

COMMUNITY ACTION

SUB-REGIONAL NEWSLETTER
OF GEF - SGP IN THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN



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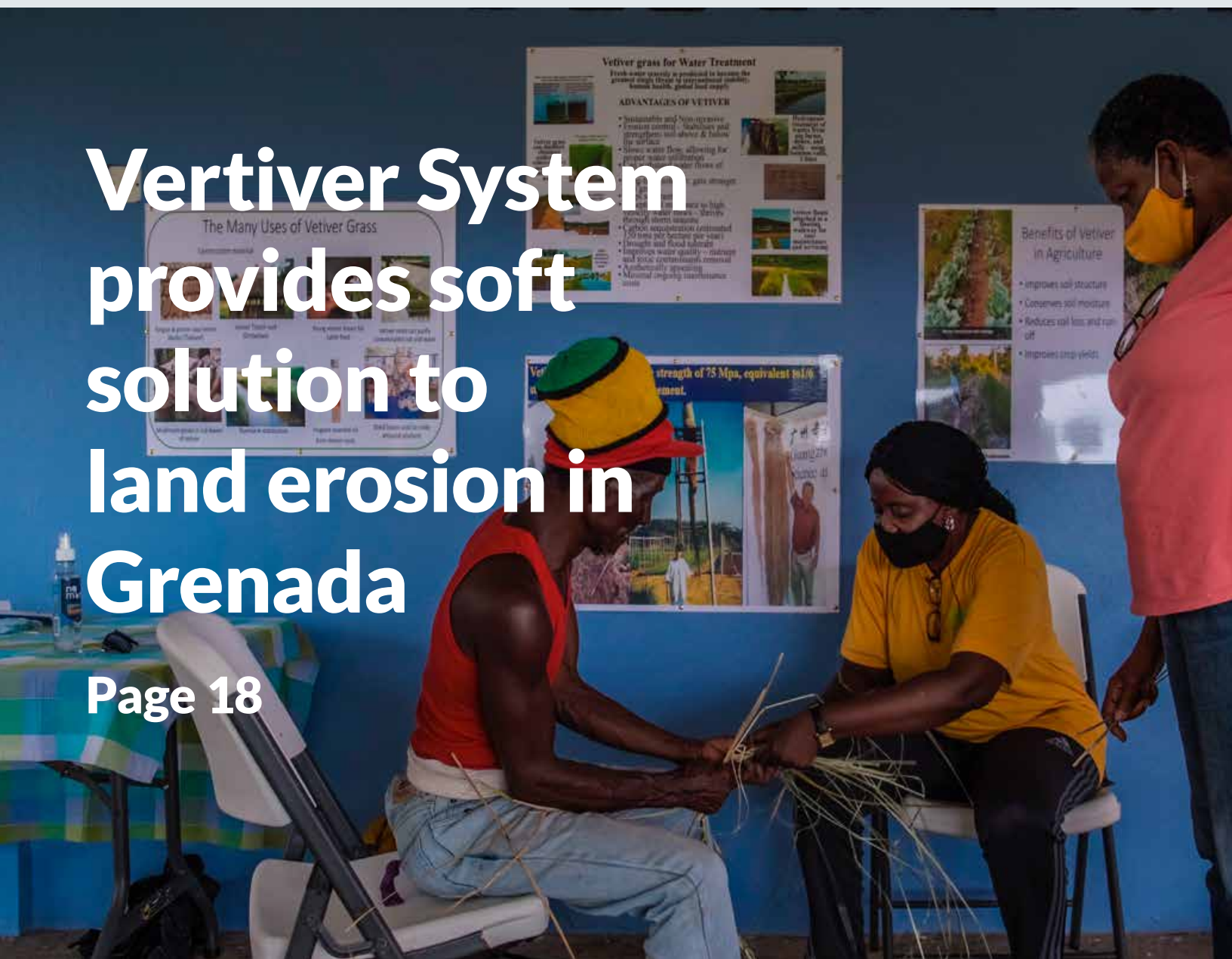
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Editor's Note

Dear Readers and Colleagues,

Welcome to another issue of the GEF-SGP sub-regional newsletter, Community Action. In this issue, we continue to highlight the exciting work of the Small Grants Programme throughout the Caribbean Sub-Region, as well as the professional milestones of the amazing regional team.

