

***International Human Rights and Sustainable Development
A Workshop for Senior Officials from Guyana, Suriname and
Trinidad & Tobago***

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Final Technical Report

June 18, 2014

IDRC Project Number: 107484-001

IDRC Project Title: *Human Rights and Sustainable Development in Practice:
Perspectives from Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago.*

Country/Region: Caribbean (Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname)

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This report is presented as received from project recipients. It has not been subjected to peer review or other review processes.

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INTRODUCTION

The Institute of International Relations (IIR/UWI) resumed an old tradition, namely to organise and conduct periodical “off shore” learning and training events, not designed for its own student body, but for government officials, diplomats, and NGO representatives. This is done in accordance with the spirit and letter of the Institute’s regional mandate. One such event was planned for the Countries of the “Southern Caribbean”, namely Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago, with focus on the international human rights system and its ever increasing linkages with the sustainable development agenda.

While the discourse on globalization remains high on the international agenda and has its impact in particular on small island developing countries (SIDS), it is felt that there is in parallel an ever increasing universal system of human rights, set up among other purposes, to support and protect these smaller members of the international community, and which ought to be central to this discourse.

At present, the international community, including the CARICOM Countries, is in the process of assessing the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It is moving towards the formulation of a set of post-2015 sustainable development goals, hidden or openly coded in terms of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights. This means concretely that there is an added need to make the necessary linkages with the international human rights system, in particular with its current and future development agenda as this is enshrined in this system.

Caribbean Countries, by and large, have ratified and/or acceded to the major international human rights instruments, although some important Conventions are still lacking the necessary approval. Generally, their human rights records are quite well known and appreciated. However, a certain emphasis is always placed on civil and political rights, in particular on issues of freedom of expression and association, on capital punishment and the right to life. But, it is felt also that in the Caribbean there is often a level of misunderstanding and neglect when it comes to understanding and appreciating the wider international human rights system, including the fundamental economic, social and cultural rights, the right to a sustainable environment, child rights and women’s rights, the rights of minorities, the rights of migrant workers and the rights and protection of disabled persons. There is also often a misunderstanding as to how these rights impact on and support progress in the human development areas of the Caribbean Countries.

It is important to acknowledge that respect for and the promotion of human rights does not stop at the ratification of human rights instruments. It is equally important that Governments meet their obligations to implement these international commitments

nationally, and to do so in a timely and effective manner. It is particularly notable how far CARICOM Countries are lagging behind in implementing and meeting their periodic reporting obligations to the international human rights bodies.

It is against this background that the U.W.I. Institute of International Relations spearheaded the delivery of this Workshop with the cooperation of the International Development Research Centre of Canada (IDRC), the Government of Switzerland through its Embassy in Venezuela, and the UN Resident Coordinator's Office for Trinidad & Tobago and its Subregional Team in Suriname.

Participants¹

The Director for this workshop was Dr. Johann Geiser, Senior Fellow, Institute of International Relations, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago.

The following were invited to participate in the Workshop:

- Senior Government Officials from Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago.
- Senior Officials from the CARICOM Secretariat.
- Selected Members of regional NGOs

Preference was given to persons who already possess some knowledge/involvement in issues of human rights and/or exposure to issues of sustainable development. These persons would come from the respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs, the Ministries of the Attorney General, Ministries of Justice and Police, and the Ministries of Planning, Finance, Economy. Among the NGOs, there were selected representatives of children protection agencies, gender related organizations, indigenous peoples' organisations, civil society organisations, and environmental protection agencies. In all over 40 participants were involved with the workshop.

¹ For a list of participants please refer to Appendix 1 - Participants

OBJECTIVES

The Workshop had set the following learning objectives, namely:

General: To promote a better understanding and wider appreciation, nationally and regionally, of the connection between human rights and sustainable development, and to determine how this agenda can be advanced in practical terms, through interaction with national and regional institutions, as well as with the University of the West Indies and its Institute of International Relations.

