

Shaping programs based on the realities of Women and Youth in Agriculture in Jamaica



This report is based on the multi-stakeholder consultations fora on sustaining women and youth participation in agricultural markets in Jamaica

September 2017 and January 2018



WUSC CARIBBEAN

Promotion Of Regional Opportunities For Produce Through Enterprises And Linkages (PROPEL)

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Introduction

The curiosity about where food comes from and how it is grown has resurfaced in Jamaica, but while the popularity of green markets and eating local has regained momentum, this has not translated into more women and youth taking up farming and getting involved in agriculture.

Jamaica currently has a "farming age gap". According to the latest agricultural census, there are more farmers over the age of 60 than between the ages of 35 and 44, and there are not nearly enough youth farmers, defined as farmers under 35, to make up for the thousands who are aging out of the industry. Additionally, Jamaican women make up the majority of Jamaica's poor and unemployed, but make up less than 20% of the agricultural work force in Jamaica.

The PROPEL project seeks to increase the number of women and youth who benefit from the vast opportunities within the Jamaican agricultural sector, by ensuring that women and youth receive equal prospects in achieving high levels of production and growth.

To ensure we achieve this strategic goal, PROPEL facilitated two Gender and Youth in Agriculture multi-stakeholder consultations in Jamaica in September 2017 and January 2018, with various market actors in the public and private sectors and civil society, to see how best practical solutions can be developed and implemented. In the January 2018 consultation, women and youth, with whom we had first consulted in September 2017, made presentations about their key concerns, after which stakeholders were tasked to see how best they can begin to address these issues.

About PROPEL

The PROPEL (Promotion of Regional Opportunities for Produce through Enterprises and Linkages) project is a sustainable economic growth project which has as a key goal to increase the value of fresh produce accessing high-value markets in the Caribbean and internationally by CAD \$100 million. PROPEL is funded by the Canadian government through Global Affairs Canada (GAC) as well as private donors and is implemented by the World University Service of Canada (WUSC), a global development non-profit organization.

PROPEL operates in five countries: Guyana, Barbados, Jamaica, Dominica and St. Lucia, and gender equality, environmental sustainability, good governance and youth participation are cross cutting themes throughout the project.

Since PROPEL comes to an end in December 2018, it is focusing its efforts on continuing to facilitate strong sustainable linkages among market participants – e.g. buyers, producers, input suppliers, research institutions, extension service providers, private sector and government – so that they can collectively address issues affecting the fresh produce market system, particularly for women and youth who participate in the agriculture sector.

The critical approach towards achieving this outcome is to understand where women and youth are in the value chain, the roles they play and the obstacles hindering their participation in the agriculture sector. Gender-sensitive value chain analysis based on the contextual realities of women and youth, and based on their experience and perceptions of those contextual realities, is not yet sufficiently part of mainstream analytical thinking in agriculture, and PROPEL seeks to make it a priority area of consideration by stakeholders within the agriculture sector.

To raise awareness of gender-sensitive value chain analysis the multi-stakeholder consultation fora facilitated by PROPEL provided the settings for women and youth to fully articulate their challenges to market actors and to propose recommendations on how these issues could be addressed. One male youth and three female youth made formal presentations at the January 2018 forum and then they, along with another six male youth and 15 female youth, participated in the group discussions with stakeholders/market actors. This way, market actors who participated in the forum were able to collectively respond to concerns expressed by the youth of both genders, and all participants brainstormed together to identify new approaches to bring about systemic change so that markets work better for women and youth.

The objectives of this second multi-stakeholder forum were to:

- Present the findings from the first forum held on 21st September, 2017 with 44 women and youth beneficiaries, in Kingston, Jamaica;
- Seek a coordinated response from market actors to the needs and priorities of women and youth in agriculture; and
- Encourage market actors to propose mechanisms to ensure that women and youth priorities in agriculture continue to get the required attention

Next steps

PROPEL staff will:

- Meet individually with some stakeholders to determine steps they may be able to take to respond to issues raised at the forum, and

- Plan a series of subsequent fora to address and prompt further action on key issues that were identified as priorities.

