

# *Shaping Programs Based on the Realities of Women and Youth in Agriculture in Guyana*



*This Report is on the Multi-stakeholder  
Consultation Forum on Sustaining  
Women & Youth Participation in  
Agricultural Markets*

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# PROMOTION OF REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCE THROUGH ENTERPRISES AND LINKAGES (PROPEL)

WUSC  
CARIBBEAN

26 Lamaha & Irving Streets | Queenstown | Georgetown | Guyana  
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## List of Acronyms

Fls: Financial Institutions

GLSC: Guyana Lands and Surveys Commission

GMC: Guyana Marketing Corporation

GSA: Guyana School of Agriculture

IAST: Institute of Applied Science and Technology//

IICA: Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture

IPED: Institute of Private Enterprise Development

MOA: Ministry of Agriculture

NAREI: National Agricultural Research and Extension Institute

NDIA: National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (also referred to as D & I)

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

PROPEL: Promotion of Regional Opportunities for Produce Through Enterprises and Linkages

SBB: Small Business Bureau Guyana

WADNET: Women's Agro-Processors Development Network

WFC: Women for Change

WUSC: World University Service of Canada



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## Introduction

Shaping Programs Based on the Realities of Women and Youth in Agriculture in Guyana was facilitated by PROPEL as a follow-up to an August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017 consultation with women and youth that was held to gather their views on the challenges they face in the agriculture sector.

The objectives of this multi-stakeholder forum were to:

- Present the findings from the consultation held on August 30, 2017 with women and youth beneficiaries;
- 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:

- 1) Meet individually with some stakeholders to determine steps they may be able to take to respond to issues raised at the forum, and
- 2) Plan a series of subsequent forums to address and prompt further action on key issues that were identified as priorities.

## How the PROPEL project works

PROPEL (Promotion of Regional Opportunities for Produce through Enterprises and Linkages) is a sustainable economic growth project which had 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.

Because 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.



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To raise awareness of gender sensitive value chain analysis the multi-stakeholder consultation forum facilitated by PROPEL provided a setting 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 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.

### Background

Historically, the food and agriculture sector has been the main contributor to economic development in the Caribbean, including the generation of employment and enterprise development for women, men and young people. Therefore, the importance of the sector for national economic development coupled with increased agriculture knowledge and technology has brought a greater focus on market expansion. This focus has the potential of creating many opportunities for both female and male producers to serve high value markets (HVMs) with fresh produce and value-added products.

Despite these opportunities, producers/agripreneurs (M/F/Y) are faced with a number of challenges such as inadequate access to sufficient extension services and technological input; inability to secure titled lands; inability to access credit; unreliable market linkages and; climate change threats. Producers are also challenged by limited knowledge on pre- and post-harvest handling techniques.

While these challenges affect both female and male producers, female producers and youth are disproportionately disadvantaged compared to men in terms of their access to land, labour, capital and technology. Additionally, women still make up majority of Guyana's poor, despite the fact that more women than men pursue tertiary level education and participate in middle and high level management jobs.

Some common challenges affecting women and youth agripreneurs are: limited access to productive resources (e.g. land, water, inputs, and technology) and information, limited access to extension services and credit, limited participation in rural institutions and decision making, lack of voice, and limited access to decent rural employment opportunities.

Rural women's specific constraints include:

- Triple work burden in the productive, reproductive and social spheres and lack of recognition
- Lower access to capital which is needed to scale up business
- Access to productive resources such as land (smaller plot sizes, degraded soils)
- Less access to improved seeds, machinery and other inputs
- Lack of agriculture insurance (this affects all farmers, male, female and youth)

- Difficulty in accessing affordable labour for crop production
- Use of technology is costly for women small-scale producers and processors
- Difficulty in accessing relevant training (due to cultural or family constraints or lack of funds)

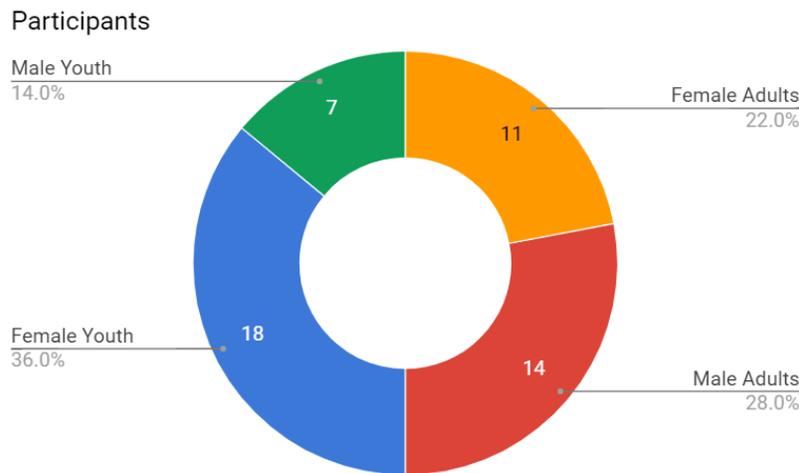
Youth’s specific challenges include:

- Lack of incentives and interest in agriculture/agribusiness due to long gestation period before profit is realized
- Lack sufficient asset to meet banks’ collateral requirements to access loans
- Banks are adverse to making agriculture loans and particularly lending to youth
- Lack of access to land
- Limited skills and education to meet demand

Mainstreaming gender equality and targeting youth are necessary in order to unlock agriculture’s full productive potential. When women and youth are assisted, they can realize more opportunities to contribute to their economic success and the economic success of their families and communities. There must be increased cooperation between farming organizations, government, private sector, financial institutions and other stakeholders in order to develop sustainable and effective solutions to address challenges faced by agripreneurs.

### Participants

Fifty persons were present at the multi-stakeholder forum. Participants included women and youth producers as well as representatives from various organizations that make up the market system: buyers, producers, input suppliers, research institutions, extension service providers, private sector and government, as well as representatives of the media and PROPEL staff. Eleven were female adults, 14 were male adults, 18 were female youth and seven were male youth<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Defined as those aged 35 and below



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Appendix 1 includes the agenda for the forum, links to media coverage of the forum, and a list of all the participants. It includes their name, the name of the organization they represent, designation, as well as their email address, and office and cell numbers.

### Forum Format

#### Welcome and Opening Remarks

The forum was held on October 3, 2017 at Herdmanston Lodge, Georgetown, and it commenced promptly at 9:00 a.m. Welcome remarks were delivered by Ms. Krysten Sewett, Market Systems Facilitator, PROPEL, Mr. Munish Persaud, Deputy Project Director, PROPEL, and Ms. Jan Sheltinga, Counsellor, Development Cooperation, Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, High Commission of Canada.

In her remarks, Ms. Sewett briefly provided an overview about the role of WUSC Caribbean in Guyana and the Caribbean. In addition, she outlined the objectives of the forum and announced the names of the market actors present for the benefit of the participants and the media.

Mr. Persaud, in his remarks, stressed the importance of the realities and standpoint of women and youths in agriculture. He also stressed the important role that the media plays in shaping the public's opinion as well as holding key players to account. As a result, he thanked them for being present and urged them to continue to educate Guyanese on the important roles of women and youth farmers and what this country can do to improve the context of their agency and farming activities. Mr. Persaud posited that like so many other actors the press is a key stakeholder as far as strengthening women and youth agency in agriculture is concerned.

Lastly, Ms. Sheltinga, in her remarks, noted that the socio-economic advancement of women and youth forms a core part of Canada's recently launched Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) which seeks to promote gender equality and to ensure inclusive economic growth that works for everyone. In addition, she encouraged participants to effectively use this forum to brainstorm solutions that would aid in lessening the challenges affecting the sustainable participation of women and youth in the local agricultural sector.

Following the opening remarks and welcome were two sessions:

Session 1: consisted of presentations by Women and Youth producers

Session 2: consisted of group discussions and presentation by market actors.

A brief summary of the sessions follows. For more detail, please see Appendix 3, which consists of Tables outlining key points from the discussions of issues raised in both sessions



## Summary Conclusions from Discussions

### Women's Participation in Agriculture in Guyana

#### Informal Sector

Rural women are among the main contributors to food production and food processing. They supply fresh vegetables and fruit to the local markets or sell at their farm gates on a daily or weekly basis. They are responsible for the care of their families, working in the kitchen gardens or on the small to medium size farms with their husbands.

Some women pay to have their fruits harvested and then sell to the market or within their villages. Most of the income earned is reinvested "turnover" in the purchase of seed and pesticides for their gardens or farms.

Most of the land on which the women farm are either ancestral family lands of which the male family members are the inheritors, or the land belongs to their spouses. In some instances, the men are employed on the sugar estates while the women care for the farms with the assistance of the children.

In the Amerindian communities, women are largely tasked with the responsibility for food production and preparation while the men hunt and fish.

#### Obstacles to Women's Equitable Involvement in Agriculture

- **Access to Credit**

In Guyana, 90% of the women heads of households who farm have no title to their lands and therefore their ability to access credit from lending institutions is non-existent. This poses obstacles to expanding and improving their farming and leads to low productivity levels. The demand for high levels of collateral and interest rates puts formal credit beyond the reach of many women.

