



Delegation in Saint Lucia

2017 ANNUAL REPORT SAINT LUCIA

IICA's Contribution to the Development of
Agriculture and Rural Communities

AT A GLANCE:

IICA'S TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN SAINT LUCIA: 2017



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ACRONYMS

Acronyms: Technical Terms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific
CAFY	Caribbean Agriculture Forum for Youth
CANROP	Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
EC\$	Eastern Caribbean States Dollars
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTP	Medium Term Plan
US\$	United States Dollars

Acronyms: Institutions, Groups and Businesses

CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CRESIAP	Regional Centre for Integrated Services in Protected Agriculture
CFL	Consolidated Foods Limited
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
MAFPPNRC	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives
DOSDEST	Department of Sustainable Development, Energy, Science and Technology
MTIB	Ministry of Tourism, Information and Broadcasting
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
SAGARPA	Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food
SLAFY	Saint Lucia Agriculture Forum for Youth
SLNRWP	Saint Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers
SLRCS	Saint Lucia Ruminant Cooperative Society Limited (SLRCS)
UNDP GEF	United Nations Development Program Global Environment Fund
UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Acronyms: Development Initiatives/Mechanisms

APP	Agricultural Policy Programme
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BAM	Banana Accompanying Measures
EDF	European Development Fund
FonTC	Technical Cooperation Fund
HOOPSS	Helping Out Our Primary and Secondary Schools
NICE	National Incentive to Create Employment
SADF	St Lucia Social Development Fund
YAEP	Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurship Project

FOREWORD

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) Delegation in Saint Lucia presents its Annual Report for 2017. The purpose of this report is to show transparency and accountability to our major stakeholders in the agricultural sector and provide an overview of the main achievements of 2017. IICA is a specialized agency within the Inter-American System whose mandate is to encourage, promote and support the efforts of its member states to develop their agricultural and rural sector. In this regard, we stand with the countries to confront the challenges faced by the sector at the national and sub-regional level, understanding that our efforts must be connected to a wider agenda for development of the Caribbean Region.



Recognizing the role that agriculture plays in the socio-economic and development processes, IICA as a specialized agency in agriculture and rural development will continue to maintain a strategic position within the sector to effectively provide efficient technical support. To that end, the Medium Term Plan for 2014-2018 is aimed at building competitiveness and sustainability of agricultural chains; support improved inclusion of stakeholders in agriculture and the rural milieu; build resilience of agri-food systems through comprehensive risk management; and support improved productivity and sustainability of family farms.

This annual report focuses on activities relating to productivity and growth in agro-enterprises, resilience, strengthening producer organizations, and agricultural health and food safety, in collaboration with local and international organizations. The Institute anticipates the continued close partnership and collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Cooperatives, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, the private sector, farmer organizations, international organizations, and women and youth organizations in executing the Institute's programme for 2018.

To continue our support to the countries the Institute is working towards a comprehensive MTP for 2018 – 2022 directed by the incoming Director General Dr. Manuel Otero. The new perspective will take on a more strategic view by involving the countries in preparing IICA's position in the sector to improve its performance. This is expected to reposition the Institute towards new approaches in the development of agriculture in the hemisphere with a differentiation strategy towards the Caribbean region and the OECS.

We would like to thank all our stakeholders for their cooperation, support and trust during the period under review and as the Institute embarks on this new approach we look forward to the continued commitment of all stakeholders in agriculture and rural sectors in Saint Lucia.

John H King
Representative in the ECS

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the Government of Saint Lucia, I am once again pleased to thank Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) for all the inputs and ongoing support it has provided to developing agriculture in Saint Lucia.



Last year, the Institute celebrated 75 years and 2017 provided the stage for celebration of this milestone through continued service to the sector. The Institute continued to be results oriented and many Saint Lucian producers, agro-processors, youth and women's groups, among others have benefitted from IICA's interventions in partnership with the Government of Saint Lucia.

There continues to be a dynamic relationship between the government with 2017 showcasing robust efforts for increased synergy between IICA's interventions and the work of the government. Besides supporting the communication of the work of the government as outlined its 2017/2018 National budget, IICA also continued to support the efforts at restructuring the agricultural and fisheries marketing programme and establishment of a new entity. In addition, the relationship has enhanced the participation of the government of Saint Lucia in regional, hemispheric and international fora related to the sector.

In 2017, there continued to be focus on youth in agriculture and programs targeted at women were strengthened through agro-processing, group dynamics and entrepreneurship. IICA also contributed to areas of strategic interest such as climate change adaptation, capacity building for producer groups, agro-tourism and agricultural health and food safety. The work in climate change adaptation and resilience has been noteworthy and with the devastating effects of the passage of multiple hurricanes in the region still fresh, this work continues to be of great importance to the country.

The Ministry has directly benefitted from the access to the Institute's network and expertise from the hemispheric pool of scientists and professionals. With the sharing of knowledge and exchanges, local professionals have accessed new skills and innovations, knowledge and capability which are aimed at the advancement of agriculture to meet international standards and requirements.

I take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Manuel Otero, Director General, of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) on his appointment. Let us continue to hold hands and to work for the benefit of our people and the very survival of our Region.

As I conclude, I wish to stress that there continues to be great expectation for meaningful results and impact from work of IICA in Saint Lucia. I wish to reiterate, on behalf of the Government of Saint Lucia, the appreciation of the work of IICA. I wish to thank the staff and management of IICA, in particular Mr. John King, for our various accomplishments this year, and for the steadfast commitment and drive which he has shown to the growth and sustainability of agriculture in Saint Lucia over the years. Thank you.

Honourable Ezechiel Joseph

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning,
Natural Resources and Co-operatives

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017, IICA directly implemented 7 technical programmes and activities relating to its strategic objectives, and provided technical cooperation products and services to another 5 local initiatives, including:

- Support to the development of the Roots and Tubers Value Chain in collaboration with the MAFFPNRC and Massy Stores St Lucia Limited;
- Support to the Roots and Tubers Cluster and Cassava Value Chain Development (a project of the FAO) in collaboration with the MAFFPNRC;
- Implementation support to the Chief Tree Initiative: Connecting the Dots for a Safe Farm to School Network for Consumption of Organic Foods and Reducing Chronic Non-communicable diseases in Saint Lucia, in collaboration with the SLNRWP and Divine Orchards (funded by the UNDP GEF SGP);
- Support to the development of a strategic plan and revised constitution for the SLAFY;
- Implementation support to SLAFY on the project "The Development of Sustainable Eco-friendly Youth Aquaponics Facility which will be used as a Demonstration Farm for Teaching and Development of Aquaponics in Saint Lucia to help Contribute to Food and Nutritional Security" (funded by the UNDP GEF SGP);
- Support to the Ruminant Cooperative Society of St Lucia in strategizing a business model for member engagement and revenue generation.