Last year, 2020 was named by some as the "Year of the Virus". In 2021, the pandemic ranges on with the introduction of new variants threatening our very way of life. In spite of the challenges that COVID-19 presents, the sub-region has shown itself to be resilient; adapting to live with the virus where possible. In this issue, I am delighted to share with you, brief snapshots of some of the ongoing projects in each country, in "Project Spotlight".

Also, allow me to officially offer congratulations and best wishes to our new Grenada National Coordinator, Ms Akarda Ventour. Welcome to the team! You can learn more about Akarda in our "Welcome Aboard" section.

Finally, I wish to pay tribute to our fallen colleague, Kadijah Edwards, who suddenly passed away in March this year. Despite her short time at SGP, she had touched all of our lives in a positive way and will forever remain in our hearts. May she continue to rest in peace.

Kerron Hamblin
Sub-Regional Junior Programme Officer
GEF-Small Grants Programme

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Front Cover: Ocean Edge Craft Workshop © SGP Grenada
Rear Cover: Map of the Caribbean © Wikipedia Commons

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About GEF SGP



Mission & History

The GEF Small Grants Programme was established in 1992 and embodies the very essence of sustainable development by "thinking globally acting locally". The Programme provides financial and technical support to projects that conserve and restore the natural environment, while enhancing livelihoods and well-being.

Through grants, the Small Grants Programme provides up to \$50,000 US directly to local communities including indigenous people, community-based organisations and other non-governmental groups for projects in Biodiversity, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation, Land Degradation and Sustainable Forest Management, International Waters and Chemicals.

The Programme is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

SGP in the Caribbean Sub-Region

The Sub-Region is comprised of the following countries:

Antigua & Barbuda
Barbados
Dominica
Grenada
St. Kitts & Nevis
St. Lucia
St. Vincent & the Grenadines



Foreword

Dear Readers and Colleagues,

Science and discovery have long been at the forefront of humanity's development. The ability to harness the resources of the environment to create tools, shelter, clothing, and harvest food has been paramount to our survival, as well as improving the quality of life. Indeed, today, science plays a role in every part of our lives, from the phones and computers that we use every day to the very food on our plates. In the medical field, scientific advancements have combatted disease resulting in an increase in the average lifespan. Vaccination is one of humanity's most powerful tools towards development. Since the early 1800s with the eradication of smallpox, vaccines have been pivotal in the reduction of global diseases such as polio, measles, rubella, tetanus and yellow fever, which all have the potential to disrupt health, education and socioeconomic systems.

In the Caribbean, immunization is extremely important to sustainable development since the economic output of its countries is highly dependent upon the health of its citizens. The COVID-19 pandemic has been described as one of the greatest threats to human development in modern history. Indeed, while 2020 marked the beginning of a Decade of Action towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 have widened the economic gap between persons living in rich and poor countries. The Caribbean region has been particularly hard hit; employment rates have experienced some relative recovery in comparison to 2020, however the pandemic has underscored some of the pre-existing inequalities in the most rapidly ageing region in the world, where the most vulnerable and poorest groups have been disproportionately affected. Compounding this, few countries in the Caribbean have over 60% of their populations fully vaccinated. With challenges to the supply of vaccines, low levels of economic reserve and bargaining power, and high levels of vaccine hesitancy, new challenges presented by a flood of misinformation surrounding the pandemic threatens to further delay progress towards development goals.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder of our dependence on basic science to ensure balanced, sustainable, and inclusive development of the planet. More now than ever, the enhanced global awareness of, and increased education in basic science is vital to attaining sustainable development and improving the quality of life for people all over the world. As such, the United Nations has proclaimed 2022 as the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development, placing a spotlight on the links between the Sustainable Development Goals and basic sciences.

The GEF-Small Grants Programme holds a unique position through their work with non-governmental organisations, civil society and community-based organisations, to continue to observe and raise the awareness of the importance of basic sciences for sustainable development, in accordance with national priorities. Though individual project funding is modest, its impacts can often be scaled up to a national level through collaboration with other communities and partners. Indeed, the GEF-Small Grants Programme is designed to mobilize bottom-up actions by empowering local civil society and vulnerable communities and it may be just the steps needed to chart a safe and effective exit to the pandemic.

