allowance (VLA).** Most of the host agencies felt that the amount was too low to attract a professional with the range of training and experience required for the assignment. The value of the VLA meant that young, inexperienced persons or retired persons (with other means of income) or persons without serious financial obligations would be potential candidates for the NUNV. It is therefore necessary to ensure that persons selected as the NUNV, without the requisite training, should be provided with the basic skills needed for the assignment. It seems that the level of skills and time needed for this UNV pilot project was greatly underestimated during the design and early implementation phase.

**During recruitment, some people do not see the NUNV assignment as an opportunity to gain experience and contribute to the development of local communities.** It was seen as a job with a UN title that may confer some status and benefits. However, all of the NUNVs interviewed were proud to be UNVs, and the feeling was especially reinforced during interactions at the Mid-term Review Workshop.

## **12. Benefits of the NUNV approach.**

**If funding is available to the CSO to hire a person to provide the kind of support that was required of the NUNV, then there is no perceived advantage of going through the UNV.** As long as the UNV, UNDP or other sponsors are able to provide the resources, then the local agencies will accept the assistance with the conditions prescribed for use of those resources. The NUNV was interpreted as a low cost means (to most host agencies) of addressing some of their programming issues and building their own capacity to engage communities in the SGP and UNSIAPE. However, if the UNV as an organisation is unable to provide competitive costs for its project implementation, then donors may find alternative approaches instead of going through the UNV.

**The UNV networking among the UN agencies and support services may offer some strategic advantages in project implementation.** Such support may not ordinarily be available to the CSOs and the NUNV served as the linkage, especially between UNDP and the targeted communities/organisations to facilitate access to networks and technical advice.

**To become more effective, most of the host agencies indicated that several NUNVs per country would be required, with each of the NUNV supported by several Field Workers.** The NUNVs should be specialists in key disciplines required for the project, deployed either by geographic regions or thematic areas. The Field Workers could also be assigned to geographic areas and should ideally be residents of the targeted communities or geographic regions. The Field Workers would be expected to have greater contact hours with selected communities and may require specific training to build their skills to the level required for effective implementation of identified tasks.

## **13. Volunteering.**

**There is no evidence to suggest that use of an NUNV had any significant advantage over the employment of a consultant, if resources were provided by a donor for hiring that person.** Since most NGOs and CBOs in this region are inadequately funded and under-staffed, use of a UNV is good means of assistance in capacity building and programme implementation. What mattered most was the ability and attitude of the individual recruited for the assignment. All of the CBOs and most of the NGOs in the Caribbean are based on and develop through local volunteer efforts. Some members of the CSO in Grand Riviere, Trinidad and Tobago believed that a volunteer is “someone who did something when he or she had the time”. However, after the efforts of the NUNV, those members modified their definition of a volunteer to: “someone giving of their time towards the personal development of an individual or group.....a regular commitment to a purpose”.

**All of the NUNVs felt that the experience was positive and each derived benefits that assisted in their personal development.** In Grenada, the NUNV benefited by getting access to information, meeting other NUNVs and learning of their experiences which helped to expand his own knowledge base. The UNV title helped in giving him some status, making it easier to gain access to senior govt officials and organisations for access to resources. The UNV title also helped allay suspicion of political motivations behind the work. In Trinidad and Tobago, the NUNV acquired hands-on experience in working with rural people, urban and state agencies. The experience and NUNV position facilitated her access to a fellowship and other job related training opportunities. Her confidence and ability in public speaking had also improved significantly. In Suriname, the NUNV's perception of the communities improved in terms of how best to deal with their problems, their lack of access to resources and the communities' micro-economic conditions. His experience was enriched through the meeting of new people and the sharing of their experiences. He was also able to expand his network of contacts and develop communication and negotiating skills.

**One issue of concern among the NUNVs was the inadequate branding of the UNV.** In public, they had no high impact means of marketing the UNV, except for the one UNV T-shirt and some stickers that were produced for the Mid-term Review Workshop in June 2002. Some of the NUNVs felt that some highly visible means of identifying themselves as UNVs were needed during field work or public engagements, such as caps and shirts displaying the UNV logo/name, or a lapel pin/name tag with the UNV logo.

#### **14. Gender Issues.**

**None of the project participants felt that there were any gender issues that arose out of, or constrained the implementation of the pilot project.** In the communities selected in Trinidad and Tobago, the participation of females and youth were high, about 40% on average. In some communities in the OECS more women than men were involved in the project. It was noted that in a few cases in the OECS, young men, generally under 20years old, were under-represented, primarily due to their perceptions and low self-esteem. In Suriname, particularly in the Maroon communities, more women participated in project activities because many of the men were working elsewhere.

