

Call for proposals

Consultancy to undertake a Cooperative Needs Assessment and National Cooperative Policy development in Dominica

1. Introduction

a. Context

During the 1920's - 1940's Cooperatives existed informally in Dominica. These took the form of 'coup de main' and 'sub'. It was not until 1945 that the efforts of the communities and groups of individuals to work and save became recognized. In 1949, the Welfare Department was given the responsibility to organize and facilitate the development of cooperatives. and attempts were made to establish the first Consumer Cooperative in Soufriere through the initiative of Mr. L.A.J. Simon, a volunteer worker who was trained in cooperative development in Jamaica.

The first cooperative to be registered in Dominica was the Roseau Cooperative Credit Union in 1952. The Credit Union started in 1950 with a membership consisting of 133 members. And share capital was in the region of \$1891.00

Other credit unions registered in the 1950's were:

- Portsmouth Credit Union and St. Alphonsus Credit Union in 1953.
- Cooperative Citrus Growers Association and La Salette Credit Union in 1954.
- Calibishie, Veille Case and Marigot Credit Union in 1955.
- St. Paul's Credit Union and St. Patrick Credit Union (now Grandbay) in 1956.
- St. Mary's Credit Union in 1957.
- St. Anne's Credit Union, St. Francis Credit Union, St. Joseph Credit Union and Dos Dane-Paix Bouche in 1958.
- Salisbury Credit Union, Wesley Credit Union and Castle Bruce Credit Union in 1958.

With the registration of all these Credit Unions, the need arose for an umbrella body which is referred to as a Secondary Body in Cooperative terms that was registered in 1958. In the 1970's a number of agricultural co-operatives were also registered. Today, there are forty-one (41) co-operative societies registered in Dominica; six 6 Credit Unions and 11 Fisheries. Presently, Dominica has one of the most dynamic co-operative movement in the OECS, as shown below:

- Asset base valued in excess of EC\$ 939,643,186
- Retained earnings
- Total Membership of the NFC's is 1500
- Share capital valued at EC10,810,5

b. The Cooperative Advantage

Cooperatives can play an important role in national economies and can be found across economic sectors. In some countries, cooperatives contribute significantly to the GDP, for instance in Switzerland, they contribute 11 per cent, in Argentina 10 per cent, in Vietnam 5.4 per cent and in New

Zealand 19 per cent. Cooperatives are also instrumental in providing opportunities for productive employment, the second global report on “Cooperatives and Employment” published in 2017, estimates that employment in or within the scope of cooperatives concerns at least 279.4 million people across the globe, in other words 9.5 per cent of the world’s employed population.¹

Box 1: What is a Cooperative?

A cooperative is defined by the International Co-operative Alliance and the International Labour Organization as “an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.”

Source: The ILO Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)

c. Rationale

The potential of cooperatives has been not fully fulfilled in Dominica and its necessary to generate an enabling environment for cooperatives, including an updated cooperative policy framework. In light of this, the Dominican government is seeking to gain insights on the role of cooperative societies in the country, including: the challenges and opportunities they face; their current and potential contribution to the economy; and the room they may have for innovation and expansion to other sectors of the economy. There is therefore need for an assessment of the cooperative sector, its current state and its potential for development that can inform relevant policy and programmatic measures that would need to be undertaken.

2. Scope of the assignment

Under the supervision of the ILO Office for the Caribbean and in close collaboration with the ILO’s Cooperatives Unit in Geneva, the consultant/company is expected to conduct an assessment of the cooperative sector in Dominica at the macro, meso and micro levels and support the participative drafting of a cooperative policy which complies with international standards including ILO Recommendation No. 193 on the Promotion of Cooperatives of 2002. The assessment should be structured as follows:

- The *macro level* will focus on the current policy and legal frameworks around the cooperative sector and the contribution of cooperative societies to the national economy.
- The *meso level* will identify and assess the capacity of institutions in charge of regulating cooperative societies, and other governmental and non-governmental institutions that can support the development of knowledge and expertise on governance and management of cooperatives through training and education (i.e. business development service providers catering for cooperative societies) as well as financing schemes (i.e. development banks, cooperative development funds) that can encourage the growth of new cooperatives in existing and other sectors.

¹ International Organization of Industrial and Services Cooperatives CICOPA, “Cooperatives and employment, second global report. Contribution of cooperatives to decent work in the changing world of work, 2017, available at: https://www.ica.coop/sites/default/files/publication-files/cooperatives-and-employment-second-global-report-625518825.pdf?_ga=2.151720831.759539408.1612796674-492808409.1570184082

- The *micro level* will identify and assess the status of cooperative societies including in relation to their potential for job creation in Dominica's priority economic sectors.

The main objectives of the assessment are to:

- Analyse the Dominican enabling cooperative environment such as the cooperative policy, legislative and institutional frameworks, access to business development services, markets and finance and assess whether they are conducive to cooperative development;
- Assess the contribution of cooperative societies to the national economy;
- Map cooperative societies in the country, particularly as it relates to:
 - the region(s) where they are present;
 - the sector(s) where they operate;
 - the type;
 - their membership base.
- Assess the capacities, strengths, weaknesses and needs of cooperative societies in terms of leadership, membership, infrastructure, participation in the markets, economic viability, and access to modern technologies;
- Assess the participation of women in cooperatives at the membership and leadership levels;
- Assess the participation of young people in cooperatives;
- Map out cooperative support organizations and assess their capacities to deliver services to cooperative societies;
- Analyze the potential for cooperative development in Dominica's priority economic sectors.
- Develop a draft cooperative policy that would form an umbrella framework with key recommended action areas including legal reform, institution building (financing, training), statistics, capacity building, awareness raising, among others.

