

Report on Training Outcomes

Institutional Development with the Jamaica Protected Areas Network

December, 2004

The following is a general assessment of Institutional Development work conducted in Jamaica, with the majority of efforts specifically geared towards supporting the eight NGO Members of the Jamaica Protected Areas Network (JPAN). Work covered the six month period from May – November 2004. Also detailed are activities' outcomes, observations, and suggestions for continued Institutional Development efforts.

The Jamaica Country Program developed and began implementation of a comprehensive Institutional Development program in 2004, as part of its plans to gear up efforts to further strengthen the Jamaica Protected Areas System, prepare for the establishment of the TFCA Debt for Nature Swap and Trust Fund, and ongoing efforts to strengthen the local conservation movement. Activities this year centered around application of TNC's established methodologies for institutional development and conservation planning, and generating buy-in from members of Jamaica's conservation community (government, non-government and donor entities).

In 2004 the Jamaica Country Program implemented the following:

A. Institutional Self-Assessments

- Provided a basic overview to government, non-government, and funding entities, generating discussion and interest on the tool as a standard measure for Jamaican environmental NGOs.
- Conducted assessments and one year ID workplans with the eight JPAN NGO members.
- Provided training on the methodology for staff members of the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ).

B. Strategic and Financial Planning

- Facilitated Integrated Strategic and Financial Planning to develop and/or review/update plans with four members of the Jamaica Protected Areas network.
- Provided training on the methodology for staff members of the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ)

C. Conservation Training Week

- Modeled after TNC's CTW, this event was customized to provide training and technical assistance to the JPAN membership and other invited guests, as determined by the outcomes of the ISAs. Topics covered:

- Natural Resource Management (Conservation Area Planning, Ecoregional Planning, and Global Information Systems (GIS))
- Human Resource Management
- Financial Reporting
- Fundraising Plan Development
- Tourism and Marketing

A. Institutional Self Assessments

TNC commissioned Institutional Self Assessments for the eight NGO members of the JPAN network, utilizing TNC's Institutional Self Assessment methodology. The Assessments provide a standardized information base on each organisation's strengths and challenges. The results were used to determine future interventions and to design the November 2004 Conservation Training Week. The assessments continue to be used to design future Capacity Building work with the ENGOs. A summarized tally of each NGOs results is attached in Appendix 1.

The Assessments were conducted through a series of individual interviews with each NGO's staff and board members, and representatives from the donor community. Results were compiled, presented to each NGO, and reviewed. Subsequent one year Institutional Development Workplans were developed by each NGO, based on issues it deemed high priority.

Institutional Self-Assessments were conducted with all eight NGO members of JPAN, comprised of:

- Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDDT – Green Jamaica)
- Montego Bay Marine Park Trust (MBMPT)
- Negril Environmental Area Protection Trust (NEPT)
- Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society (NCRPS)
- Dolphin Head Trust (DHT)
- Caribbean Coastal Area Marine (CCAM)
- Friends of the Sea (FOTS)
- Port Antonio Environmental Protection Area (PEPA)

The following is a brief summary of the status of the ENGOs under each of the eight ISA categories. For complete results, please refer to the NGO's ISA and accompanying one year Institutional Development workplan in Appendices 2 - 9.

Strategic Vision and Planning

Across the board this was a weak area for the NGOs. Efforts tended to be heavily donor driven and/or on financial sustainability. While all groups have established missions, most groups did not have a clear picture on what they are trying to achieve over the medium to long term (3 – 5 years), nor of organizational priorities. Projects were not working towards achieving larger outcome, nor in most cases was there cohesion between projects.

Leadership

On the Leadership front, all but two of the NGOs have transitioned from the original founding Executive Directors, to a second/third/fourth ED. These have not been smooth transitions. Two NGOs are without EDs, and two more have EDs that are either considering or planning their exit. With somewhat limited Board involvement on crucial matters of strategic direction, this has left several of the NGOs in vulnerable positions where they are unsure of the organization's goals, rather having converted into entities that are continually trying to source funds needed to survive.

Organizational Management

With organizations that have been in existence for many years, one would expect a higher degree of internal infrastructure. While some of the groups may have developed more sophisticated internal management mechanisms in the past, many of these are now outdated or not utilized. However, for most of the groups, efforts are best spent on higher priority areas such as strategic planning, leadership development, fundraising and staff retention.