## CONCLUSIONS

**The 2-year pilot project had an impact on the lives of the project beneficiaries, particularly in helping them to get information and training that better equipped them to access SGP funding.** In many cases the NUNV interventions led to enhanced CSO cohesion, elevated self-esteem, building of a network of resource persons/agencies, hope that some of their livelihood issues could be addressed, and in a few cases, acquisition of financing for implementation of projects. The pilot project has been a success in initiating capacity building of community groups in the Caribbean, and demonstrating that Volunteering was a good mechanism for making a significant difference to the development of CSOs and marginalized rural communities in the absence of host agency funding to recruit such persons.

**One major difference in the outcome between the efforts of the NUNVs in the OECS and the larger countries in the pilot project was in the number of community proposals qualifying for and receiving funding.** In Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, much of the NUNVs efforts were focused on the promotion of the GEF SGP and in helping targeted communities to access SGP funding which resulted in many community proposals getting approval and funding. This was a direct consequence of the NUNV having direct access to the GEF SGP National Coordinator and good support from a strong host agency. In the OECS even where there were a few strong host agencies, the result was less than desirable in terms of the number of projects receiving grants. This was largely due to the lack of access to resources caused by the absence of a GEF SGP National Coordinator. Further, where the UNSIAPE was active, the NUNVs had less time to dedicate to SGP activities, hence fewer groups received the technical assistance required to organize themselves and prepare suitable proposals. Disenchantment with the efforts of the NUNVs was significant among many groups in the OECS sub-region in comparison to the other countries in the pilot project, because expectations of funding to address priority needs were not forthcoming. An expansion of the pilot project can have more tangible benefits for CSOs and rural communities in the Caribbean, as long the human and financial resource constraints affecting delivery are removed.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The UNV, GEF SGP and UNDP headquarters should collaborate to access resources and develop a five-year UNV support programme in the Caribbean that builds on the outcome of the pilot project.
2. This five-year support programme should ensure that at least two NUNV Specialists and six NUNV Field Workers are deployed per country, wherever feasible.
3. The UNV, GEF SGP and UNDP should ensure that adequate budget lines are allocated for UNV training, in-country travel and at least one regional meeting of NUNVs and Field Workers per year.
4. The GEF SGP Unit and UNDP Country Office should select the host agency for deployment of the NUNVs on a country-by-country basis. This should be based on strategic advantage and institutional capacity to offer adequate administrative and technical support to the NUNVs.
5. The Host Agency and UNDP/GEF SGP/UNV should ensure that the terms of reference for deployment of the NUNVs, clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each party.
6. The induction of the NUNVs, Field Workers and their Supervisors should ensure that all parties understand the objectives, terms and conditions of the assignment, the policy and procedures of operation, and the need to identify and document the baseline conditions of the target groups before the interventions.
7. The GEF SGP and UNDP must ensure that resources for the project are released in a timely manner to prevent the target communities becoming disenchanted with more broken promises.
8. A programme of monitoring should be developed by the project sponsors in collaboration with the host agencies to ensure that changes in the baseline conditions of the target communities are noted and that the probable causes of these changes are recorded.

\*\*\*

## APPENDIX I

### List of Documents Reviewed

Creton, Harvey. 2002. Annual report (15/03/01 to 15/03/02). Typescript.

Creton, Harvey. 2003. End of assignment report. Typescript.

Cross, Nicola. 2003. End of assignment report. Typescript.

Cross, Nicola. 2003. *Unedited notes on project results, lessons learnt, and recommendations.*

Harrison, Leanne. 2002. Annual report (19/06/01 to 10/10/02). Typescript.

Harrison, Leanne. 2002. UNV Caribbean regional programme mid-term review workshop report. Typescript.

Harrison, Leanne. 2002/3. Mission reports (*several*). Typescript.

Harrison, Leanne. 2003. Comments for final UNV report. Typescript.

Harrison, Leanne. 2003. End of assignment de-briefing notes. UNV regional capacity building programme. Typescript.

Harrison, Leanne. 2003. Initial report (18/06/00 to 18/06/01). Typescript.

Harrison, Leanne. 2003. UNV periodic reports tracking: final report, volunteer. Typescript

Languaigne, Benny. 2003. End of assignment report. Typescript.

UNV. 1999. Project document: UNV Support to Strengthening the Capacity of NGOs and CBOs involved with GEF Small Grants Programme and the UN System Integrated Approach to Poverty Eradication Programme in Barbados and other OECS countries, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname and Guyana to respond effectively to critical Sustainable Development Needs. Project No: RLA/98/VO1. Typescript.

