

Glenn A. Bowen*

Caribbean Civil Society: Development Role and Policy Implications

Abstract: Civil society organizations (CSOs) in Caribbean countries have performed social service delivery and program implementation roles for many years. Using survey, interview, and document review techniques, this cross-national study explored the potential role of nonprofit, nongovernmental, and community-based organizations in regional integration and development. The study has found that Caribbean CSOs perform functions primarily in four areas – social services, community building, local economic development, and sustainable development – while aspiring to carry out more substantial development functions. Their role in development could encompass development planning, public-policy formulation, economic development promotion, and program/project implementation and evaluation. In this article, issues affecting the effectiveness of CSOs are identified and a remedial approach is recommended. The policy implications of a development role for the region's CSOs are discussed.

Keywords: CARICOM, community-based organizations, globalization, nongovernmental organizations, regional development

*Corresponding author: Glenn A. Bowen, Center for Community Service Initiatives, Barry University, 11300 NE Second Avenue, Miami Shores, FL 33161, USA
E-mail: gbowen@mail.barry.edu

The recent resurgence of globalization poses a significant challenge to the small island economies of the Caribbean. For many years, Caribbean countries have grappled with serious social and economic difficulties attributed to resource shortages, reliance on external aid, and structural adjustment of their economies. Development issues faced by these countries are intertwined with the challenges of being developing states in an increasingly global economy, compounded by vulnerabilities and limitations related to their size and geographic location (Girvan 2010; Mohammed 2008). In particular, the region remains vulnerable to natural disasters and to economic shocks from external competitive forces.

In response to the imperatives of globalization, national governments have expressed a commitment to strengthening regional economic integration, primarily by establishing a single market and economy. Furthermore, as

participants in the regional intergovernmental organization called CARICOM (Caribbean Community), the governments have collectively acknowledged that civil society can play an important role in the economic integration process by contributing to the formulation and implementation of policies and programs. However, it is not clear whether, or to what extent, civil society organizations (CSOs) are prepared to participate at the regional level. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to assess the current capacity of CSOs in the Caribbean with a view to determining the specific contributions that civil society may make to regional development and integration.

In this study, the Caribbean refers to the region encompassing 12 countries within the Caribbean Sea together with their three neighbors that share membership in CARICOM, an entity that functions through intergovernmental cooperation and agreement. Member states of CARICOM are Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. All are island states, except Guyana and Suriname, which are situated on the mainland of South America, and Belize, on the Central American mainland.

The main components of CARICOM are the Conference of Heads of Government, the policy-setting/decision-making organ; the Community Council of Ministers; four councils with responsibility for specific policy areas; three committees; and the Secretariat (CARICOM Secretariat 2001). Much of CARICOM's work is based on a system of consultations at the regional and national levels. This appears to be similar to the consultation processes in other regional entities such as the European Union (European Commission 2000).

The CARICOM single market and economy (CSME) involves complex economic, trade, environmental, social, and legal issues and processes aimed ultimately at providing for the free movement of goods, services, capital, and labor throughout the region. The CSME is expected to boost economic development and the competitiveness of the trade-dependent regional economy in the face of globalization (Girvan 2010). Deeper economic integration will help the region address some of the challenges of globalization by facilitating the movement of goods and services without tariffs and restrictions to the economic space in which the region's producers and consumers operate. It will also support the harmonious implementation of monetary, fiscal, and economic policies across the region. Moreover, as Hosein and Thomas (2007) noted, integration can offer protection from global market forces that might erode country-level social security entitlements.

As CARICOM prepares to compete more vigorously in a global economy where the odds are heavily stacked against the region, a tripartite model for

regional development that involves the state, market, and civil society, may be the answer. However, it is not known whether civil society is really equipped for an integral role at the regional level.

Caribbean civil society

Civil society is generally understood to be a social domain alongside the public (state/government) and private (business) sectors. This third sector consists of nonprofit, nongovernmental, and voluntary organizations. For many years, these organizations have addressed important issues ranging from disaster relief, healthcare, and environmental protection to human rights, peace building, and poverty alleviation (Pitanguy and Heringer 2002; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP] 2010, 2013). CSOs have been known to provide much-needed services to individuals, communities, and society in general. Indeed, their contributions have filled gaps in services and programs that support groups and communities and have also supplemented the social and economic activities of the public system. To their credit, some CSOs have demonstrated the potential to curb the excesses of both the market and the state (UNDP 2010).

