

Project Plan (with budget and timeline)

Where women Bloom: Supporting sustainable livelihoods for women through capacity building and inclusivity in the mushroom industry

A. Name of Applicant Entity	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
Applicant Entity Contact Details	PO Box 1223, 4th Floor, Sir Stanislaus Anthony James Building, Waterfront, Castries, Saint Lucia
Legal Status	Not for Profit
Organization and team's prior engagement with international or regional organizations	<p>IICA is the specialized agency in agriculture within the Inter-American System that provides technical cooperation and supports the efforts of the Member States to achieve a competitive, sustainable, and inclusive agricultural sector in the Americas and to improve rural well-being in its 34 member states. This mandate is achieved through an on-the-ground presence throughout North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. IICA employs more than 300 permanent staff with expertise in agronomy, animal husbandry, agribusiness and value chain development, agricultural risk management, natural resource management, rural inclusion and development, agricultural policy and economic analysis and agricultural health and food safety.</p> <p>The Institute works extensively with a number of international and regional organizations including, <i>inter alia</i>, the European Union (EU), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), Green Climate Fund (GCF), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO), CARICOM Secretariat, Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI). The scope of work is very diverse and includes specific regionally and nationally focused work in areas such as climate smart agriculture, agricultural health and food safety, agricultural policy, women and youth in agriculture, agricultural finance, disaster management and soil and water management.</p> <p>This work, however, does not diminish IICA's reach to minority groups/associations throughout the Americas. Most notably in the Caribbean region are the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) and the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) which IICA has supported through inception to present regional coverage and national representation in more than 10 countries. This coverage has supported the successful implementation of several regional projects of benefit to these target beneficiaries including the Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN) [jointly with the CTA], the inclusion of women and youth in agricultural policy dialogue at the ministerial level at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA), strengthening the organizational capacities of women and youth in agriculture groups, jointly-executed activities with CARDI in agricultural innovation and technology and climate-smart agriculture, and more recently as lead implementing institution for Caribbean Action under the Intra-ACP Agricultural Policy Programme and the Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures Projects which are funded under the 10th European Development Fund.</p> <p>IICA is therefore ideally placed to coordinate the implementation of the initiative proposed.</p>
Declaration on Exclusion Criteria, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse	IICA has a zero-tolerance policy on discrimination, sexual exploitation and abuse. In all its undertakings, staff of the Institute, as well as those employed by it, are bound by a code of conduct and reflective contract prohibiting any

	<p>actions categorized as discriminatory or exploitative, including fraud.</p> <p>Exclusion from participation in events that the Institute is directly responsible for is predicated on a participant/partner seeking to use funds or resources provided for any illegal activity.</p>
B. 1) Applicant's Institutional Arrangements related to Partnership Proposal	
Project Team Member Names	<p>Brent Theophile (IICA) – Project Lead Valerie Donat (ICA) – Project Assistant Tiffany Surage (IICA) - Project Assistant Alexis William (Funky Fungi Mushrooms) - Mushroom Production & Training Lead Jade Hutchinson (Guru) - Marketing and Market Facilitation Lead</p>
Project organization and team's prior experience in the fields of women's empowerment	<p>IICA has more than 30 years of experience in executing specialized projects supporting the socio-organizational and economic empowerment of women. The Institute's project experience in the area of women's empowerment has been multi-faceted and integrative. Specific technical areas of focus for women's empowerment have aligned personal, technical and policy advocacy in areas inclusive of climate change, rural smallholder farmer capacity building, agricultural financing, representative group governance and capacity building for enterprise development, agribusiness and production development, enterprise development and value chain development. The approach is participatory, bottom-up and focused on applicable capacity development as the basis for empowerment so that women beneficiaries are able to apply skills, competencies and knowledge in the areas of value to them. These projects have been valued from under USD10,000 to over USD 500,000. The range of activities undertaken and varying budgets give evidence of the Institute's capability to manage projects of differentiated scopes and with an understanding of the local context and requirements for effectiveness.</p>
Project organization or team's access to women's empowerment	<p>IICA has a long-standing national work programme that supports agriculture and rural development in Saint Lucia. It's work with women stakeholders in agriculture has been principally partnered, but not limited to, working with the Saint Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers (SLNRWP). In addition to Helen's Daughters with whom IICA has collaborative relationship, the Institute has scope for direct national engagement of individual women beneficiaries across Saint Lucia through its extensive work history and relationships. Further, IICA has worked with a number of community groups and civil society organizations that allow for reaching a diverse representation of women for this project which enhances the implementation process and expands the scope for impact and benefit. When coupled with technical partnership with Governmental Departments and specialized development organizations such as the FAO and UNDP GEF SGP, the Institute is well poised to execute the proposed project to the benefit of women in Saint Lucia.</p>
B. 2) Proposed Project Methodology and Deliverables	
Methodology (600 words)	<p>The aim of this project is to build the technical and entrepreneurial capacities of at least 25 women (18 – 65 years old) in sustainable mushroom production. Mushrooms are a high value agricultural product which is also nutrient-dense and capable of being produced under very low-cost systems – even at home. This means that even a small commercial unit producing 100 lbs of mushrooms and selling this at EC\$25/lb is highly lucrative in comparison to other fresh products. These features make mushrooms an ideal candidate for greater participation of women in support of economic empowerment, food and nutrition security and sustainable livelihood development.</p> <p>The project will utilize an actionable knowledge approach that focuses on building technical knowledge, skills and competencies (KSCs), supporting the practical utilization of developed KSCs, and then providing the support structures for sustaining the application of the same for lasting benefit/impact. This actionable knowledge approach has proven to be effective in other cases of socio-organizational and economic development of rural stakeholders in</p>

