



SGP GREEN REPORTER



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MESSAGE BY NATIONAL COORDINATOR

Welcome to the holiday edition of the SGP Green Reporter.

The year 2020 has been nothing short of remarkable, some would say for many of the wrong reasons. The COVID-19 pandemic remains the most defining event of 2020, it has metamorphosize from a health crisis into the greatest social and economic crisis of our lifetime. The implications are so wide reaching that it has impeded progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite this enormous challenge of COVID-19, civil society has adapted, maintained their relevance and brought hope of a brighter 2021 to many.

In this edition of the SGP Green Reporter we are pleased to highlight some initiatives of our civil society partners that in the face of COVID-19 are remarkable for all the right reasons and contribute to the attainment of the SDGs. This is being achieved through innovation, meaningful partnerships, strategic interventions, and scalable initiatives that utilize nature-based solutions, incorporate technology and meet the needs of the most vulnerable while protecting our environment.

On behalf of the GEF SGP Barbados team, thank you to all contributors who submitted articles for this edition. We hope that you, the reader, will find this edition informative and interesting; so please share it within your networks, including partners, colleagues, friends and family.

Happy Holidays & A Prosperous New Year!

David Bynoe





Resilience in the face of COVID-19: Food security and livelihoods

By Kerron Hamblin, Subregional Junior Programme Officer

Firstly, let me take a moment to extend wishes for safety and health to you and yours this holiday season. 2020 marked the beginning of the Decade of Action towards the Sustainable Development Goals, however since its very first confirmed case in the Caribbean sub-region on March 13, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has taken the central spotlight. With restrictions on commercial air travel, mass unemployment, and burgeoning public debt, the theme of “resilience in the face of adversity” has become top-of-mind for many Caribbean governments, forcing them to rethink their models for economic development. But what is resilience? The Oxford Dictionary defines resilience as “the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties or adjust easily to misfortune or change”.

Indeed, many projects implemented across the sub-region through the GEF-Small Grants Programme had to quickly adapt to the changes brought on by the pandemic, seemingly overnight. This involved issuing extensions to those projects which were experiencing delays, rethinking the ways that projects were monitored due to postponement of all non-urgent travel, movement of physical meetings and workshops to digital platforms and where possible, the reallocation of SGP resources to respond to COVID-19.

Food Security

Throughout the sub-region, disruptions in domestic food supply chains, other shocks affecting food production and the loss of incomes have highlighted the vulnerability that SIDS face relating to food security.



During the pandemic in Petite Martinique, the “Women in Action” women’s group, through a 16 month aquaponics project financed through SGP Grenada was able to supply fresh produce to residents of the island after imports of agricultural produce from mainland Grenada and neighboring St Vincent were severely reduced as a result of COVID-19.

Livelihoods

Tourism accounts for almost 30% of SIDS’ gross domestic product. The reduction of commercial air travel to the Region resulted in reduced incomes or unemployment for thousands of workers in the tourism sector, placing strain on many other areas of their lives. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, a local NGO, Sustainable Grenadines Inc., worked with fisherfolk in the Grenadine Islands of Bequia, Union Island and Mayreau to provide supplementary forms of livelihoods through honey production and seamoss farming through a Strategic grant received from SGP St Vincent & the Grenadines.



Slow Soup Drive

A COVID-19 RESPONSE



Volunteers and chefs cooking side by side at the borrowed kitchen in the Horny Ram. (Photo: Slow Foods Barbados)

Slow Food Barbados believes that Chefs and Farmers can unite to create a more sustainable, food-secure island, while supporting our communities.

This COVID-19 crisis has heightened the fact that there are many who do not have adequate access to wholesome food, especially for families whose income has not yet returned. The truth is; the need was there, before COVID-19 appeared. With guidance from several aid organizations including The Red Cross, and through community partnership with the Parish Independence Committees, the Lions Club and the St Lucy DEO, many vulnerable families in need have been discretely identified.

As a response, the Slow Soup Drive was born in April 2020. 24 volunteer chefs have been giving their time, alongside volunteers, in a culinary all-hands-on-deck approach. Utilizing 3 borrowed kitchens to deliver warm, wholesome bowls of nutrition, **ONE SLOW SOUP** at a time.

From April to September 2020, when the lack of nutritious food available peaked, over 16,000 soups were delivered to vulnerable persons in 4 parishes by amazing volunteer delivery teams of over 60 people. The Slow Soup story is truly one of community.