Through these interventions IICA, in collaboration with its partners, helped realized gains in strategic thematic areas such as value chain integration and development, market development, improved market participation of micro-entrepreneurs (including women and youth), climate change adaptation, agro-tourism, sustainable livelihood development, and capacity building of primary actors in agricultural health and food safety, production coordination, group governance and enterprise management. The collaboration of the MAFFPNRC, MTIB, SLAFY, SLNRWP, UNDP GEF SGP, the Belle Vue Farmers' Cooperative and Massy Stores are highlighted for their value-adding partnership which was instrumental in the implementation of our technical work in 2017.

The predominant themes arising from our work in 2017 were supporting entrepreneurship and enterprise development, building value chain partnerships as well as enhancing collaboration with other support organizations and partners. This focus recognized the present challenges to sustainable development, socio-organizational and business functioning of stakeholder groups, as well as emerging opportunities for micro/small business development and employment creation. These are notable engines for economic development and require greater attention and collaboration to make effective and long-lasting interventions.

These objectives are in-turn directly aligned with the flagship project areas shaping IICA's work, namely: Competitiveness and Sustainability of agricultural chains; Inclusion in agricultural and rural territories; Resilience and comprehensive risk management; and Productivity and sustainability of family agriculture. The operational areas serve as the "backbone" for delivering IICA's technical cooperation for the 2014-2018 period.

There was greater attention to integration of thematic interests and technical interventions which helped communicate and realize value in creating synergies across efforts

A focus on resilience of agricultural production systems in Saint Lucia contributed to the establishment of a Climate Smart Agriculture Forum for stakeholder dialogue and coordination on climate change related issues affecting agriculture. Thus far, the forum has been a valuable learning and information-sharing mechanism. In addition, IICA worked on the production of communication guidelines supporting improved generation of value-adding information and knowledge products that can help make agriculture systems more resilient to climate change. It is expected that this resource will support the operationalizing of the MAFPCRD's Agriculture Disaster Risk Management Strategy.

Specific mention is made of actions on the development of stakeholder representations/groups; most notably the SLNRWP, SLAFY and Mille Fleur Honey Producers Cooperative. Interventions focused on a range of areas including organizational development and networking, resource mobilization, entrepreneurial skill development and capacity building on value-adding processes. These interventions made meaningful impacts on the livelihoods of members of these groups and build capacity in members so that they are more self-reliant and entrepreneurial in their outlook.

Creating these avenues for engagement of local partners and actors is an important factor in IICA's technical cooperation that enhances the quality of implementation to the benefit of stakeholders in Saint Lucia.

The IICA Delegation in Saint Lucia continued to improve on existing mechanisms for delivering technical cooperation services as the vehicles for supporting partners and stakeholders in realizing shared agricultural development objectives of improving agriculture's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and make better use of natural resources; improving the productivity and competitiveness of the agriculture sector; strengthening agriculture's contribution to the development of rural areas and the well-being of the rural population; and improving agriculture's contribution to food security.



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INTRODUCTION

While the current global economic context presents a number of challenges to agriculture and rural development in a Small Island Developing State like Saint Lucia, opportunities also emerge. These opportunities require that the country be in a state of readiness to profit from/capitalize on them. Some of the challenges facing agriculture in Saint Lucia are intrinsic, such as its small size and the scarcity of exploitable natural resources. However, many of the more significant challenges stem from Saint Lucia's insertion into the global economy and its vulnerability to natural disasters and external economic shocks.

Invariably, there are a large number of demands for development of the agricultural sector including *inter alia* the need for access roads and other critical infrastructure, capacity building, local and export market development, agricultural standards, sustainable access to water and arable land, critical support services, and laboratory services. This reality warrants following areas of intervention may be prioritized including: value chain development of select high value agri-industries of strategic importance; building resilience of the agricultural sector to climate change; protected agriculture; integrated soil and water resource management; agricultural health and food safety as relates to trade facilitation; and strengthening institutional and technical capacity of the agricultural and rural sectors.

The message is clear: sustainable, long-term development requires development planning which maps development goals to actions and outcomes, and which seeks integrated solutions to effectively leverage available assets/resources as a whole and not in the traditional sectoral 'silo' approach. This transition requires a wide-ranging process of innovation that will develop new production, institutional, organizational and knowledge paradigms for meeting the challenges of competitiveness, inclusion and sustainability.

These insights are timely and relevant lessons for Saint Lucia as it continues to tackle the effects of the drastic decline in the banana industry, growing concerns over degradation of environmental and biodiversity resources, as well as developing sustainable livelihood options for its populace. These make a strong case for leveraging agriculture in the development context. What is then required is the strategic positioning of agriculture to perform this role.

This fact has seen a revitalized focus on and critical investment in to the agricultural sector contributing to several initiatives currently being undertaken by the Government of Saint Lucia to help boost productivity and growth. This includes making much needed capacity-building and capital investments, building a new generation of youth agri-entrepreneurs and promoting agribusiness value chain development, and maximizing the use of available development financing in sustainable interventions.

As a technical cooperation agency and partner in development for Saint Lucia, IICA remains committed to building the institutional and productive capacities of the agricultural sector in order to enhance the benefits of increased employment (especially in rural communities) expansion of

income generation opportunities and food and nutrition security. For IICA this especially means, *inter alia*, creating opportunities for youth and women participation and employment in agriculture, improving the socio-organisational and governance development of producer groups, developing market opportunities for productive agriculture sub-sectors, and supporting the growing knowledge and innovation/technology intensity of agribusinesses to stimulate interest, investment and productivity in agriculture.

The proceeding report documents the contribution of IICA to the development of agriculture and rural life in Saint Lucia in 2017. The programme of work was executed in line with the IICA Country Strategy which in turn was guided by IICA's Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2014 – 2018 and IICA's Strategic Plan 2010 – 2020, in response to the priorities agreed upon by the Government of Saint Lucia. The results achieved highlight the combined efforts of primary stakeholders in the agriculture sector and strategic partnerships towards a holistic approach to the development of agriculture and the rural milieu in Saint Lucia.



