

## **SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

This report shares a narrative as well as pictures and videos that demonstrate the outcomes of the project. In Antigua this project utilizing the “bottom up” demonstrated the outcomes of community actions in spearheading solar energy initiatives demonstrating that some knowledge, skills and capabilities does exist at the village level and that when groups partner, major outcomes can be achieved. With the media supporting and creating visibility through newspaper write ups, the sharing of information this created excitement, hope and anticipation that solar energy technology was a reality and could be made accessible to low income community groups. Lots of emails were received, phone calls and visits to learn about the project. The national sharing at two levels of consultations firstly with 150 members of the public and then bringing the private sector installer together with representatives of the utility company to discuss issues like the need for an independent regulatory authority and ways to continue the uptake of the technology through policies that encourage and promote our NDC's since Antigua has ratified the Paris Agreement. As a result of the community notices, outreach and media coverage many persons and organizations requested help but the focus was on the not for profit community organizations in low income communities. As an outcome of the community notices on the airways, several private sector solar installers came on board and offered support and technical expertise to the project.

The support from the Department of the Environment has been extraordinary, providing full support, full inclusion in all their meetings and projects, providing regional and international opportunities for sharing and capacity building. The building of partnerships and building synergies with other projects and activities were crucial to the outreach and everyone came on board to assist in reaching the goal and objectives. The community development Division also played a key role in supporting the initiatives, organizing training and assisting with follow up through the community development officers.

The Churches have played a very important role in this project, leading the way for national buy in and ownership and this has motivated their membership allows for uptake. Churches have respect, they have numbers so this contributes to education and public awareness, and their membership has technical resources which has been demonstrated in this project leading to the building of key partnerships which has opportunities for sustainability.

The Potters Seventh day Adventist Youth group has marshaled their membership and pioneered solar energy initiatives as well as in climate adaptation to include the construction of a 100,000 gallon community water cistern to be powered by this solar energy system. There is buy in from the community and the youth group has taken full ownership of the initiatives.





A&B Association of persons with Disabilities had their solar panel stolen but they will be replaced.









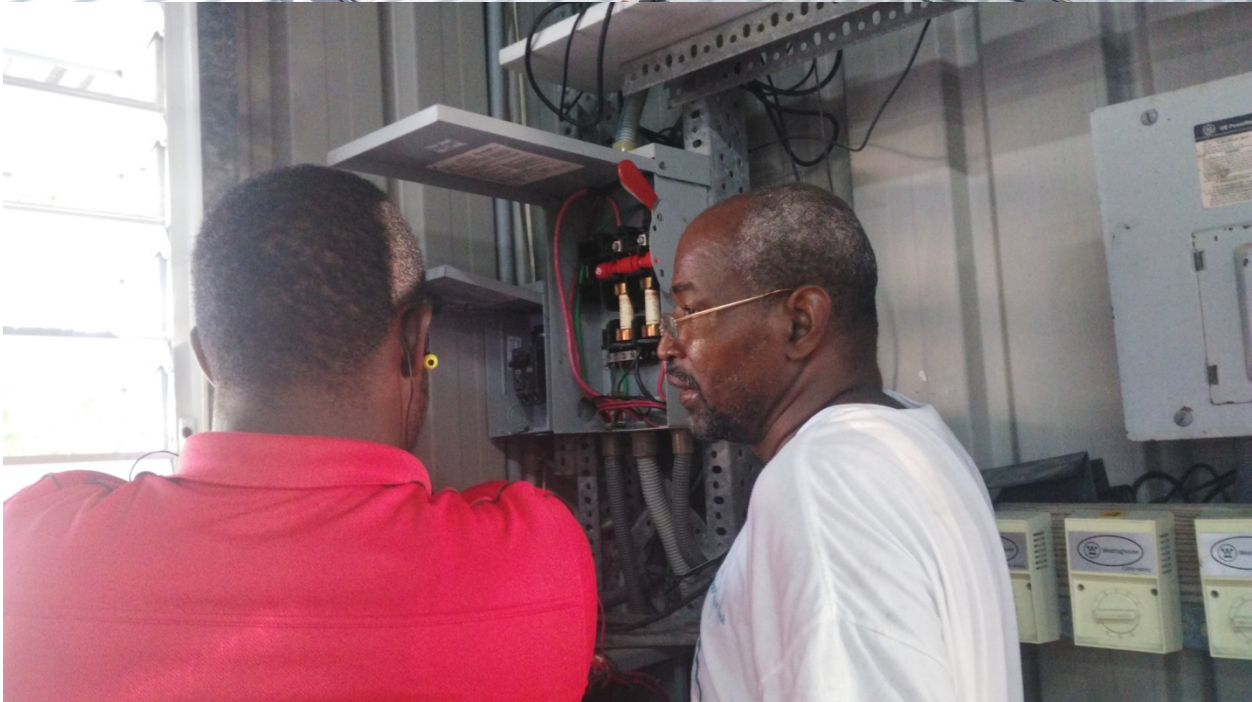
House of Refuge Ministries is located in the slum and overcrowded area of Grays Farm. The church has been impacted by the high level of homelessness, malnourished children and started a feeding program 3 years ago. The installation of solar energy made the community feel special that they were not left out and the savings generated from the solar system is used to support their outreach to children in the community. In this low income area, the small church showcases its solar panels in the roof.







