



Suriname

IDB Lab¹ Delegation of Authority to Country Offices

Reigniting Empowerment of tribal women in Suriname through Engagement in transformative Technology (RESET) SU-T1164

Plan of Operations

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| A. | <i>Project Title</i> | Reigniting Empowerment of tribal women in Suriname through Engagement in transformative Technology (RESET) |
| B. | <i>Project No. (TC#)</i> | SU-T1164 |
| C. | <i>Executing Agency</i> | Wi! Uma Fu Sranan |
| D. | <i>Target Beneficiaries</i> | Low income Indigenous and tribal women farmers in Suriname's interior hinterland communities in the districts of Brokopondo, Wanica and Para, |
| E. | <i>Sources of Funding</i> | IDB Lab Contribution Non-Reimbursable Technical Co-operation: US\$ 150,000 Counterpart Resources: US \$101,900 Total Cost US \$251,900 |
| | <i>Objectives</i> | The project objective is to pilot a model to reset productive and resilient livelihoods for tribal women engaged in the cassava value chain in Suriname |
| G. | <i>Execution Timetable</i> | The project will be executed in 18 months The period for disbursement will be 24 months |
| H. | <i>Environment and Social Impact Review</i> | This operation was screened and classified as required by the IDB's Environmental and Social Performance Framework on December 8, 2022. Given the impacts and risks, the proposed category for the project is B. |

2. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

- 2.1 The project seeks to address the **severe disruption in livelihoods and empowerment of tribal women engaged in cassava production, processing, and export in Suriname's interior hinterland communities** in the districts of Brokopondo, Wanica, and Para. These indigenous and tribal women were affected by the mobility restrictions imposed as part of Suriname's COVID 19 response, steep

¹ The Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) which remains the legal name of IDB Lab

increase in costs of living as a result of a 130% devaluation in less than 12 months, and most significantly, damage caused by severe flooding in these already vulnerable communities, all of which occurred over the period 2020 – 2022. All these events have also exacerbated the broader problem of food security in the country, which has been threatened by global supply constraints and increased pricing of many commodities.

2.2 At the beginning of 2020, Wi! Uma Fu Sranan Suriname's first all-female agricultural co-operative, in partnership with the social enterprise agro-processor SURIVIT N.V. and with support from the Japanese Social Fund through the IDB (SU-T1091 Strengthening Female Entrepreneurship in Brokopondo, Wanica, Sipaliwini and Marowijne), had established a successful model empowering tribal women from the districts of Brokopondo, Wanica, Para, Marowijne and Sipaliwini in cultivation and processing of cassava, producing a range of nutritious products sold in Suriname and in export markets. Cassava is the second most important staple food in Suriname, after rice and is the main food security crop for the Amerindian and Maroon communities of the hinterland, especially in remote areas. As such, cassava cultivation and processing provide an opportunity for food security and income-generation for women in the interior of Suriname, where the crop is grown and processed, merging local cultural traditions with modern cultivation and agro-processing systems.

2.3 Starting in 2013, SURIVIT N.V. has been actively involved in providing women from tribal communities with an option to participate in agri-entrepreneurial activities and create a sustainable livelihood for themselves. Building on traditions of agriculture and food production, and in partnership with their sister organization the Wi! Uma Fu Sranan social and economic cooperative, women in villages across Suriname were engaged in cultivation and processing of traditional cassava, producing cassava porridge and pancake mixes as well as fruit for sale in local and export market. Investments in agricultural practices and food safety supported by the Japanese Social Fund helped to **improve the quality, quantity, and commercialization opportunities of the cassava crop for female farmers, producers, and marketers, and in 2018 the company was exporting to the Netherlands and Trinidad and Tobago as well as supplying local markets.** Working within a co-operative structure, women who traditionally practiced subsistence farming as a source of food for their