## APPENDIX II

### LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED [3<sup>rd</sup> July – 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2003]

NAME	<b>ORGANISATION AND ADDRESS</b>	<b>POSITION / DESIGNATION</b>
<b>TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO</b>		
Len Peters	Grande Riviere Tourism Development Organisation, Grand Riviere	Treasurer
Nicholas Alexander	Grande Riviere Tourism Development Organisation, Grand Riviere	Public Relations Officer
Michael James	Grande Riviere Tourism Development Organisation, Grand Riviere	President
Marcia Barker	Grande Riviere Tourism Development Organisation, Grand Riviere	Secretary
Renwick Roberts	Matelot PAWI Sports Culture and Eco Club, Matelot	Public Relations Officer
Maria Jeremiah	Matelot PAWI Sports Culture and Eco Club, Matelot	Member
Larry McIntosh	Stakeholders Against Destruction for Toco, Paria Main Road, Toco	Projects Coordinator
Kennedy Samlal	Greenplains Foundation, 215 Union Village, Felicity, Chaguanas	Corporate Secretary
Robin Sonilal	Greenplains Foundation, 215 Union Village, Felicity, Chaguanas	Chairman
Deochan Sookdeo	Greenplains Foundation, 215 Union Village, Felicity, Chaguanas	Treasurer

Neil Pierre	UNDP, 3A Chancery Lane, Port of Spain [NUNV Host Agency]	Deputy Resident Representative
Richard Laydoo	UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, 3A Chancery Lane, Port of Spain	National Coordinator
Robyn Cross	Environmental Management Authority, #8 Elizabeth St., Port of Spain	Supervisor, Permitting Compliance Monitoring
Helen Drayton	RBTT Services Ltd, 19-21 Park Street, Port of Spain	GEF/SGP National Steering Committee
Molly Gaskin	Pointe-a-Pierre Wildfowl Trust/Council of Presidents of Environmental NGOs, 38 La Reine Town House, Flagstaff, Long Circular Rd., St James.	Chairman, GEF/SGP National Steering Committee
Kishan Kumarsingh	Environmental Management Authority, #8 Elizabeth St., Port of Spain	GEF/SGP National Steering Committee
Charmaine Gomes	UNDP, 3A Chancery Lane, Port-of-Spain	GEF/SGP National Steering Committee
Carrall Alexander	Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalist Club, PO Box 642, Port-of-Spain	GEF/SGP National Steering Committee
Leanne Harrison	New Zealand	Former UNV Regional Coordinator
Carol Robinson	UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, 3A Chancery Lane, Port of Spain	Administrative Assistant
Nicola Cross	Port-of-Spain	Former NUNV GEF/SGP
<b>BARBADOS</b>		
Joseph Peltier	UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, UN House, Marine Gardens, Hastings	GEF/SGP Coordinator
Jennifer Britton	UNV Unit, UNDP, UN House, Marine Gardens, Hastings	UNV Programme Manager, Barbados and the OECS

Melroy John	UNV Unit, UNDP, UN House, Marine Gardens, Hastings	Country Operations Assistant
Rosina Wiltshire	UNDP, UN House, Marine Gardens, Hastings	Resident Representative
Cathal Healy-Singh	Caribbean Conservation Association/Caribbean Regional Environmental Programme, 'Chelford', Bush Hill, The Garrison	Project Manager
Simone Mangal	Caribbean Conservation Association/Caribbean Regional Environmental Programme, 'Chelford', Bush Hill, The Garrison	Technical Officer
<b>SURINAME</b>		
Ramses Kajoeramari	Stichting UMARI, Galibi	Project Coordinator
Raymond Landveld	UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, Heerenstraat 17, Paramaribo	Project Coordinator
Siegmien Staphorst	Nationale Vrouwen Beweging, Paramaribo	Chairperson, GEF/SGP National Steering Committee
Melvin Mackintosh	Organisatie van Inheemsen in Suriname / Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden in Suriname, Paramaribo	Vice Chair, GEF/SGP National Steering Committee
Monique van Brussels	UNDP, Heerenstraat 17, Paramaribo	Country Office Assistant
Max Ooft	UNDP, Heerenstraat 17, Paramaribo [ <i>GEF SGP Host Agency</i> ]	Assistant Resident Representative
Christine de Rooij	UNDP, Heerenstraat 17, Paramaribo	Project Coordinator & National Steering Committee
Harvey Creton	Paramaribo	Former NUNV GEF/SGP
Reggie Nelson	Conservation International-Suriname, PO Box 2420, Paramaribo [ <i>Former GEF SGP Host NGO</i> ]	Legal Affairs/Policy Director
Rudi Clemens	Stichting Wederopbouw en Ontwikkeling Witagron en Omgeving (SWOWO), Witagron	Project Coordinator

<b>GRENADA</b>		
Judy Williams	Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA), Gouyave. [NUNV Host NGO]	Secretary General
Carl Lloyd	Ocean Spirits, PO Box 1373, Grand Anse, St George's	Director
Rebecca King	Ocean Spirits, PO Box 1373, Grand Anse, St George's	Director
Rickie Morain	Ministry of Finance, St George's	Sustainable Development Council
James Finlay	Former Chief Fisheries Officer, St George's	Sustainable Development Council
Spencer Thomas	Former Director General of Finance, St George's	Chairman, Sustainable Development Council
Benny Languigne	GRENCODA, Gouyave	Former GEF/SGP NUNV
James Nicholas	Southern Fishermen Association, Grand Mal	President
Alwyn Clarke	Grand Mal Development Organisation, Grand Mal	President