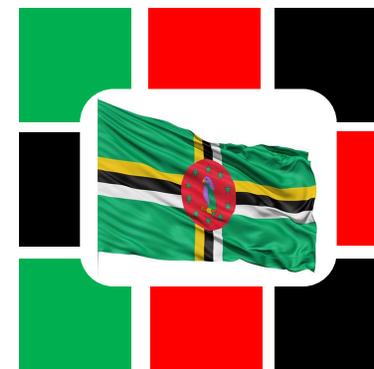


Agriculture Policy Programme - Caribbean Action



Dominica



Country
Update

APP Country Update – Dominica

The Update highlights contributions of the APP from actions under the Scale Down Work Plan, that were grounded in-country with direct benefits to local stakeholders.



3 local youth given an opportunity for developing the enterprises and expanding their business networks

- Kamarsha Sylvester of Taste of Eden and Nelva Magloire of Nelly Chips were fully funded under the APP to participate the Youth in Agriculture (YiA) Business Forum as part of the D4D in Grenada [18th – 22nd January 2016]. The Forum targeted youth who own and operate agribusinesses and/or manage and play a vital role in a family-owned agricultural enterprise. Through the YiA Forum, the Dominican youth were exposed to other business youth from the rest of the Caribbean, and they are now part of a post-forum youth-driven vibrant ‘network’.

The Grenada YiA Forum also provided more opportunities to inform of and promote their business to their peers and agri-stakeholders in the Region and to be the start of a YiA database designed to ensure that they are targeted for subsequent opportunities for further training under the APP and other development initiatives. The young agripreneurs who participated in the YiA Business Forum have established a social network using the WhatsApp platform, through which they have maintained contact, continue to share valuable information and are pursuing options for commercial ventures. This networking platform has expanded as they have added other young agripreneurs to the group. Their open and genuine commitment to pass on the knowledge gained by providing training and mentoring to other youth at the national and regional level, the post-forum continuity achieved through the networking platform provides a good basis for continuity and sharing of the knowledge and benefits started in Grenada.

- John Graceson of Big G’s Sauces also got a similar opportunity to engage regional planners to propose solutions to hindrances experienced by agripreneurs at the Component 1 (CCS) 9th Regional Planners Forum (RPF) on Agriculture. As part of the RPF, a hybrid programme of the Creativity for Employment and Business Opportunities (CEBO) tailored to youth agripreneurs, was introduced and tested. This effort is a follow up to the APP-supported YiA Business Forum held in January 2016, and provided participants with tools for improving business operation and competitiveness. It is anticipated that building institutional capacity and fostering policy dialogue with youth farmers will assist in the development and implementation of policies and other initiatives to support young farmers in Dominica.

Support provided under . . .

Component 1 – CCS: ‘Support Involvement of Women and Youth in Dialogue on the Region’s Agriculture Issues’

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Component 2 – CARDI:

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Component 3: ‘Strengthen and link existing fora for multi-stakeholder dialogue to widen regional exposure and networking opportunities for small producers/ entrepreneurs’

APP Country Update – Dominica

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Agriculture Planners get more opportunities for regional and international policy networking

- Ricky Brumant, Chief Agricultural Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries participated in the 8th Regional Planners Forum on agriculture in Grenada, [18th – 22nd January 2016]. Mr. Brumant had the opportunity to network and dialogue with planners from the rest of the Region as well as heads and senior professionals from the key regional, international agricultural development institutions and private sector entities on topics of direct significance to national agricultural development, including approaches for developing commodity-based industries, facilitation of intra-regional trade and critical areas for national and regional policy response.
- Winston Magloire a senior Official in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries was also afforded the opportunity to participate in the 9th RPF on Agriculture from 7th to 9th June 2016 in Trinidad and Tobago. This provided both the opportunity for a local planner to engage and network with peers in the region and dialogue and exchange information of critical topics for agricultural policy response as well as to be introduced to a hybrid programme of the Creativity for Employment and Business Opportunities (CEBO) tailored to youth agripreneurs.

Support provided under . . .