- **Access to land**

Men account for a majority of the property titles in Guyana. There is no clear land policy and the criteria used for the allocation of land by the Land Selection Committees discriminate against women. Some women also apply for land titles in their husband's name which removes their rights to the land in the case of inheritance.

- **Lack of projects for women**

A project undertaken by Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) entitled "Women Food Producers in Guyana" stated that most of the training for rural women was not centred on agricultural development but instead craft production, sewing, etc. Additionally, it was noted that Guyana lacks programs that address credit and distribution of land to women.

- **Losses incurred by women farmers**



In addition to the losses incurred by all smallholder farmers in Guyana (losses due to post-harvest problems such as poor transportation facilities, inadequate market access, and spoilage of produce at the market site), women producers are often victims of praedial larceny, which makes them hesitant to invest and expand their enterprise. They may also be less adept at negotiating to improve the often low prices offered by buyers for their wholesale produce.

- **Education**

Even though the enrolment of women at the Guyana School of Agriculture and the University of Guyana (Agriculture Faculty) has increased, agriculture is still a predominantly a male area of study.

### **Youth Participation in Agriculture in Guyana**

Rural youth participation in economic activities are affected by three main factors a) inadequate youth policies and institutional support services; b) weak attitudinal and technical preparation of youth for participation; and c) inadequate access to financial and other productive resources. These factors have their genesis in a number of root causes, the most salient of which are: a) lack of relevant technical skills for gainful employment; b) lack of entrepreneurial skills for mobilizing personal initiatives towards self-employment; c) absence of a supportive social and economic infrastructure; d) demotivation, low self-esteem, and poor self-concept among youth; e) weak family support structure brought about by poor or absentee parenting; and f) limited incentives as evidenced by poor wages and working conditions for the young employed.

More particularly, the forum was told that training programs, when they exist, mostly reach young men and do not cater to young women and that youths are typically subject to labour intensive farm activities, causing them to shun agriculture. As well, there is a stigma attached to agriculture in some communities, as it is associated with slavery.

Young people run the risk of being trapped in the lower end of the labor market, and facing a high risk of exclusion, increasing poverty especially among rural young people. An enabling policy environment for decent work, knowledge sharing and capacity building, and opportunities for enterprise development among young people are critical as pathways out of a poverty trap. Reinventing the role of young people in the production, processing and marketing of food is also of critical importance. This is relevant to national food security, but it is also critical to communities and households' food security and nutrition. To be effective in its sustainable food security strategies, the region needs to create the conditions for young people to improve their own and their families' food security, improve nutrition, and achieve greater economic independence gaining decent jobs in the primary sector. Increased youth entrepreneurship and business development in the agriculture and other related off-farm activities (like tourism, food processing and marketing) will help to reduce the problems of the aging farm population while increasing youth employment opportunities. A modern, sustainable and productive agricultural sector is fundamental for national food security and improved nutrition and has the potential to offer income and employment opportunities for young people.



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Although mentioned in various national policies globally and by policy makers, youth are still not adequately participating in policy debates, where their interests and prospects of wellbeing are discussed. Moreover, governments need to adapt existing strategies and policies in order for youth to access, not only existing agro sector/agribusiness opportunities, but also to be in a position to seize future opportunities, especially in a sector under transformation such as agriculture, tourism and manufacturing.

### Recommendations Made by Participants regarding Female and Male Youth

The following recommendations capture key points from the consultation and are grouped by topic. Some recommendations/suggestions that came out of Session 2 (see Appendix 2) are relevant to particular groups (e.g. Food for the Poor) and are not highlighted here but, as appropriate, PROPEL will hold individual follow up meetings.

#### Drainage and Irrigation

- The National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA) needs to improve its monitoring and scheduling to address challenges. This should be based on the priority needs of farmers.
- NDIA to host awareness programs and consultation sessions with producers on drainage and irrigation (D&I) issues. Extension Officers from NAREI and GMC can be used to schedule meetings since NDIA has no officers.
- Where possible, farmers can pool resources to address D&I issues within communities.
- Increase use of media to raise awareness about D&I services for farmers in order to fast track action by relevant authorities.
- Farmers can consider forming groups to strengthen their voice and then meet with policy makers.
- Create Drainage and Irrigation infrastructures on virgin islands

#### Training and Extension Support

- There is need for youth targeted, gender sensitive extension support.
- Service to female and male youth farmers needs to be consistent.
- Extension Officers need to be continuously trained in order to be familiar with the latest agricultural trends and modern practices/technologies so they can more effectively serve female and male youth farmers.
- Extension support should cater to the priority needs of female and male youth farmers and not be based on a fixed and rigid work plan (flexibility is essential given the volatile nature of agriculture).
- Extension services should be based on a participatory methodology approach as this will ensure transfer of skills to female and male youth farmers.
- Extension services should include basic business training.