Specific:

Seeking with the participants, in a free and frank discussion:

- 1) To promote a better understanding, wider appreciation and implementation of the international human rights system and its linkages with concepts and issues of sustainable development in the Caribbean.
- 2) To familiarize and update the participants with the status of and current developments of the international human rights and humanitarian law system.
- 3) To create greater awareness and advocacy aptitudes of the participants in their respective countries with regard to economic, social and cultural rights including environmental rights, and the requirements for implementation at the national level.
- 4) To examine with the participants the relevance of human rights in the Caribbean, as they are embedded in the MDGs and the post-2015 sustainable development goals (SDGs).
- 5) To sensitize and build capacity of the participants in preparing and submitting timely and relevant periodic reports for submission to the various international human rights bodies.

Underlying the above objectives was a deliberate effort by the Institute of International Relations to go beyond this workshop and build capacity at the Institute, by proposing the creation of a one year teaching/research staffing position in the area of human rights.

Feedback was solicited from the participants as to whether the learning objectives were met, the results were mixed. While the participants in majority agreed that the objectives of familiarising and creating awareness of the international human rights system and its linkage with issues and principles of sustainable development were met, it was felt that the objective of human rights reporting was somehow “short-changed”, mainly because of lack of time. The suggestion was made to repeat a similar themed workshop but focused on human rights reporting sometime in 2014 or 2015.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The resources from IDRC's Research Support Grant was used to host a Workshop at the Royal Torarica Hotel, Paramaribo, Suriname on October 28-30, 2013. The Workshop Programme is provided in Appendix 2. The following is a synopsis of the Workshop as reported by Dr. Marshall Conley, Workshop Facilitator, Canada:

Following the Sunday evening arrival and welcome reception of the participants, the formal sessions began on Monday with the **Opening Session**.

Dr. Geiser welcomed the participants and set the stage for the week by introducing the relationship between human rights and sustainable development and how this could be promoted through the Millennium Development goals (MDGs). He then introduced Mr. Richard Blewitt, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative (Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Aruba, Curaçao and Saint Maarten); Mr. Markus Gottsbacher, International Development Research Centre, Canada; and H.E. Henry MacDonald, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Suriname to the United Nations, New York.

Richard Blewitt spoke in his opening remarks about the actual disconnect between development and human rights, giving a number of country examples. He asked the question, "Are middle-income countries actually progressing?" There are serious governance challenges when it comes to human rights, for example dealing with marginal groups, children, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues, women, and minorities. These human rights issues must be addressed if there is to be real sustainable development.

Markus Gottsbacher brought greetings from the International Development Research Centre in Ottawa, Canada. IDRC is a major funder of this workshop. He identified a list of challenges to sustainable development, many of which are research-funded by IDRC. These include looking at 'connectors' such as human rights defenders, violence against women and girls, how communities deal with organized crime, border security, and dealing with victims of crime.

Hans Geiser presented a short overview of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) on behalf of Prof. Andy Knight, Director of the Institute of International Relations at the University of the West Indies, as Prof. Knight was unable to attend the workshop. Dr. Geiser identified the background to the development of R2P, highlighting such incidents as the Yugoslavia War and the Rwandan Genocide. However, by 2005 R2P was introduced in the United Nations General Assembly. Contemporary examples of the use of R2P (and variations of R2P) were identified.

Prior to introducing Ambassador MacDonald, Dr. Geiser commented on the mix of participants from Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, CARICOM, the United Nations, and a variety of NGOs. Forty-six people were present for this workshop. He also

noted the unavoidable absence of a few people because of personal and other commitments.

Ambassador MacDonald spoke on behalf of the Hon. Winston Lackin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Suriname and delivered the Minister's speech. The speech included statistics on challenges to the Millennium Development Goals, including water, energy, etc., and how these affected sustainable development. Human rights were mentioned often as a basic principle for the 2015 Agenda and goals as follow-up to Rio +20 (2012). These rights include the right to development, right to food, the rule of law, gender equality, etc. The CARICOM Civil society Charter was specifically mentioned. Quoting the Foreign Minister, Ambassador MacDonald stated, *"The main questions we now need to answer are: How to craft a sustainable development framework for the next 15 years that is principally based on human rights? And how to build that new framework on genuine action and not once again on a set of desirabilities. CARICOM efforts in this regard are well underway. In this respect the Government of Suriname warmly welcomes 'the Draft Declaration by CARICOM on a Post-2015 Development Agenda' which was recently circulated for consideration amongst its member states."*

A lively discussion took place in a question and answer session following the Ambassador's presentation.