Valerie Cliff
Resident Representative
UNDP Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean

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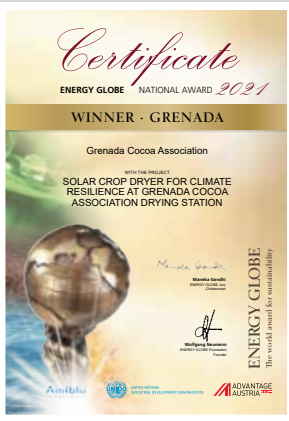
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Left: Energy Globe National Award won by Grenada Cocoa Association

Below: National Winner, Grenada Cocoa Association, cutting the ribbon to open drying facility

Bottom: View of solar array used for drying



HARNESSING THE SUN!

SGP Grenada Project receives global award

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead.

The Grenada Cocoa Association was recently awarded this year’s National Winner in the Energy Globe World Award, today’s most renowned environmental prize for innovative and sustainable solutions to environmental problems, for the GEF-SGP funded project “Solar Crop Dryer for Climate Resilience”. Grenada’s cocoa farmers had always been drying their beans outdoors under the sun, called passive drying. However, changing weather conditions in recent years, including heavy rains during traditionally dry seasons (January to March) are forcing farmers to rely more on indoor active drying. For this drying method, air is heated and blown across the beans by means of diesel as a fuel, leading to environmental and health problems. The goal of this project therefore was to increase Grenada’s cocoa drying capacity in a clean, sustainable, cost-effective manner in order to create resilience against climate change.

A custom-built solar crop drying system was installed at the drying station. Six local electricians were trained in the installation of solar technology stems and five station employees were trained to operate the system. These drying station employees are responsible for the monitoring of the solar dryers by recording data regarding quality and time. The solar heating which is now used for drying the cocoa beans has many advantages over the diesel-operated system: It is not only cheaper but also decreases the burden on the environment. There is no air pollution which improves the health conditions of the workers and the people living close to the facility. In addition, even the quality of the cocoa beans has become better since the air pollution was also affecting them.



"A wonderful person, colleague and a friend always with a smile, positive attitude and wonderful harmony of working together."

— Angelica Shamerina
Climate Change Program Advisor
Regional Focal Point for Latin America
and Caribbean and Francophone
Arab States
GEF Small Grants Programme



"Kadijah was a sweet, caring and devoted colleague."

— Maria Jose
Programme Associate for
Operations and Partnerships
SGP



"Kadijah was a true friend. I know she is with God, in whom she had placed all her trust and faith in life. It is comforting to know that she is in a much better place, with Him. Rest in peace, beautiful Kadijah..."

— Dr. Sharda Mahabir
National Coordinator
SGP Trinidad & Tobago



"Kadijah welcomed me with open arms and helped me along the way. There was never a time when I reached out to her for assistance or guidance, and she didn't make herself available. She was always kind, thoughtful and encouraging. She executed her work with pride and professionalism, something I hope to emulate."

— S. Natalya Lawrence
National Coordinator



SGP Grenada NSC Tribute to Mrs. Kadijah Edwards

I am here today as Chair of the National Steering Committee of the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) to give a tribute to in honor and recognition of this outstanding, amazing person, Kadijah Edwards who we worked with over the last 2 years. The Bible says that we must do everything as unto God and not unto men and we should also never seek to be men pleasers. John F Kennedy one of the US President in his inaugural address inspired children and adults to see the importance of civic action and public service with these historic words, "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country," and Albert Einstein said, "The value of a man should be seen in what he gives and not in what he is able to receive." These references, to me, best describes the person who I worked with for the last 5 years.

I first got to know Mrs. Edwards when she joined the staff of the GIZ UNDP ICCAS Project in 2017, and observed that she was extremely diligent and committed. She had that what I would call stick to it tiveness that is rare these days. If she wanted to get some information, data or get something done, she would keep coming to you until you delivered. Under that program she worked on many community focused projects and I believe it was there she fell in love with the people of this beautiful nation that she served so well.

Following the end of this project, Kadijah started working for The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) as a National Coordinator in 2019. During this time, she showed nothing but professionalism, commitment, and pride in her work. More importantly, her positive behavior, respect and kindness to colleagues made her an integral part of the SGP community in Grenada and globally. Having to evaluate her performance annually was a joy because she produced and exceeded what was required of her.

