



The logo for 'EAG TALK' features the letters 'EAG' in a stylized font with a green leaf and a colorful feather-like element extending from the 'G'. Below 'EAG' is the text 'THE ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS GROUP'. To the right, the word 'TALK' is written in large, bold, blue capital letters.

A look back - and a look forward



By S Natalya Lawrence – National Coordinator, GEF Small Grants Programme

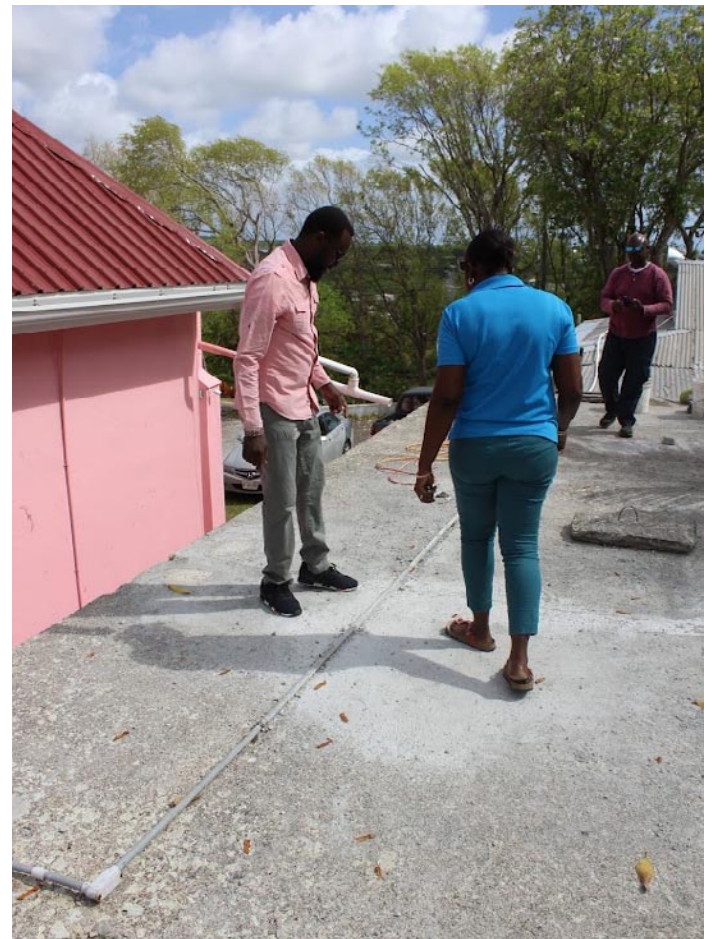
The month of January bubbles over with people resolved to grow, improve themselves, and live a better year than the one before. Energised with high hopes and solid plans, they launch into the new year with gusto. The GEF Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP), imple-

mented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), embraces the new year with similar anticipation.

For the year of 2023, GEF SGP – Antigua and Barbuda had welcomed 13 new projects and witnessed the successful completion of three others. Currently, 14 projects are under implementation, with an expected few more by the end of the first quar-



In 2023, projects focused on sustainable agriculture, chemical and waste management, biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation (Photos courtesy EAG)