The **second session** began with the workshop briefing by Dr. Geiser, as Workshop Director. He identified various aspects that led to this workshop, including its predecessor held in St. Lucia in January 2013. These workshops, and a proposed follow-up workshop to be held in Trinidad and Tobago in 2014 not only contribute to the Caribbean nations' discussions and planning on post-MDG planning after 2015, but also will contribute to the eventual setting up of a human rights programme at the University of the West Indies Institute of International Relations.

Former Ambassador of Austria, Walter Lichem, made a presentation on "Societal Development and Human Rights". He stressed that the new term being used is "societal" and not "social". *"Violent conflicts and wars today occur primarily within societies and not between states. More than 99 % of victims of war and military violence stem within states, in the context of civil wars and violence. Terrorism, organized crime are marked by non-state local actors."* Recent decades have shown that all regions of the world are facing the challenge of social disintegration. The disparity of income levels is increasing dramatically; international migration has resulted in societies which are plurilinguistic, whereby cities need to offer services in multiple languages as the immigrant population increases. We need to begin to reconceptualise how we interact with and recognize "the Other".

In order to do this we now need to realize that our development and security agendas require new terminology; hence the concept of societal development. The traditional term "**social**" refers to the various dimensions of the **productive capacities** of the human being and of communities such as health, education, age, poverty, employment, hunger etc. "**Societal**" in turn refers to the **relational capacities** of a human being and of a community including the capacity for otherness, for solidarity, for a plurality of identities,

cultures and religious faiths. “Societal” includes the ability to relativize one’s own position and identity and the ability to move into public space, interacting democratically with others in the definition and implementation of the common good. “Societal” refers also to the capacity of the human being for living in dignity with others and to the capacity for change/development and for a vision of the future.

As Dr. Lichem points out, this requires also a new approach to human rights education – which began in 1993. Societal development programmes would not only consist of education but also use a society’s public space, the cultural life and identity, media, private sector, academic and public governmental structures to project human dignity as the societal core value to be achieved in society. Human rights-related education, learning and socialisation are key strategies for achieving societal development. One proposed approach to this is the creation of “human rights cities”. The first Human Rights City programme was developed in 1997 by PDHRE (People’s Movement for Human Rights Learning) in Rosario, Argentina. Today there are more than thirty human rights cities in all regions of the world. Also, today there are multiple initiatives promoting the idea of cities being united under a human rights agenda. This need to be further promoted in the future and is something that Caribbean cities should consider.

The ensuing discussion included a question about how the possibility of employing creative arts could be used to curb domestic violence. Questions concerning the meaning of “free and equal” were also raised. The results so far have been mixed when one looks at 1st Nations groups as an example. They might be “free and equal” legally but not in societies where racism still continues to exist. A commentator thought that we still have “command and obedience” structures in society, and asked the question how do we transition to a culture which is more open and has respect for others?

Sydney Allicock, Director of the Surama Eco Lodge in Guyana, observed that there can be an improved economy through cultural tourism. However, fitting all of the ‘parts’ together is challenging. There needs to be an increased involvement of women in the process. Little is taught in schools about environmental protection, and indigenous people find it difficult to access scholarships on legal practice so that they can protect the environment in which they are custodians.

The afternoon session began with an overview of the “International Human Rights system: Then and Now” with Dr. Geiser and Ms. Christal Chapman. This was in preparation for the ensuing Group Work. Ms. Chapman explained the human rights documents that were available to the participants on the flash drives provided. Dr. Geiser then proceeded to give a background on the various human rights instruments and did this by decade. He explained to the participants the two pillar approach to human rights that basically began in the 1970s: the political and the social. In particular, discussion centred on the following: the UN Covenants; UN General Assembly Resolutions; Labour Standards; Humanitarian Standards, Environmental Standards; and the CARICOM Civil Society Charter. He finished his overview with an explanation of *The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol* (2006), and the *International*

Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990).

The Workshop then broke into three groups to conduct an Inventory and Country Assessment through Group Work, and addressed the following question: “*Where do we stand in the 3 Countries in terms of the International Human Rights System?*” The three groups were facilitated by Ms. Chapman, Dr. Marshall Conley, and Dr. Geiser.