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PART I: THE STATE OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE IN SAINT LUCIA IN 2017

1.1 UNDERSTANDING AGRICULTURE'S SITUATION

1.1.1 Agriculture in the Domestic Economy

Agriculture's contribution to GDP is estimated at 2.6% for 2017; a 6.2% decrease in contribution over 2016 (Figures 1.a and 1.b) which saw the sector's monetary contribution decrease to an estimated EC\$ 73 million.

Fig 1(a) and 1(b) Agriculture's Contribution to GDP 2016 vs. 2017 (Current Prices, EC\$ Millions)

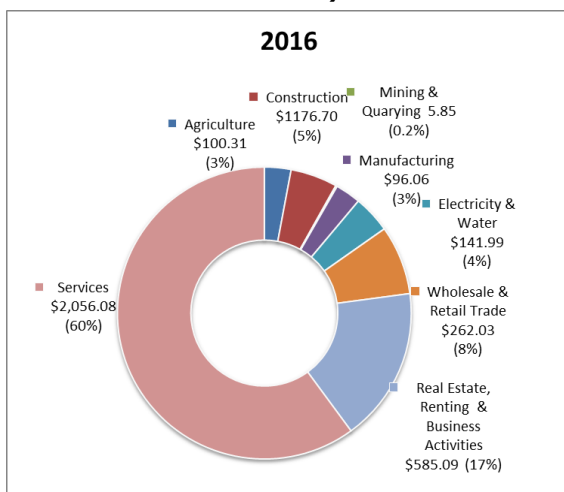
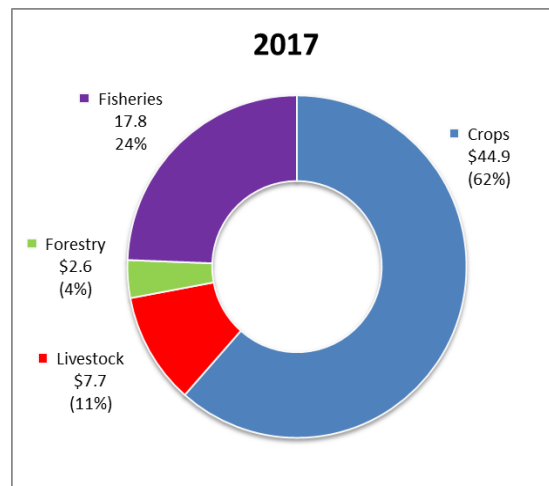
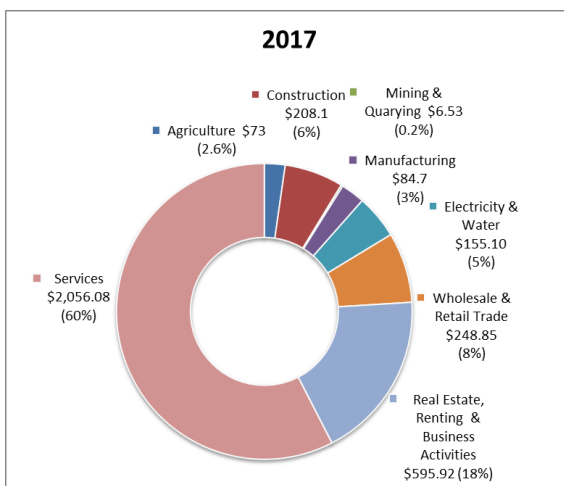
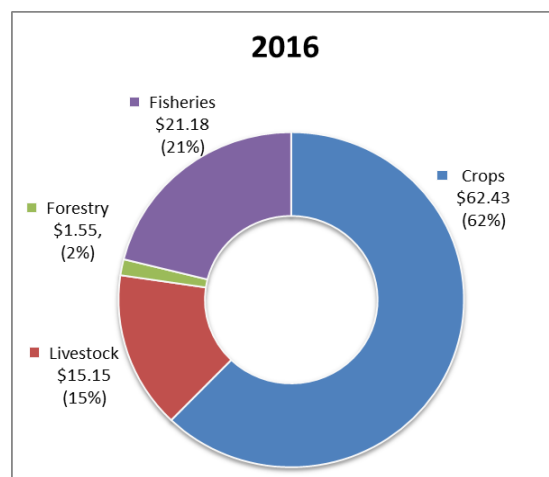


Fig 2(a) and 2(b) GDP Contribution of Major Agricultural Sub-Sectors 2016 vs. 2017 (Current Prices, EC\$ Millions)



Source: Ministry of Finance Saint Lucia, 2016 and MAFPPNRC, 2018

Despite the reduced values over 2016 (28% and 16% for Crop and Fisheries, respectively), Crop production and Fisheries were the most productive sub-sectors for agriculture in 2017 accounting for 62% and 24% of Sector total value (Figure 2.b). Special note should be taken of positive growth in the contribution of Bananas (6% increase over 2016 to EC\$18.5 million) and Forestry (68% increase over 2016 to EC\$2.6 million) which together contributed an additional EC\$2.05 million in revenue (Figure 2.a and Figure 2.b).

1.2.1 Agricultural Production

1.2.1.1 Domestic Crop Production

A large number of commodities saw significant growth in production and value in 2017. The most notable commodities with improvements in production were hot pepper, grapefruit, breadfruit, plantain and sweet potato (Table 1).

Table 1: Production Volume (tonnes) of Major Commodity Crops

Commodities	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Avg.: 2013- 2017	% change in production: 2016-2017	% change in unit value [EC\$/kg]: 2016-2017
Vegetables								
Cabbage	214	166	192	219	215	201	2.0	5.8
Cucumber	859	854	900	900	950	907	3.1	12.6
Carrot	11	19	15	19	17	16	9.0	0.5
Lettuce	201	196	204	196	202	200	-3.0	4.6
Okra	192	141	180	162	203	176	-20.2	0.1
Sweet Pepper	180	204	258	227	188	211	21.1	-6.3
Tomato	275	304	280	267	240	273	11.2	-1.8
Condiments & Spices								
Hot Pepper	0.6	1	24	42	10	15	325.9	-79
Ginger	15	15	14	21	22	17	-2.4	3.9
Staples & Root Crops								
Banana	16,611	13,621	17,452	17,457	17,527	16,534	-0.4	6.4
Breadfruit	1,048	728	1,108	1,264	670	964	88.7	6.3
Dasheen	412	389	308	469	569	430	-17.5	10.7
Plantain	1576	1921	2193	3049	1832	2,114	66.4	-15.7
Sweet Potato	844	546	828	856	607	736	40.9	-10.8
Tannia	53	79	40	79	103	71	-23.6	5.2
Yam	583	623	197	583	597	517	-2.4	0.2
Fruit & Tree Crops								
Avocado	297	245	191	273	287	259	-4.9	1.6
Grapefruit	972	798	937	831	413	790	101.4	-4.1
Lime	325	335	377	262	318	323	-17.6	-1.2
Mango	451	795	1170	672	779	773	-13.8	-10.7
Pineapple	47	56	60	87	84	67	3.5	8.0
Sweet Orange	430	384	454	364	297	386	22.5	-2.7
Sour Sop	80	162	188	210	175	163	20.2	-14.2

Source: MAFPPNRC 2018

Positive changes in unit value (EC\$/kg; 2016-2017) is the most important indicator of commodities with improving market attractiveness (that is, implied market receptivity and price appreciation associated with greater demand). The data suggests that cucumber, dasheen, pineapple, banana and breadfruit had the highest value appreciation in 2017 (Table 1).