The Villa Baptist Church had given thought to solar energy-"down the road" but with this OAS/ED opportunity to show case to the church members and the residents in the overcrowded community of Villa and Points, the church technicians put heads together and made the transition to solar "now".



Vibrant Faith Ministries is a Church located in the bushes in the bendals community. The church is family oriented and aims to showcase natural living in harmony with nature and the surroundings.



The Vibrant Faith Ministries has a philosophy of living ,working and worshipping in harmony with nature and made many outreach attempts to get their solar panels installed to reduce the cost of high electricity bills and also to testify to the country that they are a part of this great solar energy revolution

Sis Glo's Jams and Jellies is a local community agro processing facility that uses excess local fruits that in abundance to produce a wide variety of products and many are solar dried . The jams, chutneys and pepper sauces much go through the boiling process in her electric cooker which uses alot of energy so solar energy is the answer for Sister Glo and she was determined to be included in this project. On the property she grows many of the products so she always had her supplies on hand. Many of the village youth and women come to Sister Glo's to be trained and the local art of making these products with the Antiguan touch and taste.



Precision Center hydroponic project is powered by solar energy and used a small amount of water and this system had made it adapt to the 3 year drought affecting the island. Each week the church is able to provide 1500 heads of organically produced lettuce for the local market. They are currently up scaling

the initiative. During Tropical storm Gonzales, whereas farmers with produce on the ground got wiped out, this system remained intact and was able to continue produce and market their products.





Precision Centre, Antigua  
View Of Hydroponics



Precision Centre, Antigua  
-Sowing at the Hydroponics

# RENEWABLE ENERGY (SOLAR) CONSULTATION

**Precision Center**  
 Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2015

Chairperson: **Arica Hill**, Department of Environment

Agenda Item	Speaker
<i>Project Overview</i>	<b>Ruth Spencer</b> , National Focal Point GEF Small Grants Programme
<i>APUA's net-metering and net-billing for local companies working in RE and EE</i>	<b>Girvan Piggott</b> , Energy Specialist Ministry of Energy
<i>Climate Action Targets and the SIRF Fund: funding, access and distribution for homeowners</i>	<b>Lia Nicholson</b> , Officer Department of Environment
<i>Video: Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency</i> Precision Center	
<i>Video: Solar installations and distribution</i> Organization of American States (OAS)	
<i>Energy efficiency and data management systems</i>	<b>Fitzmaurice Christian</b> Precision Center
<i>Solar Project Presentation</i>	<b>Reverend Elton Williams/Amarah Christian</b> Vibrant Faith Ministries
<i>Solar Project Presentation</i>	<b>Reverend Knowles</b> Seventh Day Adventist Mission
<i>Two Musical Renditions</i>	
<i>Solar Project Presentation</i>	<b>Claudine Benjamin</b> Potters SDA Youth Group
<i>Solar Project Presentation</i>	<b>Reverend Fitz Morgan Greenaway</b> Villa Baptist Church
<i>Community solar installation project</i>	<b>Bernard Warner</b> , President Antigua and Barbuda Association of Persons with Disabilities
<i>Pros and Cons of APUA's net-metering and net-billing for local companies; Grievance mechanisms</i>	<b>Alex Spencer</b> , CariSun Renewable Energy
<i>Closing Remarks &amp; Vote of Thanks</i>	<b>Senator Maureen Hyman Payne</b>



