



Benin and Costa Rica work together to produce organic pineapples

“The Costa Ricans came to explain to the Beninese how to produce pineapples in an industrialised way and how to market them overseas.”

– Mr Mathias K. Pofagi, Director National Mechanism, Benin

As part of the programme of Partners in South-South Cooperation, Beninese farmers have learnt from their Costa Rican counterparts how to grow organic pineapples to three times their previous size and to market them to lucrative European markets. The project has improved farmers' economic and social status, and helped them to sell their organically produced pineapples at fair market prices.

Partners in South-South Cooperation

Partners in South-South Cooperation (formerly Programme for South-South Cooperation) between Benin, Bhutan and Costa Rica is a strategic partnership for cooperation on sustainable development initiated and funded by the Netherlands. Cooperation between Costa Rica in Central America, Benin in West Africa, and Bhutan in South Asia has already led to 36 separate programmes delivering thousands of jobs and hundreds of new businesses and products. The focus of the programme rests on four intertwined pillars of sustainable development: economic development, social development, environmental protection and gender equity. One of the amazing results of the programme is that the sectors developed through the programme are being sustained without further intervention after just three years. Programme costs are kept low by making use of the expertise of those directly benefiting: local farmers and entrepreneurs.

Reciprocity of the project

South-South Cooperation is a form of development assistance that makes developing countries equal partners in their development. By breaking away from North-South development stereotypes, it is able to tackle global development issues such as poverty, hunger and global warming. South-South Cooperation ensures greater empathy between southern countries and a better understanding of realistic strategies for problem resolution. The closeness of southern countries to the identification of main problems can increase the cost effectiveness of technical cooperation; promote the transfer of appropriate technology; and enhance ownership, leadership and capacity building among southern countries.

This approach enabled small farmers in Benin to implement an agricultural technology package for the production of organic pineapples that was developed in Costa Rica, and validated in both countries. Benin added the involvement of the community to the project, with a focus on women. The joint efforts of farmers and experts in both countries benefited small-scale producers in Costa Rica and Benin.



PROJET
Ananas biologique 03B07
ACICAFOC/INRAB
COSTA RICA/BENIN
Site de TOFFO 1

Achievements

The programme has brought significant economic, social and environmental benefits to farmers in Benin and Costa Rica.

“The advantage of South-South Cooperation over North-South Cooperation is that it applies the Paris Declaration Principles. Beneficiary states identify their own priorities and execute them with financial support from the North.”

– Mr Mathias K. Pofagi, Director National Mechanism, Benin

Environment

- 10 hectares converted into organic pineapple farms in Benin and Costa Rica
- Farmers in Benin converted to organic production
- 15 farms have secured organic certification
- 12 organic pineapple containers exported to USA
- Use of chemical pesticides reduced, impacting positively on the biological stability of ecosystems, and increasing their lifespan, with corresponding benefits for the farmers

Social

- 153 people trained
- 81 communities benefited
- Contributed to development and poverty alleviation in the growing areas
- Improved quality of life for workers and their families due to reduction in toxicity as a result of elimination of chemical pesticides

Economic

- Higher price received for organic pineapples
- Increased household income
- More than US \$80,000 in sales generated in one year

Award winning programme

In 2010, Partners in South-South Cooperation was awarded the prestigious UNDP South-South Cooperation Award in the categories of 'Partnership' and 'Climate Change Solutions'. Ms Marianella Feoli, Head of the Partners in South-South Cooperation Secretariat, Costa Rica and Mr Mathias K. Pofagi, Director of the National Mechanism, Benin presented their winning formula at the European Development Days in December 2010.

“The success formula was independence from donors, emphasis on real reciprocity and equality between the members and the participation not only of governments but also businesses and civil society, namely indigenous people, women, farmers and universities.”

- Marianella Feoli, Head of Partners in South-South Cooperation Secretariat and Managing Director of Costa Rican chapter

To read more about the project: www.southsouthcooperation.net

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