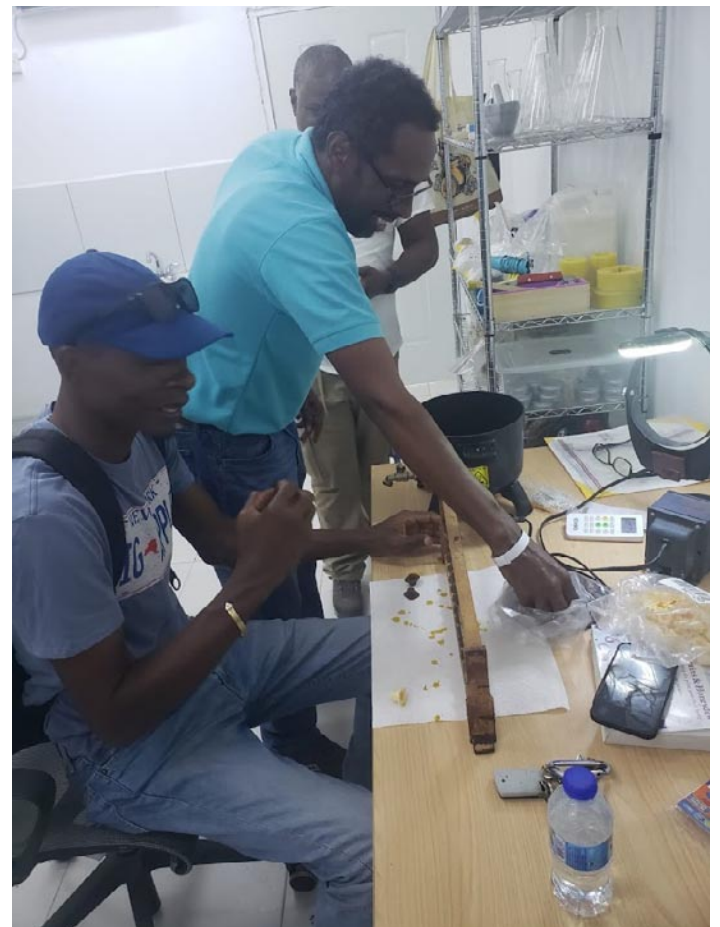


ter. GEF SGP – UNDP specialises in empowerment of grassroots organisations, helping them to address environmental and socio-economic needs within their communities. The programme provides small grants and collaborates with partners to strengthen the capacity of these organisations, promoting the sustainability of both actions and the institutions themselves.

In 2023, projects focused on sustainable agriculture, chemical and waste management, biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation. The Parham Alliance Beautification and Revitalisation Organisation (PABRO) placed their efforts on drawing attention to

community wetlands, Byams Wharf, which offer myriad ecosystem services, often unnoticed. This former neighbourhood haunting ground has been subjected to depressing quantities of illegal dumping, notwithstanding its outstanding natural beauty and global status as a Key Biodiversity Area. PABRO rallied the community to conduct cleanups, and install interpretive signage, something that local and international birders would certainly appreciate!

Our Lady of Perpetual Help tackled the effects of climate change through water conservation, increasing their water harvesting and storage capacity by 5,000 percent. Formerly providing only 700 gallons of





water for its community's use, the refurbishment of a historical cistern was successfully completed right in time for the heavy rains of October 2023. Having harvested more than 39,000 gallons of water, the church has reverted to providing water to its church body/congregation and to vulnerable members of the surrounding Swetes and Tyrells communities. Because we live in a drought prone country, the church ensured that its members understood how to adopt water conservation as a part of their lives.

The Antigua Beekeepers Co-Operative Society Ltd received valuable mentorship from beekeepers in Saint

Lucia, with support from GEF SGP - Antigua and Barbuda, GEF SGP - Saint Lucia, and the OECS Commission. The team, in addition to mentorship, were able to participate in a round table discussion which looked at the preservation and protection of biodiversity in the OECS, and also in the 'Third Hewanorra (OECS) Honey Show'. The participants from both Antigua and Barbuda scored third place awards in Medium Amber Honey, Dark Amber Honey, Photography, and Commercial Goods (confectionary and lotions), not bad at all for a first-time participation!

For 2024, GEF SGP - Antigua and Barbuda antic-

ipates more successful projects, stronger partnerships, replication and upscaling of, and innovation in projects being implemented. We look forward to advancement on the management of single use plastic, through a coalition of local NGOs, with possible mentorship from other Caribbean countries. We anticipate the restoration of two 18th Century wells, the improvement of habitat for our only endemic bird, the Barbuda Warbler, the planning for a heritage tour in a historic village, and with bated breath, we await news on the rediscovery of a thought to be extirpated (locally extinct) animal species!

Our national country programme is locally supported by the National Steering Committee, a host of government agencies, several UN Agencies, as well as regional entities, such as Inter-American Institute for the Co-operation on Agriculture. Our grantee partners have accepted the challenge to "Think Globally, While Acting Locally". They are humbly honoured to know that their work supports national and global priorities, including many of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the end of the day, our grantee partners are satisfied to know that they have done their part to secure our future today.

A horizontal banner with a blue and orange background. On the left is the ACB Caribbean logo with the tagline 'Simply Smarter Banking'. In the center, it says 'PROUD SPONSOR OF THE EVENING EDITION OF THE BIG STORIES' followed by '5:30 PM - 6:00 PM. SUNDAY TO MONDAY'. On the right is the Observer Radio 91.1 fm logo with the tagline 'The Voice Of The People'.