

# Fund Climate-Smart Aquaponics for 130 Small-Scale Producers in Jamaica



## THE NEED

After 2 years of drought, the grocery store aisles in Jamaica were barren of fresh produce. The effects of climate change on this small Caribbean country have been causing significant food insecurity, health and economic issues. To make matters worse, small-scale food producers lack the tools, technical knowledge and financing to adapt to climate change. Many are pursuing other fields of work, as unemployment rates increase. INMED Partnerships for Children has responded by launching the Financing for Climate Smart Agriculture-Aquaponics Program to provide financial tools, training, technical assistance and market access to struggling farmers, women, youth and people with disabilities. A combination of fish farming and soilless crop production, aquaponics allows for year-round harvests to increase income and reduce hunger, poverty and food insecurity.

## CHALLENGES

### Limited Access to Financing

Producers who want to invest in adaptive agricultural techniques must resort to borrowing money from unregulated local lenders at high interest rates.

### Lack of Technical Training

Producers lack ongoing training and access to innovative resources to sustain adaptive agriculture enterprises.

### Limited Business Experience

Many farmers and those interested in farming may have little business experience and do not understand how to cultivate high-end buyers for their produce.

### Lack of Space

Many producers have limited space for large-scale crop production or live in urban areas where agricultural space is not available.

### Farming is Labor Intensive

Traditional, non-mechanized farming requires heavy labor, making it difficult for people with disabilities.

### Lack of Training to Ensure Sustainability

Without a robust training program, progress made during this 4-year program will not continue at a rate to achieve lasting results.

## INMED'S SOLUTIONS

### Low-Interest Financial Products

INMED is working with development banks to provide small-scale producers access to affordable financing to start aquaponics enterprises and facilitate loan repayment.

### 4-Year Training & Assistance Plan

INMED provides hands-on training and technical assistance on aquaponics construction, technology and maintenance for a closed system resistant to climate change events.

### Business Planning & Marketing

Via workshops and hands-on assistance, producers learn to write business plans and develop sustainable markets for their goods, such as hotels, supermarkets, agro-processors and restaurants.

### Affordable, Small-Space Systems

INMED's modular systems can be scaled as space permits. They also yield 10 times more crops and use 90% less water than traditional farm plots of equivalent size.

### Simple Operation

Substantially less labor intensive than almost all other food production methods, aquaponic crops are easy to harvest from raised beds.

### Train the Trainer Program

This project will train local government agricultural agents to provide technical training and assistance in aquaponics to farmers in their communities.

*“This project will help a lot of local people. People rely on us for fresh vegetables because they cannot get it elsewhere. We will be able to employ people as our business grows. INMED has given us our hope and confidence back and we now see ourselves becoming commercial farmers.”*

— Co-op Farmer

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