

PROJECT DOCUMENT

IMPROVING SMALL FARMER FOOD AND FRUIT CROP PRODUCTION

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IICA OFFICE IN GUYANA

DECEMBER, 1986



IICA PROJECT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Improving Small Farmer Food and Fruit Crop Production

1. IDENTIFICATION

1.1 Code: _____ Programme: III Area: Caribbean

1.2 Geographic Scope: Guyana, Regions 3,4,6 Office: Guyana

1.3 Type of Project

- National and component of the Multinational Project
- Multinational
- Hemispheric

1.4 Date of: Initiation: January, 1987 Termination: December, 1989
Duration: 3 Years

1.5 Version of Document: Original Revised No. 2*

1.6 Financed by:

Quotas National Resources Other Resources

1.7 Approval: Memo: _____ Date: _____

1.8 Technician responsible for Project: Peter Ramsamy

*Project document revised, rewritten and submitted for re-approval in December, 1986.

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2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Specific Problem which the IICA Project intends to solve

In Guyana, the agricultural sector's development is faced with constraints at several levels and while many attempts have been made to remove these constraints, limitations of financial and technical resources have led to many neglected aspects. One neglected area has been specific attention to the problems of poor small farmers and landless labourers (including women and children) who live, work and produce under adverse conditions which are strongly associated with the low levels of production and productivity which have come to characterise the general problem faced by this important sub-sector.

The specific problem underlying this, however, is the problem which this IICA project will address and which may be detailed as follows:

- i) Inadequate access to improved technologies;
- ii) Low management levels; and
- iii) Inadequate support services.

The absence of these services to small farmers is a reflection of both the governmental emphasis on export crops as well as of the weak demand resulting from the lack of organisation characteristic of small farmer producer and other rural groups. With these constraints, it is not surprising that small farmers are unable to obtain reasonable incomes from their farming operations and that many consider farming a "high risk" venture.

However, given the potential of this sub-sector to contribute to domestic food production and to the supply of non-traditional commodities for export, the Government of Guyana is paying increasing attention to alleviating the problems faced by these small producers. As such, this project will focus on rural communities in Regions #3, 4 and 6, selected as a result of the 1986 technical concertation with the Ministry of Agriculture.