The three Groups reported their conclusions. The Guyana Group reported that autonomous commissions had been created in Guyana to ensure implementation of the various human rights conventions. Commentary was offered on the status of the various Conventions. The Suriname Group spoke principally on the CARICOM Civil Society Charter which had been adopted in 1997. The group’s concern was the challenge of promoting the Charter in order to make it an effective document. The Trinidad and Tobago Group also highlighted the status of the various documents. They commented on the constraints of personnel, and lack of technical expertise in preparing the reports. Dr. Conley reminded the participants that the United Nations has *The Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights*,² which can provide needed technical assistance.

Following the Group Work a panel presentation was made by Judith Osuman, the ICRC Caribbean Representative. Her presentation, “*The International Humanitarian System*”, explained the principles of international humanitarian law (IHL), the sources of the law, how it is applied, and the obligations of States Parties to the various Geneva Conventions. Discussions ensued following the presentation and prior to Ms. Osuman’s second presentation entitled “*Norms Applicable below the Threshold of International Humanitarian Law – Internal Disturbances and Tensions*”. The presentations included the classification and qualification of conflicts and relationships to international human rights law. The latter part of the presentation included an explanation on the role of ICRC in the Caribbean, which includes promoting IHL and other applicable rules of behaviour in conflict situations, including responding to the consequences of violence in the region (e.g. Jamaica in 2010, providing emergency assistance to persons affected by gang violence – food, water, medication, and psychosocial support). The ICRC is also involved in economic security in the region (an example is the Micro Economic Programme in Jamaica in 2011). The session concluded with a short video on the activities of the ICRC worldwide.

The first day of the Workshop ended at 6:00pm.

The second day of the Workshop began with a discussion and background session by Dr. Geiser on the topic “*Economic, Social and Cultural Rights – Nature and Scope*”. An extensive discussion took place on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in general and then specifically information was provided about these rights in Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, and Guyana. There was a consensus amongst

² <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/VFTC/Pages/VoluntaryFund.aspx>

all of the participants that a simplified reporting mechanism was needed for the reporting obligations under the various human rights instruments. The three countries discussed all have the same challenges of limited personnel, and varying degrees of expertise within their respective countries. A number of NGO participants suggested that there should be greater cooperation and collaboration between NGOs and Government Departments during the preparation of the periodic human rights reports.

The second session of the day began with Professors Steven Marks and Alicia Yamin of Harvard University, and Professor Miloon Kothari of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology joining the Workshop via video conference. The topic of their presentation and discussion was *“Human Rights and the Post 2015 Development Agenda”*.

This presentation and discussion dwelt on three themes:

- 1) The perceived tension between economists’ perspective on post 2015 development goals, and that of human rights practitioners. This causes conflicting paradigms.
 - 2) How to bridge the post 2015 gap between the human rights agenda and the Millennium Development Goals.
 - 3) A discussion of the opportunities to engage the United Nations Human Rights System on development goals.
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- 1) Are the MDGs human rights blind? There appears to be an incompatibility between the two. Growth is seen by bankers and leaders in economics (Ministers of Finance, Governors of Central Banks) as that aspect of capitalism that has helped to eliminate and/or reduce poverty. However, human rights objectives need to be integrated into a broad and complex agenda of development. Some writers have suggested that the MDGs and the human rights agenda are like “ships passing in the night”. The basic question is how can the MDGs further the development of human rights? It is suggested that the goals and structures of the MDGs relating to basic needs are just too simplistic to be successful. Those parts of government that is responsible for trade and economic policies tend to think in certain way, whereas other parts of the government, like Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, etc. are strongly attuned to human rights, having a completely different perspective.
 - 2) It was suggested that the Millennium Declaration was a people-centred document. It was aspirational. The actual MDGs were created by technocrats providing a roadmap. This roadmap glossed over issues such as human rights, and equality. The global goals were converted to national goals and the result is that the data is skewed for smaller countries such as those found in the Caribbean Basin. Since 2010 what has been needed is greater accountability. This is beginning to be seen in global donor accountability, and the various civil society networks which have been developed.