1.2.1.2 Domestic Livestock Production

There was an overall decrease in production volumes for all reported livestock commodities¹ with table eggs and fish (landings) showing the most notable production declines from 2016 to 2017 (Table 2). However, value appreciations for fish (landings) are a positive indicator for continued investment by operators in these sub-sectors.

Table 2: Production Volume (tonnes; '000 dzn eggs) of Major Livestock Commodities

Commodities	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Avg.: 2013- 2017	% change in production: 2016-2017	% change in unit value [EC\$/kg/dzn]: 2016-2017
Fish (landings)	1,639	1,695	1,616	1,732	1,669	1,670	-4%	6
Table eggs	1,173	1,317	1,472	1,626	1,330	1,384	-18%	-8
Poultry (dressed)	1,691	1,925	1,824	2,251	2,175	1,973	-3%	-1
Pork	153	179	199	207	205	189	-1%	-2

Source: MAFPPNRC, 2018

1.3.1 Trade in Agricultural Products

In 2017 agri-food imports as a percentage of total imports remained constant at 20% but saw an increase in value in the magnitude of 7.7% over 2016 (Figure 3). This implies appreciation of imported agri-food items with demand. Agri-food exports as a percentage of total exports also saw a 3% increase which represents a 42% increase in export earnings over 2016. The data for exports implies an appreciation for several agri-food commodities.

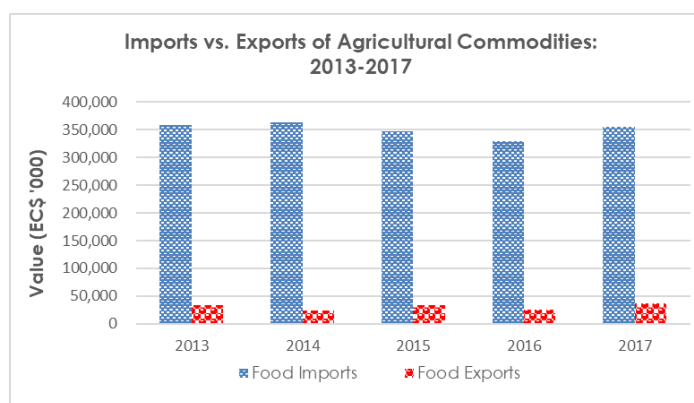


Fig 3: Import and Export of Agri-Food Commodities: 2013 -2016

Source: MAFPPNRC, 2018

¹ Data for ruminant commodities not available.



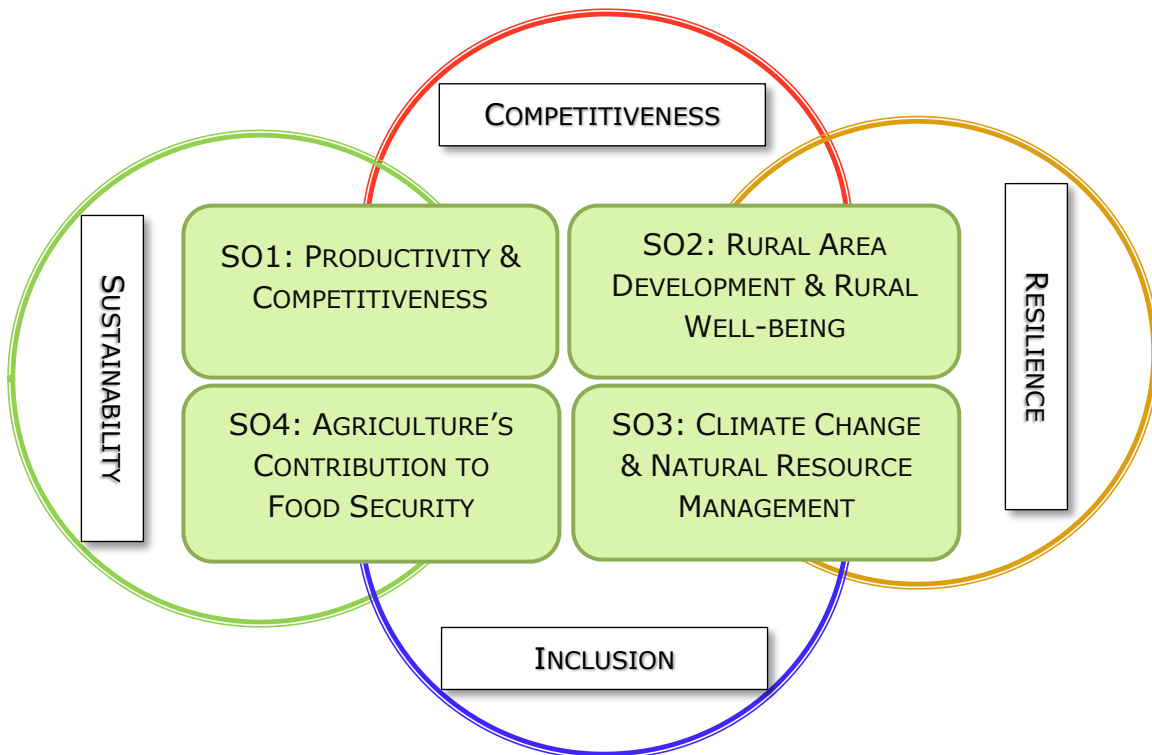
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PART II: THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENDA FOR 2017

An illustration of IICA's National Technical Cooperation Agenda is presented below. It represents IICA's strategic outlook for development assistance in Saint Lucia. The nature and purpose of the development assistance is guided by four strategic objectives; namely, to:

1. Improve the productivity and competitiveness of the agriculture sector;
2. Strengthen agriculture's contribution to the development of rural areas and the well-being of the rural population;
3. Improve agriculture's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and make better use of natural resources;
4. Improve agriculture's contribution to food security.