2.2 General Problem surrounding the Specific Problem

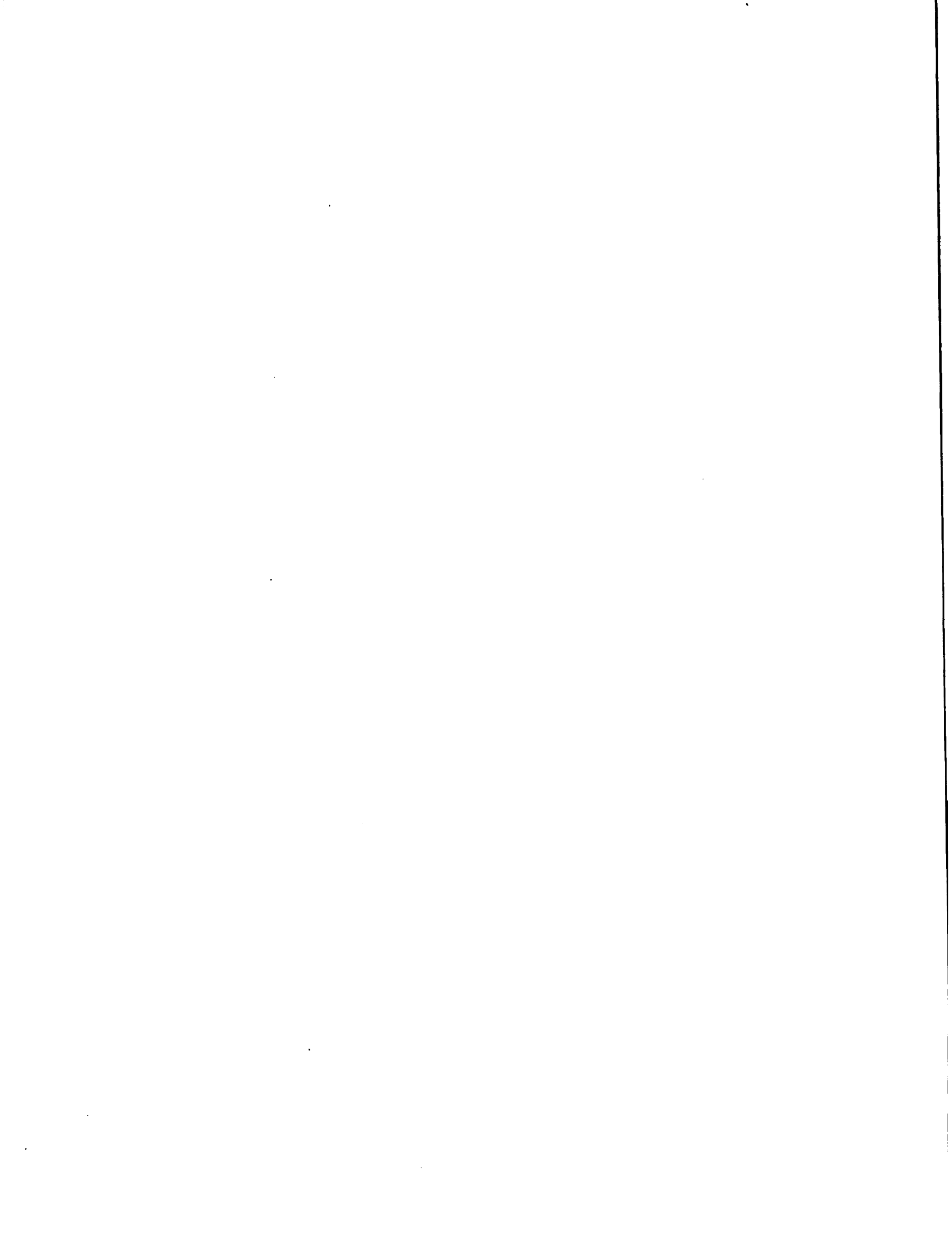
It has been estimated that in Guyana, 72% of the population may be classified as rural and in that environment, small farmers predominate. Of a total of 25,000 farms in the country, 60% are under 4 hectares and 28% between 4 and 10 hectares. In most cases the land is owned by transport, freehold or grant. In others, rental or lease for 20 years or more is common. On this land, small farmers produce a variety of ground provisions, vegetables and fruit crops and may own livestock. Rice is also an important small farmer crop but because of its importance as an export crop, the producers are often better serviced.

The Guyana Rural Farm Household Survey (1982) revealed the low income status of the small farmer, the unprofitability of his farming operations and the limited alternative employment opportunities available to him and members of his family.

60% of the rural households had annual incomes below G\$800 per capita and 80% had incomes below the Guyana target of G\$900. Over 60% of the income of rural households come from sources other than their own farms, with most of this coming from wages in non-agricultural work. Related to these features is the exodus of rural dwellers to urban and even metropolitan centres and the high average age of the Guyanese farmer who in 75% of the cases is over 40 years old.

The responsibility for agricultural and rural development lies with several governmental insitutions which in many cases have become inefficient due to the loss of skilled and experienced personnel and because of the need to operate on reduced budgets. Both resource shortages are derived from the shortage of foreign exchange and since this appears to be a long-term situation, different systems with higher levels of efficiency need to be put in place if the problems faced by the agricultural sector are to be overcome.