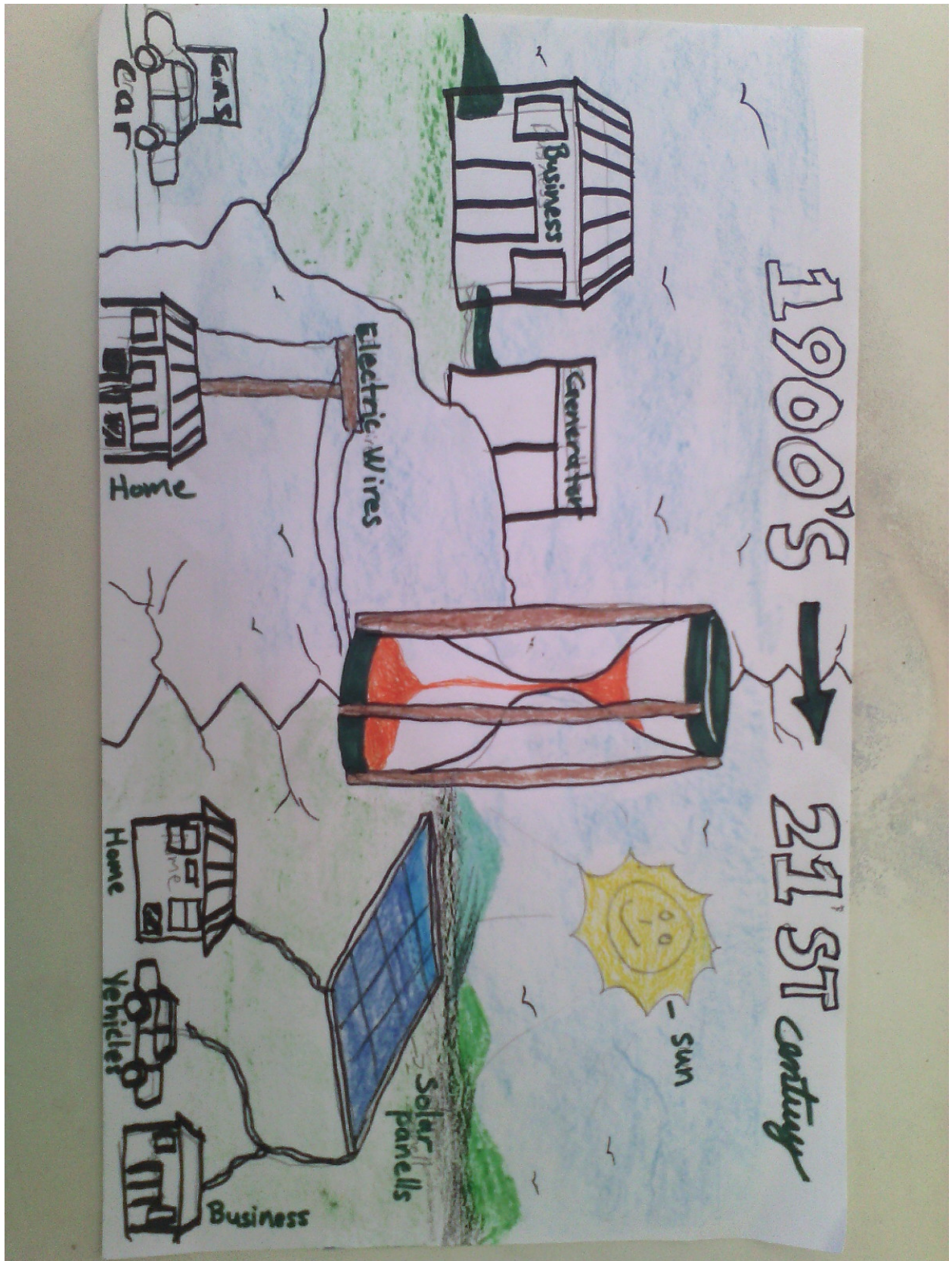
Q&A



The project supported the Douvert Barnes Art program carried out on weekends and during holidays to use art creations to tell the story. This was done through Murals painted on schools. Site visits were also arranged with teachers to visit Ruth's Place to for sharing information on how panels work and the monitoring systems. The Community Development Division was a key partner in the Art program.









**The Barnes Hill Community Development Organization.** Work on the Barnes Hill community group solar powered reservoir restoration project has started to access additional funding for a community based tourism project.



One component supported by the OAS/DOE project is to strengthen the roof bearing capacity of the reservoir roof by replacing the wooden rafters which are all rotted and the old rusted galvanize sheets covering the roof to enable the reservoir to be fitted with solar panels for lighting this area. Strong partnerships are being built with the community members who are contributing in kind and in labour to this initiative. The group was officially registered a few months ago.

The reservoir a cultural and heritage asset in the community was built in the 1800's and was the main source of water before pipe borne water was put in homes. The project has set up a website, will develop a traditional Knowledge component with picture and stories of the elders and a facility where the local agro processors can showcase and sell their products to tours and tourists passing through the area. I am currently assisting the group with proposal writing. The website details can be found at [barneshilldco.squarespace.com](http://barneshilldco.squarespace.com)



## Local

In order to mainstream information sharing, the Department of the Environment(DOE) nominated me as a member of the National GEF/Technical Assistance committee and on this committee, I am able to receive information on all the donor funded projects from European Union through the OECS, the local and Regional projects funded through the GEF, the Adaptation Fund(AF), the Special climate Change fund(SCCF) and the Green Climate Fund(GCF) and Antigua has made project submissions to all and in each project there is a component for local community initiatives all aimed at making the island climate resilience which transforms to making our buildings resilience and climate proofed, so the buy into solar energy system started through this OAS/DOE project using the bottom up approach stated the process.