Framework for IICA's Technical Cooperation Agenda in Saint Lucia



These objectives guide the specification of technical interventions which comprise the programme of work; a process that involves an intensive analysis of existing agricultural documents, statistics and policies, coupled with extensive consultations with agriculture and rural sector stakeholders including Government ministries, producer organizations, youth and women

organizations, rural service-provider agencies, private sector entities and international organizations.

These are defined by four broad and inter-related areas of:-

1. **Competitiveness** and *Sustainability of Agricultural Chains for Food Security & Economic Development* with focus on the capacity of an agricultural chain in all its links, to maintain sustained and lasting growth on domestic and international markets;
2. **Resilience** and *Comprehensive Risk Management* which aims to increase the resilience of the agricultural systems in the member countries in order to address climate change and other environmental shocks by strengthening the institutional framework for innovation and risk management based on the principles of sustainable adaptation;
3. **Inclusion** in *Agriculture and Rural Territories* where efforts are aimed at contributing to the creation of conditions for the design and participatory management of countries with focus on integrated area-based public policies for social, economic, and civic inclusion in relatively lesser developed rural areas where family farming is prevalent; and
4. *Productivity & Sustainability of Family Agriculture for Food Security and the Rural Economy* by which the sustainable development of family farming is promoted to increase its contribution to food and nutrition security and the rural economy.

These define IICA's technical work and form the framework within which impact is evaluated and reported on.



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PART III: RESULTS AND OUTCOMES FROM THE 2017 TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGENDA

The activities executed during the year were all designed towards the achievement of three key results at the national level. These are briefly detailed below:

3.1 IMPROVE THE PRODUCTIVITY AND COMPETITIVENESS OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

3.1.1 Competitiveness and Sustainability of Agricultural Chains for Food Security & Economic Development

□ *Experience Capitalisation on the Permapiculture System for Honey Production: Lessons Learnt and Good Practices*

<i>Impacts > Innovation and extension to achieve sustainable productive intensification and food security in Family Farming</i>	
Challenge(s):	Weak knowledge and managerial capabilities of beekeepers towards more productive and profitable family-farming enterprises.
Intervention(s):	Strengthen participatory association of family agriculture producers in sharing and building expertise.
Results:	1. Produced demonstrated gains from the application of Permapiculture systems in the Caribbean.
Lessons Learnt:	1. Improving hive management, hive health and resilience which is of strategic importance to the development of the honey industry in Saint Lucia; 2. Peer-to-peer learning and experiential mechanisms between national beekeeper groups/associations is a beneficial tool in providing technical cooperation support.

This action was a culmination of interventions made by IICA in Saint Lucia, as well as in Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Grenada to



Sharing the results of learning by application through both indoor and field activities. The activity was an effective way for distilling benefits and challenges which helped improve apicary operations. (IICA 2018)

introduce Permapiculture. Permapiculture is as an alternative management system and approach to honey production that focuses on a more natural hive structure (known as the Perone hive) and management focus revolving around building hive health.

This approach allows for differentiating honey as natural/organic which attracts higher prices. It also has the advantage of encouraging hive resilience which favours climate change adaptation.

Beekeepers from the participating countries spent three days sharing their experiences, lessons learnt and giving testimony to the performance of the Perone hive. Most notable in this regard were the experiences from the Dominican Republic and Suriname where the use of the Perone hive had been advanced. Beekeepers there testified of the improvements in hive performance at foraging and honey production, as well as the quality of honey produced. Importantly, their contributions helped add to the learning of other beekeepers using the Perone hive on areas of hive management such as introduction of brood, harvesting of honey and product development.



Permaculture advocates Dr. Manuel Sanchez (2nd from left) and Mr. Joaquin Sanchez (2nd from right). (IICA 2018)



Experience sharing between beekeepers from Suriname, St Lucia and the Dominican Republic. (IICA 2018)

□ *Fostering Competitive Value Chains: Capacity Building in Governance for Producer Groups*

<i>Impacts > Public and Private institutions strengthen their technical capacities to support actors in the chain so as to improve access and increase linkage to markets, with emphasis on differentiated markets, value added and promising crops</i>	
Challenge(s):	Weak governance structures and processes within stakeholder civil society organisations/groups (CSOs).
Intervention(s):	Assessment of target civil society organisations/groups to identify specific areas of governance and management for intervention viz socio-organisative goals.
Results:	1. Assessment tool and methodology to support systematic programme for CSO development; 1. Improved capacity of local technicians to evaluate and determine priority governance and management challenges and opportunities.
Lessons Learnt:	1. Strengthening the business and associative capabilities of the different stakeholders in the agricultural production chains supports rural enterprise development.

The activity concept followed IICA's intervention through a Governance capacity building workshop held in St Lucia in 2016 through the Agriculture Policy Programme (APP) and the Competiveness and Chains Flagship Component; as well as the Associative Internship of 2016 supported under the Family Agriculture Flagship Component. At the former, participating representatives of local CSOs and producer/stakeholder groups noted the need for improved organizational structure and accountability processes and mechanisms to achieving success in agri-business.

Further dialogue with stakeholders and support agencies bred consensus that there were several areas requiring intervention and the need for specificity to properly correct weaknesses. To that end, the rationale for an assessment tool and methodology was developed with the aim of:

1. Providing an objective and systematic methodology for identifying governance and management challenges;
2. Supporting capacity development of support actors to improve governance and management competency
3. Supporting capacity building of CSOs in treating with identified challenges.

Mr. Randel Esnard of the Agri-Enterprise Development Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives expressed interest in the action and gave valuable contribution to both refining the draft tool and methodology, as well as co-facilitating engagement with target CSOs. Two CSOs were targeted for the testing the tool, namely: The Praslin Seamoss Producers Association and the Belle Vue Farmers' Cooperative. The assessment was conducted over two 2-hour sessions with each group from June 13 – 27 2017.

Summary reports were compiled and submitted to the participating CSOs and a meeting to review the findings and prioritise areas for action were conducted. Principally, the assessment uncovered the following key challenges:

1. Poor internal structures and procedures for governance and operation of commercial activities which undermine transparency and accountability of the groups;
2. Weaknesses in strategic planning and vision-setting which limits the ability of management to leverage socio-organisational and entrepreneurial opportunities;
3. A large proportion of informal administrative and operational processes and procedures which need to be written down and better specified to allow for organisational learning and reduced ambiguity/ad hoc action. Interestingly, in many cases effective administrative processes are already in place and administered by senior members/management with no written record for new/junior members to adopt;
4. Poor human resource development and benefit programmes which impact on longevity and commitment of members, as well as reduces the attractiveness of membership to potentials;
5. Human capacity limitations in management and membership in functional areas related to reporting, management and control.