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2.3 Institutions related to the solution of the Specific Problem, Actions realised to solve it and Limitations

The main institutions involved in tackling the problems faced by rural communities and small farmers in particular have been the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Regional Development, the Department of Co-operatives, the Guyana Agricultural and Industrial Development Bank and recently, the New Guyana Marketing Corporation. The Government of Guyana has also initiated several separate projects ranging from large-scale capital investment projects involving irrigation and flood control works to projects designed to improve agricultural services and provide farmer inputs. Similarly, the Government launched production promotion campaigns to stimulate production of selected food and fruit crops and prohibited or restricted the importation of a large number of food items. All these initiatives have had some bearing, in a general way, on the problems of rural development but, except for the limited inputs from an inadequate number of extension workers, did not address directly such critical areas as information systems, production technology systems and institutional services for the small farmer and small farmer organisations.

The effectiveness of a depleted and demoralised Extension Service was further reduced with the decentralisation of the Ministry of Agriculture and the subsequent shift in responsibility for administration and day-to-day supervision of the Extension Workers to the Ministry of Regional Development. Technical supervision of the Extension Service still remains the responsibility of a small core of overworked professionals located centrally.

In a relatively large country such as Guyana, and given the distance that often separates communities from the centre, together with a ratio of about one extension worker for every seven hundred farm families, the importance of promoting group activity has been recognised and indeed, the national philosophy of co-operative self-reliance provides an appropriate policy basis for developing more efficient institutional systems for the delivery of services - infra-structural, research, extension, credit, input supply and marketing. In



addition, it has also been recognised that in order for policies, programmes and projects for rural development to achieve the desired impact, it is essential to stimulate and promote the participation of the population in the identification and interpretation of rural problems and also in the formulation and implementation of appropriate solutions.

2.4 IICA's Actions in relation to the Specific Problem

In 1982, in collaboration with the Ministries of Agriculture and Regional Development, the Small Farmer Production and Productivity Project was implemented. In 1984, the main thrust of this project continued in the Small Farmer Development Project which moved away from a commodity focus to a "community development farming systems" approach. In 1986 activities were implemented under the Project "Improving Dairy Production Systems for Small Farmers in Crabwood Creek and East Berbice". Over this period, IICA has identified directly with small farmers in working to release the constraints facing them.

On the basis of the experiences and needs generated, a model for Small Farmer Development on which the operating strategy since 1985 has been based was proposed (IICA Miscellaneous Publication No. 550, pp. 9-37). Project activities were concentrated in two Regions - Regions #6 and #3. In Region #6, the initial area of operation, outstanding results have been achieved - improved technologies were introduced to small farmers and agricultural field assistants, the management capability of small farmers and agricultural sector personnel increased, the levels and kinds of material inputs increased somewhat, due mainly to assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and financing was obtained from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Mission-Administered Funds for the upgrading of the Central Horticultural Station, Region #4. This latter achievement resulted in the implementation, from April, 1986, of a two-year project for the establishment of a Fruit Crop Demonstration Propagation Unit at that Nursery. However, the shortage of foreign exchange nationally and the unforeseen reduction in the human resources available for planning and executing the programmed activities and tasks, reduced the overall

impact of the Small Farmer Development Project, especially in the new area, Region #3, where progress has been slow.

In the area of fruit tree crop production, the project will continue to benefit from IICA's activities in the Caribbean Region and, in particular, from the Fruit Crop Production Specialist based in Barbados, who is responsible for the technical direction for this component of the project.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 Specific Objectives of the IICA Project

- The production and productivity of small food and fruit crop farmers improved by increasing the quantity and quality of inputs and services available to small farmers.

3.2 Indicators and Final Goals of the IICA Project

- Final yields increased by at least 25% on all crops worked with.
- Total acreages cultivated increased to 75% of land available.
- Better agricultural support systems in place with a greater level of farmer satisfaction.

3.3 Intermediate Objectives or Products generated by the IICA Project

- Improved food and fruit tree crop technology transfer for small farmers through technical support provided to the national institutions involved in rural development.
- Support service institutions - technical, input supply, credit, marketing infrastructure - organised and strengthened by increased management capability and the participation of producer organisations within their institutional frameworks.