This project provided the enabling environment for partnerships to be build and each contributed to the individual evaluation of each systems to be installed on each of the not for profit structures, roof bearing assessment, review and refitting of the electrical system in each structure, ordering of the components of the systems, training and capacity building. These partnerships included: Amarah Christian employee of the APUA, and member of the Vibrant faith ministries.Girvan Piggott, technical officer of the Ministry of Energy, Tourism and Investment and Churchill Norbert, Technical officer of the Department of the Environment

Outreach has started and has been strengthened with the local Solar Installers who were invited and participated fully at the National Solar Energy Consultation Feb 7 2016 and a follow up Focus Group Consultation on Feb 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in partnership with the Cortsland Hotel who provided the facilities to hold the meeting. These included Alex Spencer of Carisun Renewable, Edward Baynes, Daryl Jackson of OWIA , Evs Solar, Caribbean solar, Kwame Pigott of Sunergy, Paul Saunders of PL Electrical Engineering and Franz Bigler of new Energy, Ltd, Mr Whyte of the Antigua and Barbuda Public Utilities Authority, Mis Lia Nicholson of the Department of the Environment, Miss Sasha gay Middleton Youth Focal point, GEF/SGP, Hazel Cort-Corbin and Mrs Junella Cort of the Cortsland Hotel

The project outreach and impacts has gained me knowledge , experiences and capabilities to be able to function in the voluntary position as Deputy Chair-Energy for Sustainable Development in Caribbean buildings by the National Steering Committee-The main aims of the ESD project, the “first regional project of its kind in CARICOM”, are to increase the number of successful commercial applications of energy efficiency and conservation in buildings as well as expand the market for renewable energy technology applications for power generation

Nominated as NGO on Government delegation to the UNFCC COP22-in Morocco, Nov, 2016 providing many opportunities to share the outcomes of this project





The Small hotels group based on the outcomes of the OAS/DOE solar energy project and the information coming out from the media has also nominated me as their representative to the National Energy Council, being set up by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and this process is ongoing.