The assessments revealed the absence of standard operating procedures (SOPs) as an important, functional area in which the operations of the two groups could be improved. To that end another intervention was planned for November 30 – December 1 2017 to build capacity of representatives of the two groups on developing the same. This capacity building session was facilitated by Ms. Euthalia Philgence at the Fisheries Conference Room in Vieux Fort, St Lucia. Both groups identified three priority areas for SOP development and developed SOPs for one of their priorities during the engagement. These will be the basis for follow-up action in 2018 with the aim of completing SOPs for the priority areas and supporting their adoption.

□ *Creation of a Virtual Business Incubator and Resource Hub for Youth Entrepreneurs in the Caribbean*

<i>Impacts > Access and Linkage of Agricultural Chains to Markets</i>	
Challenge(s):	Weak mechanisms at the national and regional levels to support resource-poor young entrepreneurs in the Caribbean in addressing many information asymmetry-related barriers to business start-up.
Intervention(s):	Creation of an enabling environment for youth engagement and entrepreneurship in agriculture in the Caribbean.
Results:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generated information and knowledge products for equipping youth entrepreneurs to create successful start-up businesses; 2. Created a resourcing platform to support youth in making more effective use of the web to enhance their employment and business opportunities.
Lessons Learnt:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth entrepreneurship is a critical component of agriculture's strategy for realizing sustainable livelihood and economic development.

Through the financial support of the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and in collaboration with the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY), this initiative was undertaken with the specific purpose of developing a virtual business incubator (VBI) that would address information/knowledge challenges that entrepreneurs face in developing their entrepreneurial capacities and creating successful start-up businesses; as well as serve as a dedicated web platform to support youth in agriculture networking, entrepreneurial development, and knowledge leveraging for enterprise development.



Dialogue with regional and national experts contributed significantly to the VBI's development. (IICA 2017)

In addition to generating resources on starting a business and ecosystem maps of financial and technical support available to entrepreneurs for thirteen Caribbean countries, the project also developed the VBI at www.caribbeanvbi.org.



The launch of the VBI received very positive reviews from both institutions and youth entrepreneurs. (IICA, 2017)

This web platform will be populated with information and knowledge products to support entrepreneurship and enterprise development. To date there has been positive feedback from visitors and users both within and outside of the Caribbean Region on the value of the initiative.

Future interventions building on this platform will focus on leveraging the VBI as a resource mechanism for its programme to engage youth in agriculture, as well as to support agribusiness and value chain development in the Caribbean region. In this way the investment in to the project will be sustained as part of IICA's programme of work with CAFY, as well as collaborating partners, on supporting greater involvement and participation of youth in agriculture and agricultural value chains.

3.2 STRENGTHEN AGRICULTURE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREAS AND TO RURAL WELL-BEING

3.2.1 Productivity & Sustainability of Family Agriculture for Food Security and the Rural Economy

- *Associative Internship: A Capacity-Building Programme Supporting Enterprise Development in Family Agriculture*

<i>Impact> Strengthening of Family-Farming associative processes for food security and rural economy</i>	
Challenge(s):	Weak organizational systems for facilitating enterprise development of producer groups/associations.
Intervention(s):	1. Strengthen participatory association of family agriculture producers in sharing and building expertise.
Results:	1. Operationalized a methodology for systematically assessing and improving socio-organisational and entrepreneurial development; 2. Built rural capacity within the SLNRWP for sustainable rural community enterprise development; 3. Strengthened linkages between rural groups for peer-to-peer learning and knowledge leveraging.

<i>Impact> Strengthening of Family-Farming associative processes for food security and rural economy</i>	
Lessons Learnt:	1. Peer-to-peer learning mechanisms can be very effective in increasing the effectiveness of knowledge transfer, skill development and the adoption of good practices on governance and coordinating market arrangements.

The Associative Internship capacity building workshop was aimed at advancing the Associative Internship methodology (AIM) introduced in 2016 by leveraging its utility in enhancing communication and adoption through peer-to-peer learning. The objective of this activity was to demonstrate the value-adding function of suitable administrative and governance processes in commercial/entrepreneurial development. Specific actions included:

1. Administering the AIM evaluation tool to specify the internal and external aspects of the host organisation in need of attention;
2. Define a set of foundational business metrics around which the host association could plan and operationalize a collaborative commercial venture as a practical mechanism for implementing recommended administrative and governance processes;
3. Procurement of processing equipment and inputs for training and operationalizing the collaborative commercial venture;
4. Facilitate the in-country engagement of representatives from the interning organisation The Alliance for Rural Communities in Trinidad and Tobago (ARCTT) to conduct training, transfer operational processes/practices and facilitate operationalizing of the collaborative commercial venture.

Specifically, the activity utilised an edited version of the stakeholder group assessment of the AIM to reflect core governance processes supportive of effective group organisation and undertaking of commercial activity. This was administered to provide a baseline status. This assessment revealed weaknesses in a number of areas pertinent to the development targets of the host organisation including weak management skills, participatory procedures, management of agricultural and entrepreneurial risks, and internal control systems.

Secondly, a peer organisation was engaged to transfer knowledge, skills and processes for a commercial venture by the host organisation over a four-day workshop. In this case, the commercial venture was the production of dark chocolate utilizing the processes developed by ARCTT. The workshop format revolved around practical training on a core commercial activity around which group coordination and mechanisms for rural community engagement are developed. In addition to the practical elements, the workshop gave considerable emphasis to soft skills of emotional literacy, business planning and conflict management which are traditionally the primary binding constraints to the success of rural development groups and their entrepreneurial initiatives. This format focused on learning by doing and developing a practical understanding of the operational processes of ARCTT which provided good practices against the weaknesses in SLNRWP identified by the AIM assessment.



The fruit of their labor: participants reflect on the accomplishment of producing the first ever rural community chocolate bar in Saint Lucia (IICA, 2017)

In promoting strategic partnerships, IICA and SLNRWP agreed to extend an invitation to the GIZ Caribbean Aqua-Terrestrial Solutions (CATS) Ridge to Reef Project and its rural affiliates the Rainforest Producers and Jaco Producers Groups²; as well as the owner of Cocoa Sainte Lucie Chocolate Company, Mrs. Maria Jackson. Execution of the project activities was co-financed by the GIZ, ARCTT and SLNRWP.