CSOs, it should be noted, may take undesirable forms, and their agendas may be less than altruistic. Some CSOs that operate in the international community have come under scrutiny, facing questions about their legitimacy and accountability (UNDP 2013). Concerns have been raised regarding the extent to which NGOs represent the views of the citizenry and whether they allow the public to hold them to account.

In the Caribbean, three types of organizations comprise civil society:

- (1) Nonprofit organizations – tax-exempt organizations (including education institutions, churches, and trade unions) in which generally no owner, stockholder, or trustee shares in profits and losses;
- (2) Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) – legally constituted organizations that engage mainly in service provision and advocacy, as well as professional membership associations, created without government participation; and
- (3) Community-based organizations (CBOs) – grassroots groups, including citizens associations and youth clubs, that operate within a single local community.

These terms (*civil society*, *nonprofit*, *nongovernmental*, and *community-based organization*) seem to lack conceptual clarity and are used interchangeably. The most popular term is *NGO*. In line with the features of CSOs in other regions

(see, e.g. European Commission 2000), common characteristics of the Caribbean organizations are their voluntary nature, independence of government and commercial organizations, and not generating personal profit. Most of these organizations operate sub-nationally.

Webson (2010) observed that the Caribbean NGO sector has experienced a revival after a period of decline. However, it is difficult to obtain good estimates of the current size and scope of the region's civil society, let alone precise data. Similar to what Schearer and Tomlinson (1997) found a decade and a half ago, a large number of CSOs are not formally registered or incorporated. Given the region's total population of 17 million (current estimate) and on the basis of available data, civic society in the Caribbean appears to encompass nearly a quarter-million organizations. The diversity of Caribbean civil society logically reflects the diversity of the region, which has been recognized by CARICOM as "a critical potential for development" (Menke 2004, 60).

Since the start of the new millennium, NGOs in the Global South have faced threats to their survival mainly because of dwindling financial support from Northern donor organizations (AbouAssi 2013; Brown 2002; Menke 2004). Also, developing-country CSOs typically lack effective management and self-evaluation systems, efficient fund-raising approaches, and the overall capacity for strategic planning (Chaplowe and Engo-Tjéga 2007).

The role of civil society in the social, cultural, and economic development arena is emerging as an area of considerable interest among scholars, social policy analysts, and development consultants in the Caribbean (e.g. Brown 2002; Menke 2004; Schearer and Tomlinson 1997; Webson 2010). The burgeoning interest in civil society's role in the region has become manifest in the wake of the regional integration movement, driven by the demands of globalization. The current thinking is that the success of CSOs in tackling community, gender, and youth development issues (Bowen 2004; Ellis 2003; The World Bank 2003) while advocating "inclusive and participatory" processes (Brown 2002, 4) could be extended to social and economic development. Menke (2004) suggested a role for CSOs in supporting regional integration and democratic participation, at the same time addressing the failure of traditional policy making and political democracy to provide adequate solutions to social injustice and inequity.

CARICOM has long acknowledged that civil society can play "a vital role" in regional development, including policy formulation and implementation (CARICOM Secretariat 2002, para. 5). CARICOM has even drawn up a Charter of Civil Society, which sets out wide-ranging rights and responsibilities for citizens of member countries, including the right to take part in national and regional governance. The charter identifies NGOs among social partners to be consulted regarding economic and social programs and CBOs as having a role in ensuring

good governance (CARICOM Secretariat 1997). However, the charter has not been incorporated into CARICOM's juridical structure or into national laws, and CARICOM apparently does not have a formal structure for regional consultation with civil society groups. Therefore, while the promise of consultation should augur well for the region's civil society, there is no assurance that such consultations will support policy or action.

In contrast, in the European Union, consultation with NGO representatives is promoted "in the context of policy shaping" (European Commission 2000, 6). The commission has maintained a partnership with NGOs and has intensified it to "cover a range of issues, from policy dialogue and policy delivery, to project and program management, both within the EU and in partner countries" (p. 2). NGOs have participated in the commission's advisory committees as part of a formal consultation process. Furthermore, over the years, the commission has provided funds to both individual NGOs and NGO networks to support their activities.