There are various problems associated with the post 2015 MDGs. It provides a simple list of goals. There is a different attention to financing which will probably emphasise public/private partnerships. There should be different starting points for the goals, as well as the development of more thoughtful indicators. There is a way of moving beyond treating people as **patients** and seeing them as **actors**.

The MDGs are uneven. The donors have spotted some of these. A lot of goals are left out. As an example, sexual and reproductive health has been reduced to 'maternal health'. Primary school enrollment is up but quality is down. Professor Yamin also suggested that gender equality should be a separate goal.

As commented, the creation of the MDGs was a top-down process and this need to be re-addressed in the post 2015 environment.

- 3) Concerning the engagement of the United Nations human rights system with the development goals, Professor Kothari opined that there is a new robust reporting system because of the creation in 2007 of the Universal Periodic Review. This system creates a continuous human rights reporting system. The question is, does it work?

The continuing challenge is that there are still reporting requirements from the International Labour Organization, CARICOM, and the OAS for example. There are a great number of overdue reports because states are overwhelmed. This is particularly the case in the small States found in the Caribbean area.

An animated discussion took place with many participants raising comments and questions. These included the point that stakeholders' reports are now included in the Universal Periodic Review of States reports. There is a need to stop the marginalisation of human rights as a core value. Also, the right to development, as well as civil and political rights, must be included in the post 2015 MDG report. A final comment was suggested that we need to create an inventory of Government commitments made at various international conferences and gatherings (e.g. Beijing, Istanbul, etc.).

The **afternoon session** began with a panel discussion moderated by Richard Blewitt. The panel addressed "*Individual Rights: Implementation in the Caribbean*"

- *Children and Gender Rights*
- *The Rights of Indigenous People*
- *The Right to Food and Education*
- *The Right to Security*
- *The Right to a healthy environment: SIDS Focus*

The panel included Dr. Charmaine Gomes (ECLAC Office, Trinidad & Tobago), Ms. Folade Mutota (WINAD Trinidad & Tobago), Ms. Jocelyne Josiah (Guyana, UNESCO – Retired), and Mr. Wayde Ramnarine (UN Information Centre, Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago).

Dr. Charmaine Gomes presented a PowerPoint discussion on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

(UNCED). Principle 10 was adopted at the 1992 UNCED as a key part of the concept of sustainable development. The Principle asserts that access to information, public participation, and access to justice are critical for sustainable development. The presentation explained these three concepts within the context of the Declaration. A question was raised about the utility of making the Declaration a Convention. If this was done would it provide a framework for capacity building?

Hazel Brown spoke about the CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The thrust of her presentation dealt with the question of civil society's access to the Conventions. How do we make the process more participatory? Is this through dialogue? What other processes might we use? We need to have greater involvement by professional organizations in deliberations regarding Conventions.

Wayde Ramnarine of the UN Information Office spoke about the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Other Minorities. He also pointed out that the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities states that, "*Persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities (hereinafter referred to as persons belonging to minorities) have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimination*". There are also Organization of American States mechanisms, as well International Labour Organization standards, and UN protection of minorities who are refugees.

One of the participants pointed out that in his country real consultation with the indigenous people is not working because the consultation consists of "flying in for a short visit, and flying out". The solution, in the first instance is to strengthen village councils in order to better prepare their people for such consultations which may take place.

Jocelyne Josiah, from Guyana, spoke on the question of the right to food. She pointed out that the UN Human Rights Council appointed a Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, in 2008. The right to food is the right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensure a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free of fear. The nature of the legal obligations of States parties are set out in article 2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in General Comment No. 12 also defined the obligations that States parties have to fulfill in order to implement the right to adequate food at the national level. These are as follows:

- The obligation to *respect* existing access to adequate food requires States parties not to take any measures that result in preventing such access;

- The obligation to *protect* requires measures by the State to ensure that enterprises or individuals do not deprive individuals of their access to adequate food;
- The obligation to *fulfill (facilitate)* means the State must pro-actively engage in activities intended to strengthen people's access to and utilization of resources and means to ensure their livelihood, including food security;
- Whenever an individual or group is unable, for reasons beyond their control, to enjoy the right to adequate food by the means at their disposal, States have the obligation to *fulfill (provide)* that right directly. This obligation also applies for persons who are victims of natural or other disasters.