Human Resource Management

The NGOs do a fairly good job in utilizing a systematic recruitment process, and pay appears to be generally comparable with the larger NGO sector (with the exception of C-CAM and PEPA). Employee evaluations tended to be sporadic and informal, with little emphasis placed on providing systematic feedback on employee's performances or in linking employees' actions to the organization's strategic needs. A big issue here was staff retention, partially linked to lack of a longer term plan to guide actions or fundraising efforts to ensure positions would be maintained.

Resource Development

Six of the eight NGOs have funding issues. These seem to be related to an internal restructuring at the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EFJ), realignment of multi and bilateral agencies' priorities, and a downturn in the international funding panorama. Some donors mentioned unsubstantial project results, or lack of a holistic conservation approach in the geographic areas covered as an influencing factor in their funding decisions. Several of the NGOs have also undergone leadership transitions, with insufficient emphasis placed on ensuring appropriate donor contact/follow-up needed to attain constant income streams. In addition, some donor agencies are disappointed in the NGOs' inability to reach a degree of financial sustainability—an elusive task for any non-profit entity.

At the moment, there seems to be an almost defeatist attitude towards fundraising, with much finger pointing regarding who should be responsible (staff, board members, government). There also seems to be a degree of feeling of entitlement to funds, either from the government or EFJ.

Financial Management

Generally speaking, financial management has not been a major concern for the ENGOS. Over the years donor agencies have placed significant emphasis on ensuring proper project financial accounting and donor reporting. However, most of the ENGOS have reached a stage where their accounting and financial management needs are reaching beyond current software capacity. In addition, there has been little emphasis placed on ensuring internal financial statements are generated to holistically manage the entire NGO and for appropriate decision making.

Constituency Building and Outreach

The NGOs tended to rank themselves highly on Relationships with other NGOs, Government Relations, and Credibility. However, in the ever changing conservation arena, and given Jamaica's size and resource, there is an increasing need for improved inter-institutional collaboration. There is also greater need to better understand central government issues and identifying ways to jointly affect positive change on a national level.

Programmatic Capacity

While the NGOs tended to rank themselves high in this area, donors seemed to want more concrete project results and more clearly defined, holistic conservation plans (with the exception of FOTS and Dolphin Head). Again, this links back to lack of strategic planning to guide the organizations' actions and activities.

B. Integrated Strategic and Financial Planning

Based on the overwhelming need, it was determined that Integrated Strategic and Financial Plans would be conducted with all JPAN members that wanted them. TNC provided facilitation for the planning process, and each NGO provided the venue. Seven of the eight NGOs have opted to conduct strategic planning – C-CAM was the only exception, feeling it's Management Plan (under revision) was sufficient. Four of the NGOs have conducted Strategic and Financial Planning sessions in 2004, including JCDT, MBMPT, NEPT and FOTS. All four plans are in final draft stages, requiring further refinement and revision by staff/board members. For more detailed information, please refer to the draft Strategic and Financial Plans in Appendices 10 – 13. The three remaining NGOs (PEPA, NCRPS and Dolphin Head) have expressed interest in conducting Strategic and Financial Planning in 2005.

In all four cases, the planning process allowed the organizations to review (and revise) their missions, analyze their current situations (SWOT Analysis), utilize the results of the SWOT analysis to help determine realistic programmatic and organizational priorities, and determine funding needs/fundraising capabilities. However, none of the NGOs had existing management plans for the protected areas (although JCDT is working on one), which is usually one of the basic elements to help determine conservation goals in the strategic plan. So in all instances, the conservation component of the Strategic Plans has not been fully clarified.

C. Conservation Training Week

As part of its efforts to provide greater and broader Institutional Development assistance, the Jamaica Country Program decided to host a Conservation Training Week event in November 2004. The event was designed to provide a back-drop for training and technical assistance on topics ranging from internal management issues to conservation planning methodologies (as identified through the ISAs), while at the same time providing a powerful forum for increased information sharing and peer learning experiences. For many individuals it was the first time they interacted with colleagues from other NGOs doing similar tasks/jobs. Relationships were formed, and it is hoped the networking will grow beyond this event into greater information exchanges and collaboration. A further benefit of the event was in assisting the Country Program to identify two local consultants who could step into the role of providing on-going consulting services to the NGO community (Human Resource Management and Financial Management), with a potential third Board Development having consultant identified.

The week long event included training on Natural Resource Management (Conservation Area Planning, Ecoregional Planning, Defining Connectivity between Jamaica's Protected Areas, and GIS), Employee Evaluations, Financial Reporting, Fundraising Plan Development, and Tourism and Marketing. In addition, one-on-one technical assistance sessions were provided on the last four topics. A total of 50 participants attended the event, including 38 JPAN ENGO representatives and 12 observers from the wider conservation community.