Research procedure

Sampling and data collection

This six-month study was designed to assess the current capacity of Caribbean civil society in order to determine the specific contributions it may make to regional development and integration. A nonrandom sample of nonprofit, nongovernmental, and community-based organizations was constructed using both reputational (or expertise) and purposive techniques (Maxwell 1997; Miles and Huberman 1994). In purposive sampling, "particular settings, persons, or events are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide that cannot be gotten as well from other choices" (Maxwell 1997, 87). The results should not be generalized. For the purposes of this study, the primary sampling considerations were that respondents should be knowledgeable and experienced in CSO work in the region and that the overall sample should be diverse.

Respondents were selected from government registers and various web-based sources. In all, 40 CSO leaders in eight countries – Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago – were included in the sampling frame. As explained below, data were collected and triangulated through a survey, interviews, and document reviews.

Survey

The survey instrument was a 10-item questionnaire designed to identify the functions of CSOs in the region. The questionnaire covered the purpose, goals, structure, functions, and operational sphere (i.e. local community, sub-national region, national, or cross-national) of each organization as well as the outcomes of its work. The scope of each organization's work was surveyed by means of a checklist of current functions and aspirational roles – specifically information sharing, education, service delivery, project planning, program administration, and advocacy/policy development. Respondents were asked to indicate the approximate percentage of time spent on each function or role. The questionnaire, which included a glossary based on the checklist, was e-mailed to the selected organizations.

A total of 27 questionnaires were completed and returned, with a response rate of 67.5 percent. Among the returned questionnaires, four were incomplete and were therefore excluded from the analysis, leaving 23 in the sample. According to Babbie (2007), a review of the social research literature suggests that a response rate of at least 50 percent is considered adequate for analysis and reporting and a response of 60 percent is good. Nevertheless, because the survey was not based on a probability sample, this research was largely exploratory. The survey findings therefore should be seen as preliminary, and readers should be cautious about drawing definitive conclusions.

Interviews

To clarify and supplement the survey data, five interviews were conducted in Jamaica, the largest English-speaking country in the region, because of ease of access to key informants. Participants in the key-informant interviews were program administrators knowledgeable about the work of CSOs, both national and regional. The 30- to 60-minute interviews were semi-structured in that specific questions were prepared and posed but unplanned, clarifying questions were also asked throughout (Creswell 1998).

Document reviews

This additional procedure involved selecting, appraising, and synthesizing data contained in documents (Bowen 2009; Rapley 2007). In addition to those found in the public domain, documents were requested from respondents.

Approximately 35 documents – promotional literature, online newspaper articles, annual reports, and scholarly publications – were reviewed for pertinent data. Any unevenness or incompleteness in the documented data was offset by triangulating such data with those from the survey and interviews.

Data analysis

The transcribed data were coded on the basis of predetermined categories (checklist items and an “Other” category) included in the questionnaire. The use of a priori codes facilitated ease of analysis. Member checking – “verifying one’s data and interpretations with study respondents” (Padgett, Mathew, and Conte 2004, 226) – elicited feedback regarding the functions and aspirations of CSOs. This corroborative technique supported the trustworthiness of the findings.

Findings and discussion

In this section, the findings of the survey, interviews, and document reviews are presented. The findings are categorized as (a) current functions and (b) aspirational roles of CSOs.

Current functions of CSOs

Varying levels of civil society involvement were found in the countries of the region. Some organizations reported that they “did community-building work”; “contributed to social development”; and “do what government doesn’t do, which is to develop relationships with communities.” Others “had problems keeping people interested in completing projects that were started without getting some kind of pay”; “could not get a lot done without government assistance”; and “were not very effective ... because of the political environment.” Regarding the political environment, newspaper editorials and opinion columns indicated the prevalence of pork-barrel politics in some countries, especially during general election campaigns; decision making that favored politicians rather than the citizenry; and excessive spending by some administrations.

The research revealed that Jamaica had a well-regarded Association of Development Agencies, which served as an umbrella for local and national CSOs. Barbados boasted a vibrant association of NGOs and, likewise, Trinidad

Table 1: Functions of civil society organizations.

	Information sharing	Education	Service delivery	Project planning	Program administration	Advocacy/ Policy development	Other
1	x	X	X	x	x		
2	x		X	x			
3	x	x		x	x		x
4	x			x	x		x
5	x		x	x		x	
6	x			x			x
7	x	x	x	x		x	
8	x	x	x	x	x	x	
9	x	x	x	x	x		x
10	x			x	x		
11	x			x			x
12	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
13	x			x			x
14	x	x		x			x
15	x			x			x
16	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
17	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
18	x			x			
19	x			x	x		x
20	x			x			x
21	x		x	x	x		
22	x		x	x			
23	x			x	x		x

Note: Organizations represented in the research are listed as numbers.

and Tobago a network of NGOs dedicated to the advancement of women. For its part, the Windward Islands Farmers Association had built awareness of global and national issues affecting regional development, including concerns related to globalization and trade liberalization.