- Extension and research should be action oriented and involve farmers. Data/findings should be shared after conclusion of research.

## **Farm Mechanization**

- Since women and female and male youths are unable to purchase agricultural machinery due to limited finance, Food for the Poor can support women and youth with the acquisition of simple machinery, tools and equipment.

## **Access to Markets**

- GMC should seek to strengthen market linkage support to female and male youth farmers. Many women farmers are unable to participate in the market because of their obligations to the home. Focus should also be on local market linkages since women and youth find it hard to produce for the export market.
- Need for an intermediary to ensure fair prices and adherence to the consistent supply of quality produce, especially for women and youth producers. GMC's extension arm can provide market price information during extension visits.
- GMC should do more to ensure that female and male youth farmers are able to access information on price in a timely manner.
- GMC should advise farmers on what crops to plant based on demand. Continuous market assessments/study to be conducted in order to this.
- Market opportunities for women are not the same as those for men. Women have difficulty accessing markets due to limited transport opportunities.
- Women farmers need training in negotiation to effectively negotiate prices with buyers.

## **Access to Land**

- Special consideration should be made for women and youth farmers; men usually gain access to land due to socio-cultural norms.
- Lands can be leased to women farmers, individually or collectively, to reduce costs.
- Women who have land are unable to fully utilize the land due to the deplorable state of dams. Access roads and canals should be cleared and maintained by the relevant authorities.
- The time frame for acquiring land should not be so lengthy.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and NGOs should offer support to women so they can benefit from a strengthened institutional context for exercising their legal rights when it comes to land ownership.
- Guyana Land and Survey Commission (GLSC) should conduct more outreach programs to explain the procedure of acquiring land to farmers.

## **Access to Finance**

- Policies and regulations should focus more on enabling women and youth to access land (collateral for accessing financing).
- Consideration should be given for the return of an Agriculture Bank.



- Donors, FIs and Government need to work in collaboration to innovate and develop financial products for farmers considering the volatile nature of agriculture. A guarantee/crop insurance program should be part of the set up.
- FIs and organizations responsible for risk reduction such as the Bank of Guyana need to collaboratively work to ensure any agriculture loan effectively work for farmers.
- The process for accessing funds from FIs is tedious and lengthy. Farmers expend approximately \$40,000 to fulfill criteria without any guarantee of loan approval.
- Women farmers prefer grants for startups and help with the expansion of their farm enterprise.
- Loans should be structured based on crop cycle and should be flexible considering volatile nature of agriculture. There should be allowance made to reschedule repayment due to catastrophes such as: floods, droughts, and other types of adverse climatic conditions.
- Farmers require training in business proposal writing.



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## Appendix 1

The media links are as follows:

<http://guyanachronicle.com/2017/10/06/young-farmers-tell-it-like-it-is>

<http://guyanachronicle.com/2017/10/21/farming-is-no-bluff>

<http://guyanachronicle.com/2017/10/29/not-afraid-to-try-anything-that-can-grow>

<https://guyanachronicle.com/2017/11/19/farmer-rosamond-miller>

<http://guyanachronicle.com/2017/10/15/determined-to-succeed>



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## MULTISTAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION FORUM ON SUSTAINING WOMEN & YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL MARKETS

Tuesday, October 3, 2017  
Herdmonston Lodge, 65 Peter Rose & Anira Street, Queenstown, Georgetown

