

Report on
**Knowledge Capitalization for the project “Payment for
Ecosystem Services (PES) to Protect Mangroves in Bondeau,
Nippes, Haiti.”**

**Implemented by J/P Haitian Relief Organization and funded Caribbean Biodiversity
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Abbreviations and acronyms

J/P HRO	J/P Haitian Relief Organization
HTR	Haiti Takes Root
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation
CBF	Caribbean Biodiversity Fund

I Introduction

The Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) to Protect Mangroves in Bondeau, Nippes, Haiti, implemented during the past 24 months by J/P Haitian Relief Organization through its Haiti Takes Root initiative has come to its end. This project articulated its intervention on an integrated approach from ridge to reef to address climate risks, to improve farming techniques in Paillant which should have a direct effect on the mangrove and fish population in the seaside.

The project was funded by Caribbean Biodiversity Fund in the context of their Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EbA) Program. To protect mangrove ecosystems in Bondeau, Nippes, the project conducted activities that supported improved fishing techniques and agricultural livelihoods. To further create long lasting impact with the communities of the surrounding areas of the watershed of Bondeau, the projects helped to build local capacity to manage mangrove ecosystem and adopt agricultural techniques that respect the environment and protect natural resources.

The project endline evaluation conducted on a sample of 146 direct beneficiaries with all the three categories: students, farmers and fishers represented, revealed that:

- All the respondents (students, fishers, and farmers) demonstrated improvement of knowledge about the topics (mainly environmental issues) they were tested for. From 27.4% of the students at the baseline that was able to demonstrate knowledge on the topics, the percent increased to reach 61% at the endline. From the farmers, 48.65% demonstrated understanding of the questions at the baseline. That increased to 74% at the endline. The fishers represent the category in which most respondents demonstrated understanding of the environment and mangroves related questions: 63.64% at the baseline and 83% at the endline.
- Almost at a 100%, the respondents demonstrated their willingness to be trained and to take the necessary actions to protect their watershed natural resources.
- A total of 7 different activities were identified as being undertaken by the authorities and community leaders to protect the Bondeau's natural resources' including the mangrove ecosystem. These practices are Tree planting, Tree cutting prevention, Soil conservation, Soil slashing and burning prevention, Mangrove cutting for charcoal production prevention, prevent construction in the mangrove, and sensitization of the population on the importance of the mangroves.

Based on the percent of completion of the project core outputs, the project has a success of 93%. That performance was considered as what supported the level of change captured by the outcome indicators measured in the project endline evaluation.

Although the projects were statistically administratively and statistically a success, it was executed in a complex, yet difficult environment characterized by armed gangs' activities in the southern side of the capital Port-au-Prince which affected movement to the project sites. Also, the social economic context was particular with repetitive gas shortage, increase in inflation rate and political turmoil. Therefore, the project team had to maintain a feedback loop to continuously learn and improve the project process that led to the project success. All that gave opportunities

to learn, and this document aims to capitalize on the knowledge and experience the team gained during this project implementation.

2 Background- knowledge capitalization

Knowledge capitalization is a conscious and iterative way for project teams to refine the implementation process by maintaining a corrective feedback loop that allows them to learn and improve.

Knowledge management includes the processes that allow capitalization, sharing, and evolution of knowledge capital of the organization. Knowledge capital is a strategic resource for the organization in search of a better way to achieve its objective independently of its domain of intervention. By organizing and managing knowledge produced by the projects’ practitioners, we can better understand, support, optimize and accelerate the project's processes. The ultimate objective of knowledge management is to build and use organizational memory. In this report, we focus on organizing the knowledge produced within the context of the project “The Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) to Protect Mangroves in Bondeau, Nippes, Haiti, implemented during the past 24 months by J/P Haitian Relief Organization”. The knowledge stock was constituted progressively throughout the project implementation, documented by the team, and made available to be included in this report to be shared with stakeholders for future use.