Component 1 – CCS: ‘Support for policy capacity building and networking through a Regional Planners Forum (RPF)’

Ministry gets direct support to complete national agriculture policy & plan

Mr. Eluid William, an APP contracted local consultant, completed an Agricultural Policy and Action Plan for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. The consultant, working under the leadership of the Ministry, followed a participatory process, engaging key stakeholders and worked collaboratively with Ministry staff to develop the policy and plan. The final draft of the Policy and Plan was presented to stakeholders at a Validation workshop (10 – 11 March 2016). The Policy and Plan provides analysis of some of the key issues impacting the growth and expansion of agriculture and proposes various strategies for dealing with them locally and through regional initiatives. Five major policy areas are promoted prioritized, these being (1) Employment and Business Competitiveness; (2) Rural Incomes, empowerment and poverty reduction; (3) Foreign Exchange Earnings through exports; (4) Food and nutrition security and food safety; and (5) Preservation of the natural resource base. An important strategy calls for the restructuring of the Ministry of Agriculture, which includes the introduction of an Agric-Business Development Division, with emphasis on business competitiveness and entrepreneurship. Greater use of regional cooperation forms an integral part of the major strategies considered for achieving the policy goals.

This activity, which started in October 2015, was completed in March 2016. Ministry of Agriculture officials expressed satisfaction with the Policy and Plan and confirmed engagement of stakeholders for development of the policy.

Support provided under . . .

Component 1 – CCS: ‘Provide direct Technical Assistance to CARIFORUM countries to develop/ strengthen National Agricultural Policies / Plans’

APP Country Update – Dominica

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Local youth group being empowered to produce their own planting material

Twelve (12) members of the Soul Farmers Youth Group in Londonderry are receiving support from CARDI to enhance their own capacity to produce their own root crop planting material. With financial support from the APP, a new propagation shed for producing Sweet Potato, Cassava, Taro (Dasheen) planting material will be constructed, with a completion date of mid-June. Design and bill of materials already approved and this new facility will replace the old, inadequate facility which was too dilapidated to be refurbished. The facility will be handed over to SOUL Group through an official ceremony.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI :

‘Develop capacity of selected institutions and small producers/ entrepreneurs for multiplying and managing improved germplasm’

Local Ministry Agronomist gets specialist, intensive training in Fiji

Trevorne Douglas, a Dominican national and Agronomist at the Ministry of Agriculture, benefitted from a short-term, 8-week training course in Fiji, facilitated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Land Resources Division [5th April to 29th May 2015]. Over a period, Mr, Douglas was attached to different institutions observing and learning first hand, what the Pacific has been doing to mitigate the impact of climate change relevant to their home situations. Through the training, Mr. Douglas gained knowledge and insights of the effects of climate change with respect to small island developing states (SIDS) and the effect of climate change on food security the actions and ongoing work being done by SPC to combat climate change. This enhanced knowledge and capacity will enable Mr. Douglas to continue supporting the Caribbean root crop program in the Region, with specific reference to dasheen (taro) in Dominica.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI : *‘Develop the human & physical capacities to develop 'climate ready' varieties & map the vulnerability /adaptation profiles’*

Small farmers will be exposed to the benefits of appropriate small-scale equipment and improved practices

Farmers will benefit from access to one (1) walk-behind tractor and implements will be made available through CARDI in the July-August 2016 period, to demonstrate the impact of cost-time efficiency of land preparation. The arrival of the walk-behind tractor, in the wet season will enable a 1-day training for root crop farmers in the use, cost effectiveness and maintenance of walk behind tractors. Training will focus initially on farmers who do not use mechanised land preparation techniques. Demonstrations will be held during the period June – July 2016 for farmer groups in Belles, Kalinago Territory, Castle Bruce and La Plaine.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI : *‘Procure and demonstrate use of small scale equipment, tools and machinery for training demonstrations ‘*

APP Country Update – Dominica

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Root crop farmers' access to and capacity to manage improved, climate-ready planting material enhanced