Folade Mutota spoke at length of the quality of rights, of education and security.

The panel discussion ended with the participants breaking into country groups to discuss the country by country implementation of the rights discussed by the panel. The Group Work was facilitated by Christal Chapman, Charmaine Gomes, Richard Blewitt, and Hans Geiser.

The **final day** of the Workshop began with the completion of the Group Work on Implementation. This was followed by an overview of democratic devices available to society, given by Dr. Geiser. He explained devices such as use of the referendum (to make a constitutional change, a legislative referendum, or propose a new law), and the voting process associated with proportional representation. Since 2001 Guyana has used proportional representation in its national elections. Suriname's National Assembly is elected through proportional representation.

The next presentation was a video conference call from Geneva and presentation by Dr. Cleo Doumbia-Henry, Assistant Director-General of the International Labour Organization. Dr. Doumbia-Henry gave an extensive overview of ILO standards related to human rights and indicated how these are linked to sustainable development questions. She also pointed out that the ILO has more than 400 instruments with 8000 ratifications by 185 Member States. She indicated that the ILO hopes that the MDG post 2015 goals will include rights and sustainable development, and the right to work.

Following Dr. Doumbia-Henry, Charmaine Gomes gave a PowerPoint presentation on "Climate Change and Sustainable Development: A Rights-Based Approach". Ms. Gomes spoke on the impact of climate change on small communities and challenges that they faced. Climate change is affecting agriculture, health, tourism, and human security, to name a few. There have been a number of international instruments, including Kyoto (adopted 1997, in force 2005), Durban (2011), Doha (2012) dealing with climate change, emissions, etc. Adaptation to the challenges of climate change is taking place but more development and research needs to take place. Examples were given about opportunities that arose by being able to adapt.

The discussion which took place raised serious questions about how we can deal with the global situation at our community level? Increased fertilizer and pesticide is not the answer for improvements to the right to food. Could the concept of 'human rights cities'

optimise public participation? Others raised the point that there can be an increased use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to involve the public. Another thread developing during the discussion was trying to understand how all of the variables related to climate change intersect. We are all at different levels of development so how do we deal with this? What are the next steps for participants such as us? How can we create new opportunities for dialogue?

The **afternoon session** began with a presentation by Dr. Raquel Thomas-Caesar speaking about the Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development, in Guyana. The success of this project was highlighted. Dr. Thomas-Caesar pointed out that one of our problems in all communities is that, “The biggest communication problem is that we do not listen to understand; we listen to reply”, and we need to change our behaviour in this matter.

The next session was a panel discussion on “*An Introduction to, and Requirements of Human Rights Reporting*”. The panel consisted of Christal Chapman, Dr. Marshall Conley, Hazel Brown, and Dr. Geiser.

Ms Chapman spoke on the Universal Periodic Reporting process, giving examples.

Marshall Conley went into specifics of the Universal Periodic Reporting process and the various international Conventions’ reporting obligations. He observed that the UPR has revolutionized the human rights reporting process. He pointed out that the stakeholders can make submissions to the UPR and that the deadline for stakeholder submissions for the second cycle (2012-2016) was the following: Guyana, June 1, 2014; Suriname, Sept 1, 2015; and, Trinidad & Tobago, Sept 1, 2015. The UPR process includes:

1. Review of the human rights situation of the State Under Review (SUR);
2. Implementation between the two reviews (4-5 years) by the SUR of the recommendations received and voluntary pledges made; and,
3. Reporting at the next review of the implementation of those recommendations and pledges and on the human rights situation in the country since the previous review.

Hazel Brown spoke about CEDAW and Trinidad and Tobago’s concern with the Inter American Convention on Human Rights, as well as some of the OAS conventions. Trinidad and Tobago has withdrawn from the Inter American Convention on Human Rights. Participants also addressed the issue of coming up with a new method that involves civil society in a participatory way. We need to have a process of dialogue. We need a substantial dialogue! All agreed that the Treaty bodies need a new reporting process to make human rights reporting more efficient.

