



GREEN REPORTER



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DAY 2020**

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**SGP BARBADOS NSC,
2020-2022**

MESSAGE BY NATIONAL COORDINATOR

David Bynoe

Welcome to another special edition of the SGP Green Reporter. The world is currently at war with an unseen enemy that does not discriminate by gender, race, class or country. We are all at risk in the fight against COVID-19! The economic, social and public health implications of this fight have already proven to be catastrophic for most countries. During this trying and difficult period civil society has demonstrated their resilience and the essential nature of their work to uplift and preserve the very fabric of society.

In this edition of the SGP Green Reporter we are pleased to highlight how our civil society partners are evolving to remain relevant in the face of COVID-19 and the essential work that they have been doing on the frontline of this battle. This is being achieved through innovation, meaningful partnerships, strategic interventions and scalable initiatives that are helping to flatten the curve, meet the needs of the most vulnerable while protecting our environment.

We know that you will find this special COVID-19 edition informative and interesting, so please share it within your networks, inclusive of partners, colleagues, friends and family. On behalf of the GEF SGP Barbados team, I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support, stay safe and join me in saluting our civil society partners who demonstrate that civil society matters.





COVID-19 IMPACT ON GRANTEE NETWORK

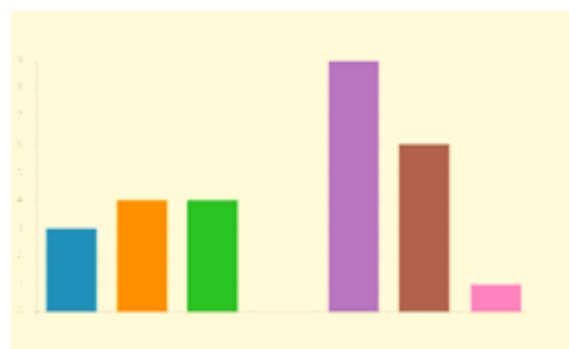
By Karen Harper, Programme Assistant

The 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) more popularly known as COVID-19 was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China in December 2019. Following initial investigations, the respiratory virus rapidly spread throughout China, across borders and international waters wreaking havoc on the health, well being and socio-economic stability of practically every country in its path.

During these uncertain and unprecedented times the work of our civil society partners has been impacted due to the physical distancing measures and other government mandated closures that were implemented to flatten the curve. From the early stages, SGP Barbados sought to gather both quantitative and qualitative data to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on project implementation within the grantee network as well as reshaping our operations to provide continued support and technical assistance during these trying times.

The survey was conducted among 15 grantee organisations with active SGP projects. The results showed that COVID-19 has negatively impacted 82% of these organisations due to one or more of the following factors; organisation closures; loss of staff or volunteers; lack of access to public services; cancellation or postponement of activities or events and limited access to project beneficiaries.

Organization closure	3
Loss of staff/volunteers	4
Lack of access to public services	4
Lack of access to online resour...	0
Cancellation or postponement...	9
Limited access to project bene...	6
Other	1



Grantee responses identifying the negative impacts as a result of COVID 19.



"...The first impact was on our youth that we have been working with. They are no longer at school... It has also meant that many of our partners have not been at work, and we have had to find alternate ways to move the project forward..."

In spite of these challenges, our civil society partners remain steadfast by navigating the uncharted 'waters' of the new normal in the face of COVID-19. One of these grantees is Healing Waters International Ministries (HWIM) which has been developing and manufacturing solutions as a direct response to the pandemic.

According to Dr Angela Moore, President of HWIM, "In April, Healing Waters was able to bring the first batch of products off the production line, and we look forward to answering the call of our nation in its time of need." For the charity, COVID-19 became an opportunity to launch deeper in the production and testing of their hand sanitizers, organic hand washes and moisturizers following the launch of their 'Go Green with Teens' project launch in November 2019. The products have been tested and are at the standard suitable for use against COVID-19 containing 70-75% alcohol.

