



WORKSHOP REPORT

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION WORKSHOP FOR MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA

Compiled by Michele Martin for the GCCA+ Component A and the EBA Project.

BACKGROUND

One of the recommendations made by the committee organising events for world water day in 2018, was to hold a workshop for members of the media to provide a forum to explore better strategies for covering stories on water and climate change. The media plays a critical role in helping the population to understand issues such as climate change and how they can take positive action. Accordingly, EBA Project staff initiated plans to hold this workshop, and reached out to the GCCA+ component A project to partner on it, since the GCCA+ provides support for capacity building for climate change. The aim of the workshop was to help journalists share effective strategies for addressing climate change and other environmental issues in Seychelles through print, radio, television and social media.

PARTICIPANTS

Members of all media houses, the media association, PR representatives and representatives from environmental organisations that often work with the media were invited to the workshop. It was attended by about 20 people, mainly journalists but also staff from MEECC environmental projects and representatives from NGOs.

WORKSHOP AGENDA

The full workshop agenda is attached in Annex B.

8.30	Welcome and introductions, agenda, ice breaker,
9:00	Presentation: the urgency of environmental issues and the critical role of the media
9:30	Panel Discussion: how to produce a great story with impact – strategies and issues to consider
10.00	Group photo and Break
10:30	Background on groupwork – media type brainstorm and presentation of scenarios.
10:45	Groupwork: Design a news story (based on provided scenarios)
11:30	Plenary: present stories and discussion

WORKSHOP EXPENSES

All of the workshop expenses were covered by the Adaptation Fund/UNDP EBA project including:

1. Venue at the STC and the PA system
2. Refreshments at break and lunch at Club 55

GCCA+ shared in the costs of workshop planning and facilitation.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

The half day workshop unfolded as per the planned programme, with the addition of a short presentation by SYAH on a new App they are using to track SDG progress.

The workshop began with a short ice-breaker game of Ecobingo (the prize was a bag of fresh golden apples “fisiter”), to set an interactive and participatory mood.

Michele gave a short presentation with a brief overview of some of the key environmental challenges facing the globe and Seychelles. We aired a short introductory film on climate change and then reviewed how climate change is affecting Seychelles already.

Panel Discussion

The introductory presentation was followed by a panel discussion whereby invited guests Pascale Harter, Marie-Annette Ernesta and Patrick Muirhead shared some of their thoughts and strategies on how to address environmental issues more effectively through the media. Their suggestions and others from participants are described below:

Strategies for engaging with audiences around environmental stories through the media

- Many people can't stand environmental stories but most like human stories. So frame it as a human story, and then let the environmental story emerge subtly
- People switch off – need a good story to capture people's interest and inspires them.
- keep it simple, use kids/animals emotional appeal, talk to real people
- Bring in heritage and culture (at the same time you teach people about how these are connected to environmental issues)
- Environmental stories need to show different sides – be careful not to be an advocate, but rather do your job as an unbiased journalist.
- Journalists don't believe everything they are told, Be doubting about statistics and announcements – ask questions, don't take sides, find the facts
- You need to be reliable with facts from different sides. Get some facts from experts – you can email experts from overseas too, get their input, people are interested in Seychelles and will want to be in contact with you
- Be creative and not cliché, try new angles
- Keep the story local, relevant to people where they live, even if there is a global link
- Find the smaller stories that join up to create a bigger story with diverse interviewees
- Go back to the elders, ask them what it was like back in their childhood...how things have changed...use archival knowledge from older folks, especially for issues like climate change
- Journalists in Seychelles have an advantage in that many are skilled in all aspects of media/journalism-use this!
- Research is an important part of the job but journalists often don't have time. Make the time in the evening, read up, watch the news etc. so that you continue to learn about the issues
- Network – use it! Use your people efficiently, draw them in!
- Some stories need time to be investigated and digested and observed. Advocate for this kind of investigative journalism for better impact and to tell the real story

Discussion - Appeal to environmental organisations by journalists:

- Don't send jargon to the media, send nice fun action stories.
- Don't just write press releases and send to all media houses – pick up phone and call journalists and give them an angle on a story. If you send the same press release to everyone the media houses think others will cover it and then don't bother coming.
- Don't expect media to come and cover and workshops!!! Get some real human stories! You can have a story about the issue your workshop is trying to address, and work the workshop into it
- Pure FM offers a platform for govt and civil society programs but not all have responded to the call for stories/interviews. They have to meet media part way.
- Media houses have very limited staff and crew, difficult to decide where to send crew sometimes, so you need to really have a good story to get prioritized
- If the journalist doesn't ask good questions during the interview – you just add in what you want/need to communicate about your event/program!