To the GEF SGP Grenada National Steering Committee, she had become like a second family, so it's difficult to express the amazing

essence and spirit of Kadijah's selfless generosity, uncompromising belief in all that is good and her unwavering commitment to family, friends and work? Kadijah was just a wonderful person, a devoted colleague and a friend, thoughtful, encouraging, a positive attitude, always kind, sweet and caring with a gifted harmony of working with others. We find it difficult to put into words, even the very best of words, to pay tribute or truly capture the sense of loss that we are all feeling today.

During the short period of time that Kadijah was with the Programme, she worked with 15 grantees and disbursed a total of US \$785,983.46.

Kadijah was a rare gem. She was like the engine that kept the SGP Programme going because of her total devotion to the organization and Grantees. She was patient, hardworking, kind, positive, and down to earth, qualities that are hard to find. She touched many, many lives both locally and internationally with her humility, and bright smile as she provided support to our communities and international colleagues. She executed her work with pride and professionalism.

So we say that her loss is there, tangible and real within everyone...but Kadijah exemplified life, love, laughter and an overwhelming belief and faith in seeing the best in everything...even loss. And so today we honor her, by profoundly feeling and expressing our loss, but also by remembering an amazing person who has played a unique and special role in all our lives. She served the people of Grenada well and we know that as you have expressed it with your calls and messages.

Kadijah was a loyal colleague to some and a special friend to many and today we honor these memories as we recall special moments. We'll remember you with all your special nuances and that we were privileged to share with you as part of the GEF SGP family. We grieve for you and cry for you and even smile because of you. And in all the tomorrows we'll feel you, gone in some ways, but your presence ever near.

The memories many of us will remember were that of a wife, a mother, a daughter, a sister, a niece, an aunt, a true friend and a colleague. Her beautiful soul is with God. Go well...stay well...always.

I hope this tribute serves as an inspiration to Her Family letting them know that she has done her duty, she has served well, to her parents to let them know that they raised a child to become a woman of virtue, excellent in spirit, who was diligent, to her daughter I say to you have a great example to emulate and I implore you to strive for her high ideals. To my fellow citizens who are here, let Kadijah's memory live on in how you go about your daily tasks and duties and also how you represent Christ in all that you do. God Bless each of you.

"There is little we can say to lighten the burden in times like these, other than to offer our assurances that Kadijah's work and memory will be dearly cherished by UNOPS colleagues both now and in the future."

— Grete Faremo
UN Under Secretary General
and UNOPS Executive Director
Copenhagen
Denmark



Welcome aboard!

Akarda Ventour is the newest addition to the Caribbean GEF SGP team. Hailing from Grenada, Akarda is an advocate for sustainable development and meaningful change. She is the recipient of the Commonwealth Points of Light Award 2019, which recognises outstanding individual volunteers who are making a change in their community. As such, gaining knowledge, experience and resources to assist others has always been a priority for her.

The civil society ecosystem is no stranger to Akarda, as she is the former Director of the Grenada Learning and Leadership Academy. This non-profit organization, whose main mission is to promote educational, social, cultural and economic development in Grenada, and elsewhere, does so through programs, projects, and activities focused on helping to create and advance efforts to improve the quality of life of youth and young adults, as a means of alleviating poverty. In her spare time, Akarda enjoys travelling, reading and volunteering.

As she steps into her new role as the National Coordinator for the Grenada programme, she brings key skills such as project management, youth and community development with a special interest in the areas of entrepreneurship training.

We welcome her into the family, as she works with NGOs, CSOs and FBOs and look forward to a successful journey with you!

Welcome to the GEF- SGP family!

Project Spotlight

“Teamwork is the secret that makes common people achieve uncommon results”

- Ifeanyi Enoch Onuoha.

Throughout the sub-region, the Small Grants Programme has been affecting meaningful change at the community level in each of thematic areas of focus, through the hard work and dedication of each country's National Co-ordinator and their teams. “Project Spotlight” seeks to highlight some of the projects, either currently ongoing or recently concluded, in each country within the Sub-Region, along with their results.

In this Project Spotlight, we will look at:

- Farmers mitigating the effects of drought and excessive run-off in Grenada
- Land conservation and sustainable livelihoods through working with ex-offenders and youth at risk in St. Vincent & the Grenadines
- The development of a seed-saving bank in Antigua & Barbuda in response to climate change
- The development of sustainable cocoa production in Dominica
- SGP St. Kitts & Nevis launches Operational Phase 7.