In addition, the blue economy project includes local inputs such as Sargassum seaweed and Aloe Vera, *aloe barbadensis*. Although the initial project focus has changed due to physical distancing and the closures of schools and other organisations, Dr Angela Moore, President stated "COVID-19 was not in any of our project plans for 2020. For Healing Waters, the first impact was on our youth that we have been working with. They are no longer at school, and the shutdown means planned activities have had to be shelved for a moment. It has also meant that many of our partners have not been at work, and we have had to find alternate ways to move the project forward." Some of these alternative ways included tapping into online communication platforms to maintain contact and interaction with the project's beneficiaries.



[Visit Healing Waters on Facebook](#)

[Watch HWI interview on Mornin' Barbados CBC TV8](#)



Despite the change in the project, Dr Moore remains positive and encourages others to look beyond the immediate tomorrow. She emphasised "...let us all work together, to see how we can build things better than they were before".



Dr Angela Moore, HWIM President and her Assistant in the production area.

Photos compliments Healing Waters International Ministries

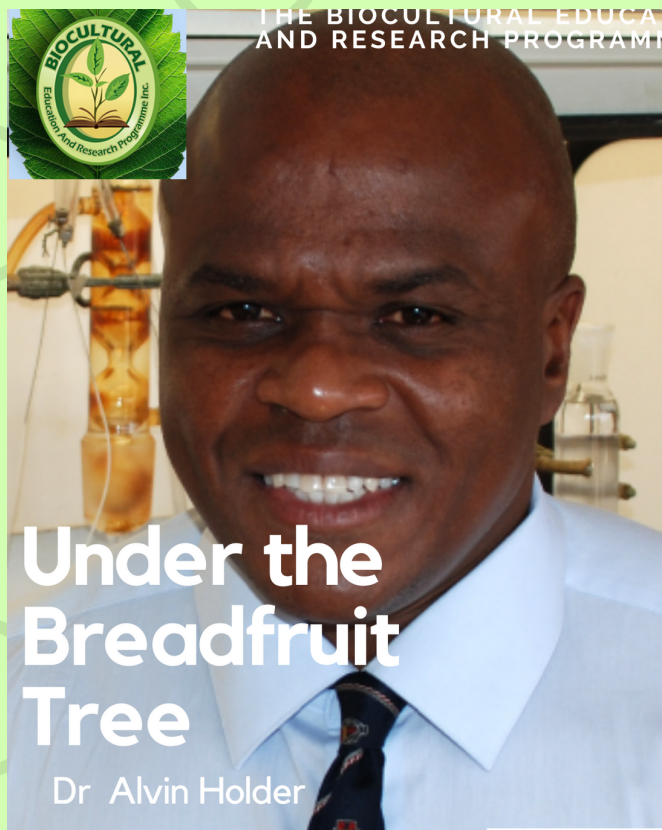
COPING IN A NEW DYNAMIC

*by Sonia Peter, Ph.D, Director,
Biocultural Education and Research
Programme*

The Biocultural Education and Research Programme (BERP) continues its focus on promoting conservation of plants with medicinal and nutritive value in Barbados. Our platform is one based on education and research and our projects all revolve around this model. Like many of our other grantee counterparts, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges in pushing forward our programme to attain targets but the period also provides time for reflection. On emerging from the restrictions imposed on a global level, business cannot be as usual.

The collective islands of the Caribbean region must take a big step towards true food security and sustainable economic development. Agriculture must be at the forefront of new initiatives to create a Caribbean basket of fresh goods and agriproducts to feed the region.

Trade and tax policies must be upgraded to facilitate easier business and our tourism industry must be fully integrated with the new agricultural framework. Health care has been given adequate focus throughout the islands but lessons are being learnt and weaknesses exposed as we respond to the pulmonary disease caused by the novel coronavirus. Now is the time for health care professionals to embrace herbal and nutritive medicine in their practices, where relevant and applicable. These responses must, however, be supported by a critical mass of mechanisms of which education and scientific research are pivotal. Here is where the work being done across the Caribbean region by grantees becomes invaluable.



