



PRESS RELEASE

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Local Economic Development supports business growth in Soufriere

Castries, Saint Lucia: The first phase of a Local Economic Development (LED) initiative in Soufriere, St Lucia officially closed today with the presentation of four business support documents to a micro-enterprise. The micro-business, Rain Forest Foods Producers received a nutrition guide, business and marketing plans, and an agro-processing manual from Ms. Khrystal Lucien, the Local Economic Development Officer (LEDO) for Gros Islet and Soufriere. Guided by Ms. Lucien, the Rain Forest Foods Producers partnered with Canadian and Caribbean volunteers and consultants for over 12 months, and gained skills that will allow them to expand their business.

Also present at the handover were representatives of national and local committees on LED, the CARILED OECS Sub-Regional Office, as well as several other technical advisors from public and private groups that offered guidance, product development tools and training to support the micro-enterprise. The lessons learned from the first phase of the business support initiative, reinforced the need for continued partnerships between public, business and non-governmental sector towards better conditions for economic growth and employment generation in local communities.

Business support for the Rain Forest Foods Producers was part of a regional local economic development program, led by the Caribbean Local Economic Development Project (CARILED) and undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada. CARILED, implemented by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, focuses on empowering local community organisations and civil society groups, community asset mapping and development, and strengthened competencies of local government and local governance bodies. Other partners in this LED initiative included the St. Lucia Social Development Fund, the Caribbean Development Bank, the Canadian University Services Overseas International, the Belle Vue Farmers Cooperative, Fruitage Jeunesse and the Soufriere Constituency Council.

About CARILED

CARILED is a six year program launched in May 2012. The program is being implemented by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), in partnership with the Caribbean Association of Local Government Authorities (CALGA), the Caribbean Forum of Local Government Ministers (CFLGM) and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF). The program, focused on local economic development, currently works in seven Caribbean countries to develop models of LED that can be shared throughout the region. It partners with local government authorities to support the growth and development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). For more information on CARILED, please contact cariled@fcm.ca. FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES ONLY, please contact kizzannleesam@fcm.ca