GRENCODA helps farmers mitigate drought

As climate change continues to threaten food security in Grenada, the Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA) is assisting farmers to mitigate the impacts of heavy rainfall and extensive dry spells. Twenty farmers and their families along with the extended community of La Poterie Grenada benefitted from a GEF funded project. Farmers were recipients of water harvesting structures and eight hundred gallons water tanks, irrigation systems, cleaning and digging of drains to facilitate flow of excess water during the rainy season, a riparian buffer zone and the repair of a pump which serviced the entire community with water on their farms.

La Poterie is located on the North West side of the island and experiences extended months of dry season limiting its selection of crops due to unavailability of water. This project reduced the adverse effects of flooding, stabilize soils and prevent excess run off from sediments, increase food supply and availability throughout the year.

The direct involvement of beneficiaries in the implementation of the project and the frequent meetings and planning sessions convened during implementation provided an approach that assures ownership of the project that can lead to sustainability. The fact, too, that the beneficiaries are largely found in a community-based group, La Poterie Water User Association, allow ease of direction and an organised forum for continued post implementation monitoring and impact assessment. Indeed, one week ago 18-20 of them met to formulate plans for the maintenance



Above: Aquaponics system constructed by the Petite Martinique Women's group.



and governance of the repaired pump.



SGP Barbados Team, Members of the National Steering Committee and the Barbados Youth Action Programme members

We Outside: SGP Barbados NSC tours community projects

By Karen Harper

The SGP Barbados Team, National Steering Committee and the local media toured two project sites on June 25, 2021, to visit the Biocultural Education and Research Programme (BERP) located at Neil's Plantation, St Michael, and Barbados Youth Action Programme (BYAP), Ashford, St John. The aim of the site visits was to provide the NSC members and some of the local media the opportunity to see and experience the SGP projects being implemented within communities across Barbados and to provide an additional conduit for the dissemination of work our grantee partners are doing in partnership with SGP.

The first stop to BERP showcased the research being facilitated with under utilized local medicinal plants in Barbados and the growth parameters of phytonutrient rich under-utilized plant species such as Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) and other plants that could be used for colds and the flu, with the future

objective of nutraceutical development. BERP's mandate involves the promotion and the conservation of plant biodiversity, and the associated traditional knowledge, through education and research. BERP has been active in the platforms of biodiversity education, plant conservation strategies and exploration of the sustainable utilization of the local plant resource. Many informative knowledge products have been offered to the public including their biennial symposium, 'Plants and Planting for the Future'. In addition, research is being done on the local plant biodiversity to demonstrate the value of the local resource as they seek to respond to issues of food security, health challenges and climate change.

During the 90-minute visit the team got a briefing on the work being undertaken by BERP as well as a display of value-added products produced from some of the underutilized plants being researched. The team also enjoyed delectable samples of purslane soup, breadfruit bread and local fruit juices.

Moving on, the group travelled to Barbados Youth Action Programme (BYAP), Barbadian youth from various communities are learning innovative methods in sustainable agriculture. BYAP is a strategic programme using preventative and unorthodox social measures to combat the rising levels of deviant behaviour and violence in the inner communities of Barbados. Within the project over thirty (30) young people are being trained in agri-preneurship and climate smart organic approaches to agriculture. They are growing crops and learning new technologies available in agriculture. These advances in agriculture also have encouraged many of them to become entrepreneurs as well as to pursue employment opportunities in this sector. The BYAP participants also displayed the value-added products created from the crops grown including cassava flour, tamarind sauce, juices, and jams. Part of the BYAP project includes public speaking, business, sales, and marketing.

Both BERP and BYAP have made tremendous advances with their



respective projects through stakeholder participation, youth involvement and support from the private sector. Recently the BERP has been nominated for a Whitley Award, which recognizes and celebrates effective grassroots conservation leaders across the Global South. BYAP has also been successful in the development and branding of their own value-added products as well as garnering additional cash co-financing support for their 'Value Improvement Project' from a local financial institution.

Media coverage:

[Falling Walls](#)

[30 youth getting Agri Know How](#)

[Youth get Agri push](#)

[VIP Youth watering bank's seed](#)



Above: BYAP branded Tamarind Sauce

Below: Dr Sonia Peter, Executive Director of Biocultural Education and Research Programme addressing the NSC and local media during the site visit.