Table 1 summarizes the survey responses. The survey found that all CSOs participated in information sharing and project planning. Although six of the 23 organizations reported that they took part in advocacy/policy development, only three (13%) provided evidence (documentation) that their efforts might really influence public-policy and resource-allocation decisions.

The following examples of CSO functions were derived from the survey, interviews, and documents reviewed:

- Information sharing: Social/community development program information provided by elected and appointed government officials at CSO meetings;

communication between citizens and governments facilitated by NGOs and CBOs.

- Education: Coordination of adult education, community literacy, and vocational projects.
- Service delivery: Assistance to farmers (start-up loans, technical support, marketing assistance, etc.); community sanitation; health, family planning, and welfare service delivery to senior citizens; provision of humanitarian aid during disasters.
- Project planning: Refurbishment of community centers; local road repairs; community beautification; farm maintenance.
- Program administration: Community safety (Crime Watch); youth development.
- Advocacy/policy development: Public forums; representation to local and national governments; agitation for community amenities and “safety nets” (e.g. short-term public work projects); public statements on issues (e.g. calling for an end to the death penalty); membership on government-appointed commissions (e.g. committees of Jamaica’s Social Development Commission and Cultural Development Commission charged with making development proposals).
- Other: Fund-raising; financial assistance with burials/funerals.

Across CARICOM member states, the functions most associated with the work of CSOs may be subsumed under four categories: (1) social services – coordination and delivery, (2) community building – including information sharing, (3) local economic development – primarily through project planning, and (4) sustainable development. The organizations tended to have overlapping functions; but, as shown in Figure 1, most (17 organizations or 74%) provided social services while the fewest (4 organizations or 17%) were involved in sustainable development.

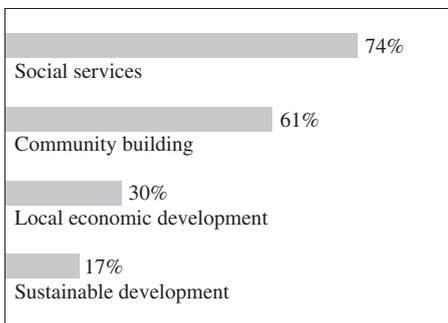


Figure 1: Activities most associated with CSO work.

Social services

Providing a social safety net for vulnerable individuals and communities was reported as being an important function of CSOs throughout the Caribbean. According to key informants, in a few cases, national governments contracted with NGOs for the delivery of basic social services to certain target populations in local communities. In various countries, nonprofit agencies delivered welfare, health, and sanitation services to local communities; provided aid to senior citizens; and coordinated literacy projects. At the regional level, NGOs participated in the Pan-Caribbean Partnership against HIV/AIDS.

Community building

Citizens associations, religious organizations, youth clubs, sports clubs, and other CBOs were instrumental in identifying community needs and coordinating local-level activities. The organizations assisted in planning and implementing “hands-on” community-building initiatives and, in the process, facilitated volunteerism and civic engagement. Some achieved notable success in coordinating community beautification, managing recreational activities, supervising youth projects, and organizing neighborhood safety programs. In contrast, a long-standing goal of empowering underserved and marginalized communities remained (in the words of an interview respondent) “mostly a goal rather than reality.”

Local economic development

Nonprofit agencies and other CSOs contributed to economic development at the sub-national level by rehabilitating productive infrastructure (especially roads), organizing entrepreneurial activities, and promoting small-business development. Farmers associations sponsored income-generating cottage-industry projects and agribusiness development by providing start-up loans, technical support, and marketing assistance. NGOs and CBOs helped to implement World Bank-sponsored antipoverty projects (Bowen 2004). Some were consulted during project design; others received funds to plan and implement sub-projects that contributed to local economic development.