- households and communities were able to receive training and apply new practices to cultivate and harvest cassava that is processed in a facility established in 2020 (co-owned by the co-operative and SURIVIT), producing porridge and cassava flour and pancake mix for local and export markets.
- 2.4** However, **starting in 2020 several external economic and environmental shocks have severely affected the viability of opportunities afforded to these women, resulting in the erosion of savings, disruption and destruction of livelihoods exacerbation of food security risks and families in these communities.**
- 2.5** The first shock was **the COVID 19 pandemic and in particular the prolonged restrictions on mobility and gathering, which disrupted primary production, processing, and sale of product.** During this period, women farmers as the primary earners in their households, had to draw on small scale savings for survival. Throughout the pandemic the Wi! Uma Fu Sranan managed to continue some activities and supported the female farmers by pivoting to training delivery via videos and virtual training materials, including an interactive mobile application that offers tools for their training in the international standards required in agricultural practices, but production and attendant income generation were severely compromised.
- 2.6** As a response, SURIVIT also sought to provide income support by maintaining a level of wages for affected workers and designed a system of sales and home deliveries of essential food products derived from cassava, such as baby food. These measures helped offset some of the economic hardships of the pandemic in the short term, while also supporting population's food security and these efforts were recognized by the IDB as the project partners were selected as winners in **the 2020 IDB Development Superheroes Award.** However, despite these efforts, female farmers suffered erosion of savings and of income generation activities because of the pandemic restrictions over the period 2020 – 2021.
- 2.7** Two additional shocks have severely undermined any efforts to restart productive activity as restrictions of the pandemic were lifted. **Suriname between 2020 and 2021 faced devaluations of over 135% of its currency value** which resulted in escalation



of costs of basic services, as well as essential goods, further imposing hardships on the population, and in particular poor communities that were already struggling during the COVID 19 restrictions and attendant loss of livelihoods. **In 2021 and more recently in 2022, Suriname experienced extreme flooding and damage to crops, property, and infrastructure in areas within the interior that had little or no experience with this effect of climate change.** Flooding has devastated Indigenous communities in the interior, including those inhabited by members of Wi! Uma Fu Sranan, destroying cassava and household crops, farmlands, and homes, effectively reducing independent households engaged in farming to seeking shelter with neighbors and families, while also creating food insecurity, malnutrition and exacerbating poverty and vulnerability in many of these communities.

2.8 As Suriname emerges from many restrictions imposed in the first two years of the pandemic, the economic shocks and severe flooding, women producers need support to **restart commercial operations and commence building a more sustainable and resilient future.**

2.9 **The challenge is to rebuild a more sustainable and resilient model that can create opportunities for women to regain a level of financial independence to care for their families, to attract the younger generation and to address food security issues in poor communities.** In the absence of new investment, the hard-won gains that have supported and empowered women in these remote and low-income communities and which have created hope for a brighter future may be permanently eroded.

3. EXECUTING AGENCY AND BENEFICIARIES

3.1 Wi! Uma Fu Sranan (WUFS) will be the Executing Agency for this operation and will sign the Letter of Agreement with the IDB. Founded in 2013, Wi! Uma Fu Sranan (WUFS) is the first all-female Agriculture Cooperative in Suriname, and its membership comprises female farmers from the districts of Brokopondo Para and Wanica in Suriname. The members are hardworking rural women from the hinterland, who seek to provide for their families with limited access to sustainable income.

Traditionally these women engage in subsistence food production without much support from financial and business support organizations. Wi! Uma Fu Sranan was started to promote and advance the livelihoods of female farmers within the co-operative. Wi! Uma Fu Sranan also is the Executing Agency for IDB's SU-T1091 Strengthening Female Entrepreneurship in Brokopondo, Wanica, Sipaliwini and Marowijne project that was financed under the Japan Special Fund Poverty Reduction Program (JPO).

- 3.2** SURIVIT N.V., registered as a limited liability company is fully owned by *Wi! Uma Fu Sranan*. SURIVIT N.V. was established to produce agro processed products that meet international requirements by using local raw materials to improve local production and substitution of imported products. Starting in 2013, SURIVIT N.V. has been actively involved in providing women from tribal communities with an option to participate in agri-entrepreneurial activities and create sustainable livelihoods. Building on traditions of agriculture and food production, and in partnership with their sister organization Wi! Uma Fu Sranan social and economic cooperative, women in villages across Suriname engaged in cultivation and processing of traditional cassava, producing cassava porridge and pancake mixes as well as fruit for sale in local and export markets.
- 3.3** The primary beneficiaries of this project are the women farmers involved in Wi! Uma Fu Sranan and SURIVIT N.V. who are low income, highly vulnerable women from Indigenous and Maroon communities in the districts of Brokopondo, Wanica and Para districts in Suriname. Brokopondo, and a part of the District of Para are mostly inhabited by Maroon and Indigenous communities. According to the 2012 Census statistics, there are around 11 Maroon and Indigenous villages in Para, 32 in Brokopondo, which range from small family communities of 50 to large communities of up to 7,000 people². Most of these tribal communities rely primarily on fishing and agriculture for their livelihoods and options for micro enterprise development, as well as other employment opportunities are limited, as these districts are remote and highly dispersed. The lack of economic opportunities in the interior usually means that men (heads of household, and usually the income providers) leave their communities to seek informal employment in extractive industries, such as mining, which is the primary

² <https://www.planningofficesuriname.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/STRUCTUUR-ANALYSE-IV.pdf>

economic activity in the interior, leaving their families in the villages for extended periods of time. Women are particularly affected as they remain in larger numbers in the villages and are left responsible for managing their households without a stable source of income. This struggle is reflected in the poverty numbers for these districts.