Vertiver Planting for Sustainable Livelihoods & Land Conservation

One of our local NGO Hand2Earth's (H2E) slogans is "soil-centred livelihoods" reflecting the organisation's focus on building sustainable communities through an intrinsic relationship with the flora, fauna and natural heritage of our islands. Working on the premise that soil quality is fundamental to biodiversity and by extension our own health, this project works with participants planting and propagates the deep-rooted vetiver grass for slope stabilisation, prevention of topsoil runoff, soil regeneration, natural pest control and groundwater retention. The project employs the leaves of the vetiver plant as natural fertiliser, and as a rapidly renewable resource for hand-craft production.

In 2018, H2E established a vetiver nursery site in Penniston integrating conservation education with prisoner rehabilitation. Beneficiaries were participants in the sustainable livelihoods vetiver grass

craft training (Grow in Time) program that started in SVGs prisons in 2015. This UNDP GEF SGP funded project expands the effective engagement with prisoners, addressing land conservation through demonstration of sustainable farming systems to assist prisoners and ex-offenders to become productive community members and take part in the urgent movement towards building climate change resilience and food security.

The project engages a team of former prisoners who graduated from handcraft training and workshops on entrepreneurship and land conservation whilst in prison. Seven ex-prisoners work are setting up a demonstration farm site and a vetiver craft workshop as part of an alternative and/ or subsistent livelihood for them. The team is growing as it engages at-risk youth and other ex-offenders in an effective intervention to the path of crime and recurrent imprisonment. The project

will also provide entrepreneurship training to prisoners and ex-offenders, as well as skills training to female prisoners. The project is designed and coordinated by Hand2Earth founder and project Vonnie Roudette who states "This project has grown organically, widening its scope, and our team is dedicated to creating outcomes that benefit community and natural heritage while creating alternative livelihoods and food security. One of our main objectives is to deliver sustainable livelihoods' skills', entrepreneurship training and sustainability education to those at risk of social marginalization and economic dislocation. The ultimate aim is to create safer, productive communities that are climate change resilient.





Saving Seeds to Fight Climate Change: The Seed- Saving Bank at the Antigua and Barbuda Horticultural Society

“Seeds never lose their potential, not even in dirt.” - Matshona Dhliwayo

As our country and region face the onslaught of dramatic and frequent climatic events, food security has been placed as top priority in Antigua & Barbuda’s national agenda. As the world, gripped with uncertainty, tackles the COVID-19 pandemic, scores of residents, supported by the Ministry of Agriculture, turned to their backyards and began their own gardens. Many have noted the drop in their food bills, the pride of consuming food produced by their own hands, and the importance of food security.

On a larger scale, the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) was happy to support the Antigua & Barbuda Horticultural Society, to construct the first seed-saving bank on island. Aply led by the Society’s president, Mrs. Barbara Japal, the project was successfully completed in March 2021. The Society’s vision for the bank is first and foremost to fight hunger in our country, by having a viable stock of seeds safely stored in a regulated environment.

In addition to this, the Society is concerned about preserving our cultural and historical patrimony, linked to plants. This is done by maintaining stocks of seeds and plants that played a huge part in our country’s diet, medicine, craft and traditions, from a local species of cucumber to jumbie beads that were used as coffee substitute and also very popular in craft and jewellery-making. There is also an entire section on the grounds that is home to traditional medicinal plants.

Lastly, but by no means the least important, the Society has positioned itself to support the beautification of Antigua & Barbuda. There seed collection, therefore, includes shade trees and all sorts of flowering plants. As we know, science has proven that a few minutes with nature helps to reduce stress. Add to this the other services trees provide to us – they create an aesthetically pleasing environment, reduce the ambient temperature by 1-5°C, buffer against storm winds, extract CO² from the air, just to name a few more benefits.

The Society is currently on a drive to collect, store and package seeds for purchase. The seed-saving bank is found in the idyllic Agave Gardens, an earlier, also successful grant from GEF SGP. Congratulations on a job well done!



Photo Credit: Natalya Lawrence



Photo Credit: Natalya Lawrence



Photo Credit: Natalya Lawrence

Clockwise Top Left: The beginnings of the seedbank collection

Above: Cleaning and sorting station

Top Right: President shows off packaged seeds collection

Right: Packaged seeds

Bottom: Wall art showing the National Dagger Log painted by Society Members Agnes Meeker and Margaret Punnett

Bottom Left: President and Treasurer of the Horticultural Society



Photo Credit: Natalya Lawrence



Photo Credit: Natalya Lawrence



Sustainable Cocoa Production Options

Adapted from Annex E- Final Report; Developing Sustainable Cocoa Production options for Dominica (DMA/SGP/OP6/Y3/CORE/LD/2018/06).