Participants

Participants in the first multi-stakeholder forum in September 2017 numbered 56, with 26 females and 32 youth.

Forty-five (45) partners and stakeholders were present at the second multi-stakeholder forum in January 2018. Of these, 23 were women and 14 were youth. Participants included representatives of Global Affairs Canada, research institutions, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Bureau of Gender Affairs, extension service providers, producers, buyers, input suppliers, governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, members of the media and the PROPEL staff.

Forum

This report on the second forum (January 2018) builds on and is based on the issues raised in the first forum of September 2017.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

The second forum was held on January 19, 2018 at the Knutsford Court Hotel. The welcome and opening remarks were delivered by Mr. Munish Persaud, Deputy Project Director, PROPEL; Mrs. Krystal Tucker-Clarke, Director of Community Liaison at the Bureau of Gender Affairs at the Ministry of Gender, Entertainment, Culture and Sports; and Mr. Walter Bernyck, Counsellor and Head of Development Cooperation at Global Affairs Canada.

Each speaker provided a brief overview of their respective organization and their interest in Jamaican agriculture and development. All expressed a sincere interest in getting a deeper understanding of the issues faced by women and youth and ways to improve their participation in various areas of the agricultural industry.

Keynote Address

The keynote address was delivered by the Hon. J.C. Hutchinson, Minister without Portfolio, Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries. The Minister expressed his delight about the forum and welcomed any opportunity to see how best his ministry and key stakeholders can improve the participation of women and youth in agriculture.

Minister Hutchinson particularly expressed an interest in seeing how agriculture can be used to tackle Jamaica's reality of crime and violence, and he relayed personal experiences of how he was able to change the perspective some youth in his constituency had on agriculture. He was also enthusiastic about the Ministry's project to get youth farmers on some 200 acres of land in agro-parks, a project that is being led by the 4-H Club and AgroInvest.

Presentation from Women and Youth in Agriculture

Yanque Yip, Michelle Irving and Sharon Holmes, who participated in the initial women and youth stakeholder forum on the 21st of September, 2017 presented the following findings, concerns and recommendations to improve the participation of women and youth in the agricultural industry:

Access to Credit

Farmers generally have issues accessing bank loans for farming, and this is exacerbated for youth farmers who may not have collateral or the reputation of older farmers. If we are serious about investing in youth farmers, we must be willing to design flexible loan programs specifically for them and offer suitable grants and seed funds.

Unlike other groups of farmers, many youth farmers have student loan debts to pay off before they can consider going into farming full-time. This may mean farming may be a second (or even third) source of income for youth to make ends meet.

Access to Land

Women account for less than 3% of private land titles in Jamaica because title and tenure tend to be vested in men through sociocultural norms. Land reform and resettlement have tended to reinforce this bias against tenure for women. Compared to men, women farm smaller and more dispersed plots and are less likely to hold title, secure tenure, or the same rights to use, improve, or dispose of land.

Additionally, accessing land is one of the biggest challenges facing youth who do not have a family legacy in agriculture. Connecting women and youth with flexible and reasonable land leases and sales must be considered a first step to access land.

Access to Technology

Women and youth are better able to meaningfully participate in agriculture when they have access to technology that boosts their independence and profit margins. This is particularly necessary for women and youth who may not receive equitable aid from older male persons and/or are not able to pay someone to perform traditional labour roles.

Climate-Smart Responses

Youth farmers are more aware of the effects of climate change on agriculture and food security. There is a greater demand among youth farmers for climate-resilient farming technology and practices. Linking experienced farmers and researchers with youth farmers will help them develop better products and ensure food security.

Representation

The lack of representation of women and youth in agriculture was a major concern as their views and particular interests are not represented in agriculture-related policies, promotions and programs.

