

Agriculture Policy Programme Caribbean Action



Bahamas



**Country
UpDate**



APP/PMU
The Intra-ACP APP is funded under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF)



APP Country Update – Bahamas

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.



Local youth provided with opportunity to promote their enterprises and expand their business networks

- Michael Bowleg was fully funded under the APP to participate the Youth in Agriculture (YiA) Business Forum as part of the Dialogue for Development Forum (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, Mr. Bowleg was exposed to other business youth from the rest of the Caribbean, and he is now part of a post-forum youth-driven vibrant ‘network’.

The Grenada YiA Forum provided opportunities to inform and promote their businesses to 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.

- Shomekhan Cargill was also given the opportunity to engage with regional planners to propose solutions to hindrances experienced by agripreneurs at the Component 1 (CCS) 9th Regional Planners Forum (RPF) on Agriculture, held in Trinidad and Tobago from June 7 – 10, 2016. 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 Bahamas and the wider Caribbean region.

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’

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Agriculture Planners get more opportunities for regional and international policy networking

- Brichell Pinder Chief Economist of the Ministry of Agriculture, Marine Resources and Local Government participated in the 8th Regional Planners Forum on agriculture in Grenada, [18th – 22nd January 2016]. Ms. Pinder 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 and international agricultural development institutions on topics of direct significance to agricultural development in the Bahamas, including approaches for developing commodity-based industries, facilitation of intra-regional trade and critical areas for national and regional policy response.
- Annva Burrows of the Ministry of Agriculture was afforded an opportunity, along with eight other planners from the Region, to participate in the 2016 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Outlook Forum in Arlington Virginia [25th – 26th February 2016]. Participants reported that the experience and exposure to the level of research, technical information, dialogue and networking was worth it and despite the economic differences between the US and other developed countries, and the Caribbean, there is need for a much greater level of investment and technical infusion into the development of agriculture.
- Mr. Delreese Moss of the Ministry of Agriculture was also supported to attend the 9th Regional Planners Forum on Agriculture from 7th to 9th June 2016, in Trinidad and Tobago. This provided an opportunity to engage and network with peers in the Region and dialogue and exchange information of critical topics for agricultural policy response. The 9th RPF also provided the opportunity for MoA officials 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)’

Root and tuber farmers’ access to climate-ready and improved planting material enhanced

BAMSI will refurbish one greenhouse structure located at its research facility in Andros. The greenhouse is being upgraded to enhance BAMSI’s capacity to multiply cassava and sweet potato planting material. The structure will be retrofitted with a new protective cover, shelves and tables and an irrigation systems. The package will also include procurement of inputs for propagation particularly, potting mix and specific fertilizers.

Support provided under . . .

Component 2, CARDI : ‘Refurbish existing germplasm production structures & multiplication units’

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Root crops and livestock forage germplasm maintained on ex-situ conservation plots

- Members of the Bahamas Agricultural Forum for Youth (BAFY) will collaborate with BAMSI on the establishment of ex-situ conservation plots for sweet potato and cassava at the Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre, New Providence, Bahamas. Activities will include the construction of raised beds and implementation of a crop rotation production plan utilizing varieties of sweet potato and cassava.
- BAMSI will establish a gene bank for forages for livestock at its research facility in Andros. The plot will consist of existing forage species and imported forage species from Caribbean and extra regional countries.

Support provided under . . .

Component 2, CARDI : ‘Establish ex-situ conservation plot for selected crops of commercial and food value’

Farmers receive training in rapid multiplication and management of Sweet Potato and Cassava germplasm

- BAMSI will collaborate with CARDI to obtain new germplasm for Cassava and Sweet potato from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. A technician will travel to the Bahamas during the third week of July 2016 to conduct training in the multiplication of the newly acquired germplasm. The training will take place at BAMSI’s research facility in Andros and will be attended by technicians from BAMSI, and the MoA as well as students and stakeholders from the private sector.
- BAMSI will also collaborate with final year students of the College of the Bahamas to implement an audit of local cassava and sweet potato varieties in July 2016. Varieties collected will be established in a gene bank at BAMSI’s research facility in Andros. CARDI will assist BAMSI in characterization of the varieties and the information generated will be provided to relevant stakeholders such as IICA and the MoA extension staff.

Support provided under . . .

Component 2, CARDI : ‘Develop capacity of selected institutions and small producers/ entrepreneurs for multiplying and managing improved germplasm’

MSME’s receive training in value added products for roots and tubers

Small processors will benefit from national training and knowledge transfer sessions in value added products for roots and tubers. Specifically, BAMSI will provide training in the processing of Cassava and sweet potato flour and making of cassava and sweet potato composite bakery products. The emphasis will be on commercialization of existing products as well as introduction of new products. BAMSI will also build its internal capacity to produce and test new products using the captive audience of research students attached to the institute. The organization will collaborate with the Department of Cooperatives, the Center for Training and Innovation in Eleuthra, Private Chefs and the Culinary School (Collage of the Bahamas). The training will target bakers, small processors and the Bahamas Agricultural Forum for Youth. The organization will collaborate with CABA and the University of the West Indies Mona to develop training material and sourcing of relevant equipment for small commercial producers.

Support provided under . . .

