



Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and FAO

Boosting agricultural productivity and building resilience

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines joined FAO in 1981. Early assistance was delivered through a range of interventions focusing on capacity building, policy formulation, agricultural planning and legislation development. More recently, interventions have addressed food security programmes, technology transfer for improved production and strengthening of market infrastructure. A major feature of current cooperation is resilience building in the face of climate change.

Developing and strengthening value chains

In an effort to diversify its economy, St Vincent and the Grenadines is encouraging processing enterprises to add value to primary production. The coconut water, cassava and sweet potato value chains have experienced increased market demand for their respective processed products and offer good prospects for growth.

In consultation with stakeholders, FAO has facilitated value chain analysis and the preparation of strategies and action plans with the objective of strengthening these value chains. Particular emphasis has been given to the further development of processed products.

The St Vincent Bureau of Standards, under a Letter of Agreement with FAO, has prioritized key activities which include: food safety inspections; the testing of products; and the provision of training on manufacturing practices. It has applied these activities to five coconut bottling enterprises and four root crop processors.

Project: Support for the Development of the Coconut Water and Composite Flour Value Chains in St Vincent and the Grenadines (TCP/STV/3501). Funded by FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme.

Matching FAO's expertise to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' development priorities

FAO assistance in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is shaped by the 2016-2019 FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF), which hinges on four priority areas:

- **Food and nutrition security**, building on the Zero Hunger Challenge, emphasizing agricultural diversification, nutrition education, strengthened governance in Food Security and Nutrition (FNS) and poverty reduction programmes; and addressing strategies for reducing food losses and waste across key value chains; and improving the capacity of government to make better evidence-based decisions by using an efficient data management system.
- **Resilience building against disaster and climate change**, focusing on the development and implementation of National Disaster plans and the provision of assistance for the development and strengthening of sustainable land and marine resources management systems as well as resilient farming and production systems.
- **Improved market systems**, supporting farmers' organizations by developing public purchasing policy and programmes which will link farmers to national institutions such as the school feeding programmes.
- **Sustainable natural resource management**, focusing on sustainable agroforestry management, improved institutional capacity for water resource management and pest and disease management in the agriculture sector.

Jointly developed with the Government and other partners, the CPF contributes to the **New Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development 2010-2020** and takes into account the country's obligations as a member of Economic Union under the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). It is also aligned with the **UN Development Assistance Framework for Barbados and the OECS**, the **UN Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework**, the **OECS Treaty on Agriculture**, the **OECS Agriculture Policy and Strategic Plan (2003)** and the **St Georges Declaration**. The CPF supports FAO's strategic objectives and priorities for the OECS as well as subregional programmes addressing cross-border agricultural issues.

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Enhancing the capacities and resilience of fisheries

Fisheries in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are among those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In particular, climate change will negatively

“The Zero Hunger Challenge means making sure that all food systems are sustainable ... and enabling smallholders to increase their productivity and incomes.”

José Graziano da Silva
FAO Director-General

impact fish production and catches in the region, affecting the food security and livelihoods of fishing communities in St Vincent and the Grenadines. In order to improve the resilience of fishing communities, it is important to develop alternative employment options. The production of sea moss (*Gracilaria* spp. and *Eucheuma* spp.) is one such option.

The Mayreau Explorers Cooperative on the island of Mayreau and the Ashton Multipurpose Cooperative on Union Island are currently producing and selling dried sea moss and a range of value-added products.

The raw product is grown on ropes in shallow water then harvested and sun-dried. These algae can be used to produce traditional sea moss drinks, as well as carrageenan, which is widely used in the food industry, and in other diverse products. Carrageenan is a vegan by-product of sea moss which can be used as an alternative to gelatin. However, production is still limited and training to improve harvesting and drying methods is necessary. In December 2017, several fishers and farmers participated in a regional farming workshop, held in Grenada, on sea moss production, harvesting and improved product development, including business skills.

Project: Climate Change Adaptation in the Eastern Caribbean Fisheries (CC4 Fish) (GCP/SLC/202-SCF- the project covers seven countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines and Trinidad & Tobago).

Supporting the Zero Hunger Challenge initiative

FAO has been supporting the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' commitment to the "Zero Hunger Challenge". The initiative addresses the structural causes of hunger by targeting the most vulnerable communities with interventions focused on the establishment of small-scale home and school gardens as an immediate means of increasing household food availability and nutritional education. Particular attention is paid to strengthening school feeding programmes and promoting food-based dietary guidelines. Additionally, governance structures and mechanisms aimed at improving food and nutrition security at the national level are being enhanced through inter-sectorial and inter-institutional coordination. At the policy level, the Government and FAO have developed a Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan, which is now with the Government for endorsement. Likewise, St Vincent and the Grenadines has taken steps to create the first Parliamentary Front against Hunger in the Caribbean as a mechanism to promote resource mobilization, accountability, good governance and policy instruments relevant to national food and nutrition security. The Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Zero Hunger Trust Fund Act 2016 has been one of the key achievements of the Parliamentary Front against Hunger. It has as its objective the provision of resources that are necessary to finance the eradication of hunger in the country.

Projects: (i) Support the implementation of selected activities of the National Zero Hunger Challenge Initiative (ZHCI) Action Plan of St Vincent and the Grenadines (TCP/STV/3601 and (ii) Support for the Development and Implementation of the Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC) Initiative in selected OECS Countries (TCP/SLC/3501 - the project covered three countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada, St Lucia and St Vincent & the Grenadines). Funded by FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme.

Zero hunger: regional scope – country focus

FAO has been supporting the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' commitment to the "Zero Hunger Challenge" as part of a regional initiative targeting the Eastern Caribbean States. The initiative is addressing the structural causes of hunger and targeting the most vulnerable communities, with interventions focused on the establishment of small-scale home and school gardens as an immediate means of increased household food availability. Particular attention is paid to strengthening school feeding programmes and promoting food-based dietary guidelines. Governance structures and mechanisms to attain food and nutrition security at the national level are also being enhanced through improved communication and information sharing among key stakeholders and the empowerment of civil society and non-state actors.

At the policy level, the Government and FAO have developed a Food and Nutrition Security Policy and Action Plan, which are now being implemented through the national Zero Hunger initiative.

Project: Support for the Development and Implementation the Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC) Initiative in selected OECS Countries.