Targeted Interventions

Despite concerns that agriculture is a male-dominated industry, with an aging workforce, very little has been done to deliberately target youth and women. Many agricultural spaces tend to be dominated by older men who often have more experience in agriculture and 'talk over' the voices of women and youth. This discourages women and youth from engaging without a deliberate effort to target their views.

Gender and Youth Sensitive Extension Services

All presenters noted feeling as though their demographic and unique needs were not being addressed through existing extension service provision.

Response and Commitment from Stakeholders

After the presentations of key issues by women and youth in agriculture, our partner stakeholders were tasked to see how they can ensure their projects, programs, products and work can become more responsive to the issues facing women and youth. The following suggestions were made:

Access to Credit

The People's Co-operative Bank (PC Bank) had already begun the process of developing an agricultural loan program and one of the key focuses would be on women. Concerns were raised about the traditional methods the bank would use to select beneficiaries, particularly around issues of collateral, and how these methods traditionally disadvantage women and youth.

Access to Land

Agro-Invest, in collaboration with the 4-H Club, has been working on giving youth access to land in Agro-Parks (just over 200 acres). Concerns were raised that the project had been announced years ago but had not developed any traction. Agro-Invest, however, noted that there has been a change in leadership at the organization and one of its priorities is to make its products and services more accessible to vulnerable populations (including women and youth).

Targeted Interventions

The Jamaica Bauxite Institution (JBI) stated that about 30% of their greenhouses are operated by women but it did not have statistics on the number of youth involved in their work. They noted that women operators tend to out-perform men and that while they would like to get more women involved, not many women have applied to lease land and become involved. They are willing to work more deliberately on getting more women and youth involved, but this may require a revision of their application process and term for leases.

The Social Development Commission (SDC) has an extensive reach in rural communities in the country, however the SDC has acknowledged that it has neglected to prioritize agriculture and to work to involve youth in agriculture. The SDC has expressed an interest in working with existing community groups with a focus on agriculture and eventually designing more projects that target women and youth in agriculture.

Health 2000 Canada (H2K) expressed interest in reaching more women and youth farmers as very few private sector groups have targeted them as a niche market, and they could be a group to focus on for brand loyalty. They will work more closely with the 4-H Club to get recommendations on youth farmers.

Gender and Youth Sensitive Extension Services

The Bureau of Gender Affairs and the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers have expressed a strong interest in working together to train RADA extension service officers on how

they can be more gender-sensitive in the work they do. However, there was an absence of a youth agency that would be able to train officers. The 4-H Club and the Ministry of Youth would be best to lead this section.

General Recommendations

Access to Credit and the Issue of Collateral

The regulatory environment has an important role to play in enabling banks to collect different forms of collateral in case of default. The banks at the forum all expressed deep concerns about the reliability of lending to persons in agriculture, and expressed no interest in working with persons who had no access to traditional forms of collateral. Banks should consider including moveable property (e.g. equipment) and introducing leasing or warehouse receipts.

Innovations are being developed around social collateral, such as a psychometric testing tool which uses character traits to assess creditworthiness. A psychometric tool has been developed by the Multilateral Investment Fund administered by the Inter-American Investment Corporation/Development Bank, and can be adapted to fit Jamaica's agriculture-banking industry. Results to date indicate that this helps to generate significantly fewer rejections of credit-worthy women and youth business owners than traditional models.

Access to New Technology

Technology without a doubt can revolutionize the way women and youth view agriculture, particularly farming and agro-processing, as it increases their independence and their profit margins. All women and youth in the earlier consultation expressed concerns about not being able to afford machinery and not having access to traditional credit routes. Two innovative suggestions were made to address this problem:

- Hire Purchase of Equipment; and
- Rental of Equipment - This could be proposed to A-1 Equipment Rentals which currently rents a wide variety of large and small construction equipment.