Observations on Individual Workshops/One-on-One Sessions

- **Human Resource Management-Employee Evaluation Formats – 11 participants.** This workshop received the highest evaluations. Participants felt they not only learned relevant issues about the topic and how to apply them, but also learned some important life lessons from the trainer. One-on-One coaching sessions (technical assistance) will be provided in the month following the workshop for all 8 NGOs.
- **Financial Reporting – 11 participants.** This topic was also a hit, receiving the second highest evaluation. By the end of the day, participants were confident they would be able to develop their own Balance Sheets, Cash Flows and Income/Expense Statements. Many stated they plan to immediately begin to utilize the formats. In addition, five of the 8 NGOs attended One-on-One sessions, learning how to better utilize their accounting software, and determining next steps to improve their accounting. This ranged from decisions to begin conducting organization wide accounting, to developing new charts of accounts to better facilitate processes and reporting.

- **Natural Resource Management – 18 participants.** This workshop met its objectives of sharing TNC’s methodologies and beginning to stretch NGOs concepts on the linkages between Jamaica’s natural resources. While the participants were overall pleased with the workshop results, the delivery and exercises could have been improved. The lead trainer was tasked with involving other TNC core staff members, but was unable to do so, leaving the TNC Jamaica science team to pick up a bulk of the work and planning.
- **Fundraising – 11 participants.** This workshop received some of the lowest evaluations. The original trainer scheduled to deliver the workshop was unable to travel, requiring a substitution 7 weeks prior to the event. The replacement trainer did not have sufficient experience with training or fundraising outside the United States. In addition, she appeared to be overextended, unprepared, and did not take advantage of offered assistance to fully develop the workshop. However, she did a wonderful job with the One-on-One technical assistance sessions, helping seven of the NGOs better determine how to address and plan their fundraising activities.
- **Tourism/Marketing 10 participants.** Participants also rated this workshop favorably. The USDA Forestry Service Heritage Design Program team has ample experience conducting these types of events, although a couple of individuals mentioned the presentations could benefit from better comprehension of the local context. The One-on-One sessions were a bit rushed as the team had over committed themselves, but in the end participants generally felt they received individualized assistance that will help them work through their next steps. In addition, the team will provide more in-depth assistance to some of the NGOs during the upcoming year.
- **Global Information Systems (GIS) – 22 participants.** The TNC Jamaica office made a Herculean effort to provide GIS training after the lead was unable to secure the TNC GIS trainer as expected. Participants who attended the Forestry Service presentation felt it provided good information on how GIS information can be developed/applied. The other two field-trips did not meet expectations, and overall there was a feeling that a hands-on experience would have been beneficial.
- **Board Development – 18 participants.** This workshop was also favorably rated by participants. The focus on Roles and Responsibilities and the Board’s Role in Fundraising were well received. The turn out was a bit disappointing, as 12 of the 30 registered participants did not attend the event. The training seemed a bit slow at times, but appeared to be at an appropriate speed/level for the participants. The trainer has years of experience working with local NGOs.

Evaluation Results

Overall the workshop appears to have been a success. The individual session evaluations were generally high (please refer to chart below), with highest marks given to the

Financial Reporting and Employee Evaluations workshops. Tourism/Marketing, GIS (at Forestry) and Board Development were also rated quite high, with Fundraising and Natural Resource Management coming in at medium/high. Appendices contain the individual summarized workshop evaluations, along with all comments made for each session.

Conservation Training Week
November 15 – 19, 2004

Summary of Workshop Evaluations

Average Evaluation Results on a scale of 1 - 5 (1=low, 5=high)		NRM	NRM Day 2	GIS - Forestry	GIS - UWI	GIS - November 18	Fundraising	Tourism, Marketing	Employee Evals	Financial Reporting	Board Development
1	Were the workshop objectives accomplished	3.8	3.8	4.3	3.3	N/A	3.7	4.0	4.8	4.7	4.1
2	Were your expectations fulfilled	3.7	4.0	4.3	3.0	3.8	3.6	4.0	4.6	4.4	4.1
3	Participatory	3.8	4.3	4.3	3.7	N/A	4.3	4.6	4.9	4.7	4.6
4	Info Sharing between NGOs	3.6	4.0	4.0	2.3	N/A	3.7	4.2	3.7	3.9	3.7
5	Quality of Exercises	3.9	4.3	4.0	3.3	N/A	4.1	4.4	4.4	4.0	4.3
6	Exercises	3.9	3.8	4.3	3.0	N/A	3.9	4.0	4.8	4.6	4.5
7	Facilitator(s)	4.1	4.3	4.4	3.0	3.4	4.0	4.4	4.9	5.0	4.6