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3.4 Indicators and Successful Goals of the Products

- Increased per capita incomes in the area of the project.
- Improved homes, household services and other aspects of the physical environment.
- Less wear and tear on the person due to improved farming systems and inputs introduced.

3.5 Achieving the Specific Objective

- The Ministry of Regional Development makes available receptive agricultural personnel to be trained.
- The Guyana National Trading Corporation, together with the Ministries of Agriculture and Regional Development, provides inputs for sale in the areas of the project.
- The New Guyana Marketing Corporation services the areas of the project by providing information services, technical support and opening export markets for food and fruit crops.
- The Ministries of Agriculture and Regional Development, National Agricultural Research Institute and the Department of Co-operatives have available professionals to assist in planning and implementation of activities.

3.6 General Objective to which the IICA Project is Contributing

- The standard of living of small farmers improved by increasing their incomes and reducing the drudgery of their work.

3.7 Indicators and Successful Goals of the General Objective

- Extension agents in the project areas upgraded and implementing planned extension programmes, in close collaboration with the National Agricultural Research Institute and the Agricultural In-Service Training and Communications Centre related to the needs of the communities.

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- Increased levels and kinds of material inputs available.
- Increased level of credit use in the project areas.
- A model for Small Farmer Development derived and tested in three areas of Rural Guyana.

4. GENERAL STRATEGY

The general strategy for the achievement of the objectives of this project is characterised by the collaboration of three major institutions in the area of the project. These institutions are IICA, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Regional Development. In addition, Professionals from the National Agricultural Research Institute will form part of the Team of National Counterparts in implementing the project.

The approach is to tackle the problem of production and productivity on four fronts, as follows:

- 1) Analysis - analyse the dimensions of the constraints and detail these in as precise a manner as possible. Out of these studies direction and confidence in tackling the most critical constraints is generated.
- 2) Technology Transfer - seeking methods of improvement on the basis of worldwide experience and introducing those most applicable to impact on the situation characterising the location of the project. The major vehicles here would be training sessions (informal and formal), demonstration plots, exhibitions, field days and workshops where experiences are shared.
- 3) Institutional Support - participating in the programmes organised by institutions (agricultural related) affecting the target groups, assisting in training key officers in these institutions, assisting in development of efficient systems for guiding the work of these organisations and promoting closer inter-institutional collaboration.

Very important are efforts directed at organising farmers to participate in these governmental as well as private sector and other non-governmental organisations and to improve the business management skills of the members of these organisations, as well as the organisations themselves.

4) Project Development Assistance - this involves projects of three Types:

- Projects to provide funds for the acquisition of agricultural inputs into the country to be made available to the target group;
- Projects to finance infrastructural needs of the target community - drainage and irrigation, supply and marketing centres, specific research interests;
- Projects to finance individual farmer and group production activities in the target community.

These four aspects are inevitably inter-related and inter-dependent. They criss-cross all the various systems impacting upon all the farming activities. As such the approach is a total farming systems community development approach. Its success depends equally as much on the institutions being collaborated with as on the farmers and their families who are the ultimate beneficiaries. It is expected that each target area would be worked in for three years in terms of direct project focus. After this period only occasional visits to observe the system put in place would be required. The three years would be divided as follows:

- Year 1: Selection of area, introduction of team, period for gaining acceptance, all diagnostic studies, identification of critical constraints, research and testing of interventions to be made, start of work within organisations and among farmers, development of external projects.

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- Year 2: Transfer of technologies decided on into the community, training courses, demonstration plots, field days, implementation of external projects, development of internal projects.
- Year 3: Continuation of activities in Year 2, handing over the organisational input roles to farmers and governmental personnel in the relevant places, evaluation of the interventions, serving as a resource to ensure the system has taken hold. The IICA project focus then shifts to target groups in other areas.