Sustainable development

In a region that relies on tourism and agriculture as mainstays of the economy, sustainable development efforts by Caribbean CSOs emphasized public education and advocacy aimed at preserving the natural environment. Four organizations reported that they were “consulted” regarding natural resource management but had little involvement in actual decision making. This finding is consistent with previous research (Mangonés 2004), which revealed that participation by Caribbean CSOs involved in natural resource management was restricted to informal, ad hoc consultations without any guarantee that their input would have an impact on policy.

Some governments co-opted CSOs in national programs that focused on environmental protection. Barbados set a good example by naming CSO representatives to the government-appointed National Commission on Sustainable Development. The commission’s role was to advise the government on measures to integrate environmental and economic considerations into decision making, facilitate discussions of global sustainable development, and review annual reports for submission to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. Key informants pointed to exemplary CSO–government collaboration involving an environmental NGO, the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDT). For more than 21 years, the JCDT has helped to manage protected areas – mostly national parks – and to advance environmental conservation.

The review of documents revealed difficulties in developing positive relationships between the state and civil society, which became evident in the processes leading to, and at, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002. Although both civil society and government representatives from a small group of CARICOM countries attended a regional meeting in preparation for the WSSD, it soon became clear that there would be no coordinated approach to their participation in the summit. Consequently, as Grant-Cummings (2003) reported, CSOs were alienated from the regional process and did not gain access to the summit’s negotiating forums where the crucial work was taking place.

Since then, despite the mutual wariness that has prevailed among the state and civil sectors in some countries, there have been promising signs. As CARICOM intensified its efforts to deepen regional integration, its member states began to provide technical, organizational, and financial assistance to CSOs, enabling their participation in regional and international conferences.

Aspirational roles of CSOs

The current functions of CSOs in the region emphasized project implementation and were therefore seen as largely task-oriented. Some organizations aimed to do more work as pressure groups, seeking to influence public policies and practices. However, with several respondents blaming partisan politics for the “lack of social progress” and the “bleak economic climate” in specific countries, some NGOs considered it important that they “serve as watchdogs.” As such, they desired to “monitor government activity and hold elected officials accountable.” All 23 organizations indicated that they aspired to carry out more-substantial functions such as helping to create social policies, planning “people-focused interventions,” and evaluating development projects.

Regarding CARICOM’s Charter of Civil Society, a key informant commented that there was “a great deal of talk but very little real action.” In general, as another CSO representative asserted, community organizations were “over-consulted and under-involved.” Some respondents argued that governments were reluctant to encourage citizen participation beyond voting in local and national elections. Many respondents admitted that their organizations were not well informed about globalization. Likewise, they were not sufficiently knowledgeable about regional integration and concomitant issues such as cross-border labor and social security entitlements.

Moreover, CSO representatives reported that their organizations were often “strapped for funds” and “operated on a shoestring” as they relied on membership dues, fund-raising events, and occasional monetary donations. The reviewed documents further revealed that many CSOs experienced difficulties in mobilizing members and volunteers to carry out some projects and, similarly, in retaining members at the leadership level. Further, organizational planning was largely sporadic, rather than strategic.

The next section highlights the potential role of CSOs in regional development. Issues impinging on such a role are considered.

Development role and related issues

In response to the challenges of globalization, the regional economic integration being pursued through CARICOM is not only a survival strategy but also a strategy for regional development. CSOs have signaled their interest in being active participants in development, rather than mere beneficiaries of it. All organizations surveyed indicated that they aspired to do substantial work in terms of social policies and interventions. The context for them was largely local

and, to some extent, national because those were the spheres in which they operated.

This research has found that CSOs were hampered by scarce monetary resources, weak organizational capacity for effective strategic planning, and leadership deficiencies. CSOs – particularly NGOs – should consider diversifying their sources of funding. They can do so by organizing fund-raising campaigns, for example, and by tapping private sector resources while accepting funds, where available, from foreign donors. They could also seek support for capacity-building programs that incorporate education and training components geared specifically to effective fund-raising and resource management, organizational leadership development, and program evaluation. Capacity is built when the organization becomes less donor-dependent and more self-sustaining, functioning as efficiently and effectively as circumstances allow.

Networks are part of the framework for civil society involvement in the European Union (European Commission 2000). Perhaps the CARICOM agenda will provide the impetus for national CSOs to create or join regional associations and networks and to build strategic alliances such as coalitions in order to extend their reach and influence. CSOs should be mindful, however, that participation in coalitions could cause loss of operating autonomy by individual organizations. Nonetheless, regional coalitions can facilitate the work of CSOs – for example, by lobbying for legislation to ensure that member states act on the provisions of CARICOM's Charter of Civil Society. NGOs that already function regionally are prime candidates for such alliances. Other CSOs should consider scaling up their involvement from the local to the national level by leveraging their successes in social service delivery, community building, local economic development, and sustainable development.