TIME	DESCRIPTION	RESOURCE
09:00hrs – 09:10hrs	Welcome and Introduction	Krysten Sewett, Market System Facilitator, PROPEL
09:10hrs – 09:20hrs	Opening Remarks and framing of the proceedings	Munish Persaud, Deputy Director, PROPEL
09:20hrs – 09:35hrs	Guest Speaker	Jan Sheltinga Counsellor, Development Cooperation Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago High Commission of Canada
09:40hrs – 10:00hrs	<i>Refreshments (end of opening ceremony)</i>	
10:05hrs – 12:00hrs	<p><b>Session 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation of Findings from Consultation Forum held with Women and Youth               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dexter Southwell representing Youth</li> <li>- Ayodele Sampson representing Women</li> <li>- Anna Bridgelall representing Women</li> <li>- Rosaman Miller representing Women</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Presentation of Findings by Groups &amp; Q&amp;A</p>	
12:00hrs – 13:00hrs	<i>Lunch</i>	
13:05hrs – 15:00hrs	<p><b>Session 2: Discuss in Groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do you intend to respond to the needs and priorities of women and youth in agriculture as (a) individual organizations and (b) as market actors who can take coordinated action? (kindly elaborate with the use of examples)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talk about who should be involved in the process...</li> <li>- Talk about what their roles should be...</li> <li>- Talk about the coordinated action that may be required and how this can be successfully undertaken...</li> </ul> </li> <li>As PROPEL is scheduled to end in December, 2018, what mechanisms can be developed to ensure that women and youth priorities in agriculture continue to get the required attention?</li> </ul> <p>Presentation of Findings by Groups &amp; Q&amp;A</p>	
<i>End of Session</i>		

## Appendix 2

### Session 1: Individual presentations by Women and Youth producers

Presentations regarding the priority areas that affect women and youth in agricultural markets were delivered by:

- Dexter South (Y)
- Ayodele Sampson (W)
- Anna Bridglall (W)
- Rosamond Miller (W)

Youth Priority Issues	Challenges	Recommendations
Drainage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poor access to drainage by youth farmers.</li> <li>2. Drains are not maintained because youth farm mainly outside of D&amp;I area.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There is the need for improved monitoring and scheduling of D&amp;I works in areas where poor youth farm, this would be effective in the maintenance of farm waterways.</li> </ol>
Training and Extension Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extension services are not as effective for youth as they should be because:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) There are long intervals between farm visits.</li> <li>b) The vested interest and time the officer places in the job is not adequate</li> <li>c) Extension support is based on a fixed work plan but it should cater to the priority needs of farmers (i.e. be flexible, considering the volatile nature of agriculture)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. The necessary skills are not always transmitted to farmers. Need to do more Participatory Farmer Field Schools where there is a two-way discussion between farmers and Extension Officers; this should be done on the field.</li> <li>3. Agricultural training institutions must always seek to update their</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Extension Head Offices must develop ways to:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reduce length of time between intervals of visiting farmers.</li> <li>b) Continuous capacity building initiatives for extension officers</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Training institutions should ensure what is being taught addresses the issues for youth in agriculture.</li> <li>3. Efforts must be made to reach the youth female population and these Efforts must cater to the needs and roles that young females play in the agriculture sector. Officers must be able to identify and respond to these needs, e.g., gender sensitive training and extension support.</li> </ol>

	<p>curriculum so that extension officers are knowledgeable about the latest agriculture trends and can work effectively with youth.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rural youth lack training in areas such as leadership and business management as well as the need for apprenticeship opportunities. Extension officers should offer this type of training as well. Perhaps GMC's extension arm can fill the gap</li> <li>Training programs mostly reach young men and do not cater to the needs of young women. Extension Officers need to be cognizant of the time and location they host training, catering to the particular circumstances of women (household responsibilities), to ensure the participation of women.</li> </ol>	
Farm Mechanization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth are typically subject to manual labour intensive farm activities causing them to shun agriculture.</li> <li>There is a stigma as a result of the historical association of agriculture with slavery in some communities.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth should be made aware of new and advancing agriculture technology, e.g., hydroponics and other non-labour intensive ways in agriculture.</li> <li>Businesses can see youth as channels for their products and services.</li> <li>Agriculture needs to be taught as a viable business venture; it must be demonstrated in a practical way that agriculture can be a lucrative business.</li> </ol>
Access to Markets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market structures are not favorable to young farmers.</li> <li>Market linkages are weak due to poor infrastructure such as roads.</li> <li>Other limitations originate from the lack of market intermediaries.</li> <li>Young people have limited knowledge of how markets work and they lack basic information on prices.</li> <li>Young rural women face additional difficulties in accessing markets as a result of their household workloads.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable innovative ways of accessing new markets including niche markets for quality products.</li> <li>Provide young rural people with opportunities to participate in markets and negotiate on an even footing.</li> </ol>
Access to Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth do not possess the collateral needed to make them eligible for loans.</li> <li>Youth do not have access to steady employment and therefore</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies and regulations should focus more on enabling youth access to land.</li> <li>Facilitating youth employment so that they can have an income to invest</li> </ol>

