



PROJECT LOCATION:
REGIONAL

PROJECT START DATE:
APRIL 22 2014

PROJECT END DATE:
DECEMBER 31, 2015

GRANT FUNDS APPROVED:
US \$500,000

ENVELOPE:
**SUPPORT TO CLUSTERING
INITIATIVES WINDOW (SCI)**

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POMEROON EXPORT PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

THE PROJECT:

Coconut water is one of the developed world's fastest growing beverage products. The entry of Virgin Caribbean as a purchaser and processor of tender coconut for water in Guyana has created a market that was essentially non-existent in recent years. The cluster core consists of the Virgin Caribbean processing facility plus the local farmers supplying to and supported by Virgin Caribbean. The company continues to grapple with inconsistencies in coconut supplies, due primarily to the neglect and abandonment of the farms while isolation and the lack of a guaranteed market for nuts and other produce, farmers have tended to seek jobs elsewhere leading to the neglect of their orchards.

Virgin-Caribbean sits at the core of this cluster and shares a desire to break the vicious cycle of farm neglect due primarily by the lack of markets and investments in processing as a result of unsustained supply. The cluster is seeking to establish a fully functioning, sustainable value chain from farm to market through

action on three fronts: Revive agricultural production in the Lower Pomeroon by building capacity to upgrade farms; Establish a modern processing facility; Link the two through transparent "win - win" contract farming agreements.

OBJECTIVE:

To optimize the Virgin-Caribbean supply chain to provide for increased efficiencies, volumes, distribution, sales and exports of coconut water.

HOW DONOR FUNDS ARE BEING USED:

- To ensure that coconut farmers in this cluster are better organized for greater efficiency and collective action thus increasing their bargaining power as suppliers. The project will also increase their access to improved harvesting and farm maintenance technology and equipment as well as provide a better understand of the opportunities associated with crop diversification and contract farming agreements.

ACHIEVEMENTS THUS FAR:

1. Business Plan and crop diversification strategy enacted.
2. Stronger legal foundation and development of commercial agreements for global business.
3. Increases in arable land usage and efficient drainage as a result of the procurement of hydraulic excavators.