- Three (3) dasheen (taro) farmers and members of the Belles farmers group, including Susana Gordon and Jeremie Maximin are receiving direct benefits from the establishment of validation trials for Dasheen (Taro) in Belles. These validation trials were established in March 2016 on ¼ acre dasheen plots on three farmer's fields in Belles, a Wet Area. One variety of dasheen (white dasheen) was used and the trial will focus on plant nutrition evaluation using liquid fertiliser. Harvesting will occur within 7 – 8 months of planting. Trials should end in November 2016
- Two (2) sweet potato farmers in the Kalinago Territory, Castle Bruce and La Plaine are receiving direct benefits from the establishment of validation trials for drought tolerance of Sweet Potato. This is in keeping with the thrust to build resilience in small farming systems for climate change impacts. The validation trial was established on 28 April 2016 under the APP on a one ¼ acre plot using 3 varieties - Japanese (red skin white flesh), O-Henry (known as Jeunzieur) and Beaugard. Harvesting will be 3 months after planting. The experience from this initial trial will be used to replicate the trial on the CARDI Field station and other farmer fields. Success of these trials will auger well for building capacity of CARDI and local farmers to access and utilize improved (resilient) sweet potato varieties.
 - **The field activities are ongoing and plots will continue to be maintained to the end of the APP in December 2016.**
- Propagators, producers & groups and extension officers will benefit from a 1 - day training and demonstration in rapid multiplication of sweet potato and dasheen. This training will take place in June 2016, and will include Field Day (practical) and Classroom (theoretical) sessions linked to the Validation will build on an advanced technical training in General Production, Pest Management and Post-Harvest of Dasheen in April 2015, provided to 60 farmers registered with DEXIA's Production Support Programme.
- A local agronomist, Ms. Kishma Registe has benefitted from temporary employment opportunity under the APP to assist CARDI in establishing and managing these validation trials. Ms. Registe, who started assignment with the APP in January, will be contracted to the APP until September/October 2016.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI : 'Establish crop validation & evaluation trials for commercial & food value and adaptability to extreme weather conditions'

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Component 2, CARDI : 'National and Regional Workshops; Farmer Field Visit for training in management of improved germplasm and animal breeds (agencies & producers)'

APP Country Update – Dominica

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Small-scale food processor MSMEs exposed to enterprise building and product development training

Small processors benefited from national training and knowledge transfer sessions in value added products for roots and tubers (Cassava Composite Bread and dasheen baked products). Small processors (Bakers) participated in CABA training in cassava and sweet potato composite bread making completed in May 2015. Participants at the training were sensitized to a range of cassava based snacks developed by local pioneer Nathalie Charles of Healthyislander who has for decades championed the need to add value to locally grown crops and the health benefits of consuming those commodities. The training was also done in collaboration with the Produce Chemist Laboratory of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries who assisted in the preparing the dasheen, and MAM's Bakery for use of their facility to conduct the training and for the preparatory work. During APP monitoring exercises participants indicated that the training was useful and consumers have indicated an interest in the products.

- **In August 2016**, as follow-up to the first training, a two-day training with the same bakers will be conducted in HACCP and GMP using Bureau of Standards personnel.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI : 'Regional and National Level Training Workshops in value-added processes and product development'

SME's receive training in packaging labelling and product development

Two local MSMEs, Kamarsha Sylvester (Taste of Eden) and Antonia Anthony-Joseph (Anton's Wild Honey/ Secretary, Dominica Bee Keepers Cooperative), were given the opportunity to attend a Regional training Workshop on Product Development, Marketing, Food Safety and GMP's for SME's [21st – 23rd March 2016, Trinidad and Tobago]. These participants, engaged in the processing of value-added products made from herbs and spices and Apiculture, both agreed that they did require and did benefit from the exposure and training in improved packaging and labelling design, use of appropriate semi-industrial equipment and infrastructure to improve good manufacturing practices in their enterprises. Hence continued and targeted interventions by development partners in this area will of great benefit to them in enhancing their operation. In April 2016, in a follow-up monitoring, APP PMU visited the enterprises of both participants who confirmed that since the training, they were currently in the process of upgrading the labels for their products. Ms. Sylvester indicated that she had contacted one of the facilitators from workshop (Ms. Carolyn Chu Fook Creative Director, Monster Media) to upgrade her label. Ms Joseph highlighted that the session of product labelling, branding and food safety provided insight into the improvements required for her product / operation and that of the Bee Keepers Cooperative. She has since contacted the Dominica Bureau of Standards and has received recommendations for meeting the required standards for Dominica and the regional market. She also indicated that she has begun the process of sourcing new packaging from Trinidad.

