International Trade Centre

ALLIANCES FOR ACTION

Alliances for Coconut Industry Development in the Caribbean

This project is funded by the European Union

The Caribbean Forum of ACP States
CARIFORUM

Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States

CARDI

Coconut Industry Board

TIME-FRAME: Phase I: 2015 – 2018
Phase II: August 2019 – April 2024

COUNTRIES: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada (Phase II), Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago

FUNDER: European Union

MAIN SDGs SUPPORTED:

Overview

ITC's Alliances for Action, together with the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and partners, has been working since 2015 to mobilize investment, revive the food growing industry, boost the incomes of small-scale farmers and processors in the region.

Coconut farmers and small firms have ramped up productive and commercial capacities in a climate-smart way. They have also increased their competitiveness by tapping into local, regional and international markets for increased economic resilience.

Our current project phase replicates this model across the Caribbean where we will continue to emphasize public and private partnerships from 'farm to fork': from growing to processing, to marketing and market access.

Phase I of the Development of the Coconut Industry for the Caribbean project has catalyzed investment and ramped up productive and commercial capacity amongst beneficiaries. It has improved value capture and productive and governance capacities.

To date **Phase II** has replicated the successful partnerships model across the Caribbean region and scaled-up impact through the Alliances for Action model with a strong focus on commercialization, value addition and investment.

Methodology

Alliances for Action (A4A) is an International Trade Centre (ITC) initiative to establish a network that transforms food systems and advances the Sustainable Development Goals through producer partnerships that cultivate ethical, climatesmart, sustainable agricultural value chains.

We aim at achieving resilience and growth for farmers and MSMEs through more mindful and responsible trade, production and consumption systems and improved opportunities to compete on a global market.

This includes building strength and competitiveness of MSMEs and enabling sustainable market linkages and value addition. In the long term, this will serve to incentivize and engage more youth and women at all sector levels.

Alliances for Action | 5 Pillars

The Alliances for Action 5-pillar approach aims for scalable improvement in the health of agricultural value chains, the sustainability of food systems, and thereby in the competitiveness of smallholder farmers and MSMEs.

1 UNDERSTAND

- Markets & value chain systems
- Sustainability gaps and opportunities
- Business ecosystem
- Value addition and diversification potential

2 CONVENE

- Establish responsible and inclusive public-private production and commercialization alliances
- Connect actors from farm to fork

3 TRANSFORM

- Upgrade capacities for MSMEs and TISIs to compete
- Support responsible and sustainable production and trade
- Enable policy to put Alliances into Action

4 INVEST

- Promote responsible investment in the Alliances
- Derisk investment and finance

5 IMPACT

- M&E for responsible production and trade
- Traceability of impact from farm to fork
- Communication & promotion
- Ethical business models

RESILIENCE, BETTER TRADE & GROWTH

Impact achieved thanks to the Alliances for Action Network in the Caribbean:

Ministerio de Agricultura, República Dominicana
Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries & Barbuda Affairs, Antigua & Barbuda
Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS), Barbados
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, the Environment, Sustainable Development and Immigration of the Government of Belize
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Dominica
Ministry of Agriculture of Guyana
Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries (MICAF) of Jamaica
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Co-operatives, Saint Lucia
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Rural Transformation, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines
Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV), Suriname
Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, Trinidad & Tobago
Alligator Head Foundation
Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA)
Barbados National Conservation Commission (NCC)
Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE)
Banana Industry Board, Jamaica
Bananos Ecológicos de la Línea Noroeste (BANELINO)
Barbados National Standards Institution (BNSI)
Basque Culinary Center (BCC)
Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA)
Belize Bureau of Standards (BBS)
Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA)
Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA)
CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ)
Center for Agricultural Research (CELOS)
Centro de Investigación Científica de Yucatán (CICY)
CLAC Comercio Justo
Coconut Industry Board (CIB), Jamaica
Development Bank of Jamaica Limited
Development Finance Corporation, Belize
Export Saint Lucia
Government Analyst –Food and Drug Department (GA- FDD), Guyana
Guyana Marketing Corporation (GMC)
Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA)
Institute Of Private Enterprise Development (IPED),Guyana
Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
Instituto Dominicano de Investigaciones Agropecuarias y Forestales (IDIAF)
International Coconut Community (ICC)
International Coconut Genetic Resources Network (COGENT)
Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO)
Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana (JAD)
Ministry of Economic Affairs, Suriname
National Agriculture Research and Extension Institute (NAREI)
Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA)
Saint Lucia Bureau of Standards (SLBS)
Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (SALCC)
Scientific Research Council (SRC), Jamaica
Small Business Bureau (SBB)
Suriname Business Forum (SBF)
University of the West Indies (UWI)