	<p>Saint Lucia, including women.</p> <p>Taking a systems approach, the project will first establish the operational base for training and supporting the participating women. This will first involve scaling up an existing system for substrate and spawn production to be able to consistently supply to the 25 women producers. The selection of participating women will be done by the project team and partners from the Taiwan Technical Mission through an application process where candidates will be asked to supply a brief video testimonial about themselves, as well as to provide a brief bio (i.e. farmer registration, address, age, etc.) via an application form. The project will also pay particular attention to sustainability parameters related to each candidate (e.g. geographical location, accessibility to inputs, market proximity/linkages, etc.). This will be followed up by site visits to confirm the selected participants and evaluate the specific set-up requirements for a small, scalable mushroom farm. Training will focus on scaling up the mushroom unit, and will guide the participants through selection of suitable species for production based on location and environment, good agricultural practices, quality management, packaging, marketing and specifying a business roadmap for sustainable growth. The latter will form the basis for mentoring/follow-up support and empowerment of the participants to have a vision and plan for growth. With regards to marketing, the project will host specific consumer/buyer engagements to promote both the women producers and their products, thereby creating market linkages.</p> <p>Set up of the commercial units will be done by the project team and the participants team in a type of “koud-meh” (shared labour) to foster greater ownership and commitment to making the investment successful. The Embassy of Taiwan, Taiwan Technical Mission and other specific partners/representatives will be invited to participate in the koud-meh for visibility. Finally, with functional units and market-ready products, the women mushroom producers will be positioned to take their products to market within a facilitated environment and set of arrangements using the Guru marketplace app. This will give women producers improved opportunities, and greater flexibility and control in the supply of their product.</p> <p>The approach is supported and reinforced in the development of scalable mushroom production units which provide access to productive assets, labour-saving techniques, capacity building in good agricultural practices (GAPs), market linkages and marketing support. These contributions directly enhance the economic and technical empowerment of women to have possession of factors of production (especially entrepreneurship to overcome limited resources), obtain sustainable income and ensure better balance between economic pursuits and responsibilities at home/ to family.</p>
<p>Project Plan and Activities (500 words)</p>	<p>A. Upscale the existing systems for sustainable spawn and substrate production</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Procure and install the equipment needed to sustainably scale up spawn and substrate production for supply to training and enterprise development. 2. Establish production and distribution systems. 3. Monitor and improve on the established systems for three (3) months. <p>B. Train and establish small-scale commercial mushroom production units for at least 25 rural women (18 – 65 years old)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify at least 25 interested rural women for training in sustainable mushroom production 2. Develop demo farm units, training manual and other resources for training. 3. Procure the startup material for small scale mushroom production system. 4. Train twenty-five (25) women (18 – 65 years old) in small scale mushroom production