The specific tasks to be covered by this consultancy include:

- Reviewing existing relevant literature on cooperative societies in Dominica and provide:
 - an overview of the policy, legislative and institutional frameworks;
 - an overview of the state of cooperative societies in the country, highlighting specific opportunities and challenges, and data available per sector.
- Assessing the contribution of cooperative societies to the national economy, including to job creation;
- Undertaking a mapping of cooperative societies, their geographical presence and the sectors where they operate;
- Identifying relevant cooperative support organizations (i.e. cooperative unions or federations, cooperative business development service providers, training institutes, NGOs, etc.);
- Preparing standard interview questionnaires for relevant organizations and other necessary tools such as focus group discussions guidelines (e.g. for interviews with key informants and focus group discussions);
- Assess the capacities, strengths, weaknesses and needs of cooperative societies in terms of leadership, membership, infrastructure, participation in the markets, economic viability, and access and use of modern technologies;
- Assess the participation of women in cooperatives at both membership and leadership levels;
- Assess the participation of young people in cooperatives;

- Identify the challenges and opportunities of existing cooperative societies;
- Identify skills gaps and specific training needs for cooperative societies;
- Identify financing gaps and specific financing needs for cooperative societies;
- Assess the capacities of support organizations, governmental and non-governmental to deliver services to cooperative societies;
- Analyze concrete opportunities for cooperative development in Dominica's priority economic sectors;
- Provide concrete recommendations for strengthening and further developing the cooperative sector in Dominica's priority economic sectors. Recommendations should target the macro, meso and micro levels (see above under scope of assignment);
- Provide relevant examples of comparable cooperative sector development initiatives from other countries and sectors;
- Produce an assessment report based on the above objectives and tasks, which include but is not limited to a desk review of the policy, legislative and institutional frameworks, stakeholder mapping, analysis of cooperatives societies and support organizations, opportunities for cooperative development in priority economic sectors and recommendations;
- Undertake consultations with relevant cooperative stakeholders (government, cooperative movement, social partners, etc.) toward the development of a national cooperative strategy;
- Draft a national cooperative strategy that would form an umbrella framework with key recommended action areas including legal reform, institution building (financing, training), statistics, capacity building, awareness raising, etc.;
- Undertake national consultations and validation workshop on the draft strategy with relevant cooperative stakeholders (government, cooperative movement, social partners, etc.);
- Finalize the national cooperative strategy after consultations and validation.

3. Methodology

The methodology to be followed by the consultant will include the following components:

- A desk review of relevant documents related to the legislative and institutional framework and the cooperative sector in general;
- Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with relevant stakeholders such as cooperative societies and cooperative support organizations, government representatives, social partners, among others. The main objective of the interviews will be to gather in-depth information, including perceptions, views and factual information on the current situation and potential for cooperative development in Dominica's priority economic sectors, as well as women and youth participation in the cooperative sector. The consultant should take specific measures to ensure the inclusion of women and youth in the interviews and focus group discussions.

4. Outputs

The final output expected from the consultant is a needs assessment report of a maximum of 40 pages (excluding annexes) in English and a draft policy document of maximum 20 pages.

Specific deliverables expected from the consultant include the following:

| Deliverable | Explanation |
|---|--|
| Inception Report | This document should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A work plan; - Methodology; - Information on the stakeholders to be interviewed; - Specific research questions; interview and FGD guide / questionnaire; - Initial bibliography for the literature review. |
| Draft needs assessment report | The draft report should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A literature review; - Analysis of the legislative and institutional framework of cooperatives; - Analysis of the contribution of cooperative societies to the national economy; - Identification of cooperative societies and cooperative support organizations; - Assessment of capacities, strengths, weaknesses and needs of cooperative societies in terms of leadership, membership, infrastructure, participation in the markets, economic viability, and access and use of modern technologies. - Assessment of women and youth participation in cooperatives - Analysis of the potential for cooperative development in Dominica's priority economic sectors; - Recommendations on the way forward to strengthen and further develop the cooperative sector in Dominica; - Annexes containing: complete list of interviews; bibliography; interview questionnaires; focus groups guidelines, list of stakeholders identified during the mapping exercise, any other relevant document. |
| Draft cooperative policy which considers the needs of women and youth | The draft document will be used for national consultations and will be validated at national level. |
| Final assessment report | Revised report based on the comments to the draft report. |
| Final cooperative strategy which considers the needs of women and youth | The final version should include comments and inputs from national consultations and validation workshop. |

5. Qualifications

Required qualifications include:

- Advance University degree in social sciences or other relevant subjects;
- Familiarity ILO Recommendation No. 193 on the Promotion of cooperatives and other relevant guidelines related to the promotion of cooperatives;
- Knowledge and experience in working in the Caribbean;
- Specific knowledge on participatory research methods;
- Experience in cooperative development;
- Good facilitation, presentation and analytical skills, as well as ability to elaborate high quality research documents;
- Language skills: fluency in spoken and written English is required;
- Familiarity and facility with ICT tools that can be used for regular data collection.

6. Application process

Candidates interested in this consultancy are invited to submit a technical proposal (not exceeding 10 pages) which should include: i) tasks to be performed; ii) suggested methodology; iii) work plan; iv) detailed financial proposal; v) CV of the person who will undertake the consultancy or company profile including the CVs of the team members. At least one copy of a similar task developed under a previous contract should be suitable (it should be included as annex and will not be counted within the 10 pages limit).

Submissions should be sent to bliek@ilo.org no later than 7th of November 2022.