

Final Report on the UK GGF Project
Implemented by the Anguilla National Trust to provide
“Institutional Support for the Promotion of Civic Rights and Civil Society
Participation in the Democratic Process”

Project Overview

The Anguilla National Trust’s proposal to implement this project was initially conceived as one way of responding to public criticism that the Trust was concerned with the welfare of birds and lizards but not with people. With the overarching goal of sustainable development, further rationale was provided to engage the Trust in a project related to Human Rights and Civil Society Participation in Democracy as the Trust’s Mission is “the business of ensuring the sustainability of Anguilla’s National Heritage and its vision is that of a “dynamic people-centered organisation working in collaboration with public, private and civil society entities to manage Anguilla’s natural, social and cultural heritage.” In preparing the project proposal, it was even thought that this project could provide the ideal opportunity for selling the concept of sustainable development as a people’s right.

Purpose: The purpose of the project as stated in the proposal document, was to “*enable the Anguilla National Trust to influence the practice of government in Anguilla through a three-year programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of non-government organisations to effectively mobilise civil society participation in decision-making for national development.*”

General Objectives: When the project was formally launched in May 2002, the general objectives as stated in the proposal were as follows:

- (i) to equip the Anguilla National Trust for a high degree of field work in Anguillian communities to promote the concept of civil society participation in national decision making as a human right
- (ii) to strengthen the leadership capacity of the Trust by training staff in the skills of negotiation, conflict resolution, and use of communication strategies and technologies
- (iii) to improve the quality of institutional support currently provided by the Trust for several non-government organisations in Anguilla.
- (iv) to provide a necessary level of support through training that will facilitate definite action by elected representatives to initiate processes and procedures for the extension of relevant international conventions.
- (v) to build confidence for implementing the obligations of international conventions extended to Anguilla and to strengthen the island’s capacity for monitoring such intervention by regional and international interaction and exchange.

Priority Actions: At that time, priority actions included:

- Procuring a new vehicle and office equipment for the Anguilla National Trust which would enable the implementation of a participatory programme of community education for influencing the practice of good government.
- Training in Smithsonian Environmental Leadership and Communication course for the Executive Director of the Anguilla National Trust.
- Participation by appropriate government and Trust representatives in regional and international meetings pertaining to relevant international conventions.
- Specialised training for elected representatives with respect to the procedures and requirements for extension and implementation of the conventions in Anguilla.

Revised Proposal: By July 2000 a revised project proposal necessitated by the incompatibility of administrative arrangements with the policies and practices of the Trust, made changes to facilitated those arrangements and broadened the priority actions to include leadership training for other members of staff. The revised proposal expanded the general objectives of the project to include the “*improved quality of functioning within the Trust’s office.*” However, the specific objectives related to achieving the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s Command objectives remained unchanged. These were:

Specific Objectives

1. The creation of an ongoing forum for public discussion on human rights
2. The wide dissemination of summarised forms of international conventions such as the CEDAW to facilitate community education
3. The establishment of a national mechanism through which breaches of human rights may be addressed.

Several months of project time were lost due to this incompatibility that prevented the Trust from immediately hiring the necessary project staff. That situation was not satisfactorily resolved until the end of February 2001 after a meeting with His Excellency, the Governor. This matter has been adequately addressed in previous reports but I will share with you the contents of the Memo from the Governor’s Office dated 5th March 2001. READ THE MEMO.

This final project evaluation, will highlight the objectives that have been achieved as well as the activities and outputs of the project. Participants will be asked to measure the project’s impact against the objectives and activities undertaken and to indicate which outcomes of the project they would like to see strengthened and supported in the future. The report will also comment on the overall experience of its implementation from the perspective of the Anguilla National Trust. We have also included one page from the Report on the consultation at the launch of the project when one of the small groups assessed the status of civic rights in Anguilla. During your small group exercise, please take a few minutes to discuss whether you have perceived any movement, either upward or downward in the exercise of these rights. Even before I comment on the implementation of this project, I ask you to pause and read with me, the three quotations on your programme and reflect on them as you prepare to evaluate the impact of the project.

Activities, Outcomes and Outputs

These have been listed below in chronological order.

Year 1: 1999-2000

- July 1999 - Project proposal submitted to Governor's Office
- November - Governor's Office indicated success of bid and requested cost benefit analysis
- December - Cost benefit analysis submitted
- March 2000 - Project vehicle purchased
- March - Project public awareness brochure produced

Year 2: 2000-2001

- May 2000 - Project formally launched in participatory exercise
- July - Revised proposal and cost benefit analysis submitted
- August-Dec. - New office equipment and furniture purchased for office of ANT
- September - ANT co-ordinated civil society meeting with Baroness Scotland
- September - ED ANT completed Smithsonian Environmental Leadership Course
- December - Employment of ANT Admin. Manager and Extension of sea turtle moratorium
- January-June 2001 - Human Rights columns published in *The Anguillian* and *The Light* respectively entitled ***The People's Rights*** and ***The Rights Space***
- February - Purchase of new photocopier for ANT office
- ED ANT met twice with White Paper team & again recommended expansion and resourcing of Human Rights Reporting Committee
- ED ANT met with H.E. the Governor to determine the way forward
- March-April - Needs Assessment exercise with NGO leaders