- 3.4** The poverty rates of all the districts that form the hinterland are far above the overall national poverty rate (26.2 percent). The poverty rate for the district of Sipaliwini is 51.7 percent, Brokopondo has a poverty rate of approximately 30 percent and 1 person out of 3 live in poverty, while more than 1 person out of 4 is classified as extremely poor. Para has a poverty rate of 44 percent³.

4. PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND DESCRIPTION

- 4.1** The objective of this project is to pilot a model to reset productive and resilient livelihoods for tribal women farmers that are engaged in the cassava value chain in Suriname.
- 4.2** In order to achieve this objective, the project has been structured to introduce and pilot the implementation of agricultural technologies and innovations that will generate a new model of cassava's primary production through the Wi! Uma Fu Sranan cooperative, taking into account the gender and diversity perspective. This intervention entails: (a) transition of the primary production system into one that is more productive, sustainable, and resilient to climate change, in order to generate incomes and support for tribal communities today and in the future; (b) increasing production efficiency and volumes, through the introduction of digital technologies; and (c) engaging younger women and additional farmers in the value chain to secure human capital for the reset and future sustainability of the model.
- 4.2** **Component 1: Introduction of new techniques and technologies for sustainable livelihoods.** The objective of this component is to evaluate and introduce appropriate climate resilient technologies and processes to mitigate effects of ongoing climate change in hinterland farming communities. In addition, growers will benefit from the

³ [IDB Survey of Living Conditions 2017](#)

introduction of technology tools such as GPS mapping, use of drones and digital traceability systems that will engage the participation of younger women that are not attracted to traditional methods, and which will improve value creation and capture for primary producers. Of utmost importance will be the evaluation and introduction of climate resilient technologies and processes to mitigate effects of ongoing climate change and particularly, the devastation of flooding on crops and households in farming communities. To increase output and to further build resilience of the supply chain, the project will also engage and assist additional farmers to cultivate and harvest cassava in accordance with the processing facility standards and requirements, under a contract farming or block farming model, which will also help additional vulnerable subsistence farmers diversify their income streams and increase earnings, further expanding benefits beyond members of the Wi! Uma Fu Sranan cooperative. The idea is to draw on and incorporate as much IDB Lab experience with other projects in the country and in the region with the use of agtech technologies, such as drones, terracing, use of non-toxic inputs, traceability systems and other methodologies that can be adapted and applied.

4.3 The expected results for this component include a) a diagnostic study on the challenges faced by beneficiaries in sustainable/resilient cassava cultivation; and b) a diagnostic study for the identification of appropriate technology solutions for these challenges.

4.4 **Component 2: Reset of primary production.** The objective of this component is to provide resources to the female producers to reset their primary production of cassava. In the aftermath of severe flooding and because most savings have been eroded. Female producers will be supported via the provision small non reimbursable grants to purchase the resources needed to reset their primary production. The identification of those farmers eligible to receive the grants will be based on criteria defined in project execution. In addition, the Executing Agency will manage procurement and distribution of items needed to ensure (i) that funds are used for the intended purpose and (ii) that the best pricing is obtained based on consolidation of orders and negotiation with suppliers. Additionally, to accelerate and sustain the rebuilding of livelihoods for female growers, SURIVIT N.V will also promote multi-cropping systems of crops

typically grown for household and community consumption and will commit to process and market other products in addition to cassava, which will maximize the income generation opportunities and food security for farmers and their communities. This initiative will support establishment of a more resilient and environmentally sustainable cropping systems, helping women farmers and broader rural communities in the interior of Suriname to move from traditional low productivity, by shifting cultivation production to more efficient sedentary sustainable production systems.