Those working in the areas of food security, health and plant biodiversity can inform coping strategies and establish networks for knowledge sharing. Now more than ever, in recent history, we understand that we must link our arms to lift each other out of this challenging time.

BERP decided to reach out to regional and international scientists to discuss plant research and how it can inform our response to issues referenced.

Interviews will be conducted within the series titled 'Under the Breadfruit Tree' in honour of the breadfruit which we believe can become a major player in agriproduct development. Already it is being explored as a source of flour, but its application is much wider including the production of nutraceuticals. Noted scientists conducting research for the next antibiotic, treatments for cancer and diabetes, new methods of farming will sit with the Director of BERP for these virtual conversations. **Interviews are uploaded to our [Facebook](#) page every Saturday for the months of May and June 2020 at 7:00 pm.**



FOOD SECURITY

A NATIONAL PRIORITY

by Marlon Charles, Director, Family Heartbeat International Network

The issue of food security has become one of national priority in Barbados and across the Caribbean, with a challenge being issued to the Caribbean by Barbados' Prime Minister and CARICOM Chairman, the Honourable Mia Amor Mottley to slash its annual US\$4 billion food import bill by at least a quarter over the next five years.

Family Heartbeat International Network (FHIN), in partnership with Healing for the Soul Ministries and Excel Worldwide Agriculture Ltd has responded to this challenge having successfully acquired a planning grant from the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) implemented by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which has assisted in the development of a proposal to support the farming department of Her Majesty's Prison Dodds.

This programme will provide the necessary resources required to significantly improve and increase the productive operations of their current farming program.

It is also envisioned that the crops and livestock produced as a result of the program will not only supply the existing needs of the institution making it self-sufficient, but its surplus will be sold to the public.

The impact of current COVID-19 pandemic has indeed been felt during the critical planning stage of this programme and has resulted in the need to adapt our approach. Working within the parameters of the national restrictions on movement over the past few weeks, we have increased the use of technology, utilising platforms such as Zoom Meeting to facilitate meetings as we continue to engage with all of our stakeholders. Furthermore, the potential national impact of this pandemic has reinforced the need, importance and urgency of such a program which among several other benefits, will not only ensure food security for an already vulnerable population i.e. those currently being incarcerated, but will add to the current initiatives being spearheaded by our government and other interest groups to address this issue.

A revised look at food security during pandemic conditions

By John Hunte, Secretary, Organic Growers and Consumers Organisations (OGCA)

With a truly global response to this most recent pandemic COVID-19, countries such as Barbados are witnessing changes in fresh food distribution that will change the way that agriculture is viewed in the future. Nearly every traditional marketing opportunity for independent farms changed within a fortnight. Wholesalers of local food crops have also had to drastically adjust their sales options with hotels, supermarkets, restaurants, cruise ships, out door central markets, various farm markets and school meals departments, all closed. The farmers and produce that would have been earmarked for those markets has now being redirected to delivery and pick up services and on the whole, this has been taken up with haste by many farmers and distributors advertising their produce on social media and hitting the streets to make sales.

It is an uncoordinated effort and because of this it is hard to gauge the effectiveness of the strategy, to ensure traceability and to standardise prices.



Photos compliments the Organic Growers and Consumers Organisations (OGCA)

The projections on food production levels during the dry season have always been difficult to estimate and without the traditional marketing outlets there are some considering a possible shortage of fresh produce due to COVID-19 hit production and distribution lines, while others are anticipating an oversupply on the market due to a lack of tourists. A level of stability and coordination can be supplied by the careful intervention of government agencies, in particular the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (BADMC) and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.

Thankfully the Ministry of Agriculture and BADMC have been positioning themselves to be able to organise the semi centralised and redistribution of agricultural produce through the Zonal and pack house system, which has been coming on stream over the past 2 years.