Lessons learned

- **Timing.** A minimum of four to six months lead time should be expected prior to the event. With only two months prep time, undue stress was placed on all involved (participants/coordinators/facilitators) to coordinate actions.
- **Coordinating with Facilitators.** It was by far an easier task to coordinate with external facilitators than with internal TNC facilitators (non-Jamaica staff). While external facilitators required a cash investment, TNC probably expended more funds on staff time than it would have contracting out more of the work. TNC staff tend to be overextended, and while there is willingness to provide assistance there may be inability to appropriately do so. Also, the TNC science staff person tasked with bringing on a Marine Biologist and GIS specialist was unable to do so, requiring the Jamaica team to step in and help redesign the training sessions. This may be partially resolved by providing a longer lead time, and requiring more stringent adherence to deadlines.

- **Last minute substitutions.** TNC should consider moving forward with a more comprehensive mechanism to identify service providers for both training and technical assistance. In this case, the original fundraising trainer was unable to travel, requiring identification of a substitute 7 weeks prior to the event. Finding an appropriate substitute was complicated by limited knowledge of available service providers.
- **Board Participation.** Of the 30 individuals registered for the Board Development workshop, 12 Board Members did not attend (40%). While it is understandable that last minute issues may arise, this amount of absenteeism is quite high. In the future, TNC may wish to personally invite Board members and emphasize the importance of their participation. Also, given the NGOs' leadership issues, those board members who did not attend were probably the most in need of this type of assistance.
- **Registered Participant Attendance.** In addition to the 12 absent board members, 7 registered participants did not attend the event (14%). Overall, this is not a large amount, but as most of these individuals and the absent board members were registered to stay at the hotel and had been included in the original tallies for meals, TNC expended funds unnecessarily. In the future, TNC may wish to establish some mechanism to improve attendance and/or timely cancellations. One way may be to charge a nominal registration fee per participant – this would force the NGOs to place a value on accurately choosing who should attend. Another option could be to inform the NGOs they will be charged a set amount to cover the cost of lost meals/lodging for any registered individuals who are absent without 48 hours notice.
- **One on One Sessions.** For the most part, these appeared to work well for Fundraising, Financial Reporting, and Corporate Sponsorship. The Tourism and Marketing sessions were a bit rushed due to the facilitators' time constraints, but in the end appeared to provide at least limited assistance with the promise of future in-depth follow-up. In the future, TNC may wish to provide greater information on the sessions prior to the event. In the case of two NGOs, the EDs were absent during the registration process and did not provide guidance to staff on which sessions to attend. This meant some NGOs registered for sessions that were not relevant and/or timely.
- **Identification of Local Service Providers.** Hats off to the Jamaica Country Program for identifying two high caliber Jamaican trainers. Both the Human Resource Management and Financial Management trainers did a phenomenal job. In addition, they each received the highest evaluations during the week. Given the success, it may be worthwhile to begin casting a wider net to identify other appropriate individuals for training/technical assistance.

D. Recommendations

1. TNC Jamaica's 2005 Institutional Development workplan should be based on continuing on-going efforts. This would include facilitation of the three outstanding Strategic and Financial Plans (NCRPS, Dolphin Head, PEPA), and revisiting the ISAs a year after the original ones were conducted to determine progress/impact.
2. TNC should monitor Conservation Training Week's technical impact by following-up with the participating NGOs to determine which tools/methodologies have been applied in the organizations. Follow-up could be conducted around 6 months after the event was held to provide sufficient time for the NGOs to have begun implementation. Based on feedback, it can better determine if the topics/learning were relevant, and how to best design future events.
3. To affect real change in Institutional Development, TNC should consider alternative means of providing leadership technical assistance to several of the NGOs. These are most needed in NCRPS, NEPT, MBMPT, and PEPA. Some alternatives could include developing a mentoring program for the EDs, a fellowship program for the EDs, additional training for the EDs, and/or additional training/assistance for the board members.
4. TNC Jamaica should consider identifying and hiring an in-country person to conduct and/or coordinate Institutional Development work. The Country Program plans to continue supporting the JPAN membership, may also wish to provide similar assistance to other partner NGO partners, and is considering its future relationships with government entities. An in-country person could be trained as needed on the methodologies, and would be better able to provide continuous support at a lower overall cost to the program.