- 4.5** The expected outputs of this component will include a) 50 people participating in deployment of new technologies (awareness raising, training, testing, adoption); b) at least 90% of the beneficiaries participating in training on sustainable agricultural practices and new technologies will be female, c) At least 20 female farmers of Wi! Uma Fu Sranan Co-operative receive small grants to assist in land preparation and cultivation of cassava and other crops, and d) US\$40,000 of total financing provided to female farmers to facilitate investment in tools and materials needed to restart cultivations and new technologies.

- 4.6** **Component 3: Scaling up.** The main objective of this component is to develop a strategy for scaling the pilot project to extend benefits and positive impact on environmental sustainability and climate resilience. This component will include an assessment of the results and broader impact of the project intervention, and to ensure that the activities can be sustained beyond the period of IDB Lab intervention, and resources can be attracted to fund a second part of the project focused on **increasing the resilience, productivity, and competitiveness of the processing operations** a scaling strategy and investment plan will be prepared. In addition, other donor organizations will be engaged to solicit future investment and technical support for scaling. In this regard, SURIVIT N.V has already began the establishment of direct working relationships with key research and technical cooperation agencies such as the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Centre for Agricultural Research in Suriname (CELOS), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV) and University of Wageningen.



- 4.7 The expected outputs of this component are a) a report on the results of the pilot and lessons learned completed, b) the development of a scaling strategy and investment plan for presentation to other donors, and c) engagement of at least 3 donor organizations for future investment and support.
- 4.8 **Innovation:** The project innovation includes two key elements. The first is the **technological innovation** effected via the introduction of (climate resilient) technologies, processes, and other tools (such as technology tools such as GPS mapping, use of drones and digital traceability systems) to tribal female farmers, who have traditionally engaged in manual processes. The second element of innovation focuses on the **empowerment of the tribal female farmers**. Empowering women is essential to the health and social development of families, communities, and countries. When women are living safe, fulfilled, and productive lives, they can reach their full potential, contributing their skills to the workforce and can raise happier and healthier children. They are also able to help fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large. Empowering women means equipping them with the tools they need to have power and control over their own lives. In this regard the project is structured to provide female with opportunities to (re)gain financial independence and building a more sustainable and resilient future for them and their families.
- 4.9 **Impact:** Impacts can be expected three levels as follows: **(i) Inclusion and Diversity:** The project will focus support to female farmers that self-identify as indigenous, tribal or afro descendants which are expected to account for 90% of project beneficiaries. **(ii) Climate Change Adaption and Resilience:** The implementation of more climate smart, sustainable, and resilient primary production will support livelihoods and food security for tribal communities today and in the future; and **(iii) Improving the Lives of Poor And Vulnerable Populations:** This pilot targets tribal women that can be characterized as poor and vulnerable, particularly in the aftermath of flooding, and the economic and health factors as outlined in section I. Importantly this pilot will support recovery of these households , assisting them in restarting production, reaching 200 metric tonnes by year 2 which will contribute to their in regaining a level of financial independence and resilience. As the pilot is expanded as per Component III the scaled intervention can benefit a higher number of beneficiaries, drawing on results of the

pilot to provide opportunities to help shift the lives of Indigenous and Tribal women from being poor and dependent to being financially independent and making valuable contributions to the economic and social well-being of their families.

5. SUMMARY BUDGET FOR PROJECT FINANCING

5.1 The budgeted cost of the project is presented in the following summary table, the detailed budget is included as Annex II:

| Cost Elements | IDB Lab USD | Counterpart USD | Total USD |
|--|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Component 1: Introduction of new techniques and technologies for sustainable livelihoods | \$50,000 | 6,000 | 56,000 |
| Component 2: RESET of primary production | \$50,000 | 17,000 | 67,000 |
| Component 3: Scaling up | \$30,000 | 43,900 | 73,900 |
| Project Administration | \$20,000 | 35,000 | 55,000 |
| Total | \$150,000 | 101,900 | 251,900 |

All figures expressed in US\$

5.2 **Sources of Funding:** The total cost of the project is budgeted at US\$ 251,900 of which IDB Lab will contribute US\$150,000 (59.5%) in non-reimbursable technical co-operation funds. The Executing Agency commits to make the remaining funds, US\$101,900 (40.5%), available as counterpart resources, of which US\$66,900 will be provided in cash, and US\$35,000 will be provided in kind. The Executing Agency commits to provide all counterpart resources either directly and/or by mobilizing other stakeholder/partner agency contributions. Also, 66.7% of the operation's resources are invested in climate change mitigation and/or adaptation activities, according to the joint methodology of the Multilateral Development Banks. These resources contribute to the IDB's climate financing goal (30% of the volume of approvals annually).