The core strength of the approach for the workshop was in supporting peer-to-peer learning as an approach to building capacity of partner producer groups as well as improving likelihood of adoption of recommended good practices supporting governance procedures (including record-keeping, normative and administrative processes and distribution of duties), member engagement and coordination, market linkages and other operational strengths and weaknesses which is beneficial to informing planned interventions.

□ *Business Assessment and Market Readiness: Improving Youth Business Operations*

<i>Impact> Access and Linkage of Agricultural Chains to Markets</i>	
Challenge(s):	The lack of specialized support mechanisms/approaches to foster youth enterprise development.
Intervention(s):	1. Provide grant funding to assist with the improvement of business operations and building capacity to enhance productivity and facilitate greater access to local, regional and international markets.
Results:	1. Strengthen operational weaknesses for better market access and participation of five youth entrepreneurs; one in St Lucia.
Lessons Learnt:	1. Specialised interventions supporting youth entrepreneurs require closer attention to indicators of potential (e.g. non-capital based financing such as cash flow or asset-based financing).

² The two rural women's groups are supported by the GIZ under its Caribbean Aqua-Terrestrial Solutions (CATS) Ridge to Reef Project.

The goal of the Flagship project is to promote the Sustainable Development of Family Farming (FF) and Increase the Contribution that FF makes to Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) and the Rural Economy. This specific activity for a Business and Market Readiness Assessment, targeted members of the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) with the view to provide grant funding to assist with the improvement of business operations and building capacity to enhance productivity and facilitate greater access to local, regional and international markets.

The activity assessed the business and market readiness of targeted enterprises to determine which among them were best positioned to utilize the grant funding effectively. The assessment comprised of two sections: the first conducted as an online survey focused on General Management, Business Operations, Product Information/Development and Marketing; and the second by interview with the youth entrepreneurs which produced succinct details regarding current operations, challenges, and plans for the enterprises. The responses were weighted on a scale from zero (0) to five (5); Yes – 5, Incomplete – 3 and No – 0. In cases where questions were not applicable five (5) points were allotted to balance the score. The section also contains an interpretation of the score results with ranges from 0 – 50, 50 – 100 and 100 - 150. An overall business rating of Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory and Highly Satisfactory was given to the enterprise following verification and analysis of the information discussed in the interview. Based on the results from Sections One and Two, the three enterprises to receive the grant were chosen.

Five (5) CAFY member-owned agri-businesses in three countries were assessed: St. Lucia (Algas Organics Inc. and Green Haven Fresh Farms), Suriname (Golden Honey and Randy's Farm) and Trinidad and Tobago (WhyFarm). The exercise provided a brief overview and specific recommendations for the provision of material support to three of the agribusinesses of an approximate USD 2,500 grant per agribusiness.

Algas Organics Inc. was selected for St Lucia having received a score of 140 of a maximum of 150 points, and benefited from support to increasing product storage capacity and improving the availability packaging material. These interventions contributed to the youth-owned enterprise being better able to participate in target markets and meet customer demand.



The intervention identified limited storage capacity and packaging material as major hindrances and helped improve these by a factor that enabled better market participation. (J.Dujon 2017)

3.3 CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

3.3.1 Natural Resources Management and Adaptation to Climate Change for Agriculture

□ *Caribbean Climate Smart Agriculture Forum: 2017*

<i>Impact> Member countries have improved knowledge on how to design and implement plans, policies and actions to increase the resilience of production systems to climate change.</i>	
Challenge(s):	Inadequate institutional capacity of both public and private organizations which limit planning and action on climate change adaptation and mitigation.
Intervention(s):	Training on Integrating Adaptation to Climate Change into Development Planning
Results:	1. Raised awareness among agricultural stakeholder of best practices promoting and supporting climate smart agriculture.
Lessons Learnt:	1. Multi-stakeholder discussion forums on climate smart agriculture are a good impetus for supporting action on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Recognizing the urgency of adaptation, adoption of climate smart agricultural³ practices and the need for a stronger platform on which agricultural sector stakeholders, as well as other relevant actors could exchange experiences and knowledge, IICA in 2015 initiated the Caribbean Climate Smart Agriculture Forum (CCSAF).

The CCSAF exists as a neutral space where all can share, learn, plan and promote policies, strategies and actions towards more productive, low emission, sustainable agricultural systems that are well adapted to the regions changing climate. This approach allows for enriched national dialogue as well as exchanges within the Caribbean for learning and knowledge auctioning.

In 2017, 4 webinars were hosted which engaged more than 40 local participants and close to 300 regionally, in learning and experience-sharing on climate smart agriculture topics relevant to the Caribbean region, including implementing climate change goals, applying the Ecosystem-based Adaptation method on farms, climate change impacts affecting fisheries and livestock, and developing a project proposal to address a national climate change adaptation and mitigation priority.

³ Climate smart agriculture is defined as agricultural practices/methodologies that sustainably increase productivity, resilience (adaptation), reduce/remove greenhouse gases (mitigation) and enhance achievement of national food security and development goals.

3.4 IMPROVING AGRICULTURE'S CONTRIBUTION TO FOOD SECURITY

3.4.1 Comprehensive Management of Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Risks for Resilient Agriculture

□ *Operationalising a Farmer Certification Framework to enhance Standards Adoption for Saint Lucia*

<i>Impact> Improving the efficacy and efficiency of food and nutrition security programs in the Members States</i>	
Challenge:	Weak mechanisms to assure/verify food safety and quality which limit market access, participation and development for small farmers
Intervention:	Specified a functional farmer certification system validated by local producers, buyers and technicians
Results:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defined a coordinating framework for farmer certification (in collaboration with local actors); 2. Validated the defined framework through focus group consultations with key stakeholders in the value chain system; 3. Enhanced capacity of primary stakeholders to support the operation of a functional farmer certification programme that meets requirements of local buyers.
Lessons Learnt:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local buyers have expressed willingness-to-pay for quality and safety assurances as an added value to their clients; 2. Voluntary standards adoption can be more easily facilitated through the value chain approach in promoting dialogue that yields mutually beneficial arrangements for the actors involved;

This initiative was a direct response to several key comments/revelations which pointed to a need to strengthen farm and chain systems for improved conformance to food safety and quality requirements for both domestic and export markets; namely:

1. Willingness to pay expressed by agro-processors/manufacturers and wholesale buyers in St Lucia in relation to strengthened traceability systems from the farm level⁴;
2. Request from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Physical Planning and Cooperatives (MoA) to support and advance previous initiatives for a farmer certification framework;
3. Findings from the Cost-Benefit Assessment on Non-Compliance to SPS requirements which noted that St

Support for the Operationalizing of a Farmer Certification Programme to Enhance Standards Adoption in St Lucia

Flagship Project: Productivity and Sustainability of Family Farming for Food Security and the Rural Economy



This initiative is aimed at strengthening capacities by Family Farming-related stakeholders, thus achieving more sustainable production and more active participation in area-based management.