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

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Farmers exposed to the benefits of appropriate small-scale equipment and improved practices

BAMSI will procure small hand held equipment for crop (sweet potato and cassava) and animal (small ruminants) production demonstrations. This activity will also include training in the use of same for targeted stakeholders. For small ruminants in particular, the organisation will conduct training in pasture rehabilitation and establishment, cost of production and management of breeding programmes. Beneficiaries include the Bahamas Agricultural Forum for Youth (BAFY), Bahamas Network of Rural Women Producers (BANROP), MoA technicians, students from the College of the Bahamas and associated farmers. These activity is scheduled for the period July – August 2016.

Support provided under . . .

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

SME's receive training in packaging labelling and product development

Ms. Chavara Roker - Agripreneur and Ms. Martha Smith - Bahamas Network of Rural Women Producers (BAHNROP) was given the opportunity to attend a Regional training Workshop on Product Development, Marketing, Food Safety and GMP's for SME's [21st – 24th March 2016, Trinidad and Tobago]. The participants agreed that she required and benefited 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 her enterprises. Hence continued and targeted interventions by development partners in this area will be of great benefit to them in enhancing their operation.

Support provided under . . .

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

Producer groups and networks capacity for governance supported

Ms. Olga Wilson - Cat Island Farmers Association of the Bahamas participated in a Regional training Workshop in Producer Group Governance hosted jointly by C2 and C3 in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, [April 25-27, 2016]. At that workshop Ms. Wilson received expert orientation on producer group governance, dynamics, financial assessment tools, and Good Agricultural Practices.

Support provided under . . .

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

Directory of major enterprises in small ruminants and tomato value chain published

Twenty one (21) organizations within the small ruminants value chain and nineteen (19) organizations within the tomato 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 the Bahamas and the Directory will also be made available online in APP partner and Ministry of Agriculture websites.

Support provided under . . .

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

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SME's receive equipment to support production

Component 3 of the APP will support the development of the apiculture value chain in the Bahamas by providing direct assistance in the form of 175 beehives to farmers to boost the production of honey and honey products. This activity will be coordinated by IICA Bahamas.

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 agrifood processing MSMEs'

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
[C1 - CCS - ongoing] Upgrade the Regional Agribusiness Platform and support capacity of producers to use same for business and trade-related information	An upgraded website has been delivered to the CARICOM Secretariat (Carib-Agri Website www.agricarib.org). 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, CRFM, FAO, 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] 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] 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 and approach to commodity-based industry development should be reviewed in the context of the recently initiated support to development of a national agriculture policy and plan.</i></p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - close to completion] Develop a Regional Policy framework for the Herbs & Spices Industry</p>	<p>Herbs & Spices Regional Policy Framework and Coordinating Mechanisms will develop a strategy which aims to address identified needs of the industry which cover, technical issues of production and organization; issues of raw material supply; compliance with market entry requirements; issues of packaging and presentation; consolidation of shipments; and financing, among others. The experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders will be taken on board through regional consultations. A platform for continuous dialogue, exchange and coordination of the industry will be a major facet of the policy. Development of the Herbs & Spices Regional Policy Framework and Coordinating Mechanisms is in keeping with the overall approach to develop functional commodity-based industries in the Region.</p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>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><i>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.</i></p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>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><i>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.</i></p>
<p>[C1 - CCS - ongoing]</p> <p>Support Policy Networking and Knowledge Transfer through a Regional Agricultural Planners Forum</p>	<p>More structured opportunities will be provided for planners in Ministries of Agriculture to network and dialogue on a 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</p> <p>Activities continue in 2016.</p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
<p>[C2 – CARDI; close to completion] Study/validation meetings on harmonization of trade standards for movement of select crop & animal livestock germplasm in the region</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>The recommendations and protocols should be reviewed as part of the national agriculture policy process.</p>
<p>[C3 – IICA; close to completion] Experience capitalization on successful CARIFORUM-based financing schemes involving small producers/ entrepreneurs in value chains’</p>	<p>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 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.</p>
<p>[C3 – IICA; planning in progress] ‘Regional Agri-Value Chain Financing Forum to strengthen stakeholders engagement on Value Chain financing in CARIFORUM countries’</p>	<p>A number of local stakeholders, including producer enterprises and one Development Finance Institutions, will get the opportunity to engage with their peers and colleagues from the region as well as international experts, when Jamaica hosts the Regional Agri Value Chain Financing Forum in September 2016. The forum, hosted in collaboration with FAST, and the IICA Flagship Project on Competitiveness and the CTA, will include representatives from national and regional financial institutions, representatives of commodity producer, women and youth organizations and technical professionals from CARIFORUM countries.</p>

Regional APP Actions with Benefits at Country Level

Action/Component	Brief Description
[C3 – IICA; ongoing] Prepare Financial & Investment profiles for selected commodity based Industries	IICA in collaboration with FAST, CaFAN and CABA will identify and select a strategic commodity sector to promote investment and produce an investment guide to be launched during the Regional agri-Value Chain Finance Forum. Local stakeholders will benefit from sharing of information results and experiences of work undertaken in targeted countries.
[C3 – IICA ; planning in progress] Working Capital Fund study for selected commodity based Industries	Representatives of Producer Groups, National Value Chain Specialist and local Development Finance Institutions will be invited to participate in a regional focus group meeting to determine the quantitative and qualitative parameters for a fund that would facilitate access to working capital needed by farmers who are participating in the CaFAN-lead Regional Roots and Tuber (Sweet Potato, Dasheen) Export Programme.