Recognizing that CARICOM functions through intergovernmental cooperation and agreement, CSOs need to build relationships with national governments that could give the organizations a voice in the discourse on regional economic and social policy. National-level relationships could open the door for CSOs to articulate citizen perspectives and contribute policy ideas that eventually might become part of deliberations and decisions at the regional level.

CSOs ought to play a fundamental role in shaping policies that put human and social development issues prominently on the regional agenda. Surely, CSOs have a stake in the development and implementation of policies that facilitate cross-border labor mobility, protect workers in the intra-regional labor market, and recognize country-level social security entitlements. Their new or renewed mission could include advocating participatory decision-making processes (Brown 2002) and inclusive, democratic, and developmental social policy. But they must first do their homework. Bearing in mind that CSOs, by

and large, are not sufficiently knowledgeable about globalization and related regional issues, they need to understand what regional integration means and would be well advised to familiarize themselves particularly with trans-border social issues related to globalization. Further, NGOs need to ensure that their structures are representative and that they can “contribute substantial policy inputs” (European Commission 2000, 9).

A probable downside to large-scale CSO involvement is the effect on the state if national government structures are weak. In such a situation, CSOs could undermine the functions of the state. Extensive CSO involvement could also create conflict with administrations that have a vested interest in a status quo characterized by government excesses, self-serving decision making, and pork-barrel politics.

Policy implications and conclusion

Most of the work of CSOs in CARICOM countries has been at the sub-national level, where they have performed mainly service delivery and community-building roles. CSOs have supported civic and social programs in considerable ways and aspire to become more involved in development work. An envisioned role for CSOs in regional development has implications for public policy; and the CSOs’ participation itself has implications for the approach to formulating policy.

Given the acknowledged “vital role” that civil society can play in development (CARICOM Secretariat 2002, para. 5), CARICOM should consider designing specific policy measures to strengthen CSOs within a legislated framework of participation. Strengthening local and national CSOs is a sure step toward strengthening the region’s civil society.

If consultation is regarded as best practice in regional intergovernmental organizations, then CARICOM should endeavor to do it right. If social partnership is the stated *modus operandi* (CARICOM Secretariat 1997), then it should involve mutually beneficial arrangements. Consultation should entail more than the eliciting of opinions; social partnership should mean more than information updates. Partnership-based consultation should involve substantial collaboration between governments and non-state actors in both national and transnational policy planning and development.

It is recommended that policies explicitly encourage civil society’s participation not only in project implementation but in policy formulation and decision-making processes as well. This could prove effective in expanding the

knowledge base, improving the quality of development decisions, and building public support for such decisions. Civil society's active involvement would, in all likelihood, then be seen as promoting the public interest and the state's responsiveness to people's needs. It could both reflect and support good governance (CARICOM Secretariat 1997) – institutional processes and practices that are participatory, accountable, transparent, and equitable.

A good approach by CARICOM could be the adoption of a policy to recognize an entity that represents the region's civil society, with the requisite structure to facilitate CSO participation. Such an entity could be a regional council composed of the leaders of national organizations drawn from all 15 CARICOM member states. Robust mechanisms and institutionalized procedures for the council's participation in the regional integration movement would be needed.

In sum, CSOs in the Caribbean have played a role in delivering basic social services, coordinating community-building activities, supporting local economic development, and promoting sustainable development. This preliminary cross-national assessment shows that their role in policy development has been tangential at best. Clearly, more research – as well as more rigorous research – is needed to gauge the efforts and achievements of CSOs in relation to regional integration and development.

As the region witnesses an abiding interest in the promise that CSOs hold as partners in regional development, the limitations of these organizations need to be addressed. CARICOM would do well to provide technical, managerial, and financial assistance to CSOs (as the European Commission and some Caribbean governments have done) to enable their participation in its work. For their part, CSOs should build their capacity to participate, scale up their work, and begin to fulfill their potential as veritable partners in development.