Now may be the ideal time for government to mobilise the resources to fast track this agency, in conjunction with other organised farming organisations, to mitigate the possibilities and negative effects of shortfalls, gluts and non suitable produce getting onto the market

Price stability can be achieved in this manner and a measure of organised distribution that works within the sensible restrictions that reduce the likelihood of community spread of viral contamination.

Additionally, with the large number of sudden unemployed, due to shut downs and lay offs, maintaining affordable prices of fresh vegetables and ground provisions and reducing the possibility of price gouging, will be an important social function to alleviate the stressful conditions that many households are currently facing. This is all happening in a dynamic environment that can, without much capacity to forecast, return to near normal conditions, with supermarkets restocking, schools and colleges reopening and fast food and other restaurants returning to patronage. However, this whole period remains to be historically noted as lessons learnt and to be built upon in anticipation of the next time.

The original article was posted on the Organic Growers and Consumers Organisations (OGCA) [Facebook](#) page on April 13, 2020.



Photos compliments the Organic Growers and Consumers Organisations (OGCA)

THE GROW SMART YOUTH FARM PROJECT

*by Franz Harewood-Hamblin, Director,
Empower Youth International*

The impact of the global pandemic (COVID-19) has both positively and negatively impacted our sustainable agriculture youth project. Firstly, one major positive is that because of COVID-19, Barbadians have sought to rely more on the local farmers for their food supply and this has been a positive for our project in that because of the increase demand for local produce, our Grow Smart Youth Farm is well-positioned to help meet this demand with its 4.5 acres of arable land.

However, the recent layoffs and unemployment of persons have restricted some people's access to sufficient, diverse and nutritious sources of food because they lack sufficient income for such purchases. Thankfully, before COVID-19, Empower Youth International (EYI) was at the forefront of combating poverty and improving food insecurity by assisting senior citizens and vulnerable rural families with fresh vegetables (sweet potatoes, pumpkin, squash, cucumbers etc.) from our youth garden. One of the best things about our project is that that we are also helping to decrease the impact of non-communicable diseases by providing healthy food to residents in the community and without the GEF Small Grants Programme implemented by UNDP this would not be possible.

Another major impact that COVID-19 brought was the government expansion of crop production in the country. Due to increase focus now on food security, the Barbados Government has increased farming and imposed extensive water harvesting in the area of our farm. This has severely impacted the available water supply needed to conduct open field farming. These occurrences have forced Empower Youth International (EYI) to find and introduce new technologically innovative solutions to farming—such as Aquaponics. Aquaponics is a form of agriculture that combines raising fish in tanks with soil-less plant culture (hydroponics). The nutrient-rich water from raising fish provides a natural fertilizer for the plants and the plants help to purify the water for the fish. One of the most profound things about aquaponics is that it uses 90% less water and grows six times more per food per square foot than traditional farming.

But this is not all that we have up our sleeve, we are finding innovative solutions to reach youth interested in agri-business too, stay connected through our social media handles www.empoweryouthint.org or [growSMARTyouthfarm](https://www.instagram.com/growSMARTyouthfarm) on Instagram to hear more about it!

COVID-19 does not have to be the end of the world, we the people of the Caribbean are creative, we know how to turn a tragedy into a treasure!

EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19



By Hallam Hope, CARITEL

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the essential role Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are playing to alleviate the many challenges most vulnerable Barbadian citizens are facing. The lock down of the society has resulted, for example, in transportation challenges, reduced incomes as companies no longer earning the same level of income have had to adjust, leading to less money for some households to buy food and pay utility bills.

It has put more pressure on getting food out to the homeless, challenges for farmers to tend to their crops and suddenly transformed student learning from the traditional class room to the home where online education has brought issues with access to computers, the distractions of the home and adequate bandwidth. Fresh impetus has come from the revitalised Barbados Association of Non Governmental Organisations (BANGO), which groups more than 99 civil society bodies.

BANGO has been reaching out for support for its members, has been utilising social media and technology such as Zoom meetings to design its strategic approach to the new pressures COVID-19 has brought to these volunteer organisations.