During 1987, the project will continue its work in Crabwood Creek, Region #6 and in Hague Backdam, Region #3, and will be initiated in Mocha/Arcadia, Region #4. In Region #6, the main emphasis will be on providing technical assistance to the Regional Administration and the Crabwood Creek/Moleson Farmers' Service Co-operative in their efforts to attract credit assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank who, in 1983, provided this community with an Emergency Grant of US\$100,000 for rehabilitation of infrastructure and provision of inputs following disastrous flooding in May, 1983. The formal request was prepared by IICA and was submitted to IDB by the Government of Guyana.

In Region #3, project activities will be intensified in Hague Backdam following the analysis phase, with specific actions to promote and strengthen the farmer organisation and to fully integrate the Extension Service and Research Scientists into the project.

In Region #4, activities will be initiated with a Women's Group of farmers and housewives in the Mocha/Arcadia community.

For the Fruit Crop Demonstration Propagation Unit, as soon as construction/repair works are completed and facilities/equipment installed and become operational, the main focus in 1987 will shift to the training of personnel from the ten (10) Regional Nurseries. This activity was initiated in April, 1986 and is supported by a CIDA grant of Cdn\$50,000. Scheduled tasks are to be completed in March, 1988.

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5. ACTIVITIES TO BE REALISED BY THE PROJECT

- 5.1 Agricultural technology transfer
- 5.2 Upgrade agricultural and business management skills
- 5.3 Resource generation assistance
- 5.4 Establishment of a Fruit Crop Demonstration Propagation Unit.

The full participation of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Regional Development, which are the major institutions to which the project relates, is critical to realisation of the activities because they provide both personnel and financial support for the services impacting most directly on the farming communities.

6. DIRECT, IMMEDIATE AND FUTURE BENEFICIARIES

6.1 Direct, Immediate Beneficiaries

The direct, immediate beneficiaries of the project are the farmers and institutions located in the project areas. For the farmers and their families, increased income, an improved environment and deepening of community spirit are expected to lead to greater levels of satisfaction. However, it is important to recognise that the level of benefits to be enjoyed by these beneficiaries is related to the effort put forward by them. The farmers must be willing to participate in the technology transfer and group activities, as well as devoting time and energy to upgrading the work output of the agricultural and other related service institutions in their area. On the part of the institutions, willingness to open their approaches to collaboration with other institutions and farmers is an important prerequisite for obtaining the benefits of the project.

6.2 Direct, Future Beneficiaries

The future beneficiaries are the nation and the Region, because the most disadvantaged sectors will be able to organise themselves, thus deriving the benefits of improved technology and to ensure that growth is

equitable and does not cause social unrest. For the Region, demonstration of the effectiveness of regional co-operation, especially in agriculture, is likely to deepen the feeling of solidarity and integration which has been reborn in the Region, and through these mechanisms food security and exports can be promoted.

6.3 Indirect Beneficiaries

The indirect beneficiaries are institutions and consumers who derive benefits because of the rehabilitation and growth that takes place among farmers and institutions directly affected by the project. In the case of consumers, it will be mainly urban consumers who will receive greater quantities of a wider variety of high-quality produce at relatively lower prices.

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7. SUMMARY OF TOTAL COSTS

Year & Source of Financing	Object of Major Expenditure									Total US\$	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
<u>First Year</u>											
- Regular	-	20.5	-	3.5	2.0	1.5	2.8	1.4	1.9		33.6
- External	-	-	-	5.8	5.2	-	1.3	6.6	-		18.9
<u>Second Year</u>											
- Regular	-	21.1	-	5.0	3.0	2.5	4.0	2.0	3.0		40.6
- External*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
<u>Third Year</u>											
- Regular	-	22.0	-	7.0	4.5	4.0	5.0	3.0	4.5		50.0
- External*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-
<u>Total (US\$)</u>	-	63.6	-	21.3	14.7	8.0	13.1	13.0	9.4		143.1

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*An important aspect of this project in preparing financial requests to funding agencies to facilitate the removal of the major constraints to production and productivity. In 1983, a project grant of US\$100,000 from IDB was realised as an output of the original version of the project. In 1986, a project for the establishment of the Fruit Crop Demonstration Propagation Unit attracted Cdn\$50,000 as grant financing from CIDA. In 1987, IDB is expected to complete its appraisal of a loan request from the Crabwood Creek/Moleson Farmers' Service Co-operative.