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: 'Improve design of packaging and labelling for select agri-food processing MSMEs (producer groups)'

APP Country Update – Dominica

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SME's receive technical assistance and equipment to support product development

Local sweet potato and dasheen producer groups will receive direct technical assistance from a local National Value Chain Facilitator (NVCFs) contracted through a CAFAN Letter of Agreement (LoA) with the APP Components 2 and 3, as well as from provision of small scale packaging equipment (crates) and labelling, including training in use of same, to improve the marketability and presentation of their products.

- **These will be delivered to beneficiaries in June/July 2016.**

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: 'Purchase and distribute small-scale processing and packaging equipment to support improved product handling, presentation and quality for select agri-food processing MSMEs'

Producer groups and networks capacity for governance and value chain development supported

The locally-based secretariat of CAFAN, concluded a LoA with the APP (Component 2 and 3) which makes provision for the contracting of the services of one (1) National Value Chain Facilitator (NVCF), Mr. Augustus Adrien Bannis, is assigned to directly to the local CaFAN membership for a period of six months, to support dasheen and sweet potato producer group enterprises in areas related to production, export marketing, group development and access to finance. Mr. Bannis has participated in initial consultations on the CAFAN Execution plan and C2, C3 training activity at the recently concluded APP Regional Producer Group/Enterprise Governance and Group Dynamics training workshop [April 25-27, 2016] in St. Vincent and the Grenadines). At that workshop NVCFs received expert orientation on producer group governance, dynamics, financial assessment tools, and Good Agricultural Practices, and contributed to the development of subsequent training modules in Producer Group Organizational Development/ Dynamics - all to support their delivery of technical assistance to commodity-based producer groups.

- **The NVCF will be in-place until September 2016.**

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: 'Direct technical assistance to selected producer groups and commodity-based enterprises for value chain development through National Value Chain Facilitators'

APP Country Update – Dominica

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MSMEs trained in producer group governance and producer-buyer networks highlighted

- Two (2) local stakeholders - Jeremie Maximin, President of the Belles Farmers Group and APP-contracted NVCF/CaFAN Augustus Adrien Bannis - received expert training at a Regional training Workshop in Producer Group Governance hosted jointly by C2 and C3 in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, [April 25-28, 2016]. The local NVCF will continue to support these groups, with a focus on members of the Dasheen and Sweet Potato Producer clusters, within defined areas of activity covered by the CaFAN-IICA-CARDI LoA/CaFAN Execution Plan – including Producer Group Governance building activities and Buyer Networking.
 - The regional-based training is completed.**
- Mr. Augustus Adrien Bannis (NVCF) participated in the *Strengthening Producer-Buyer Relationships: Networking Platform Experiences and Strategy Meeting* held in St. Lucia during the period 27-28 June, 2016. It was designed to facilitate joint planning and sharing of information so as to improve the organizational capacity of producer, women and youth through their insertion into value chains. The aim of the dialogue platform is the removal of obstacles to the production, marketing and distribution of commodities and to build capacity and institutional frameworks and systems for value chain development. The meeting in St. Lucia benefited from the already established producer-buyer relationship which exists between Massy Stores Saint Lucia and several local producers and was the focus of discussions. Experiences of producer-buyer relationships in Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana were also highlighted.

Support provided under. . .

