



Country: Mauritius

Sector: Agriculture

Project: A model for Sustainable Production and Consumption Practices and Eco-Entrepreneurship Development

• **Grantee:** Centre de Formation Agricole Frère Remy (CFAFR), Mauritius

Acknowledgements

The SWITCH Africa Green programme was developed by the European Commission to support African countries in their transition to an inclusive green economy, the main objective being to promote sustainable development. This is based on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns, while generating growth, creating decent jobs and reducing poverty.

This impact sheet on *A model for Sustainable Production and Consumption Practices and Eco-Entrepreneurship Development* provides a snapshot of results and achievements of the project under the Green Business Development Component of Phase I (2014-2019) of the SWITCH Africa Green Programme. This component supported micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to apply and adopt SCP practices in their business operations.

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BACKGROUND

Rodrigues island has a population of about 41,669 People, with about 40% of the population living below the poverty line. The main source of income and economic activities in Rodrigues are fishing, farming, and tourism[1]. The 'Centre de Formation Agricole Frère Remy' is an agricultural training centre that provides vocational training to the youth. The project 'A model for Sustainable Production and Consumption Practices (SCP) and Eco-Entrepreneurship Development' was started in 2015 and was implemented for a period of 35 months where it mainly worked with the youth.

Through the project intervention, students who had failed to advance from the basic primary education level were enrolled to the 'Centre de Formation Agricole Frère Remy' where they were offered vocational training in livestock rearing, horticulture, floriculture, mosaiculture, pyrotechnic and zootechnic. The Centre enrolls an average of 40 teenagers between the ages of 12 and 18 years every year. The project empowered the youth by equipping them with skills that promoted their self-reliance, helped reduce their levels of poverty and fostered growth and devolvement in the agriculture sector.

The project implementation committee was instituted to provide oversight of project implementation.

OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the project was to provide vocational training that promotes SCP practices and eco-entrepreneurship development among the youth.

Specific objectives were to:

1. Integrate green business development in the curriculum and assist students that have been trained to set up their own small businesses.
2. Carry out studies to inform optimization of resource use: water, waste and energy at the 'Centre de Formation Agricole Frère Remy'.
3. Train students, trainers and community members on sustainable consumption and production practices.
4. Promote exchanges between students in Rodrigues, Reunion and Mauritius islands on green agricultural practices and green business development.





BENEFICIARIES

The project engaged 47 students (10 female and 37 male) who received training and adopted sustainable agriculture practices. Community members, including the parents of the students were provided with technical extension services promoting sustainable agriculture.

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OUTPUTS

Improved capacities of business development services to promote SCP practices by MSMEs

Green business development services provided

The project enhanced capacity for green business development where six coaches were recruited at the Centre. The coaches provided mentorship to the students on SCP practices and entrepreneurship.

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Increased networking among green businesses

Networking events organised

Networking sessions and educational tours in Mauritius were organized, through which, over 41 students were given an opportunity to interact and exchange ideas on green business development. From the networking exchanges, 14 of the students were awarded funding to start their own businesses in the first year of the project implementation and 27 of the students were awarded in the second year. The networking events were organized using resources mobilized by the grantee.

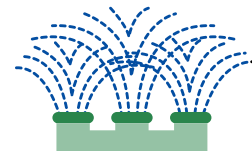
Two (2) champions were selected to demonstrate integration of sustainable agriculture in their businesses and they visited other agro-entrepreneurs in Mauritius for knowledge sharing.

Beneficiaries of the project participated in the SWITCH Africa Green networking fora (2016 and 2018) during which they had opportunities to connect and share experiences with other green businesses.

Improved capacities of workers in green sectors

Training on SCP practices

Students were trained on SCP practices in organic farming, poultry farming, pig rearing, kitchen gardening, cookery and maintenance of farm equipment such as installation of irrigation systems and efficient water piping systems. The students also benefited from training on developing business plans and enterprise budget management.



Technical tools developed for scaling up SCP

The following training manuals were developed:

- **Gardening Techniques Training Manual** which addresses activities related to efficient and cost-effective garden landscaping and sustainable gardening techniques;
- **Beehive Farm and Honey Production Training Manual** with guidelines on beehive construction as well as honey separation and production techniques.
- **Culinary Arts and Kitchen Gardening Training Manual** which contains techniques of food preparation using energy efficient measures to conserve energy.

OUTCOMES

Uptake of SCP practices by MSMEs

Adoption of SCP practices by MSMEs

Beneficiaries took up practices such as substituting inorganic pesticides with organic pesticides to grow vegetables and the use

of compost and poultry waste to produce manure. Mixed farming practices were adopted to enhance efficient use of farmland by rearing animals on the same land used for cultivation.

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The use of plastic was minimised as the beneficiaries re-sued cement bags, old tires, and old plastic pots as nursery beds. Animal sheds were constructed using recycled metals and plastics. Rain water harvesting was also harnessed and solar lamps were installed in the farms.

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IMPACTS

Environmental impacts

Reduction in waste

The beneficiaries were trained in the production of biogas from using pig waste to generate green energy and produced organic manure. The waste generated in the farms was also used in the production of compost manure and water used for washing vegetables and rice was reused for irrigation. Project beneficiaries were trained on the use of natural fertilizers from plants such as lemon-grass, green spices and thyme. Pest control was managed using natural remedies to minimize crop loss.

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Economic impacts

Increase in revenue

Most of the enterprises engaged by the project were start-ups which were generating revenue of less 1 USD annually. In 15 of the MSMEs, an increase in revenue from 973.39 USD to 4760.78 USD annually was recorded.

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Social impacts

Improved health and safety

The students enrolled at the Centre were majorly those who could not proceed to attain a higher level of education and had no other alternatives for a livelihood. They received vocational training which enabled them set up their own small businesses thereby improving their livelihoods and that of their families. The use of organic pesticides was beneficial to their health and safety compared to use of synthetic pesticides which posed a risk on their health and well-being.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Networking and knowledge sharing activities with alumni of the Centre helped encourage students and see the practical application of skills learnt to generate income.
- In addition to the opportunities in agriculture, project beneficiaries discovered business opportunities in wall construction, irrigation and land pipe installation.
- The incorporation of the kitchen gardening module in culinary arts encouraged the beneficiaries to differentiate between bulk agriculture and house kitchen gardening.

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“SWITCH Africa Green has equipped me with the skills to conduct my agri-business initiative. The concepts I got from the training sessions empowered me to utilize every resource well increasing my flock from 4 animals to 126 animals. Through Switch Africa Green I am able to support and provide for my family. For future aspects, I want to lease land to be able to embark on crop production,”

Herman Agathe, a young entrepreneur.



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