

# Green Economy: Financing local economic development and strategic local action

## Local initiatives towards local economic development in Suriname

### The indigenous village Galibi as best practice for local initiatives

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Galibi is an Indigenous village in the district of Marowijne, located on the Maroni River and borders with French Guiana. It's one of the largest Indigenous villages in Suriname with a population of 741<sup>1</sup>. The villagers are from the Kaliña tribe and means of subsistence is mainly fisheries and tourism.

One of the strengths of this village is the involvement of the community in decision making and the good cooperation with tribal authorities and local government. As one of the village chief, Kapitein Pane, stated: *"Decision-making isn't a matter of the Village Chief. The collectivity determines the ins and outs in the village. We have to consult with the people..."*<sup>2</sup>

#### **Local Initiatives**

This village sets an example for others. Looking at their decision- making process, their solidarity, their commitment and their many local initiatives. Due to the remoteness of the interior most villages are not connected to the electricity grid. Alternatives such as diesel generator, solar and hydro power are used. This also applies to the water distribution. The search of the villagers to take matters into own hands led to the establishment of a sister city relationship (municipality Koksijde), cooperation with an NGO (VZW Marowijne) and Flemish drinking water Company (De Watergroep). Projects resulting from these collaborations are in close cooperation with tribal authorities, NGOs and Local government. A few are: drinking water project, renovation of the cultural center for the women and waste management. Since January 2016 all projects that are being implemented are linked to achieving the SDG agenda. If their latest initiative on wind energy succeeds it will be a deciding factor for hydro power in Suriname.

By writing this paper I want to show how big the impact from a small community of almost 800 people can be, what they can achieve and how they can be an example and contribute to the development of Suriname.

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<sup>1</sup> Stichting Algemeen Bureau voor de Statistiek; Suriname Census 2012

<sup>2</sup> Captured during sessions in August 2016