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Set up scalable mushroom farms for twenty-five (25) rural women (18 – 65 years old) across Saint Lucia. 6. Provide coaching and mentoring of rural women in good agricultural practices (GAPs) for mushroom production 7. Monitor, mentor and provide troubleshooting support for the progress of mushroom operations post training for a period of at least 6 months. <p>C. Develop participatory mechanisms for marketing and market linkages</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and execute a consumer/buyer engagement program to establish market linkages and inform product development and marketing. 2. Organize a public awareness campaign to inform the wider public of the health benefits of mushrooms and the types of mushrooms that can be consumed in Saint Lucia 3. Introduce and engage 25 women on the ecommerce platform (GURU) to create and secure guaranteed markets. <p>D. Project branding and visibility</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce project branding materials. 2. Produce empowerment video testimonials of participating women to highlight project outcomes. 3. Produce project video report. <p>See accompanying Project Budget</p>
Project Deliverables and Milestone with detailed timeline (500 words)	<p>Deliverable 1: Production and distribution systems for training and enterprise development of women established (Month 3 – January 2023)</p> <p>Deliverable 2: 25 rural women (28 – 65 years old) trained in small-scale mushroom production (Month 4 – February 2023)</p> <p>Deliverable 3: Establish scalable mushroom units for 25 women (18 – 65 years old) (Month 6 – April 2023)</p> <p>Deliverable 4: Establish product specifications and market linkages for newly established mushroom producers (Month 7 – May 2023)</p> <p>Deliverable 5: Project empowerment testimonials and project report (Month 8 – June 2023)</p>

Project Budget

Item	Details	Qty	Cost per unit USD\$	Total (USD\$)
A1: Upscale the existing systems for sustainable spawn and substrate production and supply				
Peptin	lbs; input to spawn production process	5	50.00	250.00
Agar	lbs; input to spawn production process	5	50.00	250.00
Magnetic Mixer	Spawn production	1	200.00	200.00
Filter	For lamina flow	150	9.00	1350.00
Pellet Maker	Substrate Production	1	750.00	750.00
Autoclave	Substrate Production	1	1000.00	1000.00
Cardboard Shredder	Substrate production	1	500.00	500.00
Wood shredder	Servicing/ensure fully operational of shredder in possession by Taiwan Technical Mission.	1	360.00	360.00
Transportation services	(1) Collection and transportation of substrate materials for processing [est. 10 trips]; & (2) Transportation services for cargo [est. 4 trips].	14	40.00	560.00
Shipping and Handling	Sea/air transport to St Lucia for items purchased overseas. Shipping, handling, duties estimated at 120% of cost of items			4900.00
				<u>10,120.00</u>
A2: Train and Establish small-scale commercial mushroom production units for at least <u>25</u> rural women (18 – 65 years old)				
Participant selection process	Project team (IICA + The Mushroom Collective); in-kind (5 days): develop and conduct evaluation process *1 ppl x US\$190/day; 2 ppl x US\$ 140/day; 2 ppl x US\$ 93/day			
Trainer: Training in Mushroom Production	Group (F2F & virtual) and 1O1 meetings: training and set up of operations. Blended virtual engagement (2 hrs training and 1 hr Q&A) with Face 2 Face engagement: Trainer: US\$186/day each x 15 days (6 weeks)		186.00	2790.00

Item	Details	Qty	Cost per unit USD\$	Total (USD\$)
Trainer: Set up of smallscale commercial mushroom units	Payment for services in evaluating locations, design of units and set up. * In-kind contribution of IICA (1 ppl x US\$190 + 1 ppl x US\$ 70)and The Mushroom Collective (3 ppl @ US\$93/day) for unit design and set up @ max 10 days 2 trainers: US\$93/day each x 25 days (6 weeks)		186.00	4650.00
Materials: Set up of smallscale commercial mushroom units	Supply of starter bags and basic tool set, unit construction materials and environmental management system for optimum production Est. USD 2250/ person		25.00	56250.00
Meals and refreshments	(1) Training: Group F2F sessions x 4 @ US\$ 15/prsn [water/light refreshments] (2) Koud meh: US\$ 20/beneficiary @ 25 beneficiaries			2120.00
Transportation services	Transportation of set up materials	23	140.00	3220.00
Mentorship and Follow-up	2 trainers + project team providing hand-holding post set up over 2 months @ max 15 days. Includes site visits to troubleshoot + virtual meetings/exchanges			
				69,030.00
A3: Develop participatory mechanisms for marketing and market linkages				
Consumer/buyer engagement program	IICA: Preparation and deployment of consumer survey, marketing content development, conducting focus groups and coordinating direct engagement with buyers/distributors	12 days	265.00	3180.00
Buyer/Producer Fora	Women and youth mushroom producer meeting with buyers in their locality to establish market linkages Venue: 2 days @ US\$150/day Refreshments: 60 ppl @ US\$30/ppl			2100.00
Guru on-boarding	Facilitator services: Virtual and individual F2F engagement; US\$120/person	25.00	120.00	3000.00
				8280.00
A4: Project Visibility				
Branding products	Visibility and promotion, marketing: shirts, banner, signage, etc. (lump sum)			3424.00