While times might have worsened for some of the most vulnerable, the fact is bills such as electricity, water, cell, telephone and Internet still have to be paid. But many Barbadians still prefer to stand in lines to pay bills at their commercial bank which could further increase their exposure to the virus. Rather than risk health these bills may all be paid from the comfort of the home. A new initiative has been implemented to identify funding for a national project for the elderly to assist them with understanding how they can pay utility bills and even land tax online. With the endorsement of BANGO the aim is to provide online assistance directly to those in need of help to understand the procedures and assist them with computer literacy problem-solving. Online payments has been around since SurePay was launched in 2004 yet there has been no long-term plan to assist the elderly.

With most commercial banks offering online banking it is quite simple to pay for bank services online and check on balances to ensure bills paid by this means are deducted from the relevant accounts. Additionally, citizens will have no choice as at least one bank has announced the posting of statements online will replace mailed statements.

A close-up photograph of an aloe vera plant, showing its thick, green, serrated leaves. The leaves are arranged in a fan-like pattern, and the background is softly blurred, showing more of the plant and some greenery.

HOUSE OF REDISCOVERY

by Ian Douglas, Founder & Chairperson

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD Report, 2013) outlined the urgent necessity for hyper-local, self-reliant village designs to prepare for an additional two plus billion people joining the planet by 2050. When we started the idea for a community based citizen science Eco-lab in 2015, the Eco-Lab project had its genesis in Operational Phase Five (OP5) of the Global Environmental Facility GEF, Small Grants Programme (SGP) initiative in 2016. While land degradation, reforestation and climate change mitigation were some of the original focal points, we desired to evolve our research and development in plant based herbal healthcare, eco-pharmaceuticals and natural cosmetics.

Up to the point of the planning grant we were thinking narrowly without realising the true potential. Interestingly, some people thought that we were beginning to have our wires twisted, dreaming because of the scope of what we wanted to achieve.

In reality those with scientific background in agriculture and related areas thought that this was (mad). However this labelling from a pseudo intellectual group dynamic in the Barbadian vernacular and deeper

psyche stems from our colonial experiences and religious conditioning which continue to keep our people divided.

It became apparent beyond our idea with the Eco-lab that serious healing and psychological reparation was needed from new perspectives and paradigms, hence we have transliterate being MAD to (Making A Difference) used by the [Organic Growers and Consumers Association] (OGCA) at their organic certification launch in 2017. Developing complex choreographies, directing and creating multi layered projects introduced Ian Douglas to large scale wide thinking, while his interest in electronics, robotics and in particular the micro world of agriculture and herbal lore introduced him to Nano and Micro thinking.

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has given relevance and urgency for developing the model of the Ethno-botanical lab along with the charity's work with climate change mitigation, environment advocacy, food security and the smart class ideas centred on remote Working scenarios. In the fight against COVID-19 pandemic we are currently looking at several plants including; "Conga Lana" (*Eclipta prostrata*) Shine bush (*Peperomia pellucida*) Wormwood "*Artemisia*

a year's overview

HRD Activities

Annua", The Baobab tree (Adansonia digitata) and Mile tree "the casuarina" (Casuarina equisetifolia)

In the initial stage of the Eco-lab project we envisioned only high-tech working space, with test tubes, digital microscopes and fast analytical computers etc.

Utilising our experience with medicinal herbs, visiting a South African Agro University, incorporating areas of the performing arts and my high tech hobby created the S-M-A-R-T-C.L.A.S.S module.

We received an invitation to replicate the Eco-lab project in Ghana from our partners there. We were that adamant the first lab must be in Barbados as a model community centre. The low tech aspect became clearer as we looked at how we will incorporate the performing arts, using drumming, dance, and drama and in musical instruments in scientific research modules connected to plant alchemy.

This high and low tech science approach will driving more and more people to do more critical research and looking back to their ancestral traditions.

