

# PROJECT STATUS REPORT

## 01/01/2020 - 06/30/2020

### SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

**Operation number:** TT-T1067

**Suboperation number:** ATN/ME-15827-TT

**Project Name:** Making Agriculture Profitable and Sustainable

**Purpose:** Promote the adoption of climate smart agricultural practices amongst 500 farmers

**Country admin**

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**Country beneficiary:**

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

**Group:**

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**SubGroup:**

**Executing Agency:** The Cropper Foundation

**Team Leader:** VASHTIED

**Project cycle:**

Report Date: 2020 - 07 - 01

Approval Date: 2016 - 10 - 28

Signature Date: 2017 - 01 - 28

First disbursement date: 2017 - 05 - 31

Original Execution End Date: 2020 - 01 - 28

Current Execution End Date: 2020 - 01 - 28

Original Last Disbursement Date: 2020 - 07 - 28

Last Current Disbursement date: 2021 - 07 - 28

### SECTION 2: PERFORMANCE

Project's performance summary since the beginning

The project has undergone several key changes in terms of scope and deliverables that were caused by deviations in components including: cost of testing, size of the high-value market and involvement of the Ministry of Agriculture. These deviations have resulted in changes to the overall scope of the project but has also increased the sustainability and integration of the project into the national agricultural environment.

Supervision Team Leader comments

The Cropper Foundation has secured important partnerships that will support sustainability of the program beyond the period of IDB Lab financing. These partnerships include a marketing partner in Massy Stores, Farmer support with the National Agricultural Development Company which focuses on farmer support and has packing facilities available for small agro processors as well as a system of farmers markets, and the local branch of IICA that will support on going training and advisory support

Project's performance summary in the last 6 months

COVID-19 has impacted the progress of the project, however not significantly. Partners were still able to work together virtually and field officers and farmers were still able to deliver on their requirement as they were essential workers as described by the Government. Several initiatives to support the sustainability of the project were developed by the partner organisations which are currently being developed.

Supervision Team Leader comments

### SECTION 3: INDICATORS AND MILESTONES

**C1 : Supporting Adoption of Climate Smart Agricultural Practices**

**Weight** 33%

**Qualification** ~not selected~

Indicators	Baseline	Planned	Achieved	Status
<b>I1</b> Number of Farmers trained	0	500 ( 2021 - 04 - 28)	825 ( 2020 - 03 - 09)	Finished
<b>I2</b> Number of farmers that have adopted new technologies and farming practices	0	300 ( 2021 - 04 - 28)	330 ( 2020 - 03 - 09)	Finished

**C2 : Developing Independent Testing**

**Weight** 33%

**Qualification** ~not selected~

Indicators	Baseline	Planned	Achieved	Status
<b>I1</b> Number of Farmers whose produce is tested and certified as chemical free	0	250 ( 2021 - 04 - 28)	5 ( 2020 - 08 - 13)	In progress

**C3 : Positioning Sustainable Produce in High Value Markets**

**Weight** 34%

**Qualification** ~not selected~

Indicators	Baseline	Planned	Achieved	Status
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11 Number of farmers linked to new strategic business partners 0 250 ( 2021 - 04 - 28) 20 ( 2019 - 01 - 30) In progress

Milestones	Planned Value	Achieved Value	Due Date	Achieved Date	Status
Conditions Prior	7	7	2017 - 07 - 28	2017 - 07 - 28	Achieved
training of 10 extension officers	10	10	2018 - 03 - 31	2018 - 05 - 14	Achieved
development of standards and protocols, and tests to detect the presence of chemical free produce available for sale in 2 Massy stores	1	1	2018 - 07 - 30	2017 - 12 - 17	Achieved
completion of training of 250 farmers in climate smart agricultural practices	2	0	2019 - 04 - 30		Overdue
seminar on adoption of climate smart agricultural practices and uptake of chemical free produce available for sale in 4 Massy stores	250	0	2019 - 11 - 30		Overdue
	1	0	2020 - 01 - 29		Overdue
	4	0	2019 - 01 - 29		Overdue

## CRITICAL FACTS THAT HAVE AFFECTED PROJECT'S PERFORMANCE

Supplier/contractor performance

Others, Which?