Year 3: 2001-2002

- May - ED ANT invited to meeting of Human Rights Reporting Committee and recommended public awareness about its work and expansion to make it more representative and responsive
- July - Three Anguillians representing the Anguilla Christian Men's Association, the Anguilla National Council of Women and the Anguilla Bar Association, participated in the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights Seminar in Belize
- August - Guidance and support provided for facilitation of UK Human Rights Workshop
- October - ANT began production of Anguilla National Council of Women's Newsletter ***Between Us***
- October-October 2002 - NGO Development Co-ordinator, Damien Hughes employed to mobilise civil society organisations and to co-ordinate interventions based on needs assessment
- November - US volunteer contracted as NGO Development Officer for one month
- Human Rights Education three-day workshop organised by the Department of Education with support from UK GGF project
- January 2002 - ANT & WE OD Exercise to maximise involvement of governing Council
- March - Return of NGO Development Officer for month of March
- National Human Rights Symposium
- ANT OD workshop to develop fundraising strategy
- March-August 2002 - ***What the People Say*** live, weekly, programme from the streets of Anguilla
- August - Development of ***All Kinda Rights*** for production by "All A We"
- October-December - Project termination processes implemented and final report submitted
- January-March 2003 - Post project community meetings

Implementing the Project – Concluding Remarks

In its most positive aspects, this project has served as a yardstick to measure the status of human rights in Anguilla and the level of readiness on the part of civil society organisations in Anguilla to be proactive and assertive in their participation in the democratic processes of national life. From the perspective of the project manager, it has been extremely frustrating to have had such useful involvement in the diagnosis of Anguilla's case, in relation to the exercise of human rights and people participation and then to have had less than satisfactory involvement in the treatment. The evaluation exercise is intended to provide an opportunity to share your views on how what was accomplished impacted participants drawn from the non-government organisations, staff associations, private and public sector organisations, the church and the media. It is however also intended to come up with some degree of prognosis for what if anything from this project can have lasting value.

Yuh Hear Dat? I particularly enjoyed listening to the responses of people on the street as we spoke to them through the radio programme but the Trust had been left very much alone in its production even though several of the organisations represented had been invited to participate and indicated that they would. In several instances the views expressed, indicated a less than adequate understanding of either the issues or some of the basic concepts related to major civil society groups and fundamental human rights. Two instances come to mind – it was evident that even as we lament the public inertia shown in response to repeated invitations and pleas to participate in the Electoral and Constitutional Reform Forum, some people as yet, have no clear understanding of what the constitution is. The second example comes from the number of people who, when asked about whether or not there was need for a National Youth Council, heard the word COUNSEL and responded strongly that our youth today need much counselling. In this sense, the project and other parallel national processes seemed somewhat unrealistic in their expectations of civil society mastery of higher mathematics when what was required may have been simple addition. It was also worrying that so many people still say that they are afraid to speak out on matters that impact directly on their lives.

Political Independence - Throughout the implementation of the project, the issue of political independence raised its head time and time again. One such occasion was the Order in Council removing the status of illegality from homosexual activity between consenting adults in private but you raised your voices strongly, though after the fact when you met with Baroness Scotland. Another was during the Human Rights Symposium when our learned friend from Jamaica Dr. the Honourable Lloyd G Barnett reminded us starkly of our constitutional limitations. You were as silent then as you were when this matter was raised in the Constitutional Forum. The new Principal of the Albenia Lake-Hodge Comprehensive School has indicated that he was unaware of the request for the school's Debating Society to participate in a National Independence Debate to be supported by this project and has asked us to resubmit that request as he would like to have the students engage in that exercise.

Project personnel noted the strength of your responses at the UK Human Rights workshop which took place in August 2001 and noted how you took the agenda and made it your own. We noted also the hesitation and non-response to the matter of how that workshop would be taken forward by you. The National Trust in its implementation of this project also received some criticism

that we were being paid by the British to carry out their agenda. Even as we were fighting with the Governor's office to access the resources needed to engage in the work of the project, in one instance our NGO Co-ordinator and our NGO Development Officer who was an American volunteer, were rebuffed when they showed up for a very important meeting as the Chairman of the body with whom they sought collaboration, saw her as a white woman and thought she was, "the British".

Legal Aid, Human Rights and Gender: Even as we formally end this project, you are being afforded another opportunity to guide the Government of Anguilla and the Legal fraternity on the matter of establishing a Legal Aid Clinic as a standing institution and not as a project activity. It must be clear by you, whether this is a real need or a passing fancy and we must single out Ms. Palmavon Webster for her work done on behalf of the Anguilla Bar Association.

In similar fashion we must thank Mrs. Lana Hoyoung for assisting in the facilitation of today's exercise. We hope you will give her your inputs as to what you think the Gender and Human Rights Unit located in the Chief Minister's Office and the Human Rights Committee chaired by her ought to be doing. We are too late for the budget exercise but hopefully you will empower her to negotiate successfully for the resources she needs. And she needs those resources – Of the skits developed to stimulate group and community discussion, one or two of them are not likely to be produced because they are too sensitive – they hit too close to home and that in itself is an indicator of the kinds of emphasis needed to fully implement the rights of the child in Anguilla and the necessity for us to be more serious about the extension and implementation of the CEDAW in Anguilla.

The Big P - As I close, I know that many of you do not need any extra work and already some of you may be sorely stretched by your active involvement in more than one organisation. Several of your organisations expressed reluctance to come together in a national formation to influence the practice of democracy in Anguilla. We hope that you will ultimately realise the need to move away from the politics with the small 'p' which I believe contributes to the fear because it is partisan, and toward that collective action characteristic of Politics with the big 'P' that is about empowerment and nation- building.