As our island slowly turned back on, soup production has slowed but not stopped. The Initiative is in discussion with partnering organizations to continue the much needed efforts of the Slow Soup Drive. Please contact us if your organization is able to lend assistance with funding, donations, delivery, and volunteerism.



Chefs working tirelessly using donated produce in a borrowed kitchen. (Photo: Slow Foods Barbados)

To learn more and get involved:

Instagram / Facebook:

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Web: www.slowfoodbarbados.org

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A warm, hearty, nutritious, locally sourced soup (Photo: Slow Foods Barbados)

The initiative recognizes the important role our farmers play in co-creating a healthy food and healthcare system. Thanks to generous monetary donations the Slow Soup Drive has been able to purchase fresh produce from local farmers, helping to secure their livelihoods and building food security.

The Slow Soup Drive speaks to issues on food waste, malnutrition, food security and the benefits of a circular economy.



A team of chefs and volunteers working together. (Photo: Slow Foods Barbados)

Gender mainstreaming as a COVID-19 response

by Marsha Hinds Layne

Gender Focal Point, SGP Barbados NSC

If it is one downfall that advocates and activists have, it is that we tend to regurgitate our ideas in the silos in which we operate and we assume everyone understands the importance of our causes. The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded me that this way of approaching gender work is wholly inadequate.

Not only am I responsible for assisting women to regather their lives and escape the economic displacement or violence that a pandemic assails but I equally have to spread the message of how gender even puts women in more vulnerable positions to begin. This is the only way to move gender mainstreaming past a 'box ticking' activity to tangible policy and project change.

The projects that are supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) have the underpinning goals of helping the environment and bolstering sustainable living and development. Gender has to be a key focus in environmental action and sustainable development because unless we remove the inequalities presented by traditional gender stereotypes we are not able to achieve the associated goals.

Let us bring it down to tangible examples. If an entity wants to create a GEF SGP supported initiative to provide opportunities for disadvantaged youth, it is important to understand how disadvantages are systematically created.



A young male from a vulnerable community is susceptible to poor school performance, becoming in conflict with the law as well as low or no job opportunities.

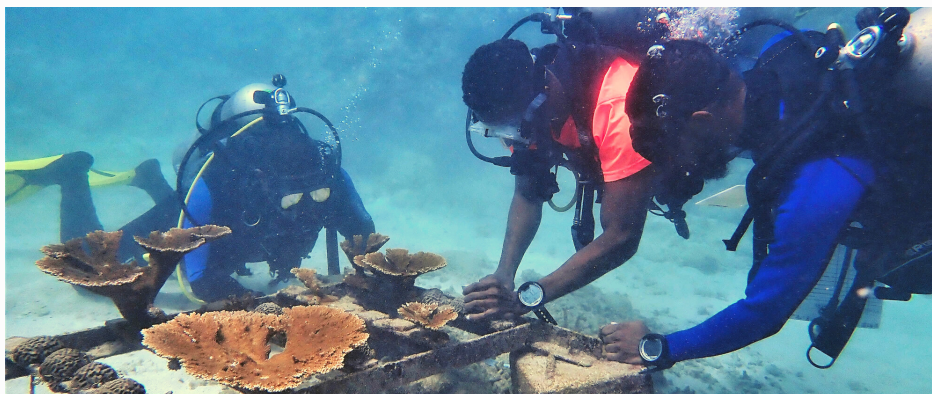
Given our traditional gender roles, in addition to all the challenges that a young male from a vulnerable community can face, a female is also susceptible to sexual exploitation and becoming a teenaged mother. The project that caters to providing opportunities to disadvantaged youth then, has to bear in mind that female youth will require different types of programme support and cannot be lumped together. An example would be child care to be involved in programming. Another tangible example would be a project that creates night economic activity at an improved environmental attraction. Unless that project could do something to address street harassment which is a perennial problem faced by women and girls on the streets of Barbados, women and girls will not be able to partake in that project in the same way as males due to security needs.

We have been performing action in the environment and sustainable living for some time but the fact that the inequalities of gender still severely hinder women and girls is a signal that we have to become more purposeful about mainstreaming gender in projects.

Gender mainstreaming is transformative and when we integrate it into environmental action we allow both genders to fully participate and contribute to the efforts.

We remove barriers to the employment provided by projects and advocacy. We also begin to reflect on inequality at the system level and how it pervades some lives. Gender equality is not about angry women or 'a takeover'. It is simply about creating a better world where all of the population can thrive in harmony and safety.