COVID-19 pandemic of course has impacted the project by the slowing down of activities across the board in the executing agency, partners and farmers as well. In addition there have been challenges with cost of testing which contributed to delays in earlier project stage

## SECTION 4: RISKS

	Impact Area	Severity	Prob.	Date	Responsible	Mitigation action
<b>Consumer market not ready for chemical safe goods.</b>	Positioning Sustainable Produce in High Value Markets	(1) Very Low	Very Low 20%	2020 - 02 - 14	Project Coordinator	A directed market study on chemical safe produce was undertaken that looked at consumer likelihood to purchase branded chemical safe produce as well as price premiums for such produce. The results of the survey done with 300 persons in key grocery stores in all major regions of Trinidad confirmed that the market is receptive and willing to pay a premium that will hold indicators true for the project.
<b>farmers cannot afford testing post project execution</b>	Intermediary Outcome, Developing Independent Testing	(4) High	High 80%	2020 - 02 - 14	Project Coordinator	The project has developed a umbrella certification scheme to reinvest profits from sale of goods+membership fees to offset costs to farmers of testing in accredited labs. The initial protocol developed by the local lab did not meet necessary criteria for current pesticide usage.
<b>Farmers do not adhere to operational and quality standards required by the buyer</b>	Intermediary Outcome	(3) Medium	Low 40%	2020 - 02 - 14	Project Coordinator	work with farmers that are currently working with the buyers and demonstrated the commitment required to implemented the practices developed by the project.
<b>Farmers do not adhere to operational and quality standards required by the buyer</b>	Intermediary Outcome	(2) Low	Very Low 20%	2020 - 02 - 14	Project Coordinator	Farmers will be required to enter into a signed agreement that details the conditions for participating in the brand, which includes higher premiums and other incentives. Conditions will include testing by CARIRI, as well as other sustainable farming practices necessary to qualify. If these are not met the farmer will not be able to enjoy the benefits of selling under the brand.
<b>Farmers do not understand the business case to participate in this niche market</b>	Intermediary Outcome	(2) Low	Low 40%	2020 - 02 - 14	Project Coordinator	Farmers will be provided with introductory agribusiness training, as well kick off meetings with TCF, wherein they will be made aware of the various price premiums under the brand, and what they will be eligible to make as participants under the project.
<b>Market size not sufficient to satisfy supply.</b>	Positioning Sustainable Produce in High Value Markets	(3) Medium	Low 40%	2020 - 02 - 14	Project Coordinator	The expected volumes of produce by Massy Stores are lower than expected, and can realistically be serviced by a small number of farmers. Expanding the project will require expanding the number of Massy Stores (allowed in the TCF-Massy MOU) or expanding to other markets, such as other groceries, farmers markets, hotels etc. Using the initial phase of testing, TCF will determine the realistic farmer cohort that can be certified. Using this number, TCF will then seek to primarily expand the Massy Stores beyond project boundaries, then open to other supermarket chains, and then explore alternative markets such as hotels etc.
<b>Project not able to source necessary numbers of farmers to supply demand.</b>	Positioning Sustainable Produce in High Value Markets	(2) Low	Very Low 20%	2020 - 02 - 14	Project Coordinator	Massy Stores have provided volumes of produce required per month for the initial 5 crops to be put on shelves. The volumes requested are manageable even with a small number of participating farmers for the numbers of stores within the project boundaries (4). The selection of farmers will work backwards from the volumes required so TCF can be assured of regular supply to stores.
	Final Outcome, Intermediary Outcome,					

<b>COVID-19 pandemic</b>	Positioning Sustainable Produce in High Value Markets, Supporting Adoption of Climate Smart Agricultural Practices, Developing Independent Testing	(4) High	High 80%	2020 - 08 - 04	Executing Agency	Re-positioning of chemical safe produce to reflect a healthier choice. Adjustments of training and meeting to suit online and social distancing protocols.
TOTAL RISKS QUANTITY: 8 IN EFFECT RISKS: 8 NOT IN EFFECT RISKS: 0 MITIGATED RISKS: 0						

## SECTION 5: SUSTAINABILITY

### Indicate likelihood of project sustainability after project completion:

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#### Justification

Given the partnerships established and the market channel with Massy Stores the program is likely to be sustained