A local NGO, Caribbean Agricultural Network (CAN) through a GEF-SGP Dominica funded project has set out to develop sustainable cocoa production options for Dominica at the community level.

Key project activities included:

- plant propagation of 3000 grafted cocoa plants, with 1400 plants going to four demonstration plots and 300 to farmers who provided cutting for grafting. The remainder were sold to members of the Northeast Cocoa Producers Cooperative and members of the general public.
- establishment of four demonstration plots (two at Marigot, one in the Kalinago Territory and one in Warner) in which a selection of 35 different cocoa accessions (350 plants in total at each plot) were planted. These are grafted plants that will yield fruit genetically identical as the parent plant from which the cutting material was retrieved
- genotyping select Dominican cocoa accessions to measure the genetic composition of Dominica's cocoa, where a total of 60 trees from across the island were sampled, tagged and georeferenced
- capacity building of farmers and Ministry of Agriculture extension staff were trained in cocoa plot establishment, pruning, rehabilitation of abandoned cocoa plots and the harvest and post-harvest management of cocoa. A total of 130 persons were trained including 32 women and 98 men. Training sessions on cocoa grafting and micro-propagation of bananas and plantains were also conducted.
- Demonstration of the integration of honey production within the cocoa plots is a goal of the project. Four participants were selected from the localities where the demo-plots are located to participate in an introduction to beekeeping training.

Knowledge Fair and National Honey Show a huge success!

The GEF SGP St Lucia partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Rural Development to host the second knowledge fair and the inaugural Hewanorra National Honey Show on December 9 - 10, 2021. Individuals from across St Lucia gathered to showcase their innovation in products and byproducts of honey coming out of the apiculture industry, including food and beverage, cosmetics and health and wellness. The two day event also included a national honey show, where local producers were judged in various categories and classes, such as wax presentation, honey cookery, art and photography.

This event was part of SGP St. Lucia's country programme strategy to improve the local apiculture industry by moving away from basic harvesting of honey to creating high value products.

More information about the knowledge fair can be viewed [here](#).



Chairman of the GEF-SGP St. Lucia NSC addressing the audience



SGP St Kitts & Nevis launches OP7

St. Kitts & Nevis welcomes the start of a new Operational Phase.



The GEF UNDP Small Grants Programme in St. Kitts and Nevis, in collaboration with its grantee-partner, Junior Achievement St. Kitts and Nevis, recently launched its Seventh Operational Phase at the historic Golden Rock Hotel on Nevis. The recently concluded phase, Operational Phase 6 saw 29 projects being supported to a tune of USD 841'700 with co-financing provided by the groups of over one million USD.

As part of the programme, grantees completing projects during Operational Phase 6 that were very impactful and added great benefit to the environment and the community were recognized and asked to share highlights of their project with the audience. These projects were:

1. Harvesting and Storing Water to Adequately supply an Open Organic Farm System by the Gideon Force Agricultural Cooperative Society Limited, Verchilds, St. Kitts
2. Preserving the Natural Environment and Contributing to the island of Nevis Re-forestation programme undertaken by the Nuff Tings Boys Club out of Fountain Village, Nevis.
3. Establishment of the Irma Didier Garden for the conservation of the floral biodiversity of St. Kitts and Nevis and to demonstrate soil conservation practices and rainwater harvesting from the St. Kitts Flower Arrangers, St. Kitts
4. Rehabilitation of the Mansion Bay to support biodiversity conservation, community use and livelihood development by the Family and Friends of Mansion and Christ Church, St. Kitts
5. Green Learning at the Cayon High School by the Cayon High School Environment Club

The new Country Program Strategy OP7 builds on the OP6 agenda, past and existing initiatives, as well as the projects and lessons learned thereof, to increase effectiveness. It aligns with UNDP & the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, (UN-SDGs) and further aligns with the national agenda for sustainable development in the twin-island Federation of St. Kitts-Nevis.