SYAH – new forum for sharing stories about climate change

Rossetta Alcindor from SYAH made a brief presentation about a new App “Verdentum” (<http://verdentum.org/>) they are using to track progress on the SDGs and climate change. Participants were encouraged to register as users, as they will have access to info for media stories, and environmental groups can also share their successes.

Groupwork

Following the panel discussion, there was a group work exercise whereby participants were challenged to find innovative ways to present an environmental story that had limited immediate public appeal (three topics were given – an endangered plant reaching extinction point, increasing waste, and water shortage. A game was used to get people into groups/topics. Some of the suggestions that emerged from the groupwork exercise included the following:

- For environmental groups: when organising a big campaign – allocate different stories to different media houses, to tackle the issue from different angles
- For journalists: Need to do research so you have a background on the issue and think about the different angles, talk to your networks; question your sources; Find the passion – the angle that you as a journalist are interested in
- For people working with radio – be creative with sound effects, use interviews with people from different angles; Radio is a great iterative and interactive medium – you can invite people to call in text, etc. and do follow up stories.
- For all: Have a variety of topics related to the issue and do a series of stories; Use lively cool innovative approaches – be sincere and enthusiastic

Photos of the workshop can be found in Annex C.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

At the end of the morning, participants were invited to fill in an evaluation form. 17 forms were submitted and the findings are summarized in the table below.

In general, the feedback indicates that participants picked up many new strategies for tackling environmental stories, including climate change. Some of the strategies discussed were relevant for the work of journalists but others targeted people working in the environment sector, giving them advice on how to make their projects and issues more media worthy. Participants noted that they really enjoyed the networking and interactive nature of the workshop, and many cited specific ways in which they would change their practise based on ideas that emerged during the workshop. Several participants noted their disappointment that more members of the media and environmental sector were not present to learn and contribute their ideas to the discussions. In all, the feedback indicates that the workshop was successful and met its intended objectives.

Workshop evaluation responses – summary from 27 participants.

1. Please tell us at least one new thing you learned	2. What did you enjoy about the workshop?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to personalize environmental stories/use human interest angle x 4• About constraints faced by media houses and journalists x3• New/multiple ways to put a story out x3• New tool being used by SYAH x2• Innovative ways to report on project activities• Media are more interested in how people react to the environment, not in the environment per se• How to see a story at different angles so it interests people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interactions between participants / interactive /sharing of ideas x 7• Groupwork x 5• Good networking x 3• Discussion with renowned journalists/panel discussion x3• Openers• Aim of the workshop• Hearing the media’s perspective• Different angles of the stories• Meeting new friends

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices in journalism • Nothing • Journalists hate jargon • Don't assume that journalists or the public know what you're trying to convey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh fruit
3. What didn't you like?	4. How can you apply what you learned in your work?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some key players not present, limited discussions, should have more media present x 5 • Nothing/everything ok/no response x 5 • Env ed representatives from MEECC not present • Too short, should have been full day • Room too cold • Have another session outdoors • Too much jargon – needed better explanation • Cynical speaker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make better stories relevant from human perspective / relate story to people's lives x 5 • Better ways how to portray stories / to engage different audiences x3 • Apply what has been suggested • Do a daily environmental topic relating directly to the listeners • n/a • Be better prepared for interviews and relay important information • monitor the change in how the media covers environmental news • Think of audience first – make the story sexy • establish a network of journalists and work with them to develop stories • change perception

Numbers indicate how many participants wrote a similar response.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This workshop represented a well appreciated first step towards improving dialogue and collaboration between members of the media and representatives of environmental organisations. Although there were fewer participants than hoped, those present were actively engaged in discussions, groupwork and sharing ideas about how to do a better job of getting the public to care about issues like climate change and water shortages or floods. The following recommendations emerged from the discussions and from the evaluation forms submitted:

1. Journalists covering environmental stories should take care to research the issues and explore the topic from different angles, to present an objective and critical account of the problem and potential solutions
2. Framing environmental stories as human stories, focusing on local, real life examples of people who are involved or affected is an effective strategy to reach a wide diversity of audiences.
3. Environmental organizations need to do a better job of working with the media, coming up with innovative and interesting angles on the stories they want covered, and avoiding trying to get media coverage of boring events such as workshops, which are of low interest to journalists and the public alike.
4. The opportunity for dialogue, sharing and learning together was well appreciated by all of the participants and points to the need for further workshops of this nature.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A special thank you is in order to the panellists, who provided much food for thought and sparked a lively dialogue among participants -thank you Marie-Annette Ernesta, Patrick Muirhead and Pascale Harter!