Component 2, CARDI

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Component 3, IICA: ‘Support National Producer-Buyer Networking and Group Governance Building activities’

SME's receive support to conduct financial investment profiles

At least two (2) local stakeholders in Dominica's sweet potato value chain (small farmers and processors) will be assessed in terms of credit-readiness and qualifying enterprises will undergo an investment profiling. They will be among those ‘sampled’ in a regional initiative, undertaken in collaboration with FAST International, CAFAN and CABA to promote investment and produce an investment guide to be launched during the Regional agri-Value Chain Finance Forum. The local NVCF has already been provided with initial training/orientation by FAST expert in enterprise credit-readiness assessment and investment profiling tools at the C2-C3 April 25-27, 2016 workshop in Saint. Vincent and the Grenadines. NVCF application of tools and final assessments of selected local qualifying Sweet potato producer enterprises will be completed by end of June 2016, in preparation for engagement with Financial Institutions (FIs) during the C3 Regional agri-Value Chain Finance Forum to be held in Jamaica in September 2016. This is being undertaken within framework of C3 FAST-IICA and CaFAN-IICA-CARDI LoAs

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: ‘Prepare Financial /Investment profiles for selected commodity based Industries to strengthen information baselines and stakeholders engagement on value chain financing in CARIFORUM’

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Directory of major enterprises in the dasheen and plantain value chain published

- Twenty one (21) organizations within the dasheen value chain and twenty four (24) organizations within the plantain value chain were featured in an APP Directory of major CARIFORUM producer groups, buyers and service providers. The Directory includes the contact information for key producer groups, supermarkets, restaurants, traders, exporters, agro-processors, and input suppliers involved in these commodity-specific chains. Forty (40) copies have been made available for distribution to stakeholders in Dominica and the Directory will also be made available online on APP partner and Ministry of Agriculture websites.

Support provided under. . .

Component 3, IICA: 'APP Directory of major CARIFORUM producer groups, buyers and service providers'

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
[C1 - CCS - ongoing] Upgrade the Regional Agribusiness Platform (Carib-Agri Website www.agricarib.org) and support capacity of producers to use same for business and trade-related information	An upgraded website has been delivered to the CARICOM Secretariat. Website content uploads are being done, and a presentation will be made to Planners in the 9 th Regional Planners Forum in June 2016, in Trinidad & Tobago Local stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to the content for the website.
[C1 - CCS - ongoing] Upgrade/expand the existing web-based Institutional Directory and Activity Integration Map developed under a previous IICA-CTA project	The consultancy is advanced and a presentation will be made to Planners in the 9 th Regional Planners Forum in June 2016, in Trinidad & Tobago. The Platform targets key agricultural development agencies which are part of the umbrella Agriculture Food and Nutrition Cluster (AFNC) and that provide development support to the sector. The information already gathered/provided by these agencies on their activities and initiatives will be coded and included in the database to enhance stakeholder knowledge on what's happening and foster greater institutional coordination. Local stakeholders are encouraged to contribute information on projects to enhance the database.