	cannot generate savings for investment in farming.	in agriculture. 3. Donors, financial institutions and government should come together to innovate so that women and youth farmers can access credit.
Mentorship	1. More often than not, youth farmers are portrayed as people with low self-esteem and lacking in aspiration. Listening to these stories cause youth to be lacking in aspiration and this can be demotivating.	1. Access to mentors who can play a proactive role in strengthening the knowledge, values, skills and services needed by youth to overcome the challenges they face and seize these opportunities. 2. Government and NGOs should play an active role in attracting young talented people into agriculture and find innovative ways of doing so.
Formation of an Informal Agriculture Youth Network	1. Insufficient access to active Agriculture Youth Network in Guyana	1. If we are to enable youth to transform agriculture then the barriers to their engagement need to be addressed, thus, the need for a strong agriculture Youth Network that can speak with a united voice on policy discussions at the local and national levels, e.g., social media, apps, etc. 2. Youth should be seen as important and allowed to have an impact on government decision-making as part of a larger body than they would on their own.

Women Priority Issues	Challenges	Recommendations
Access to Local Markets (not export markets)	1. Women face difficulties accessing and competing in local markets. 2. Market opportunity for a woman may not be the same for a man. 3. Women often lack timely market information, face challenges in negotiating prices with buyers and have difficulty accessing markets due to limited transport opportunities. 4. Most women farmers are unable to participate in the market because of their obligations and responsibilities in the household.	1. Donor and government agriculture programs should respond to the specific problems facing women in accessing markets and not just the problems of men. Men usually receive more support when compared to women
Land Tenure (Legal Advice)	1. Due to socio-cultural norms, land titles are usually vested in men and this bias against women makes it less likely for women in agriculture to hold titles or secure tenure.	1. Offer support to help women exercise their legal rights, through legal advice e.g. from MoA, NGOs. 2. Educate local land administration officials on women's land rights and

	This often leaves women more vulnerable to poverty, gender-based violence and displacement.	<p>how to promote and enforce those rights.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate both women and men on the benefits of recognizing women’s land rights.</li> <li>Educate local land administration officials on women’s land rights and how to promote and enforce those rights.</li> <li>Educate both women and men on the benefits of recognizing women’s land rights.</li> </ol>
Training in Negotiation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women are unable to get competitive prices for their goods as the middlemen only strive to buy commodities cheaper from women but sell at high price to maximize their own profit.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to training in negotiation skills thus providing women with capacity to negotiate with middlemen.</li> </ol>
Formation of an Informal Agriculture Women Network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient access to active Women Agriculture Network in Guyana. Women can strengthen their voice in numbers and gain better representation within the agriculture sector to ensure their needs are catered for.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thus, the need for a strong informal agriculture Women Network, e.g., social media, apps, etc. so that they can speak with a united voice on policy discussions at the local and national levels.</li> </ol>
Agriculture/Accounts Training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most women are often taken advantage of because of their limited knowledge about agriculture and the cost associated with various activities, especially those women who are in agriculture as a last resort and have no assistance.</li> <li>Women’s participation in training activities are dependent on their availability since they have to manage household and child rearing responsibilities.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The schedule of training activities must be gender sensitive and implemented at a convenient time to women farmers.</li> </ol>
Soil Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women farmers are not aware of the availability of soil analysis services in Guyana.</li> <li>Women do not have access to agricultural machinery, e.g., tillers, tractors, etc. to prepare their land.</li> <li>For women farmers in far flung area, the cost is prohibitive to get the</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women farmers need to be aware of the facilities that offer the services of a soil analysis.</li> <li>Women should be supported in accessing land prep and other appropriate equipment.</li> <li>Government and projects should support infrastructural works such and</li> </ol>