With training received in Caribbean Climate Online Risk and Adaptation tool (CCORAL) 5C'(Caribbean Community Center for climate Change) and Caribbean Development Bank-, all the solar energy projects have a component to include CC risks and this is part of the training being carried out, **Sustainable Pathways and Protected Areas Renewable Energy ( SPPARE)** project is a GEF approved full size project with a component to set up the Sustainable Island Resource Financing ( SIRF) Fund is enshrined in the legislation and will provide 15% funding to NGO for solar energy projects and other climate related community initiatives aimed at adaptation and mitigation. This OAS/DOE solar energy project is a forerunner and I have been sharing experiences and case studies .Proceeds from the SIRF Fund will enable up scaling and replication many more solar energy projects that support our NDC's will be supported by the SIRF Fund.

Selected to develop National Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation videos and photo montages based on the OAS/DOE solar energy project for the OECS climate Change Fest and Exhibition in Antigua, Sept 6-8, 2015.

Outcomes of the OAS/DOE solar energy project were key components in the development of the Crowd Funding for Climate change initiative for Antigua and Barbuda, to pilot 3 local community projects in partnership with Romilly & de Romilly Limited, 2016

**Antigua and Barbuda Association of Persons with Disabilities** through their solar energy installation and ongoing work has been motivated and is seeking to empower their members. The aim is to work to improve the houses so that solar panels can be installed but the conditions are grave. I am engaged in ongoing outreach work with this group to focus on sustainable housing and to improve the conditions. This has led to the production of a video initiated and supported by DOE which highlights the housing condition of many of the persons with disabilities. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4vsGeUEVio>

OAS Sustainable Cities Training Course and Climate Change Fest brought many government, and NGO's including church representatives together and was a mechanism for mainstreaming information and has been a real motivating force and has planted seeds which are growing. An email received from Kareem Warner who represented the Development Control Authority (DCA) on Sept 30<sup>th</sup> which reads"" Good afternoon Ms. Spencer my name is Kareem Warner I was a participant in a workshop you held a few months ago on sustainable cities. I was amazed by all the presentations, so much so that I have taken it upon myself to see that one of the projects presented at your workshop be developed here in Antigua. That project was presented by the participant from Grenada. I don't exactly remember his name but I'm hoping that you would provide me with a way in which I could contact him in hopes that he'd be able to aid me in this endeavor. Thank you for your attention and help"

Media presentation, TV presentations on Good Morning Antigua and Barbuda, on ZDK programs, on the DOE website and facebook pages, the 2015 Independence Magazine write up on the project, other write articles in the Observer newspapers and other public education and awareness events has contributed to the recognition of solar energy as a viable alternative for , increasing its visibility and the many other environmental benefits.

## Regional

The project has shared information on the project and the networking and partnership strategies with the Low Emission Development Strategy (LEDS) LAC Platform specifically providing information regarding Antigua on “Advances in the national strategies” and for “Integrating Mitigation and Adaptation” and lessons learned. Out of these interactions and the information shared on the partnership strategies at work in Antigua, two publications will be produced and the work of the project will be highlighted especially through the partnerships developed with government agencies and the private sector.

Antigua is one of 5 Caribbean countries that has signed on to P10 and the government of Antigua ratified the P10 LAC Declaration on June 15, 2015.