EcoStrategies Grenada Inc promotes soft engineering solution to land erosion

Eco Strategies Grenada Incorporated (ESGI) project support efforts for the re-introduction and education of vetiver grass and the Vetiver System (VS) within communities and state entities in Grenada, given the plant's unique attributes and uses as a bioengineering tool to solve a wide range of soil and water related challenges. The Vetiver System (VS) as a cost-effective green infrastructure tool was introduced, with in-depth reviews of examples of its use globally as well as in the Caribbean, coupled with practical discussions among participants about the history of its use in Grenada, and different current day needs which could be identified locally.

At end of 2020 wet season, approximately 2,000 plants were installed – and 1,000 plants were distributed and installed between the training programme. The final 3,000 plants to be installed during the project will be completed during 2021 wet season – where 900 of these will be provided to Carriacou for a watershed restoration project there. The project was developed and implementation led by Ms. June Slinger, and members of the ESGI team based at Ocean Edge Farm in Crochu, Grenada supported by the GEF Small Grants Programme Grenada.

Future plans include collaboration with The Nature Conservancy in their watershed restoration project to encourage use of the Vetiver System by farmers in the Grenville, St. Andrew area and with the Grenada Solid Waste Management Authority engineers contracted to neutralize toxic waste at the Perseverance, St. George landfill.

Photo credit: Jonathan Barcant, Vetiver System (VS) Specialist
Website: <https://vetivergrenada.com/sgp-project/>

Project at a glance

- **Project Title:** An educational initiative to promote & encourage utilization of The Vetiver System (TVS) as a readily available soft engineering green technology to mitigate land erosion in Grenada.
- **Project Start:** 1st April, 2020
- **Project Value:** \$25,424.00 USD
- **Grantee:** Eco Strategies Grenada Incorporated (ESGI)



St Kitts & Nevis wins National Award again

Garden of Rebirth, a non-profit organisation that has developed a centre to provide suitable interventions for abused women and their children, has received a National Energy Globe Award for their project “Reducing Carbon Footprint by Transforming a Centre for Victims of Domestic Violence to a Green Living Space”.

To improve the lives of the residents, Garden of Rebirth sought to implement approaches to environmental regulation which can provide flexible and cost-effective solutions to preserve the eco-system and strengthen the facility. The centre was designed with a “green” focus. It is fitted with tinted energy-efficient security windows and a battery-operated solar system. The rainwater harvesting system is used to water the gardens, flush the low-flush toilets and supply the aquaponics system that is built to produce 400 fish, 1,000 heads of lettuce, and 200 plants.

The produced vegetables help people to change their nutrition and consume less meat and dairy which are responsible for about 15 percent of the manmade global greenhouse gas emissions. Besides, the centre is fitted with low-flow showerheads and tankless water heaters. All of the resources used are considered to be clean energy. LEDs have been used which use only a quarter of energy, last up to 25 times longer, and do not contain mercury. As a result, electricity and water bills have decreased by at least 75% from 2017 to 2020. In addition, the project has reduced the amount of waste through the sale of reused clothing in a recycled shipping container. Furthermore, engagement of particularly women and youth is fostered concerning sustainability issues. They are empowered to contribute to the development and harmonisation of regulations as well as laws on environmental management..



Caribbean Biodiversity Fund partners with SGP

This year, the GEF-Small Grants Programme partnered with the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF). Through joint collaboration, it is hoped that grants and projects for biodiversity conservation and management can be efficiently and effectively scaled up in countries with both SGP National Programmes and CBF Partnership Agreements.

Currently within the Sub-Region, joint educational outreach activities to empower local communities in Antigua & Barbuda to aid in conservation action have taken place through the Marine Ecosystems Protected Areas (MEPA) Trust. The first of six seminars, organised with three Community and youth-based organisations, focused on raising awareness of marine and coastal issues and national biodiversity targets. The second session focused on helping group to develop small projects to be implemented in their local communities.

By leveraging resources together, the partnership between SGP and CBF is expected to achieve greater efficiency and results on the ground. The partnership will also aim to mobilise approximately half a million USD by both parties, based on their existing and new funding at the country and regional levels.

Left : Some of the recycled clothing on sale at the centre.

Right: National Award certificate 2021.





COMMUNITY ACTION is a knowledge product of the
GEF-SGP Country Programmes in the Eastern Caribbean

“If civilization is to
survive, it must live on
the interest, not the
capital, of nature.”

— Ronald Wright

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