



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

ONGOING PROGRAMMES

Fit For Market (FFM, FFM SPS, FFM+)



ICR Facility



ACP Business-friendly



FD4ACP



Digital Finance for Resilience (DFS4RES)



ACP Quality Infrastructure



Business ACP



EURIZ



DIRECCT



DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTIONS

Fit For Market (FFM) programmes support companies in the horticultural sector and their environment to ensure their international access to horticultural and national markets while complying with sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and market requirements, individually or collectively. Support includes food safety, environmental management, social compliance and business management. The main types of support are related to the implementation of a management system (on social themes, environment, quality) meeting the requirements of international certification standards required by customers (GLOBALG.A.P., HACCP, Rainforest Alliance, SMETA, etc.). Set up in the continuity of FFM past programmes, the new FFM Plus (FFM+) programme support is tailored to facilitate the transition of ACP horticulture towards more sustainable food systems, addressing the priority areas identified in the Farm to Fork strategy of the European Green Deal.

In the Caribbean, COLEAD and the **Caribbean Agribusiness Association** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at promoting and strengthening the development of agribusiness in the Caribbean, improving competitiveness through increased capacity to produce better quality food and more secure, better market access and strong business and management skills. The **FFM SPS** programme has trained and awarded certificates to 661 participants from different countries' public sector services (including from the Caribbean) that implement improved SPS analytical, control and enforcement procedures for local and export markets.



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In June 2021, a third virtual training course on implementing official controls was provided for inspectors in the Caribbean by FFM SPS. Inspectors from Antigua and Barbuda took part in the training, including participatory group assignments and presentations.

COLEAD, through FFM and FFM SPS, in collaboration with the *Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture*, has launched the Caribbean Agrifood Business Series to support a more resilient and greener agricultural and agrifood business sector in the Caribbean. This Caribbean Agrifood Business Series aims at **(i)** exchanging ideas and best practices on selected priority issues; **(ii)** showcasing successes of smallholders, businesses and micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs); **(iii)** promoting and documenting forthcoming innovations and technologies benefiting smallholders and MSMEs; **(iv)** promoting networking amongst various stakeholders in the food chain; and **(v)** disseminating research findings.

ACP Business-friendly is designed to achieve two key outcomes:

- Adopting and implementing business-friendly, inclusive and responsible national policies and legal frameworks.
- Strengthening productive, processing, promoting and marketing capabilities and value chains.

In 2022, ACP Business-Friendly programme and the *Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA)* continued their collaboration to extend technical assistance support to Caribbean Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) to promote investment in the region. In April 2022, CAIPA members were briefed about the UNIDO investment opportunity development approach, including reference to the UNIDO investment promotion toolkit and methodology. CAIPA members were asked to indicate their interest for closer collaboration to coach IPAs in the development of investment opportunity profiles using the UNIDO methodology.

The **ACP Quality Infrastructure (QI)** programme supports ACP policy makers, institutions and private sector actors to **(i)** enhance the regional Quality and Regulatory infrastructure governance; **(ii)** strengthen the availability of the value chain-specific QI services; **(iii)** promote quality culture and practices. The programme complements and builds on the ongoing achievements of the ACP Business-Friendly programme reinforcing the UNIDO's programme action (Meso-level component).

ACP QI was officially launched in the Caribbean at the 41st Meeting of the *CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ)* Council, in October 2022.



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FO4ACP (Farmers' Organizations for ACP countries) programme aims to increase the incomes and improve the livelihoods, food and nutrition security, and safety of organized smallholders and family farmers by strengthening regional, national and local farmers' organizations. One of the key areas for intervention in the region is the development, strengthening and consolidation of technical advisory services and training systems.

At regional level, the programme supports also the mapping and systematization of information related to farmers' organisations. This mapping exercise provides key insights into the legislation and institutional rules governing the establishment of farmers' organisations, unions or associations in different countries. In collaboration with **PROCASUR**, an interactive online platform was developed to create an innovative learning environment for training programmes addressing farmers' organisations. The platform is an important tool for sharing experiences, knowledge and good practices directly among peers. Under the FO4ACP programme, FAO and PROCASUR undertook the mapping of 30 farmers' organisations whose membership range in size from 7 to 700 producers.