The project and its outcomes have been shared at the Principle 10 negotiating meetings that I have attended in various cities in Latin America and I was given the opportunity at the OECs Consultation in St Lucia from August 26-29, 2015 sponsored by the UNECLAC offices in Trinidad and Chile, UNEP, World Resources Institute and the OECs to share a power point presentation on the project. I was asked to be a Panelist in the Workshop and my presentation showed and demonstrated that the community groups are empowered by Principle 10 which has three pillars.-Access to information, Public Participation and

Access to Justice .I shared slides and showed that the community and church groups had access to Climate Change information and as a result was able to participate in the project. The Environmental and Protection Management Bill passed in Antigua in May 2015, has enshrined in it's provisions many sections relating to these three pillars and this Act binds the crown. I was accompanied to this meeting by Senator Maureen Hyman Payne-Junior Minister in the Ministry of Legal Affairs who also shared how the public-has rights in shrined in the act. to include Alternative Dispute Mechanisms(ADM) and we hope Antigua will shortly initiate steps towards an Environmental tribunal to allow speedy resolutions to environmental matters. The presentation also showed how the Environment Division, the Focal Point of many of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements(MEA's) facilitates the flow of information to the public resulting in the mobilization of technical and financial resources and a case in point is the submission and approval of this project.

### **International.**

I was asked by the Ministry of Energy to meet with the US AID scoping mission headed by Carol Mulholland, Manager, Strategy and operations, Energy at the Deloitte Consulting, LLP in Arlington, VA to share on the solar energy initiatives taking place at the Community level for inclusion in the future plans for the Eastern Caribbean.

Nominated as NGO on Government delegation to the UNFCC COP22-in Morocco, Nov, 2016 providing many opportunities to share the outcomes of this project

The project was shared at COP21 in France. I was a part of the Government of Antigua's Delegation. While there I connected with many organizations and shared on the OECS Panel-“CSO in a changing climate”.

Project received an intensive write up in the OAS/ECPA Newsletter for March 2016



After my OAS/DOE funded panel presentation at COP 21, I was approached by **Richard Widick**, **PhD Sociologist**, [Orfalea Center for Global & International Studies](#) Co-Director, [International Institute of Climate Action & Theory METRO GLOBE PRODUCTIONS](#) Author: *Trouble in the Forest: California's Redwood Timber Wars*. We connected and shared more on the project and the work ongoing and impacts of this initiative. We have remained in communication and he has submitted a project proposal to a donor and is sourcing funding to come to Antigua to make a movie on the OAS/ED solar energy Project which is demonstrating how local communities are adapting and mitigating to the impacts of Climate Change.

The project was submitted and won the 2015 National Energy Globe Award by the Energy Globe project under the patronage of the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) and in cooperation with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).-June 5, 2015



The OAS/ED funded solar project was entered in to 2016 The Momentum for Change Competition, a program of the UNFCCC and it has communicated that they are prepared to set up a webpage for the project so the details are being worked out through the Focal Point, Ambassador Diann Black-layne so all our videos and document from this project in Antigua can be shared to the entire world.

I participated in the Sustainable Housing from a European Perspective at Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, July 4-8, 2016, in Delft, the Netherlands preparing me for work in climate proofing low income housing which includes components of solar energy, water harvesting and water recycling.

## **Knowledge Management Outcomes**

A series of videos as Knowledge Management products were filmed.

PARIS, France, Dec 05 2015 – Antigua & Barbuda’s Ruth Spencer this week presented on Civil Society in a Changing Climate during a COP21 side event organized by the OECS Secretariat. <http://caribbeannewsservice.com/now/civil-society-in-a-changing-climate/>

Sister Glo’s Jams and Jellies which received a 1kw system from the project

Solar Distributions and installation-sharing on some of the groups involved in the OAS solar energy project

The Disability Feature. Sharing what the Antigua and Barbuda Association for Disabled Persons is doing following their involvement in the OAS Solar energy project, the OAS Sustainable Cities course and their efforts to reach out to transform the homes of their members into climate proofed homes. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p4vsGeUEVio>

Potters Seventh Day Adventist: Climate Change Adaptation-Launching the Solar Energy project and the construction of the 100,000 gallon community Cistern.

Integrated efforts in communities, also led to the production of the video on the Barnes Hill Reservoir, the Creekside interview and the Water crisis in Antigua and Barbuda.