CORALL members, Courtney Forde, Hamilton Forde and Stefan Gooding, recording information about coral fragments on the frame at Driftwood, during November 2020 (Photo: Zoe Lisk)



CORALL Fragments thrive during COVID-19 lockdown

by Susan Mahon, President, Coral Reef Restoration Alliance (CORALL)

The Coral Reef Restoration Alliance (CORALL) in Barbados has continued to monitor and care for our outplant sites at Port St Charles and Driftwood on a monthly basis, although we certainly did have to stop during Lockdown and the period during which access to the beach was restricted (April and May 2020).

CORALL received a nice surprise after returning to our sites for a snorkelling reconnaissance trip on the 3rd of June 2020. The corals were in good shape and did not seem to have needed too much cleaning around them. Most of the fragments had grown, and this was especially evident with respect to the elkhorn fragments on the frames at Driftwood. The biggest elkhorn fragments are now in the order of 18x13 inches and 14x15 inches (Nov 2020). This means that they grew from tiny nubbins less than an inch in diameter to large dinner-plate-size corals within a period of about two and a half years. The brain coral fragments have also grown and become fused together on the boulders at Port St. Charles.

A full-page underwater photograph serves as the background. It depicts three divers in blue wetsuits and black masks working on a sandy seabed. They are installing a tall, white, Y-shaped 'coral nursery tree' that has several horizontal cross-arms. Bubbles are visible around the structure. The water is a deep blue, and the seabed is light-colored sand.

The success of our outplants, even during the COVID-19 lockdown, gave us added encouragement when applying to the Government of Barbados for permission to establish a coral nursery within the Folkstone Marine Reserve. CORALL obtained permission just before UN World Oceans Day on June 8th, 2020, to establish a Pilot Coral Nursery at Vauxhall Reef. We have installed three 'coral trees' and three modules and have begun to populate the trees with 'fragments of opportunity'. These fragments have been accidentally broken off from their parent colonies. We are therefore permitted by the Government to rescue them, and use them as nursery stock, to ultimately assist in restoring deteriorated coral reef ecosystems.

CORALL members, Michel Loustric, Christian Lay and Chris Bainbridge, installing a 'coral nursery tree' at Folkestone, during November 2020 (Photo: Zoe Lisk)

BitEgreen Barbados Project

by Simera Crawford, Executive Founder, The Caribbean Environmental Management Bureau & BitEgreen App

The inter-relationship between environmental pollution and pollutants originating from human activity in the terrestrial landscape and nearshore marine environment, pose significant economic and social sustainable development challenges, with hidden opportunities in all areas of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Additionally, the need to incorporate COVID-19 or pandemic safe instruments is still a top priority, and the lack of infrastructure and knowledge around circularity processes is a hindrance to most citizens.

The Caribbean Environmental Management Bureau (CEMBI) is an arm through which innovative plans or solutions to targeted Sustainable Development Goals are initiated, created, developed and aided for release as products and services. One such solution is BitEgreen Market web platform and app, aimed at enhancing the Circular



Economy for overall operational efficiency of businesses, and integrating environmental preservation and other sustainable actions into mainstream society through everyday activities. The BitEgreen app under CEMBI is the newest GEF SGP project, with links to another UNICEF project; and a member of BLOOM, the sustainable energy and climate technology (cleantech) cluster hosted by Barbados Industrial Development Cooperation (BIDC) in partnership with the Ministry of International Business and Industry, with technical assistance under the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) - achieved after competitive assessment.

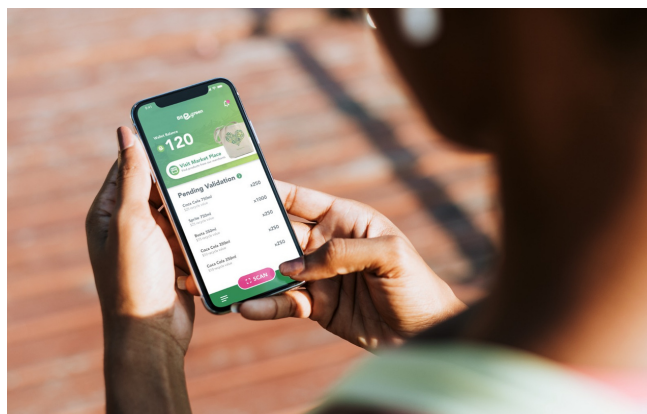


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CEMBI and its App have attracted local and international praise including being the “Most Comprehensive Circular Economy App Design” and kudos flanked with request to be part of the upcoming Energy Globe Awards of which UNIDO is a premium partner. Now with initial funding, the pilot launch of the BitEgreen Market web platform and app should be possible within months.

