



# INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION



# THE CHALLENGE

The Caribbean region is at a critical junction where it must endeavour to undertake crucial steps towards realising access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food for all regional citizens all year round. Over the years progress toward this end has been slow. According to the Caribbean Food Security & Livelihoods Survey, approximately 43% (i.e. 3 million out of 7.1 million people) of the English and Dutch Speaking Caribbean are food insecure as of April 2024. While this is an improvement representing a 17% reduction over May 2023 figures it still is a crucial area of concern as this represents a 78% increase when compared to figures at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

Food security concerns for CARIFORUM Member States emanate, inter alia, from high levels of poverty, and an underperforming agri-food system. The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB/the Bank) and FAO in 2019 identified the main reasons for the underperformance of the agrifood sector in the Caribbean as:

- i. low productivity/productivity growth – reflected in low/stagnant yield development
- ii. weak market linkages – inability to supply quality products on a consistent basis for the Region to take advantage of opportunities for intra-regional trade in agricultural products
- iii. high vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change.

In a response to these challenges the European Union (EU) has mobilised EUR 7 million to strengthen the food security systems across the Caribbean region. This contribution is part of a wider envelope of EUR 600 million to develop sustainable and resilient food systems across the ACP Countries. The Caribbean Development Bank in partnering with the EU has contributed USD 3 million (approximately EUR2.84 million) towards this initiative and jointly tailored the following call to action.



# A CALL TO ACTION

## OBJECTIVE

To support **agri-MSMEs and producers to become more competitive and resilient** through access to finance, innovation, technology and additional regional distribution channels.

## OUTCOMES

Enhanced **sustainability, resilience, nutrition and gender sensitivity of food production systems** (agricultural and fisheries), for local and regional markets.

Improved **processing and regional distribution** systems of food products.

## OUTPUTS

- Increased **access to finance** (inc. insurance-based options) to smallholder agricultural and fisheries producers, with a particular focus on women and youth.
- Enabled **Aquatic/Agri-tech innovative and transformative research and investments** in food production solutions with a sustainable and scalable model in the region.
- Increased **sustainable channels for distribution** of food-products at a regional level.



# CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Budget:** €9,843,561 (€400.000 – €570.000 per project)

**Regional Projects:** up to €670.000 per project

**# of Projects:** 2 to 5 per window

**Date of Call for proposals 1:** Oct 7 – Dec 9

**Date of Call for proposals 2:** March 18 – May 12

## OVERALL PROGRAMME OBJECTIVE

To enhance the (environmental and social-economic) resilience and the sustainability of food systems in the Caribbean, in order to promote food and nutrition security, particularly among vulnerable communities and marginalised groups.

## Financial Allocation:

The financing available across the three windows of this programme represents the first of two calls for proposals with each call having an allocation of € 1,378,273. The first call will occur over the period October 7 – December 9, 2024 and the Second Call will commence March 18 – May 12, 2025. Resources will be allocated on a competitive basis and based on the assessed value of the intervention following an appraisal report to be presented to the project steering committee. Individual country project grant contributions may range between €400,000 – €570,000; regional projects covering more than two countries may benefit from grant resources ranging up to €670,000.



## Window 1

**Increasing access to finance (including insurance-based options to smallholder agricultural and fisheries producers with a particular focus on women and youth**

- **€1,378,273 financing available**
- **Counterpart financing 10 – 30%**  
First Call for proposals:  
Oct 7 – Dec 9  
Second Call for proposals:  
Mar 18 – May 12

The call is open to all regional organisations, academic and research institutions, government and quasi-governmental development financial agencies, and private sector organisations within CARIFOURM member states. Stakeholders such as: eligible Small-holder farmers, fisherfolk, Agri-food SMEs/MSMEs, agro-processors and related distributors, as well as business support organisations (i.e. industry organisations) engaged in the provision of services, and/or production and marketing of agrifood products.

## Window 2

**Financing innovative aquatic/agri-tech solutions with scalability potential**

- **€1,378,273 available**
- **Counterpart financing of up to 50%.**  
First Call for proposals:  
Oct 7 – Dec 9  
Second Call for proposals:  
Mar 18 – May 12

The call is open to research and investments firms, academic and research institutions, the private sector including: - farmers and fisherfolk as well as agri-food producers, agro-processors and distributors, stakeholders; and business support organisations engaged in research and the provision of services within CARIFORUM member states.



### Window 3

Financing actions aimed at developing sustainable channels for distribution of food products at a regional level.

- **€1,378,273 available**
- **Counterpart financing of up to 50%.**

First Call for proposals:

Oct 7 – Dec 9

Second Call for proposals:

Mar 18 – May 12

The call is open to distributors, customs and excise departments, port authorities, maritime operators, Small-holder farmers and fisherfolk, academic and research institutions. Agri-food stakeholders and associated support institutions within CARIFORUM member states.



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Proposals will be assessed and selected by an established evaluation committee based on the following guiding criteria

- **Relevance** - Interventions based on country and regional priorities and alignment with programme objectives
- **Design** - Adequacy of problem analysis; analysis establishes the rationale for the project, highlights likely constraints, informed by lessons learned
- **Effectiveness** - A robust work plan to guide the agency's implementation of the project is in place & mechanisms are in place to mobilise, commercial and donor resources
- **Feasibility** - The major risks have been identified and measures are in place to mitigate such. Also, project objective are expected to be completed within the time-frame of the Contribution Agreement
- **Sustainability** - Mechanisms are in place to hold key implementation partners accountable and the benefits generated by the project will be sustained in the longer-term
- **Cost Effectiveness** - Proposal based on competitive development that demonstrates cost effectiveness and ability to reach scale to satisfy market demands

*Further details on the Evaluation criteria may be found via the QR code displayed on back cover*





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