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Support AFNC (one F2F), virtual coordination meetings, logistics, communications</p>	<p>CARDI as Chair of the AFNC has been leading the process to manage monthly virtual meetings addressing a number of areas that are supported directly under the APP as well as complementary actions by other institutions. Since the start of 2014, a smaller core of agencies, comprising CARICOM Secretariat, IICA, FAO, CDB, UWI, OECS Secretariat, CRFM, CARPHA, CaFAN and CABA have been holding monthly coordination meetings, of which four have been face-2-face. With support from the APP, in its short life the AFNC has managed to establish itself as a credible mechanism to foster collaboration on agency work activities to minimize overlaps and accelerate consensus on solutions to tackle common issues. Given that these key institutions provide direct support to agriculture in the countries, these meetings facilitate open dialogue and information sharing which could impact on delivery of support in country or could be based on sharing of successful experiences in country that could be replicated. Under the AFNC, teams have been created to champion the development process of priority commodities. These priority commodities and the lead agency are (a) Small Ruminants (CARDI), (b) Roots & Tubers (FAO), (c) Herbs & Spices (CABA)</p> <p>Local stakeholders are encouraged to make input through the CARICOM Secretariat and their local IICA and/or CARDI office, or directly through any of the key AFNC members.</p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Strengthen Coordination meetings, logistics, communications of the 4Thematic Groups (TGs)</p>	<p>The 4 TGs meet virtually and F2F on matters relating to their portfolio. As part of their functions, these TGs would need to liaise at the country level to determine the status of activities/initiatives being undertaken by Ministries of Agriculture, and other national, regional and international agencies, relating their specific portfolio. Countries have an important role in this information gathering process. The TGs and their lead agencies are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems (CCS) 2 Business Development (IICA) 3 Climate Change & Natural Resource Management (FAO) 4 Human Resource, Research & Development (CARDI) <p>Local stakeholders are encouraged to make input directly to the lead agencies identified.</p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C1 - CCS - completed]</p> <p>Examine the adequacy of market infrastructure with focus on small producers</p>	<p>This study was grounded in five (5) countries - Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago. It sought to determine whether existing ‘physical facility or tangible facilitating arrangements’ are adequate to permit the flow of agricultural products from farm-gate to consumer. ‘Adequacy’ was measured from the supplier (farmer, retailer and/or vendor) and the buyer (individual consumers, retailers/wholesalers) perspectives, as well as any intermediary, for example packing houses. Based on the findings of the country assessments, several recommendations were offered for improving market infrastructure that will simultaneously improve the outcomes for vendors, including small producers and experiences for consumers.</p> <p><i>The recommendations should be reviewed in the context of the recently completed national agriculture policy and plan.</i></p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - close to completion]</p> <p>Develop a Regional Policy framework for the Cassava-Based Industry</p>	<p>Initially, the ToR identified five (5) countries - Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname, to be ‘case studied’. While these are generally representative of the difference in the agricultural sector in CARICOM, there is recognition by the Consultant that this would not provide a sufficient basis for making policy for the entire Region. The new proposal would allow for the capture of salient aspects of the industry development in a wider regional sample, by grouping the countries in Haiti, Mainland countries (Belize, Guyana, Suriname) and other CARICOM countries (including the OECS and Barbados). Hence the role of IICA and CARDI offices in facilitating the Consultant with the information and experiences gathering process will be an important factor in ensuring success of this activity.</p> <p><i>The recommendations should be reviewed in the context of the recently completed draft national agriculture policy and plan.</i></p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing] Develop a Regional Policy Framework and a Business Plan for a Coordinating Mechanism for Herbs & Spices Industry</p>	<p>The countries to be ‘sampled’ as the basis for generating the body of information for analysis and recommendations will be specified on the submission of the Consultant’s Inception report. Given the regional thrust to develop links to the hotel and hospitality industry and the prominence of this industry in several countries of the region, while not all countries will be ‘sampled’ in the effort to develop of a regional industry development plan and coordinating mechanism, the results of this activity will have direct benefits for further enhancement of existing agri-tourism linkages throughout countries of the region.</p> <p>A technical meeting was convened by the CARICOM Secretariat [9th – 10th May 2016] in Trinidad and Tobago, which provided a forum to consult with and exhaling information with other herbs and spices entrepreneurs and a consultant Dr. André Gordon, on the development needs for the sector as part of an initiative to develop a Regional policy and strategy for the sector and a mechanism to facilitate industry collaboration, commercial activities and their interface with the public sector on matters of policy. This activity commenced in December 2015, and will conclude in August 2016.</p> <p>Local stakeholders in the Herbs & Spices sector will get an opportunity review the document and to determine whether it complements the development thrust of the recently completed draft national agriculture policy and plan.</p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing] Assess business facilitation mechanisms with a focus on trade limiting policy measures and transportation services systems</p>	<p>Given the longstanding priority placed on ‘alleviating’ these trade and logistical constraints, it is expected that the results of consultations will have direct application to countries’ efforts at systematically strengthening business and trade facilitation mechanisms for intra-regional trade in agricultural products.</p> <p>This activity was launched in March 2016 and will conclude in October. Local officials will be consulted during the process of country-visits and will have an opportunity to input into the recommendations.</p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing] Build capacity of policy planners to integrate Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change (CC) Adaptation into national agricultural development policies & programs</p>	<p>While only a limited number of countries will receive direct support in this area, in the form of development of Drought Hazard Annex to existing National Disaster Risk Management Plans, the process, experiences and information generated from the support will be shared and transferred to other countries in the Region. This can be done through regional training activities, including the Agri-Planners Forum, as well as incorporated into the planned national level support for developing policy frameworks and plans at the national (country) and industry levels (cassava, herbs & spices).</p> <p>This activity was launched in March 2016 and will conclude in October. Local officials will be afforded an opportunity to review the findings and recommendations, including the Drought Hazard Annexes to Disaster Risk Management Plans, being developed for Saint Lucia and Grenada.</p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
[C1 - CCS - ongoing] Support Policy Networking and Knowledge Transfer through a Regional Agricultural Planners Forum	More structured opportunities will be provided for planners in Ministries of Agriculture to network and dialogue on a more continuous basis as the main tool to strengthen their capacity to undertake routine planning functions, foster consensus for decision making on critical issues on the regional agenda and as a vehicle for transferring knowledge on specific policy-related topics through virtual and F2F training activities. One more face-to-face RPF will be convened in June 2016, with representation from one Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Planner and one youth enterprise.
[C2 – CARDI; close to completion] Study/validation meetings on harmonization of trade standards for movement of select crop & animal livestock germplasm in the region	Through two separate, but complementary studies under C2, both completed in July 2015, CARDI is contributing to efforts at modernizing existing rules and regulations concerning trade in plant and animal material for easier movement while, at the same time, maintaining the lowest level of risk with respect to the transfer of pests and diseases within CARIFORUM. A F2F technical review meeting on plant germplasm trade protocols (to be convened on 7 December 2015) will explore the pest status and the risk of transmission for six priority crops, and a range of suitable options were selected and presented through six crop-specific “Protocols for the Transport of Disease-Free Planting Material in CARIFORUM”. The outcomes of this meeting and action on an agreed way forward will have far reaching implications for countries which have expressed an interest in obtaining improved germplasm for roots and tubers from both countries within and outside the region. A similar technical review will be undertaken for animal germplasm and given the current concerns with the spread of AI disease in poultry, the findings and recommendations of the protocols for moving animal germplasm across the region become even more relevant. The recommendations and protocols should be reviewed in the context of the new draft national agriculture policy and plan.
[C3 – IICA; close to completion] Experience capitalization on successful CARIFORUM-based financing schemes involving small producers/ entrepreneurs in value chains'	CARIFORUM countries will benefit from specific case studies and short videos of the successful value chain financing mechanisms. These experiences will be documented and used for knowledge transfer and promotion to other countries in the region. Among these are the financing mechanisms and experiences in the white potato and onion industry in Jamaica and the production input loan and marketing scheme spearheaded by MASSY STORES in Saint Lucia. The two consultancies are intended to contribute to the enhancing of understanding of innovative agri-value chain financing schemes for MSMEs, the pivotal role of supportive government policy and engagement and successful collaboration with financial institutions, in order to catalyse changes in practice, help others not to repeat errors and facilitate the design of new interventions that are evidence-based.