About the Founder:

Simera Crawford is the Founder of the BitEgreen app under the Caribbean Environmental Management Bureau; who has a background in natural sciences and natural resource and environmental management, with specialization in coastal and marine resource management encompassing sustainable tourism. Her background is complemented by expertise in innovation and information communications technology (ICT) skills, made possible through CEMBI’s highly competent team members.



Learn more at www.cembi.org



Participants at a focus group meeting for the app, which included representatives from Banks Holdings Ltd, Pine Hill Dairy, B's Recycling, Walkers Institute for Regeneration Research Education and Design (WIRRED), Kwikily, Life After Gravity, Bitt, TEN Habitat, CEMBI, UNICEF and GEF SGP. (Photo: CEMBI)



Biodiversity & the Green Economy

*Dr Sonia Peter,
Biocultural Education and Research
Programme*

COVID-19 can be viewed as the unfortunate catalyst as it has forced the global population to look inward for capacities and solutions for the challenges posed to human survival. Food and nutrition security now shine like beacons in the myriad of urgent issues requiring attention by policy makers. The search for vehicles that can take us into battle with the Coronavirus 2 is well in progress. Climate change, and the outfall of global warming, is sending us currying for shelter when the Earth sends her lessons whirling across the Atlantic. The devastation to economies, especially the tourism dependent islands of the Caribbean, seems insurmountable. But how can a focus on biodiversity and the green economy be incorporated into strategies for propelling us over these hurdles?

The natural plant resource offers solutions if the principles of sustainability are embraced. The Biocultural Education and Research Programme has been exploring the value of the plant biodiversity in Barbados and the impetus that it can provide for the enhancement of the green economy.

Food and nutrition security

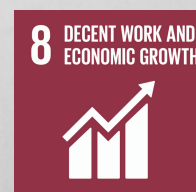
-There are many underutilized and resilient species that can be investigated for agricultural production, whether as greens or for agri-processing. BERP has identified species including the diminutive Pussley, *Portulaca oleraceae*, which is a source of omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins. Experiments are currently being conducted within trial units that allow for modelling of growth parameters.

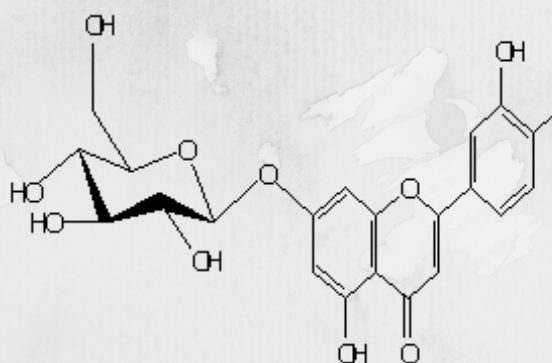
Coronavirus 2 (SARS-COV-2)

-Plants used for colds and flu are likely sources of agents that are antagonistic to the virus. This is being researched by BERP and the paper entitled *The Application of ESI Mass Spectrometry in a Structural Assessment of Potential Actives in Plants used for Colds and Flu in Traditional Medicine in Barbados* is currently being edited for publication.

Climate Change Mitigation

- Enhancement of green spaces, with the conservation of plant biodiversity, will assist with CO2 sequestration while enhancing the tourism product. BERP is promoting the establishment of food, herbal and conservation gardens and plans are being made for a major contribution in this area. Youth outreach is a necessary component.





Plant based products

- The biodiversity in the Caribbean, and Barbados, is often unique to the region. The development of phenotypes means that novel natural products can be employed in innovative product development in the areas of cosmeceuticals, nutraceuticals, and alternative medicines. BERP is currently formulating products in these areas and, also offers classes to build capacity within the population for the development of a botanical industry.

Photos: Biocultural Education and Research Programme (From top to bottom):

- Cosmeceutical production at a BERP workshop
- BERP workshop promoting green spaces
- Modelling Units for the study of *Portulaca oleraceae* growth parameters at partner J&P Farms Ltd. l-r Consultant: Marcia Marville, Partners: Bernice Chase, Peter Chase
- Luteolin-7-O-glucoside discovered in *Ocimum campechianum*, used for colds and flu (Labwork completed at Environment and Climate Change Canada, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in collaboration with Deputy Director BERP, Dr John Headley, Research Scientist)



Barbados - Sargassum Adaptive Management (SAMS) Inception Workshop

Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES)

The massive influxes of sargassum seaweed that have intermittently impacted Barbados and most other parts of the Caribbean since 2011 are receiving renewed attention from several sources. This was revealed at the inception workshop of a new project on 'Co-developing a Barbados Sargassum Adaptive Management Strategy (SAMS)'. This small planning project is to assist Barbados to become more resilient to the threats posed by sargassum and to turn sargassum into an opportunity for sustainable development once safe commercial uses are identified.

