



Significant achievements in 2017

Agriculture Opportunity for development in the Americas

Saint Lucia



- IICA supported the St Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers (SLNRWP) in operationalizing the first ever rural community chocolate producing organization in St Lucia. This was achieved through the Associative Internship Project, an activity of IICA's family agriculture project that benefited 20 rural women micro-processors. IICA collaborated with the Alliance for Rural Communities of Trinidad and Tobago (ARCTT), which provided a peer-instructor to build capacity in the Micoud Cluster of SLNRWP. Through additional contributions made by the GIZ CATS Project, rural women members from Rainforest Foods and Jacqo Producers' Group (both based in Fond St Jean) were also able to participate. Since the activity the benefiting members of SLNRWP have been producing and selling 60 – 80% dark chocolate through their networks, and have engaged several large retail distributors for carrying their product with positive feedback.
- The IICA project on family agriculture, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the St Lucia Bureau of Standards, developed a draft farmer certification framework for St Lucia, with the objective of articulating a cost-effective and sustainable system for voluntary adoption of standards to help improve quality and safety assurances in the local and export markets. The initiative was based on the request of private sector processors who collaborated with IICA as beneficiaries and partners in the implementation of the 10th EDF SPS Project in St Lucia, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture. Through a consultative process with farmers, buyers/distributors, exporters and institutions supporting the national quality infrastructure for agriculture, a draft farmer certification framework was developed that is stakeholder-validated, and fosters the adoption of standards for improved quality, safety assurance and market participation.
- A virtual business incubator (VBI) for Caribbean youth in agriculture was developed in collaboration with the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) and with financial support from the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA). The VBI will serve as a resource network and acceleration hub supporting youth entrepreneurship in agriculture by providing Caribbean-specific insight into starting and doing business in 13 Caribbean countries, entrepreneurial ecosystem maps detailing from whom and where start-ups and businesses can access financial and technical support, as well as a networking space for engaging mentors and peers for learning and knowledge-sharing.
- IICA supported the governance capacity development of the Belle Vue Farmers' Cooperative and the Praslin Seamoss Producers Association in order to strengthen internal governance procedures that promote transparency and efficiency of operation. The assessment developed by IICA with input from the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the governance and supporting parameters of the two groups were evaluated and scored in an objective format. This assessment highlighted the absence of standard operating procedures as a key limiting element of governance. Based on these findings, IICA conducted a two-day training session on developing standard operating procedures for critical processes.
- As part of its technical cooperation agenda, IICA supported a Roots & Tubers Value Chain Initiative undertaken by Massy Stores Limited, together with the Ministry of Agriculture. The objective of this programme was to support and promote local production by coordinating with the domestic retail market in order to reduce imports of products with local comparative advantage. The technical

support of IICA fostered collaboration between the partners, development of planning tools for target crop selection, market evaluation and production planning and coordination.

- IICA supported a programme for productivity enhancement in vegetable crops through protected agriculture technology, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Embassy of Mexico in St Lucia. This initiative generated technical cooperation services that were beneficial to procuring resources for programme implementation, coordination between the Ministry of Agriculture, private sector partners and learning institutions, and knowledge transfer by technicians trained through IICA-facilitated capacity building opportunities.
- IICA implemented Phase 5 of the Helping Out Our Primary and Secondary Schools (HOOPSS) which supports the creation and development of school farms/gardens in collaboration with the St Lucia Agricultural Forum for Youth (SLAFY), Massy Stores Limited, and the Ministry of Agriculture.
- IICA hosted a National Dialogue on Climate Services under the Institute's Resilience Project. The national dialogue was a follow-up action recommended in former IICA initiatives in 2016, where stakeholders surveyed spoke specifically of the kinds of information and communication products/services that they required. Through the national dialogue, an opportunity was provided for more inclusive discussion of these demands, notably the specific information needed by different

agricultural stakeholders (farmers, extension officers, agricultural planners, others), and details on communication channels and actors who could support the effective development and dissemination of climate services in Saint Lucia.

- The Institute strengthened the management and operational capacities of Producer and Stakeholder representative organizations in developing work plans, strategic plans, partner relations and implementation of group and external project actions. These actions were done through a combination of training, one-on-one consultations, and supporting participation of representatives in technical and financially-feasible opportunities. These formed part of IICA's technical cooperation programme to promote the inclusion of women and youth in agriculture, as well as support rural development by promoting the clustering and consolidation of smallholder assets for enterprise development.
- IICA hosted four Caribbean Climate Smart Agriculture webinars which promoted stakeholder dialogue and coordination on climate-change-related issues affecting agriculture. The forum recognized the inadequate institutional capacity of both public and private organizations which limits planning and action on climate change adaptation and mitigation. The forum exists as a platform where agricultural stakeholders can share, learn, plan and promote policies, strategies and actions towards more productive, low emission, sustainable agricultural systems that are well adapted to the region's changing climate.



INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR
COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE

www.iica.int