Laying the Foundations

Phase I of the Development of the Coconut Industry for the Caribbean project succeeded in reviving a dormant industry, leveraging its potential, and mobilizing investment into the region's coconut industry.

It focused notably on Access to Finance and Investment as the catalyst for the development of the Caribbean Coconut Industry that will enable and amplify activity results at all levels of the value chain.

Strategic partnerships with government bodies, private sector stakeholders (including major conglomerates), private and development banks and farmer organizations were fostered.

THE RESULT

By tapping into a strategic network and increasing its attractiveness to investors, Phase I successfully mobilized over **$40 million of investments into the Caribbean coconut industry**.

FOCUS AREAS

Climate-Smart Alliances in Action: sustainably increase productivity and incomes, increase resilience to climate change effects and reduce environmental footprint

Women Empowerment: empower through knowledge, participation, equal opportunities and increased representation at decision-making level

Value addition: Build strength and competitiveness of MSMEs through sustainable market linkages and value addition

Next Coconut Generation: Engage, motivate and mobilize younger generations to improve livelihoods and modernize the industry

Maximizing the impact

Building stronger and inclusive value chains in the Caribbean coconut industry has tremendous potential to empower communities associated with the business. Phase II is improving market linkages and bringing together stakeholders in the public and private sector for building a resilient and commercially driven coconut industry in the region as a major contributor to global coconut trade.

OBJECTIVES

Phase II is building on Phase I guided by the following objectives:

1. Foster partnerships to expand the Alliances for Action partner network;
2. Improve capacity of farmers, processors, business owners and support institutions in the coconut sector;
3. Increase momentum of investment mobilization

EXPECTED RESULTS

Reinforced producer groups and support services to improve coconut producer and enterprises performance

Improved market linkages and facilitation of public and private sector stakeholder networks to coordinate implementation of market and sector development plans

Long term collaboration between value chain operators and guiding Caribbean support services to assist with commercially driven value chain development

Strong and inclusive value chains providing tangible outputs with improved community incomes

Improving adaptation and mitigation capabilities with resilience to climate events

Scaling up

Replicating the Alliances for Action model across the coconut industry in the Caribbean will help establish long-term relationships between producers, processors and buyers.

A strategic network of alliances for production, commercialization and provision of support service packages has been established. Accelerated digitalization opportunities spurred by the COVID-19 crisis have helped reach and impact project beneficiaries more effectively, as they have become more active online. Online trainings through webinars have proven particularly successful.

ITC and CARDI have integrated a COVID-19 response approach into project implementation through urgent adaptive measures that contribute to COVID-19 impact mitigation and to post COVID-19 recovery. They are designed to build resilience and flexibility at the MSME / Farmer Association level and at the Country/institutional level.

Income and risk diversification are the key elements around which development of the industry revolves – for the financial partners, the smallholder farmers and the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

The second phase of this project is replicating best practices captured in the first phase, keeping up investment momentum and strengthening the Caribbean coconut industry's capacities and partnership networks.

IMPACT TO DATE (as of 1st quarter 2022)

8,000+ people reached through online technical trainings and sessions

9 partnerships developed with farmer cooperatives associating 8,300+ members in coconuts and 25,000 in other crops

Network of 102 support institutions

2,290 farmers reached directly with enhanced support services

23 climate smart irrigation systems installed via COVID-19 & drought rapid response

137 coconut processors for activation of product development and commercial alliances

15 value added products produced as part of COVID-19 rapid response on income diversification

30+ financial institutions and 50+ agri-MSMEs consulted through Finance for Action: Access to Finance Landscape Study

45 Nurseries established and/or rehabilitated

1,000,000+ USD investment leveraged (cash & in-kind).