The project will continue this aspect of its strategy by seeking external assistance for provision of inputs to assist with infrastructural development or to conduct studies to evaluate rural development strategies.

8. OBSERVATIONS

8.1 On the Pre-Project Activities

As a result of 1986 institutional and technical concertations with the Minister of Agriculture and the Chief Technical Officers of the Ministry, continued assistance was specifically requested under the Small Farmer Development Project, whose contribution to the improvement of Extension Services has been recognised. New areas identified for implementation of project activities included Mocha/Arcadia, Region #4, with consideration to be given to Parika/Salem, Region #3 and Wauna, Region #1. In Mocha/Arcadia, the Minister insisted that land tenure problems would be resolved. The potential of the Fruit Crop Demonstration Propagation Unit Project was acknowledged and a Fruit Tree Crop Project is expected to be developed following the present initiatives.

It is expected that a Local Professional with specialisation in Agronomy will be contracted to be responsible for this Project.

8.2 On the Verification of Achievements

Indicators and Goals	Means of Verification	Responsible
Monthly farmer training sessions	Copies of material presented and mémoires of events	IICA Professional responsible for the project
Establishment, monitoring and presentation of results of demonstration/trial plots	Reports and mémoires of actions as well as reports of results	IICA Professional responsible for the project
Utilisation by farmers of technology transferred	Evaluation surveys of cropping area	IICA Professional responsible for the project, Ministries of Agriculture and Regional Development

Indicators and Goals	Means of Verification	Responsible
Increased availability of inputs	Commercial and governmental information on demand and supply of inputs to the area	IICA Professional responsible for the project to get from commercial and governmental supply institutions
Increased utilisation of credit	Commercial bank data for the area of the project	IICA Professional responsible for the project to get from commercial bank
Assistance in improving marketing system	Mémoires of action taken and evaluation of the relevant variables to be affected (reduction in p.H. losses, increased value added, lower marketing costs, better prices, etc.)	IICA Professional responsible for the project to obtain
Institutional strengthening	Mémoires and evaluation by recipient institutions of IICA collaborative efforts	IICA Professional responsible for the project to obtain
Increased levels of management and planning by farmers	Survey results to compare with diagnostic study	IICA Professional responsible for the project
Organisation of farmers in community agricultural management	Reports on meetings held and farmers' involvement comparisons over time	IICA Professional responsible for the project, Ministry of Regional Development, Farmers' Committees
Assistance in preparation and implementation of projects to tackle infrastructural constraints and for large sector projects	Reports and project documents	IICA Professional responsible for the project
A Model for Small Farmer Development derived and tested	Workshop reports and publications	IICA Professional responsible for the project, in collaboration with National Counterparts

8.3 On the Motives and Purposes of the Revision of the Project

Following the resignation of the National Professional responsible for the project in 1985, it was incorporated, in 1986, with the "Improving Dairy Production Systems of the Crabwood Creek and East Berbice Areas" Project, under the responsibility of the International Professional Animal Production Specialist, assisted by the National Technical Consultant attached to the Fruit Crop Demonstration Propagation Unit.

This present project is a second revision of an earlier project, which was first reviewed and updated in 1983, in order to replace the original SBF project in the IICA format as a Quota project. The preceding versions were implemented under Programme VI - Stimulus for Agricultural and Forest Production.

For 1987, the project has been reformulated as an independent project within the framework of the new Medium Term Plan and incorporates the Fruit Crop Demonstration Propagation Unit as a major activity. The revised project reflects the priorities and guidelines of the new Programme III - Organisation and Management for Rural Development.