Item	Details	Qty	Cost per unit USD\$	Total (USD\$)
Audio-visual products	Content Developer: videos/testimonials/adverts development	10	110.00	1100.00
				<u>4,524.00</u>
A5: Project Management and Reporting				
Administrative expenses	Printing, stationary, preparation and management of service providers, site visits, etc.	Lump sum		3250.00
Project Reporting, Branding and Visibility Content Production	IICA: Preparation of project report, social media and visibility material generation	14 days	265.00	3710.00
Procurement	"IICA: Procurement and coordination of logistics	2.2 days	265.00	583.00
				<u>7543.00.00</u>
				<u>99,497.00</u>
	In-Kind Contributions:			
	IICA			11,815.00
	The Mushroom Collective			13,510.00
PROJECT TOTAL				<u>124,822.00</u>

Project Schedule: Where Women Bloom – Supporting Sustainable Livelihoods for Women and Youth through Capacity Building and Inclusivity in the Mushroom Industry

Activity	Tasks	Month						Responsibility (per activity)				
		Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	April 23		May 23	June 23		
Activity 1: Upscale the existing systems for sustainable spawn and substrate production and supply	1.1. Procure and install the equipment needed to sustainably scale up spawn and substrate production for supply to training and enterprise development.										IICA Mushroom Collective	
	1.2 Establish production and distribution systems										IICA Mushroom Collective	
	1.3 Monitor and improve on the established systems for 1.5 months											BTheophile Mushroom Collective
Activity 2: Train and Establish small-scale commercial mushroom production units for at least 25 rural women (18 – 65 years old)	2.1 Develop and implement participant selection process											IICA Mushroom Collective TTM/ICDF
	2.2 Plan demo farm unit designs, training manual and other training resources											IICA Mushroom Collective
	2.3 Procure start-up material for small scale mushroom production											IICA Mushroom Collective

Activity	Tasks	Responsibility (per activity)															
		Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	April 23	May 23	June 23								
	2.4 Train twenty-five (25) women in small scale mushroom production															IICA Mushroom Collective	
	2.5 Set up scalable mushroom farms for twenty-five (25) rural women (18 – 65 years old) across Saint Lucia															IICA Mushroom Collective	
	2.6 Provide coaching, mentoring, monitoring and troubleshooting support to rural women in good agricultural practices (GAPs) for mushroom production post training																IICA Mushroom Collective
Activity 3: Develop participatory mechanisms for marketing and market linkages	3.1.1 Design and execute a consumer/buyer engagement program to establish market linkages, and inform product development and marketing																IICA Mushroom Collective
	3.2.2 Organize a public awareness campaign to inform the wider public of the health benefits of mushrooms and the types of mushrooms that can be consumed in Saint Lucia																IICA Mushroom Collective
	3.3.3 Introduce and engage 25 women on the I-Farm and GURU platforms to create and secure guaranteed markets																IICA Mushroom Collective

Activity	Tasks	Responsibility (per activity)									
		Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	April 23	May 23	June 23		
Activity4: Project Reporting, Branding and Visibility	4.1 1. Produce project branding materials										IICA Mushroom Collective TTM/ICDF
	4.2 2. Produce empowerment video testimonials of participating women to highlight project outcomes										IICA Mushroom Collective
	4.3 3. Produce project video report										IICA Mushroom Collective