Testimonials

FARMER PERSPECTIVE, GUYANA

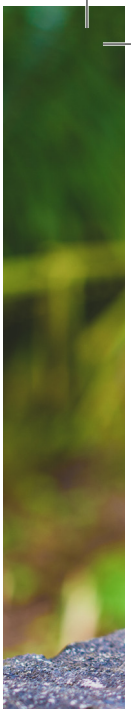
'When I arrived here in 2016, Hope Nursery was on the brink of bankruptcy and collapse with only 5 bins and 1500 seedlings' says Ricky, Manager. 'Through the project and partnerships with the Ministry of Agriculture and international development agencies, we have increased the number of bins to 85 and the production capacity to 100,000 seedlings per annum. With the improved efficiency we are now a profitable enterprise looking for export markets for our quality seedlings.'

Ricky Roopchand, Manager, Hope Nurseries

FARMER PERSPECTIVE, BELIZE

'We are grateful for the platform, since it is through the platform we were able to link with farmers and other potential buyers who were in need of both seed nuts and seedlings. Without this ability to network we would have had mature seedlings on our hands leading to significant losses of income. The platform has also enabled us to share and receive information which we have adopted to improve our operations. It has been a vital part of our marketing efforts as well.'

Edward Flowers, General Manager, San Miguel Farms



Nature's Little Secret
100% PURE
Extra Virgin Coconut Oil
Heat-Free
Naturally Dominica
Nature's Little Secret
Extra Virgin Coconut Oil
Net Weight: 12.16 fl. Oz. (360 ml)
Nature's Little Secret
100% PURE
Extra Virgin Coconut Oil
Heat-Free
Naturally Dominica

DEVELOPMENT BANK PERSPECTIVE, JAMAICA

'The DBJ and ITC have established an alliance for financing activities for the coconut industry. The ultimate goal is to improve the skills, confidence and knowledge base of farmers and processors so they can efficiently grow and manage their operations.'

Paul Chin, General Manager, DBJ Micro Finance Services Division

FARMER PERSPECTIVE, SURINAME

'From my operations farmers can see first-hand how to sustainably manage their resources while being productive. Every part of the coconut tree can be converted into valuable products. We remain motivated and inspired to explore new opportunities!'

Lead farmer Ricardo Vriesde

FARMER PERSPECTIVE, DOMINICAN REPUBIC

'When my farm was flooded, the coconut trees survived. With support from ITC and the BANELINO Farmers Association, I will be able to diversify production, supplement my income, and secure my family's well-being.'

Organic coconut and banana Lead farmer Maria Genao, BANELINO

VALUE ADDITION DURING COVID-19, DOMINICA

'As we all try to survive this pandemic, I'm reminded of the economic value, medicinal and health benefits of coconut oil. The coconut tree itself is a symbol of survival and resilience.

During this pandemic, Huile Dominique Coconut oil did not only survive but thrived as a result of cooking oil shortages and people spending more time exploring healthy cooking options. More people are reaching for coconut oil as a healthy alternative to regular vegetable oil.'

Kamisha Dominique, founder of Huile Dominique

CLIMATE-INCOME SMART DURING COVID-19, JAMAICA

'We were able to put in climate-smart irrigation and continue with our intercropping during the drought and during the COVID-19 pandemic. We planted papayas, sweet peppers, pumpkins, plantains, hot peppers and as a result we were able to keep our workers at work every day. The extra produce means we can supply the local market in and around the area and get extra income.'

Adrian Robinson, Lead Farmer

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Find out more about the project here

Follow us on Instagram here.

Street address
International Trade Centre
54-56 Rue de Montbrillant
1202 Geneva, Switzerland

P: +41 22 730 0111
F: +41 22 733 4439
E: alliances@intracen.org
www.intracen.org

Postal address
International Trade Centre
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

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