SMART relates to: Sustainable Management of Agricultural Resources and Training while CLASS is the Eco-Lab complementing courses: Cultural -Learning- Aid - Studies - Sessions, SMART-CLASS is based on remote working and learning with an (AI remote module) as a template for local and long-distant home-based citizen's science learning. The concept allows for different scenarios of coordination such as meetings, collaborative work and training.

#WED2020

June 5 - Celebrate Biodiversity

Upon the heels of a successful execution of the 2019 Small Island Future Fest (SIFF), SGP Barbados was ready for another execution of this event to celebrate World Environment Day 2020.

COVID-19 happened. This meant re-imagining celebrations for World Environment Day and World Oceans Day as the plans for the much anticipated SIFF halted abruptly in March once the pandemic reached our shores. Immediately our vision of a two day street festival transitioned to hosting and co-hosting approximately 20 online sessions including Facebook live tours, ask an expert session via ZOOM and Skype to highlight the work of the grantee network in our local communities. Like many new experiences, this 'new normal' brought many learning lessons, however, we embraced the challenges and succeeded!

From 2-8 June our week of activities received remarkable online engagement from the grantees and the general public who were able to access our social media to 'Contact an expert, go on a tour and celebrate their environment'.



SGP Barbados Week of Activities 2-8 June 2020

JUNE 2

6:50AM SGP in the Media – Launch of 2020 World Environment Day Activities on Mornin' Barbados CBC TV8

JUNE 3: SGP Partners Facebook Live Tours

- 10AM Bairds 'Village Aquaponic Association
- 2PM: Renewable Energy & Youth with Nature Fun Ranch

JUNE 4: Ask an Expert (Part 1)

10-11AM

- Medicinal Plants of Barbados and Food Security with Dr Sonia Peter, Biocultural Education and Research Programme
- Coral Reef Restoration with Zoe Lisk, Coral Reef Restoration Alliance
- Renewable Energy and Organic Farming with Aidan Rogers and Christine Preece

12-1 pm

- Permaculture with Erle Rahaman-Noronha, Caribbean Permaculture Research Institute (CPRI).

2-3PM

- Aquaponics with Damian Hinkson, Baird's Village Aquaponic Association. Contact Damian on WhatsApp at 258-1695.
- Sustainable Lifestyle Products with Dr Angela Moore – Healing Waters International Ministries. Contact Dr Moore on WhatsApp at 257-6650.

JUNE 5 : SGP Partners Facebook Live Tours

- 10AM Medicinal Plants Museum Tour with Biocultural Education and Research Programme

JUNE 5 : SGP Partners Facebook Live Tours

- **3PM Organic Farm Tour with Organic Growers and Consumers Association. Join the Facebook Live Tour via ‘Organic Growers and Consumers Association (OGCA)’**

JUNE 6: Ask an Expert (Part 2)

10-11AM

- Medicinal Plants of Barbados and Food Security with Dr Sonia Peter, Biocultural Education and Research Programme
- Coral Reef Restoration with Zoe Lisk, Coral Reef Restoration Alliance

11-12PM: Renewable Energy & Organic Farming with Aidan Rogers and Christine Preece

2-3PM

- Aquaponics with Damian Hinkson, Baird’s Village Aquaponic Association. Contact Damian on WhatsApp at 258-1695
- Sustainable Lifestyle Products with Dr Angela Moore – Healing Waters International Ministries. Contact Dr Moore on WhatsApp at 257-6650

Click here to visit GEF Small Grants Programme Barbados on Facebook for access to WED recorded sessions.

World Oceans Day 2020

June 8

ZOOM chat with Coral Reef
Restoration Alliance (CORALL)
on Coral Reef Restoration &
Monitoring



[Access the recording by clicking CORALL's logo.](#)

[Click here to read more about CORALL's activities](#)

SGP BARBADOS NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE (NSC), 2020-2022



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Association**
Financial Management
Focal Point & Specialist



**Ron Goodridge - Ministry
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