### ASPECTS THAT PUT THE PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY AT RISK

*[There were no aspects reported during this period]*

#### Actions related to sustainability which have been implemented in the project:

Several activities have been designed in conjunction with the project's partners (NAMDEVCO, IICA, Ministry of Health and CARIRI) that will integrate the project's learnings and outcomes into national level institutions with responsibility for agriculture and food safety. 1) Development of a mobile phone app for farmers, led by IICA. Strengthening capacity for recordkeeping is essential, since farmers, particularly those with few or no employees, find it difficult to accurately record daily farming activities, especially at the time it happens. In spite of several attempts over the years to promote farm record keeping, this remains a gap in the farm sector. There is ample global evidence that use of low-cost smart phone technology and specialized software create new opportunities for farm management applications in small farms. The App is also intended to help achieve the MAPS' ultimate deliverable which is the promotion of climate smart agricultural practices by farmers in Trinidad and Tobago through its support of increased efficiency and productivity of farming systems, as well as the enhancement of their adaptive capacity. It will allow farmers to: (i) track compliance to T&T Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) standards (for traceability), (ii) track expenditures for improved decision-making, and (iii) keep track of any digital on-farm tools used. It is expected that farmers who use the App will: i. have a better understanding of what they need to do to successfully meet TT-GAP standards and apply proper food safety measures on-farm to comply with same; ii. have a user-friendly tool to effectively keep records, track their cost of production and make real-time decisions to better manage their costs. 2) The Development of the Grown Safe Certification Programme (GSCP), is being designed by TCF, NAMDEVCO and IICA. The GSCP aims to provide an integrated approach to sustainable implementation of climate-smart agricultural practices by addressing the critical need to catalyse a higher value channel which incentivizes farmers to make the required changes. In addition, the GSCP seeks to utilise a multi-stakeholder approach along the food supply chain, to provide to the retailer and consumer, a voluntary certification programme that is based on the principles of internationally recognised Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). The GSCP is a voluntary, non-contractual programme established to incentivize farmers in the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices by providing local small-holder farmers' access to high value markets. The GSCP provides training, monitoring, and testing to approve that farmers' produce is "Certified Safe" based on international food safety guidelines and Good Agricultural Practices. Produce is termed "Certified Safe" if selected pesticide residue are below the Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) set by the FAO Codex Alimentarius Standards and are absent of selected harmful microbiological pathogens. 3) Development of a national pesticide database, to be managed by the Chemistry, Food and Drug Division (CFDD) of the Ministry of Health. This was identified as major critical gap in national information around pesticides identified within the project. Of course, the project focuses on the promotion of pesticide safe crops in Trinidad and Tobago which depends on the farmers' (and buyers')

ability to: Identify safer pesticides for use; Undertake proper storage and handling; Use the recommended rates of application and frequency of application; while also limiting the use of Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) and practising proper empty pesticide container management. The CFDD, a partner in the project, has spoken at length about the drawbacks that the country faces without such a system, which they have the manpower to run but not the funds to build. Through MAPS and the component - Supporting the development of climate smart agricultural practices, the project will develop the electronic database which can be integrated with the Ministry of Health's website. The actual data on pesticides will have to be provided, verified, validated and populated by the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate/ Chemistry, Food and Drug Division. Updating the database will be the remit of the Ministry of Health/ Chemistry Food and Drugs Division on an ongoing basis. 4) Supporting the establishment of a national model farm focusing on sustainable agriculture to be set up by NAMDEVCO. NAMDEVCO has some of the primary responsibility for supporting the expansion of food security in the country through their Farm Monitoring and Inspection programme. They have developed the outline for a large model farm next to their packinghouse in Piarco, Trinidad. The establishment of a Model Farm which will be a National Demonstration Centre on Food Safety and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). This NAMDEVCO-managed facility will ensure the implementation and maintenance of the requirements toward mainstreaming sustainable agriculture through certifiable GAP operations according to national standards. It will be fully equipped to guide stakeholders in all aspects of crop production from farm to table using GAP as the guiding principle with the influence of buyer/market requirements, whether domestic or foreign. 5) Development of a virtual farmers market. This will be undertaken by Cropper Foundation to help widen the size of the market available to farmers under the GSCP, as well as other farmers who are desirous of becoming certified. This will expand their ability to sell to consumers and other buyers outside of Massy Stores.