3 Objectives

The project teams joined with key stakeholders to brainstorm in a learning workshop about their experiences managing this project and what they could learn from that. Therefore, this report aims to organize the results of the key findings of the lesson-learned workshop and include notes on lessons learned the team captured and documented throughout the project processes. More specifically, to objectives of this knowledge capitalization document are to:

- Exchange experiences: identify challenges, opportunities, good practices, and lessons learned regarding projects that aim for better mangrove ecosystems management in a complex social, economic, and political environment.
- Preparedness and coordination between stakeholders and local government actors in planning and implementing PES for better ecosystem service in Haiti.

4 Methodology

To establish the knowledge capital of the project, the team proceeded in two ways:

- Consciously identify opportunities for learning especially in face of unusual challenges, document the lessons learned, and share them in the project's periodic reports.
- Organize a learning workshop with the project's key staff and stakeholders to brainstorm around learning opportunities that need to be capitalized on for sharing and future use.

5 Findings

Some of the challenges the project sought to address were mangrove sedimentation, arbitrary wood chopping, and overfishing. While all the activities to be completed were carried out within the project timeframe with slight extinction by its end to better organize the phase-out, the national context did not make it easy to achieve immediate the expected results. The accentuation of the food crisis in the project area, a direct consequence of inflation due, among others, to the gas shortage and difficulty for food to be delivered in rural areas because of armed gangs’ activities in the southern side of the capital of Haiti, made the local population less receptive to the project awareness activities. The challenges mentioned above did not only affect the community. They also negatively impacted the project planning. Despite all of that, the team managed to find working strategies that allowed them to deliver as per the project results framework. All the knowledge developed during the process is gathered in the following subsections.

5.1 Better coordination: recognize the role and responsibilities of each actor

One important lesson learned early in this project management process was to give everyone their space to add value to make the project a success. Indeed, all the stakeholders were given the opportunity to play their roles and instructions were clear about everyone's responsibilities. At their level, every stakeholder and partner were recognized for their right to participate in decisions about the project orientation.

The key takes away from all this is that the involvement of the stakeholders in the decision-making process helped to guide the execution of the project. Additionally, the establishment of transparent partnerships is key to success with projects implemented in such a turbulent work environment.

5.2 Developed improved livelihoods and source of income faster

Although the project was about helping communities in the Bondeau’s watershed to have access to sustainable agricultural practices and fishing technics, the rapid raise of the cost of life made it very difficult for the population to take advantage of all of that. In fact, from that experience, the team understood that activities that can generate income should be undertaken to help the population to face daily life challenges. That would make them more receptive to the project's main treatment. The team has learned that as the cost of life raises, the socio-economic precariousness of the population of Paillant/Bondeau impedes the application of measures promoted for the protection of natural resources, in particular, mangroves by such projects.

5.3 Encourage ownership by involving the beneficiaries in the project process

On many levels, the population played a significant role in this project process. They were invited to participate in coordination meetings to better plan for various activities. The children organized and led the environmental clubs etc. All of that helped the sense of ownership of the project by the local population. That helped us understand that the direct involvement and participation of beneficiaries in the process of implementing project activities facilitate the ownership and then the success of the project.

5.4 Develop strategic partnership

The development of strategic partnerships and synergy is important in the search for convincing results and sustainability. However, not all the partners are keen on the project's success. Some actors unfortunately are motivated simply by the opportunity for short-term gain. That is why it is necessary to ensure the reliability of the partners in order to not compromise the success of the project.

5.5 Remember we are not alone

The Ecosystem-Based Adaptation approach (nature-based solutions) has many advantages due to its sustainability and low costs for invaluable services (ecosystem services). However, due to the socio-economic precariousness of the population, it is important to establish partnerships between humanitarian and development projects to gradually facilitate the integration of green infrastructure to respond in the long term.

5.6 Advocate a more effective role of government for enforcing environmental laws

One of the most important conditions for people to protect natural resources is the ability of the government to enforce environmental laws. Unfortunately, for many years, the countryside of Haiti is left on its own with people who fight daily to make end meet to live. That leads them to over-exploit of local resources that would naturally support their lives in the long run. That is why national authorities should take action to give the population a better way to gain their lives, educate their children and find good medical care on hand, and other, enforce laws in both national and international conventions on environmental and natural resources protection.