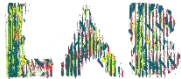
5.3 Up to USD \$60,000 in counterpart financing expended by the Executing Agency from January 1, 2022, to date of approval will be retroactively recognized.

5.4 **Disbursements:** Disbursements will be reviewed on an ex-post basis as outlined in the following section.



6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- 6.1 Operational supervision and disbursement responsibility will reside with the IDB's Country Office in Suriname and the appointed IDB Lab team leader.
- 6.2 **Execution and Disbursement Periods:** The Project will be executed in 18 months and disbursed in 24 months.
- 6.3 **Disbursement by Results:** The Executing Agency will adhere to the standard IDB Lab disbursement by results, and financial management² arrangements. Project disbursements will be contingent upon verification of the achievement of milestones. Verification of milestones will be based on achievement of specific indicators and results, which will be agreed upon between the Executing Agency and the IDB Lab. Achievement of milestones does not exempt the Executing Agency from the responsibility of reaching the Results Matrix indicators and project's objectives (as presented in Annex I). According to the IDB Lab's Performance and Risk-based Project Management approach, project disbursement amounts will be based on the project's liquidity needs for a maximum period of 6 months. These needs must be agreed upon between the IDB Lab and the Executing Agency and will reflect the activities and costs scheduled in the project's annual planning exercise. The first disbursement will be contingent on the Executing Agency reaching Milestone 0 (fulfillment of conditions prior to first disbursement). Subsequent disbursements will be issued if the following two conditions are met: i) IDB Lab has verified that all milestones due as at the time of disbursements have been achieved; and ii) that the Executing Agency has justified 80% of all cumulative advances.
- 6.4 **Procurement and contracting:** The Assessment of Integrity and Institutional Capacity (DICI) generated a **High-Risk** classification. In this regard, the Executing Agency will adhere to the standard IDB procurement policies³ and a dedicated project manager from SURIVIT N.V. will manage project reporting and fiduciary management. Before project procurement and contracting begins, the Executing Agency must submit the project Procurement Plan for the IDB/IDB Lab's approval. This procurement plan must be updated annually / when there are changes in the methods or goods or services to be procured.



- 6.5 Project Status Reports:** The Executing Agency will be responsible for presenting Project Status Reports (PSRs) to the IDB Lab within thirty (30) days after the end of each semester, or more frequently as determined by the IDB Lab, by providing at least sixty (60) days' notice to the Executing Agency. The PSR will contain information on the progress of project execution, achievement of milestones, and completion of project objectives, as stated in the project's Results Matrix (Annex I) and other operational planning tools. The PSR will also monitor the mitigation of identified/new project risks (external and internal). Within sixty (60) days after the end of the execution period, the Executing Agency will submit to the IDB Lab a Final Project Status Report which will: (i) briefly describe project implementation; (ii) update the results matrix and document final project results and impacts; (iii) identify early evidence of replication and scaling by other actors; and (iv) identify project lessons learned. This Final Project Status Report will be prepared by the executing agency, or another party, as may be decided on by the IDB Lab team leader.
- 6.6 Fiduciary Management and Supervision:** The Executing Agency will establish and will be responsible for maintaining adequate accounts of its finances, internal controls, and project files according to the financial management policy of the IDB/IDB Lab. A mobilization workshop to review all fiduciary requirements will be convened prior to project start for the Technical Coordinator for the project and any assigned financial support staff of the Executing Agency. Additional training and support may be provided during project execution as required.

7. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

- 7.1 Information Disclosure.** Project information is not considered confidential under the IDB Access to Information Policy. This document is therefore public in accordance with said policy⁴.
- 7.2 Intellectual Property.** The Executing Agency shall own the intellectual property rights to all works produced or results obtained under the project, and will grant the IDB Group an irrevocable, worldwide, perpetual, royalty-free, and non-exclusive license to use, copy, distribute, reproduce, publicly display, and perform any and all Executing Agency



intellectual property derived from execution of the project, as well as to create derivative works.

8. APPROVAL

8.1 This project is recommended and approved for financing under the IDB Lab Program of Delegation of Authority (MIF /GN-62-7).

Recommended By:

Date:

February 15, 2023

Vashtie Dookiesingh
Private Sector Operations Lead Specialist (DIS/CTT)

Approved By:

Date:

February 15, 2023 | 11:51 AM

Antonio Gonçalves
IDB Representative, CCB/CSU