⁴ Conveyed during training workshops on both HACCP and Food Traceability Systems funded by the 10th EDF SPS Project in 2016.

Lucia had a positive cost-benefit ratio with regards to investments in improving the national quality infrastructure and general SPS compliance.

Recognising the above, the activity was proposed on the premise of designing and operationalizing on a limited scale, a coordinating framework (inclusive of requisite support systems, forms, procedures, etc.) for farmer certification. Specifically, this focuses on the certification of the crop production process based on recommended Global G.A.P.-compliant standards and code of practices already developed for St Lucia by the St Lucia Bureau of Standards (SLBS). The proposed framework was presented to three (3) stakeholder categories: technicians, buyers and farmers⁵ for evaluation and critique in focus group meetings. These were helpful in clarifying proposed processes on the functionality of the proposed framework, as well as stimulating broad conversation on economic incentives and benefits to chain actors that the system should feature. A number of monetary and non-monetary incentives⁶ were discussed, particularly with buyers and input providers, which were considered acceptable and within the scope of their operations to support.

In addition, the focus group sessions highlighted a number of related areas that support overall chain/partner relationship, namely: production scheduling and coordination with buyers/markets, as well as farm-level support mechanisms for standards adoption, as well as adoption of appropriate management and production techniques/technologies. The consultations and engagement engendered by the activity also facilitated a number of new avenues for cooperation between actors, including non-agri-food actors such as the Ministry of Education in improving training and knowledge transfer mechanisms.

A primary benefit of this activity has been the articulation of a framework that is positive-sum in its outlook and approach to supporting enhanced standards-compliance. The consultations further validated this.



Meeting with Ministry of Agriculture Heads of Departments on the Farmer Certification Framework (IICA 2017)

⁵ Done during the week of Oct 30 2017.

⁶ Non-monetary such as preferred buying, discounts and reward points on inputs/consumable purchases and awards for most progressive or consistent farmer. Monetary incentives focused on an incremental price gain for produce of higher certification tier, and selling-point allocations to a medical, insurance or retirement fund for certified farmers.



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PART IV: PARTNERSHIP 4 PROGRESS

Building partnerships and inter-agency collaboration is an important mandate for IICA and a strategic focus for delivering meaningful technical support. In 2017, IICA collaborated with a number of development partners to advance progress on agriculture and rural development. These are highlighted below.

□ Supporting Improved Capacities of Agricultural Stakeholders



IICA/SLAFY: In 2017, collaboration with youth largely focused on group governance and enterprise development - recognizing that these are of strategic importance and necessary for sustainability. Therein, IICA collaborated with and supported SLAFY and its members in mobilizing resources for enterprise development projects/initiatives, provided technical support for implementation,



IICA/SLNRWP: SLNRWP is a major partner with IICA in building capacity for improvement of socio-organisational and business development of rural women in St Lucia. In 2017, we collaborated on a number of key areas making women micro-processors more capable to govern their groups, manage their businesses and produce more market-ready products. Most notably was the establishment of a chocolate-producing group within the Micoud Cluster, producing St Lucia's first rural community chocolate bar.



IICA/Massy Stores: IICA and Massy continue to be proud partners with SLAFY on the sixth phase of the Helping Out Our Primary and Secondary Schools (HOOPSS) project which is currently being implemented, and in 2017 have pursued closer collaboration on value chain development for root and tuber crops amongst other local commodities with comparative advantages and scope for market development. These efforts revolve largely around market scheduling and providing specialized technical support and market information to farmers. In so doing, the initiative aims to increase market opportunities for farmers while supporting import substitution and replacement where feasible.

□ *Supporting the Development of Agricultural Small-holders/Entrepreneurs and their Groups*



IICA/ GEF SGP: Building on our joint cooperation on the East-Coast Sargassum Project and the Chief Tree Initiative in 2016, IICA supported the SLNRWP in implementing a project entitled “The Chief Tree Initiative: Connecting the Dots for a Safe Farm to School Network for Consumption of Organic Foods and reducing Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases in St Lucia” in collaboration with project partner Petra Auguste, Manager of Divine Orchards. This project combined capacity building on organic/chemical-free production practices, food utilization in preparing safe foods for children, as well as research and advocacy on early childhood nutrition by introducing Chief Tree resources at select Pre-Schools in St Lucia.



IICA/GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF MEXICO: IICA has positioned itself as the main facilitator/intermediary for the direct technical cooperation support provided by the Government of the Federal Republic of Mexico to the Government of Saint Lucia in the field of agriculture. The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Mexico in Saint Lucia is working with IICA to undertake interventions in areas of adapting greenhouse technology, germplasm management and improvement, as well as youth in agriculture development.

Technical Cooperation



IICA/MAFFPCRD: The MAFFPNRC is IICA's main partner in Saint Lucia and the two agencies work jointly on a wide range of activities. In 2017, the primary activities were the hosting of the Post-Budget Discussion on the Agriculture Budget, operationalizing of the Mexico-IICA-Government of Saint Lucia, and the design of a Farmer Certification Framework for St Lucia. In August of 2017, the Institute partnered with the Ministry to host a Post Budget Forum. The forum sought to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on the budgetary allocations of the government towards the development of agriculture in Saint Lucia. As a result of this intervention, producers agro-processors and other stakeholders were able to better strategise and play programmes based on the work of the government. In addition, other players were provided with an opportunity to partner with the government on identified gaps in the development process.



IICA/FAO: IICA supports the implementation of the Technical Cooperation Programme for Cassava Value Chain Development in St Lucia.



IICA/OECS: IICA has an ongoing working relationship with the OECS Secretariat. During the year, IICA provided technical and secretariat support to the Meetings of the OECS Agriculture Task Force, preparation of strategic documents for the Meeting of OECS Council of Ministers for Agriculture, capacity building initiatives on Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary measures, and advancing the implementation of the OECS Regional Plan of Action for Agriculture, including on agro-tourism.

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