	excavator to dig drains/canals, and tractors to plough fields.	digging drains/canals and building dams for women farmers.
Technical Advice in Scheduling Agriculture Farming (Extension Support)	1. Technical support is inadequate as mentioned by Dexter Southwell. Many times, women are unable to participate in training sessions or benefit from extension support due to their unavailability during the time the services are offered.	1. Training for women should cater to the supporting roles they play, not forgetting the activity in the farm. Most importantly women need more direct material support to enhance their ability to produce.
Encouragement of Women in Agriculture	1. Most women have small farms and most are not sure how to expand. Often times, they do not feel very confident that they can succeed.	1. Successful women farmers need to be supported and encouraged to act as mentors to existing and future female farmers. 2. The above can be accomplished through the formation of a women network to learn and support each other and strengthen their voice in numbers and gain better representation.
Access to Farm Lands (Farm to Market Roads)	1. Most women farmers have little or no access to land. 2. Some women farmers who do have access to land cannot use them due to the deplorable state of the dams leading to the farmlands, (e.g. dams are filled with natural vegetation, and canals for drainage and irrigation are clogged).	1. Lands should be leased to women farmers, individually or collectively, by the agency responsible at a reduced cost. 2. Access roads and canals leading to the farm lands should be cleared and maintained by the authorities responsible.
Shortage of Labour	1. It is extremely difficult for women farmers to have consistent and reliable labour force: shortage of labourers and charges are higher for women. 2. Women farmers do not have the capacity to do manual labour that is often required in farming. 3. Men are often not inclined to work for women producers.	1. Tillers can greatly mitigate the labour challenge faced by women farmers. These can be made available to women farmers in clusters and formal farmer groups by Govt., NGOs and other agencies.
Alternative Method of Farming: Shade House	1. Field farming is too rigorous for women. 2. Impact of climate change on conventional agriculture practices.	1. Shadehouse agriculture is less labour intensive and should be targeted more to women. It is therapeutic, can be home based, and time can be managed well.
Access to Technical Knowledge:	1. Women farmers are not usually targeted by the various agencies	1. Forums dealing with the technical aspect of agriculture should target

Postharvest Handling/ Management of Products	responsible for forums where technical knowledge of agriculture and agricultural products are delivered. 2. Some women farmers are not aware of training initiatives.	women farmers and their crops equally as men are targeted. 2. Awareness and adequate time to mobilize women to participate should be taken into consideration.
Credit (Grants)	1. Agricultural loans are not easily accessed by women and the current lending strategies are not working. 2. Women producers lack the necessary collaterals to approach the lending institutions for loans	1. Women farmers prefer grants as opposed to loans. 2. Less stringent requirements when preparing applications for grants.
Communication of Market Information	1. Market information given to farmers is not always accurate.	1. Accurate and honest communication of which market to produce for and what the size of the market is.
Praedial Larceny	1. Most women producers are often victims of praedial larceny and they suffer heavy losses which makes them hesitant to invest and expand their enterprise.	1. The penalty associated with this offence should be increased.

**Session 2: Group Discussions and Presentation by Market Actors**

Solutions Proposed by Stakeholders						
Drainage and Irrigation	Training and Extension Services	Farm Mechanization	Access to Markets	Access to Land	Access to Credit	Agro-processing
<b>Individual Organizations:</b>  <b>NDIA (MoA, NGOs, etc):</b> 1. Use the media houses to raise awareness 2. Have scheduled	<b>Individual Organizations:</b>  <b>NAREI:</b> 1. Conduct assessments 2. Tailored programs 3. Farmer field schools 4. Train along the value chain as per needs	<b>Individual Organizations:</b>  <b>Food for the Poor:</b> 1. Supporting the contribution and distribution of seeds, simple tools	<b>Individual Organizations:</b>  <b>GMC:</b> 1. Capacity building for farmers in strategizing production. Market research/analysis can help farmers plan	<b>Individual Organization:</b>  <b>GLSC:</b> 1. Availability of land- make contact with Regional Office	<b>Challenges:</b> 1. Working capital 2. Collateral 3. Terms of repayment 4. High interest rates 5. Management and leadership 6. Financial literacy	<b>Individual Organizations:</b> <b>IICA:</b> 1. Mobilize resources including financial or human resources 2. Coordinate efforts among stakeholders <b>GSA:</b>