ANNEX A – WORKSHOP AGENDA



ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOP FOR JOURNALISTS

Wednesday, 18th April, 2018, 8:30-12:30 at STC Conference Room

Background

As a small island developing state, Seychelles is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise, salt water intrusion, heavy rains and flooding, coral bleaching and droughts. It is critical that the population of Seychelles becomes more aware and pro-active in terms of how they can better prepare for present and future impacts of climate change, as well as address other environmental problems. The media plays a critical role in helping the population to understand issues such as climate change and how they can take positive action. The Government of Seychelles' Adaptation Fund Eco-System Based Adaptation project has partnered with the GCCA+ capacity building program to hold a one day workshop for journalists. The workshop aims to help journalists share effective strategies for addressing climate change and other environmental issues in Seychelles through print, radio, television and social media.

Workshop objectives:

- 1) To increase journalists' awareness of environmental issues like climate change and the critical role of the media
- 2) To share tools for covering climate change and other environmental issues effectively through the media.
- 3) To inspire workshop participants to apply what they have learned to their work as journalists

Workshop Facilitators: Rajelle Barbe (EBA Project) and Michele Martin (GCCA+)

Venue: STC Conference Room

Agenda

8.30	Welcome and introductions, agenda, ice breaker,	Rajelle and Michele
9:00	Presentation: the urgency of environmental issues and the critical role of the media	Michele
9:30	Panel Discussion: how to produce a great story with impact – strategies and issues to consider	Pascale Harter, Foreign news reporter, BBC Marie-Annette Ernesta Journalist, SBC Board Member Patrick Muirhead, SBC Journalist
10.00	Group photo and Break	
10:30	Background on groupwork – media type brainstorm and presentation of scenarios.	Michele
10:45	Groupwork: Design a news story (based on provided scenarios)	Michele & Rajelle
11:30	Plenary: present stories and discussion	Rajelle
12:30	Workshop conclusion and lunch	

For more information contact:

Rajelle Barbe (Community Engagement Specialist – EBA Project) rbarbe@pcusey.sc, 281-3953

Michele Martin (Capacity Building Specialist - GCCA+ Component A) mpmartinsey@gmail.com, 253-5668

ANNEX B – WORKSHOP REGISTRATION



ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOP FOR JOURNALISTS 18 APRIL 2018

Attendance List

No.	Names	Organisation	Contact/ E-mail Address
1.	Gen Berry	Island Conservation Society	genfitcher@yahoo.com communications@ics.sc
2.	Alice Mascarenhas	Consultant	alicesmascarenhas34@gmail.com
3.	Joanna Prosper	PCU OI project	j.prosper@pcusey.sc
4.	Sandra Bonnelame.	Parfm.	Sandra@parfm.sc
5.	Maylene Julie	Seychelles NATION	maylene.julie@nisa.sc
6.	Johnny Valera		
7.	Nigel Simenon	ENV	n.simenon@env.gov.sc
8.	P. MURHEAD	SBC	patrick.murhead@sbc.sc
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10.	FREDRICK OWIND	Met OFFICE	f.owind@metes.gov.sc

1.	elke talma	MFF	2590772 elke.talma@iun.org
2.	Sophie Morgan	MEECC	2822796 smorgan@env.gov.sc
3.	Betty Victor	EBA Project	2588060
4.	Rajelle Barbé	EBA	r.barbe@pcusey.sc 2513753
5.			

11.	Lynn Betsy 2716636 / 2825984	PUC	l.betsy@puc.sc l.betsy@puc.sc b.pryed@puc.sc
12.	Pascale Hebe	Journalist.	
13.	CHARLES DONOVAN	PROFESSOR	c.donovan @imperial.ac.uk
14.	Sylvie Hh-tunie	K-Radio	spivie@k-ent.sc 2511719
15.	Tessa Henderson	SMC	mediasec@scymecher.com.sc 2724415
16.	Rose Da Alcindor	SYAH	setta.alcindor@gmail.com 2596657
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18.	Mari France Weston	Free lance	marifrances@vivi-consulting.com 2512477
19.	Haley Burke	SBC	haley.burke@sbc.sc 2718929
20.	Sherlyn Hussen	SBC	Sherlyn.Hussen@sbc.sc 2822905
21.	Marco Genny	SBC	Marco.Genny@sbc.sc 2822439
22.	David Scholastique	Seychelles Independent	
23.			415

ANNEX C – WORKSHOP PHOTOS



Top: Participants represented different media houses as well as environmental organisations. Bottom: Panelists Pascale Harter, Patrick Muirhead and Marie-Annette Ernesta



Top: Participants engaged in groupwork. Bottom: group photo of participants and organisers.