The **final Group Work** was on Preparing and Presenting a National Report, facilitated by Christal Chapman, Marshall Conley, and Hazel Brown. The three country groups addressed the following items:

1. With respect to your country, please indicate how you have been fulfilling your reporting obligations. Please present information on the Reports which have already been submitted; the Reports which are due; and those which are overdue.
2. Given the multitude of reporting obligations which exist under the human rights system, what are your recommendations for alleviating the reporting burdens from your country's perspective?

The **closing address** was given via video conference from New York, by Professor Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, New School, New York. Her presentation was on "*Is there a Right to Development*"? Dr. Fukuda-Parr is the Chief Editor of the United Nations Development Report, and Founder of The Journal of Human Development. Covering a range of topics within the concept of the right to development, Dr. Fukuda-Parr explained that the definition of the right to development includes, participation, equality, ethical standards, and the human consequences of development. "Development is not a destination. It is a process." She went on to explain the dichotomy between the development community – which is more mediatory, offering alternatives, and the rights community – which is more strident and litigious. The ensuing discussion from the participants once again made the point that there is a need for greater public consultation. We need to strengthen civil society and government cooperation by acting in partnership, and not as competitors.

At this point in the afternoon the three country groups each reported on their respective status on human rights reporting.

The afternoon ended with brief closing remarks by Dr. Conley and Dr. Geiser. Dr. Geiser exhorted the participants to remember that we do have the CARICOM Civil Society Charter of 1997, and we need to do more on its implementation.

The Workshop closed with photos and the presentation of certificates of attendance to all of the participants.

PROJECT OUTPUTS

1. Two reports were generated the Evaluation Report and the Conley Report which were circulated to all participants.
2. Thirty-five senior officials from the three countries were able to enhance their knowledge on international human rights and sustainable development.

3. The workshop participants have formed an informal network which they can leverage to advance international human rights in southern Caribbean.
4. The papers that were presented will be published as an edited volume by January 2015.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

1. Strengthened the knowledge capacity of the participants about the current developments in international human rights and humanitarian law system.
2. Enhanced the reporting capabilities of the participants to international human rights bodies.
3. Elucidated the linkage between human rights and sustainable development in the region.
4. Increased awareness among the participants of the international economic, social, cultural and environmental rights and the need for implementation at the country level.
5. Expounded on the proposed post-2015 sustainable development goals.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In concluding this brief Report, it is fair to state that this Workshop overall was a successful and useful exercise, first and foremost in the eyes of the Participants themselves. The fact that the workshop was oversubscribed, and a number of potential participants could not be considered, attest to the interest and felt needs of Governments and NGOs of the Southern Caribbean for this type of Human Rights and Sustainable Development forum.

The presentation and interaction between experts/resource persons and the participants was invariably of high quality, and special mention has to be made of those Experts who could not join us in Suriname, but who made excellent presentations over video-conferences from their respective places of work, i.e. Harvard, New School New York, and ILO Geneva.

In terms of the overall ratings of the Workshop, the participants' ratings overall and in large majority were at the very high end, and so were the ratings of methods and format of presentation. The following is *Workshop Evaluation Report*

1	Objectives of the Workshop	0 Not stated	1 (low)	2	3	4	5 (high)	Total

	1. Providing info on HR system		1	2	8	14	6	31
	2. Familiarizing participants on status of system		1	3	5	13	9	31
	3. Creating awareness and building advocacy wrt ESC rights		1	4	12	9	5	31
	4. Examining relevance of HR in the Caribbean		1	3	9	10	8	31
	5. Building participants capacity to prepare reports	1	4	7	11	5	3	31
2	Presenters	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
	1. Physical Composure	2	1	2	5	13	8	31
	2. Interaction with audience	1	2	1	6	13	8	31
	3. Clarity of Speaking	1	2		5	14	9	31
	4. Knowledgeable in content areas	1	1	1	2	15	11	31
	5. Clarified content in response to questions	1	2		9	11	8	31

3	Format of Presentation	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
	1. Appropriate for intended audience		3		7	12	9	31