The **ICR Facility** supports private and public stakeholders and regional institutions to improve their investment climate and business environment by facilitating public-private dialogue, among other actions. At regional level, the programme supported the **Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA)** in an analysis of the credit reporting infrastructure in fifteen CARIFORUM countries. The intervention provided an in-depth assessment of credit bureaus and collateral registries in the region, and highlighted opportunities for reform at the regional level.

In addition, the **Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA)** received support to analyse the insolvency frameworks around the region. The ICR Facility supported the **Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)** in structuring its private sector lending and in assessing the supply chain and trade finance facility feasibility for the Caribbean region. At national level, the ICR Facility has supported the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority in improving its capacity to attract and retain foreign investment, while contributing to a better business environment.

DFS4RES Digital Finance for Resilience in the ACP Countries aims at deploying digital finance solutions at the scale and speed necessary to deepen financial inclusion, and accelerate economic recovery from COVID-19, in order to make economies and societies more resilient to external shocks. In 2022, DFS4Res programme launched in the Eastern Caribbean, kicking off with a diagnostic and market assessment of digital finance gaps and opportunities. Based on the diagnostic, the programme undertook an initial scope to tackle policy and market issues related to the availability of digital payments.



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The programme provided also technical assistance to policy and regulation across the **Eastern Caribbean region**. The aim of this support is focused on developing an enabling legal and regulatory framework for digital payment solutions and in particular, e-money wallet providers, to enter markets, as well as improving the policy ecosystem for digital finance in general.

UNCDF worked with the **Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)** to design survey instruments to measure the level of digital finance and inclusion across the region. A Technical Note with recommendations on indicators was provided to and adopted by the OECS as part of the OECS Financial Inclusion Survey (launched October 2022).

The programme consulted with the OECS to draft the problem statements for the design of a Caribbean FinTech Sprint for Financial Inclusion in partnership with the Innovation Hub.

The main objective is to attract local and global FinTechs with solutions to address specifically identified challenges from stakeholders in Eastern Caribbean Countries to develop digital financial services that can support an emerging, but inclusive digital economy. To support policymakers and related stakeholders across the Eastern Caribbean in their efforts to advance digital financial inclusion, the programme organised a series of technical workshops.

The first edition entitled “Advancing Financial Inclusion & Digital Payments Across the Eastern Caribbean”, targets policymakers with a focus on two policy themes critical for the region: **(i)** Licensing, regulating and supervising E-Money and Digital Finance; **(ii)** Security for emerging digital financial services.

DIRECCT (Digital Response Connecting Citizens) is implemented jointly by Agence française de développement (AFD) and the Belgian development agency, Enabel. In the Caribbean, DIRECCT supports the **Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)**, which is setting up a unified system for collecting and managing public health data in the countries of the Caribbean community. This investment in the health security supports integration of real-time digital surveillance systems to enhance risk assessment, monitoring, prevention and control of established infectious diseases and new and emerging public health threats by CARPHA and CARPHA Member States.

CARPHA also coordinates capacity-building of Member States’ Ministries and Authorities of Health to implement these systems for local, sub-regional and regional surveillance, with a focus on gender equity and human-centered technology.



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Another activity undertaken at the Caribbean regional level is the Virtual E-Commerce Accelerator Programme (VEAP), implemented by **Caribbean Export (CEDA)**. VEAP is aimed at building capacity of Business Support Organisations (BSOs) and firms to adopt e-Commerce technologies and processes leading to broader and more effective market reach, customer engagement and export sales.

EURIZ guarantee helps to increase credit accessibility for MSMEs, by engaging in cooperation initiatives with a wide variety of financial institutions. Implemented by PROPARCO (AFD Group), EURIZ covers agricultural and agri-business, health, education, digital, and microfinancing companies owned by women or young people, who are facing increased difficulties in accessing finance. In 2022, the programme reinforced the offer of the EURIZ guarantee and developing activities in the Caribbean region.

MORE INFORMATION

- Read the Monitoring Report 2021:
<https://businessacp.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Annual-Report- online-version.pdf>
- Visit the "Programmes' Highlights" page on the Business ACP website:
<https://businessacp.com/en/94071-2/>