<p>outreach programs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Have public consultation</li> <li>4. Create P&amp;I infrastructures on virgin islands</li> <li>5. Create contact with prompt responses for farmers</li> </ol> <p><b>Farmers:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pool resources together for their own benefits</li> <li>2. Create groups and meet with policy makers</li> <li>3. Extension officers, NTFS to meet with farmers and bring back information to the responsible authority (data collect- to justify interventions)</li> </ol> <p><b>PROPEL's role:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be the connect between the government, organizations and farmers</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Apprentice scheme</li> <li>6. Special training activities (accounting, agrochemical marketing)</li> <li>7. Action oriented research via farmers</li> <li>8. Involved groups in discussions after research</li> </ol> <p><b>Market Actors:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training in cost of production</li> <li>2. Educate how to establish markets early, create relationships</li> <li>3. Improve market intelligence (farmers) extension services</li> </ol> <p><b>Sustainability Plan:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Networking</li> </ol>	<p>and equipment to farmers, agro-processing and farming groups and learning institutions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Promoting the adaptation of climate smart agricultural practices through the establishment of shade houses</li> <li>3. Supporting small-scale farmers to pursue crop diversification and adapt new technologies to boost efficiency and productivity</li> <li>4. Supporting agro-processing and farming groups with the establishment/upgrading of agro-processing centers</li> </ol>	<p>farming enterprise</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Need to teach farmers that selling is not marketing – understand customers and contract arrangements</li> <li>3. GMC Extension Arm to inform farmers of market prices during extension visits</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Information- be more proactive in sharing info and make it accessible (hotline)</li> <li>3. Financial access- special considerations for single mothers, youth (leased land can be mortgaged and used as collateral)</li> <li>4. Apply as part of a cooperative</li> <li>5. Reintroduce the concept of GUYBANK</li> <li>6. Time frame for access- put more resources into making the process shorter as the service is in demand</li> <li>7. You must have a plan before asking for a loan/grant. Have all your information at hand.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Anti-Money Laundering requirements (Guyana Revenue Authority, National Insurance Scheme, proof of address)</li> <li>8. Market facilitation</li> </ol> <p><b>Mitigations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Structure loan based on cycle of crop</li> <li>2. SBB-             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Credit guarantee (40%) (equity)</li> <li>b) Guarantor (parents, relatives)</li> <li>c) Bill of sales (moveables) collateral</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Negotiated by bank depending on purpose and cash flow</li> <li>4. SBB-             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 6%</li> <li>b) Interest subsidy</li> <li>c) RBGL can negotiate interest rate depending on collateral offer</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Training:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) RBGL provides training (SMEs)- can network with farmers and set price</li> <li>b) SBB provides technical training - extension support and risk mitigation</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One year training in agro-processing; possibility of government scholarships</li> <li>2. Training on demand</li> <li>3. Business incubator services:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Product development</li> <li>b) Financial literacy</li> <li>c) Business planning</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><b>Food for the Poor:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Funding:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Purchase of equipment</li> <li>b) Infrastructural development</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Network with government to facilitate/provide training opportunities</li> </ol> <p><b>WADNET:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Offer technical support e.g. study tours (share knowledge)</li> <li>2. Can offer consolidated market place</li> </ol> <p><b>PROPEL:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can offer capacity building to institutions e.g. train the trainers</li> </ol>
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<p>2. Facilitate training sessions on sensitization and other issues affecting farmers</p> <p>3. Host similar forums that brings stakeholders together and resolve these issues</p> <p><b>Sustainable Plan:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use the extension officers to have scheduled meetings</li> <li>2. Farmers to get involved in the system &amp; procedures to benefit from the services offered.</li> <li>3. Farmers to sensitize others about these benefits</li> <li>4. Educate their children to appreciate farming</li> </ol>				<p><b>Sustainability plan:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finding markets for agri produce</li> <li>2. Efficiency and more collaboration among extension offices and government agencies</li> <li>3. More prudent financial management (farmers paying rent)</li> <li>4. It's all about policy. Government buy in at the national level is necessary for long term success</li> <li>5. Networking- with other farmers and with organizations</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. SME Toolkit (online)</li> <li>7. Proof of address- letter by individual stating person applying for loan resides at the location             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Awareness about benefits of registering with GRA and NIS.</li> </ol> </li> <li>8. GMC and SBB to facilitate market linkages             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Government of Guyana - 20% of procurement goes to small businesses</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Caribbean Chemicals to feature a television program on Financial Institutions and what they can offer to W/Y in agriculture</li> <li>2. PROPEL to continue to support/facilitate networking forums</li> </ol>	<p>initiatives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Can offer capacity building to agro-processors e.g. training in labeling and packaging, quality control, good manufacturing practices, etc.</li> </ol> <p><b>Coordinated Action:</b></p> <p><b>Challenge:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of platform to share info (unaware of organizations' mandate and who does what)</li> </ol> <p><b>Solution:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creation of database of info and platform to share info (document analysis)</li> </ol> <p><b>Recommendation:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. GMC to lead this initiative</li> </ol> <p><b>Supporting Organizations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IICA- to help design questionnaire</li> <li>2. GSA- setting up Terms of Reference</li> <li>3. SBB- assist financially</li> <li>4. PROPEL- to facilitate</li> </ol> <p><b>Sustainability Plan:</b></p>
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**PROMOTION OF REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCE THROUGH ENTERPRISES AND LINKAGES (PROPEL)**

WUSC  
CARIBBEAN

26 Lamaha & Irving Streets | Queenstown | Georgetown | Guyana  
[wusc.ca](http://wusc.ca) / [eumc.ca](http://eumc.ca)

							<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Policy strategy (to say clearly which ministry is responsible for what and a clear outline of its functions):</li><li>5. Technical support</li><li>6. Political support</li></ol>
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