	2.Content was presented in an organized manner		3	2	6	15	5	31
	3. Content was presented clearly and effectively	1	3	1	7	13	6	31
	4.Content consistent with objectives	1	3	1	8	10	8	31
	5. Length of programme was adequate	1	3	6	7	7	7	31
4	Presentation Methods	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
	1.Audio/Visual Support	1	2		5	17	6	31
	2.Visual Aids Hand-outs and Oral Presentations clarified content	1	1	1	3	16	9	31
	3.Presentation methods were appropriate for subject matter	2	2		6	14	7	31
	4. Delivery of Presentation	1	2		8	15	5	31
5	General	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
	How would you rate this programme?		1	1	10	11	8	31
	Did you have previous knowledge of the international HR system and its linkages to sustainable development?	0 1	Yes 23	No 7				Total 31

Participants Suggestions /Comments

Of the 31 participants who completed the Evaluation, 20 provided suggestions / comments:

- A greater effort could be made with respect to balancing the participants in keeping with the subjects discussed.
- The coordinators should conduct follow-up studies with a view to ensuring execution of matters discussed.
- The workshop was well organised and structured; the content was very informative.
- Would greatly like if a similar workshop could be conducted for Parliamentarians in Guyana.
- This workshop was a great learning experience; thank you for the opportunity.
- With respect to reporting, a more detailed workshop on this subject may be needed where participants are taught how to report effectively and are also able to share their experiences, especially to gain insight from those participants of countries that actually report on time. Need to get reporting expertise from persons outside the Caribbean as well.
- A simple checklist should be developed for moving after the workshop.
- More Power Point presentations would have been useful.
- Relevant videos could have been utilised at intervals so as to keep the participants' attention more.
- Workshop needed a workshop leader; there should be a distinction between the facilitators and speakers – they shouldn't be the same person(s).
- There were too many monologues, not enough room for discussion and dialogue; workshop felt like a classroom at times.
- This workshop was too basic; not enough concrete tools for furthering our work. There should have been more room for local, regional resource persons.
- Time keeping was an enormous problem and at times very useful sessions were either slipped or rushed.
- More group work needed; more opportunities for “cross pollination” between countries
- Less historical perspective and more focus on current state of affairs.
- I hope that in the near future such training will be possible because the basics are present but it takes practice and knowledge to become a human rights advocate.
- Congratulations on the workshop; we are looking forward to more in the future.
- Follow up meetings need to be held and reporting especially on human rights and environmental protection.
- Very good initiative but there could have been improvement by having more interaction between participants from the various countries.

- This workshop has been very informative and I learnt a great deal and see the relevance to my work. It is my intention to incorporate what I have learnt in my work programme.
- I found the workshop insightful; it made a linkage I was not aware of.
- Members of government must be greatly reminded of their roles and responsibilities with respect to ensuring human rights are dealt with in a fair and proper manner and to ensure there is equality for all.
- A very good learning forum but too much crammed into a short a duration.
- Participation by other Caricom nationals.
- Better time management needed.
- Hopefully this will go beyond a one-off event and will lead to a sustainable process and network.
- I would like to see the continuation of this series of workshops and for it to go beyond the horizon of the treaties covered and focus on other key instruments that have equal importance, e.g. LGBT rights; refugee rights in the Caribbean.
- It may be useful to send some of the material ahead of time or put them on a website that participants can access.
- With a workshop of this nature, it would also have been good to have a field visit to have a better understanding of some of the linkages.
- This workshop was well-organised and the presenters were of a high calibre. More use should have been made of Power Point/ interactive presentations to ensure the sessions do not become so monotonous.

A certain shortcoming has to be noted also in terms of follow-up and outcome objectives. Participants were asked, on return to their respective countries and workstations, to give some feedback and comments on how they intend to exercise their advocacy and follow-up role in support of the human rights agenda and its implications for sustainable development post-2015. Unfortunately, very little feedback and comments were received, beyond the suggestions made at the end of the Workshop.

In conclusion, thanks and appreciation has to be extended to the Governments of Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago, for having nominated and facilitated Officials, some 35 governmental and non-governmental, to participate in this Workshop. Thanks and appreciation also goes to the sponsors of this Workshop, i.e. the International Development and Research Centre of Canada, the Government of Switzerland through its Embassy in Venezuela, and the UN/UNDP through its Resident Representative in Trinidad & Tobago and Suriname.

APPENDIX 1 - Workshop Participants

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APPENDIX 2 – PHOTOS OF THE WORKSHOP