Security and Praedial Larceny

Security and praedial larceny were concerns raised as women are perceived as easier targets than men. General recommendations include working with the Jamaica Constabulary Force's Praedial Larceny unit to do preventative work with farmers on how they can ensure they are taking all possible measures to reduce security risks and are aware of how to react in various situations that could endanger themselves and their property.

Access to Land

To increase women and youth's access to land, special consideration must be given to understanding the history of land ownership in different parishes in Jamaica, the lack of awareness on land rights, lack of awareness on opportunities to access land, and how to negotiate land leases. Irrespective of formal legal frameworks in Jamaica on land ownership, many women's access to land continues to flow through male relatives and many youth will not have access unless an older relative dies.

While working with women and youth, we must educate them on the legal opportunities to access land and their rights; they must also be trained to negotiate land leases they are offered, particularly around the length of time and structures that can be built on these lands.

Media Coverage of the Forum

Interview on RJR Agro Buzz on a summary of the Multi-Stakeholder Forum

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0By4UWfM4ufhdZnBlcDB6Mm1OOGVaT2FtT3hLc1FDeUxLSW9F>

Jamaica Information Service: Engaging Young People Agriculture Can Help Curb Crime
Hutchinson

<http://jis.gov.jm/engaging-young-people-agriculture-can-help-curb-crime-hutchinson/>

Jamaica Information Service: Calling Farmers Radio Show

http://jis.gov.jm/radio_programs/micaf-says-engaging-young-people-agriculture-can-curb-crime/

Gleaner: Government Set Five Agro-Economic Zones Across Jamaica

<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20180122/govt-set-five-agro-economic-zones-across-jamaica>

Appendices:

Programme

Schedule

REGISTRATION

GREETINGS

Munish Persad
Deputy Project Director
PROPEL - WUSC Caribbean

OPENING REMARKS

Mrs. Krystal Tucker-Clarke
Director of Community Liaison,
Bureau of Gender Affairs at the Ministry of
Gender, Entertainment, Culture, and Sports

Walter Bernyck
Counsellor and Head of Development Cooperation
Global Affairs Canada

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Hon. William J.C. Hutchinson,
*Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Industry,
Commerce, Agriculture, and Fisheries*

BREAK

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Yanque Yip

Michelle Irving

Sharon Holmes

DISCUSSION

LUNCH

SOLUTION AND PLANNING

EVALUATION & CLOSING

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through Enterprises and Linkages (PROPEL)**



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Women & Youth in Agriculture

Registration

Name	Organisation
Yanque Yip	TSOTARE Agricultural Innovation
Leon Samms	PROPEL
Gillian Rowe	Scientific Research Council
Lenworth Collins	Perishables Jamaica Limited
Denerene Allen	Social Development Commission
Donald Robinson	PROPEL
R. Brown	
Dawn White	Agricultural Cooperative Development International/UDCG
Dwayne Brown	Farmer
Wesley Harley	Jamaica Bauxite Institute
Gillian Smith	Food & Agriculture Organisation
A . Wilson	PYE
Sharon Holness	Jamaica Agricultural Society
Marsha Williams	Jamaica Agricultural Society
Kemari	Jamaica Agricultural Society
E. Miller	Jamaica Agricultural Society
Dianne Gordon	Jamaica Bauxite Institute
Walter Bernyck	Canadian High Commission
M. Walters	ALMD/ Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries
J.C. Hutchinson	Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries
Keva Ellis	National People's Cooperative Bank
Jherane Patmore	PROPEL
Kristal Tucker-Clarke	Bureau of Gender Affairs
Stephen Henry	Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries
Kleisha Rhoden	JAMP
Clarence Osborne	Jamaica Bauxite Institute
Ainsworth Morris	Jamaica Information Service
Terrence Samuels	PROPEL
Simon Nicholson	Farmer
Shemariah Gedaliah	PROPEL
Beverly Darby Collins	Rural Agricultural Development Authority
Na-Shena Davis	Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries
Latoya Lewis	AIC