## SECTION 6: PRACTICAL LESSONS

	Relative to	Author	Date
THE IMPACT OF BACKGROUND CHEMICAL LEVELS. In collaborating with CARIRI on developing the chemical testing protocol we have learned that the background levels of chemicals (in particular pesticides) in the environment are so high that it is not meaningful to focus our testing only on participating farmers. We must include adjacent farmers and water sources in our testing protocols as it is possible that the crops of our participating farmers, who do not use added chemicals, may be contaminated by adjacent and background sources of chemicals and we need to be able to detect this.	Implementation	Mark Thomas	2019 - 10 - 22
Dealings and requests with government Ministries and their departments involve significant amount of protocol and the anticipated time for such interactions and obtaining decisions should be at least doubled when formulating a workplan and critical path.	Design	Mark Thomas	2019 - 10 - 22
Defining and testing assumptions: in the design of projects, key assumptions are made that are critical to its success. In undertaking a new venture out of an organisation's comfort zone, these assumptions should be clearly defined and undergo testing either pre-implementation or very soon after implementation starts. Funding should be allocated for testing of these assumptions to ensure that subsequent activities are informed by results. MAPS - key assumption was that consumers will respond positively to branded chemical safe products and pay a higher premium, therefore resulting in sales growth for farmers. Past research, even by TCF, was spotty and tangentially linked to the current project. This assumption was tested through a directed market study which proved that the assumption holds true.	Design	ALYSSA BLACK	2019 - 10 - 22
Building redundancies in key project areas (Plan As and Bs): For project activities that solely depend on either one service provider or resource with numerous dependencies in the workplan, projects should have a 'plan b' in the event that circumstances prohibit timely use of the service or resource. This should be done in the development of the work plan as 'plan b options' or alternative case scenario choices and how they could be mobilised in the event of a failure with the primary provider or resource. MAPS: The bureaucracy of the Ministry of Agriculture has severely limited the expected outreach of the extension officers, coupled with severe flooding in late 2018. However NAMDEVCO has a similar component of field officers with (anecdotal) closer ties with their registered farmers, who also undergo Farm Certification with some similar sustainable practices. NAMDEVCO has less red tape and are easier to mobilise.	Design	ALYSSA BLACK	2019 - 10 - 22
Honest understanding of limitations: More rigorous and honest assessments of key institutional limitations and resources need to be incorporated into project planning and scheduling. Not to be taken as aspersions on organisations' ability, an honest reflection of timeframes or bureaucracy in delivering services or resources can only help in developing work plans that are easier to implement. Involving key partners in project design in a deeper way would mitigate these effects. MAPS: SMJ as Massy's packager, is not willing at this time to be the packager for the project. While NAMDEVCO is able and willing to perform the service, early notice of this could have saved time and effort. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture has several limitations with knowledge provision (farmer information etc) that could have been understood better and built into the project timeframe.	Design	ALYSSA BLACK	2019 - 10 - 22
Building on successes: Reinventing the wheel uses up resources for no reason and takes up valuable time. Projects implemented by organisations like TCF build on past experiences that inform the design and implementation. In many cases, these past projects provide learning and even tools that should be utilised in future related projects. A proper institutional assessment of internal resources and key partners should be undertaken so that projects improve on rather than seek to re-create. MAPS: Past TCF projects funded by the IDB have tested and improved the High Nature Value Index (HNVI) as an innovative tool to determine a farm's	Design	ALYSSA BLACK	2019 - 10 - 22

health and contribution to sustaining the ecosystem it is in. The HNVI is a ready-made and relevant tool to be used in outcomes R2 and R4 and will be revised to do so.

Constantly work on collaboration: In projects that involve large numbers of interconnected stakeholders, several elements need to be built up to ensure collective impact: Partners need to develop and share a common agenda built on shared values (MOUs, Steering committees etc); Shared measurement systems to hold everyone accountable (responsibility matrix etc); mutually reinforcing activities (greater integration of connected organisational workplans (GAP initiative eg.); continuous communication to build trust and ensure everyone knows what's going on (in-person visits, email threads); and a strong backbone organisation that seeks to coordinate activities and that partners can trust. Kania & Kramer 2011 ([https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact))

Having an independent advisory group/steering committee is vital. The development of an advisory group under MAPS, sourced due to their expertise and organisational influence has vastly improved the implementation and sustainability potential of the project. Partners are able to use their influence and networks to hasten activities and ensure implementation. In addition, their expertise is critical in determining accuracy of data gathered during implementation. For example, if the testing consultant's inception report had been passed to the advisory committee they would have assessed that the compounds being tested for were not applicable to the current agricultural landscape and allowed for a much earlier revision of the project implementation timeline.

There should be a dedicated sum of funding that can be allocated to prospective grantees to undertake targeted baseline of situational analysis to better inform the development of the final proposal. This lack of information may have impacted on the understanding of the total market size, available shelf space for farmers' products, feasibility of such ambitious carbon sequestration activities and so forth. Rather the assumptions for activities that the theory of change was built on, could not be effectively interrogated.

Implementation	ALYSSA BLACK	2019 - 10 - 22
Design	Omar Mohammed	2020 - 03 - 09
Design	Omar Mohammed	2020 - 08 - 04