References

- AbouAssi, K. 2013. "Hands in the Pockets of Mercurial Donors: NGO Response to Shifting Funding Priorities." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 42:584–602.
- Babbie, E. 2007. *The Practice of Social Research* (11th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Bowen, G. A. 2004. "Community Capacity for Social Development: Examining Social Fund Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean." *Social Development Issues* 26(2 & 3):71–89.
- Bowen, G. A. 2009. "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method." *Qualitative Research Journal* 9(2):27–40.
- Brown, N. A. 2002. *NGOs and Donors: Partners in Caribbean Development* (Report of the Meeting, November 6–9, 2001, Grenada). London: The Commonwealth Foundation.
- CARICOM Secretariat. 1997. "The Charter of Civil Society for the Caribbean Community." Accessed November 12, 2012. http://www.caricom.org/jsp/secretariat/legal_instruments/chartercivilsociety.jsp.

- CARICOM Secretariat. 2001. "Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas Establishing the Caribbean Community Including the CARICOM Single Market and Economy." Accessed June 5, 2013. http://caricom.org/jsp/community/revised_treaty-text.pdf.
- CARICOM Secretariat. 2002. "The Liliendaal Statement of Principles on 'Forward Together'." Accessed November 12, 2012. http://www.caricom.org/jsp/community/regional_issues/liliendaal_statement.jsp?menu=community.
- Chaplowe, S. G., and R. B. Engo-Tjéga. 2007. "Civil Society Organizations and Evaluation: Lessons from Africa." *Evaluation* 13(2):257–74.
- Creswell, J. W. 1998. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Designs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ellis, P. 2003. *Women, Gender & Development in the Caribbean: Reflections & Projections*. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle.
- European Commission. 2000. "The Commission and Non-Governmental Organisations: Building a Stronger Partnership (Discussion Paper presented by President Prodi and Vice-President Kinnock)." Brussels, Belgium: European Commission.
- Girvan, N. 2010. The Caribbean in a Turbulent World. In *Inter-American Cooperation at a Crossroads*, edited by G. Mace, A. F. Cooper, and T. M. Shaw, 60–79. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Grant-Cummings, J. 2003. "Caribbean Civil Society and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD): Lessons Learned Towards Participation in the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) POA [Plan of Action] Review Process, Mauritius, 2004." Caribbean Sustainable Economic Development Network.
- Hosein, R., and C. Thomas. 2007. "Caribbean Single Market Economy (CSME) and the Intra-Regional Migration of Nurses: Some Proposed Opportunities." *Global Social Policy* 7(3):316–38.
- Mangonés, K. 2004. "Governance and Civil Society Participation in Natural Resource Management in the Caribbean: Study of Partner Organisations (CANARI Technical Report No. 331)." Laventille, Trinidad: Caribbean Natural Resources Institute.
- Maxwell, J. 1997. "Designing a Qualitative Study." In *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods*, edited by L. Bickman and D. J. Rog, 69–100. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Menke, J. 2004. "Globalization, Diversity and Civil Society in the Caribbean: Integration by Design or Default?" In *Globalization and Governance: Essays on the Challenges for Small States*, edited by A. Bissessar, 56–72. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co.
- Miles, M., and A. M. Huberman. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Mohammed, D. A. 2008. "Size and Competitiveness: An Examination of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME)." *The Round Table* 97(395):287–303.
- Padgett, D., R. Mathew, and S. Conte. 2004. "Peer Debriefing and Support Groups: Formation, Care, and Maintenance." In *The Qualitative Research Experience*, edited by D. K. Padgett, 225–35. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Pitanguy, J., and R. Heringer. 2002. "Trade, Human Rights and an Alternative World Order: The Role of Civil Society." *Development* 45(2):53–7.
- Rapley, T. 2007. *Doing Conversation, Discourse and Document Analysis*. London: Sage.
- Schearer, S. B., and J. Tomlinson. 1997. "The Emerging Nature of Civil Society in Latin America and the Caribbean: Study Summary and Conclusions." Accessed November 12, 2012. <http://www.synergos.org/knowledge/97/csinlac.htm>.

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2010. *Human Development Report 2010 – The Real Wealth of Nations: Pathways to Human Development* (20th anniversary ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2013. *Human Development Report 2013 – The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*. New York: UNDP.
- Webson, W. A. 2010. “Philanthropy, Civil Society, and NGOs in the Caribbean: An Overview of the Dimensions of the NGO/Civil Society Sector in the Insular, English-Speaking Caribbean.” St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands: Caribbean Philanthropy Network.
- The World Bank. 2003. *Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