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C3 – IICA; in planning stages] Regional Agri-Value Chain Financing Forum to strengthen stakeholders engagement on Value Chain financing in CARIFORUM countries'</p>	<p>The outcome of the Credit Readiness exercise will determine those MSMEs and Development Finance Institutions from Dominica that will attend the Regional Agri Value Chain Financing Forum to be held in Jamaica in September 2016. The forum will be hosted in collaboration with the CTA, and will include representatives from national and regional financial institutions, representatives of commodity producer, women and youth organizations and technical professionals from CARIFORUM countries. Enterprises selected to attend will include those that have undergone credit-readiness assessment and subsequently investment profiling (by BDOs using FAST Tools).</p>
<p>[C3 – IICA; plans ongoing for technical meeting] Working Capital Fund study for selected commodity based Industries</p>	<p>A two-day regional workshop, involving representatives of selected producer groups and enterprises involved in Roots and Tuber production, transformation and marketing initiatives (spearheaded by APP Beneficiary organizations along with selected NVCFs, BDOs and IICA National Specialists who are supporting producer groups and value-adding enterprises) is earmarked for Barbados in August. This workshop is linked closely with the work on credit worthiness assessments being undertaken under the APP-FAST LoA. Enterprises being cleared as credit worthy' is an essential step in being deemed eligible for the financing.</p>