The project is a planning partnership between the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Blue Economy (MMABE) which has responsibility for addressing sargassum responses, the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University of the West Indies (UWI)



Young entrepreneur and innovator Ms. Kerri-Ann Bovell explains her ideas for sargassum products at the workshop (Photo: CERMES)

which has scientific expertise and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Forty-three (43) participants attended the hybrid project inception workshop either in-person or online on 10 December. These included government officials, the business sector, fisherfolk, local and regional non-governmental organisations, UWI, CARICOM organisations and UN agencies. The workshop's three main sessions featured presentations on sargassum science, response mechanisms, sargassum uses and approaches to the Sargassum Adaptive

Management Strategy. These connected science to practice. The SAMS will provide a forum for key actor collaboration in Barbados. The approach may be replicated in other sargassum projects being implemented by UWI with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN and other partners.

The SAMS planning project, which ends in January 2021, will use participatory processes to recommend arrangements for managing sargassum in Barbados including uses, environmentally responsible responses, monitoring protocols, profiles of impacted coastal sites and more to develop an adaptive framework for building resilience through learning institutions. Unlike plans that are static, the SAMS will be designed to learn and adapt to new knowledge on sargassum amidst the changing climate that is affecting us all.



Photo: gef.org





Intangible support for climate action

by Sade Deane

Founder and Principal Consultant, Step Up Sustainable Solutions

An opportunity to reflect on how the Small Grants Programme (SGP) has accelerated climate action through the youth, I established on a few thoughts.

Starting from the beginning looking at the youth sector I would say my experience as a youth leader with the challenges we faced to carry out climate action were Funding and Capacity Building which compromises the need of action in the area. Keeping in mind as youth we have time, drive, boldness and voice that may demand accountability to those who we watch charter directions of climate action on our behalf in influential positions.

The internal capacity of a youth organization or movement requires support of all types because it is necessary for our survival to serve and to represent.

Youth beneficiaries in the region have been positively impacted by the Small Grant Programme from the organizational level and personally. Two examples I have experience is on two capacity building opportunities from SGP was the development of the Gender and Climate Change Guidance tool and the Social Enterprise Training for Eco Tourism.

The process to the guidance tool made provision to listen to our novice minds on the area of Gender and the specialists in gender listened to our specialties in climate action and the vulnerable groups we represent. Capacity building was addressed in our second conversation with a Climate Change and Gender Guidance Tool which helped organisations understand and analyze the linkages between gender and climate change.

The organizations now have the capacity and lens to see the cross cutting issues of gender that they couldn't see before. Better equipped going into conversation and these spaces.

This looked like: advocacy strengthening to expand and create in depth insights on issues impacting youth, organizational capacity now will allow for quality of programming design it can help with policy engagement to ensure gender and vulnerable groups are considered. Its influence from the training brings me to recommend having more cross cutting issues starting with a listening component and capacity building will provide civil society and youth to take a holistic approach to climate action.

The Social Enterprise Approach to Eco- Tourism Project provided Social Enterprise Training in essence puts organization to use the business strategy while doing the greater good socially and environmentally. This looked like organizations creating Revenue Models for Sustainability to enable climate action. Product development guidance was given to the answer the question, how you can create a product/service/experience that invites other people to climate action?

Which then lead to organisations meeting their operational pillars without compromising the functionality of its operations and climate action efforts. Individually the workshop inspire entrepreneurial ideas which can close gaps in climate action. It has inspired me to develop a carbon service for the Caribbean. This will allow for anyone to invest in climate action projects.

I think I said support in different ways and picturing an entity who does it would be SGP. That's why as Youth organisations or movements we must map out what is support for us. Support helps you to identify what it looks like, to be ready when it comes and integrate it in our programming to ensure the quality as we cannot do it alone despite our youthful years on our side.



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



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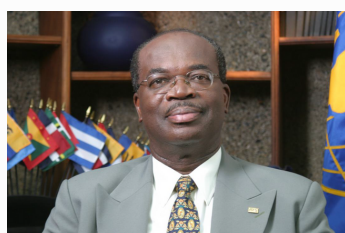
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Seasons Greetings & Happy Holidays
from SGP Barbados





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