



GILBERT AGRICULTURAL & RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT

September 2012–August 2013

GARD CENTER
P.O. Box W16 75
Woods Center
St. John's, Antigua

Tel. 463-4121 or 562-0084
Website: www.gardc.org
E-mail: admin@gardc.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/gardcenter

GARD Center

Annual Report

September 2012 –
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Overview

Objective

To develop skills of men and women between the ages of 16 - 30 years, to be able to establish and operate viable farms or other agricultural and rural based enterprises, at a universally acceptable standard of living.

To encourage the formation and development of groups and other types of organizations amongst graduates of the GARD Center's training programs and to establish links with other existing local and regional organizations.

Our Vision

A sustainable, empowering institution through which young men and women can develop the capacity to increase their living standard through their movement in agricultural and rural based enterprises.

Our Mission

To build a premier enterprise development facility rooted in the agricultural and rural sector that caters to the training and personal development needs that support the creation and expansion of sustainable livelihoods of young men and women.

Message from Chairperson of GARD Center's Board of Directors:



This Annual Report has been written during the 25th year of continuous service by the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Center (GARD Center).

This is no small feat, given the shoe-string budget on which it has carried out its vision and mission as offered strength to “feeble hands” and sought to steady those with “weakened knees”.

Members of the Board have been very committed to the cause of GARD Center. Some have been associated with it for all of its existence. I am grateful for the dedication of each director. Your due diligence has enabled GARD Center to operate with a high standard of accountability which has made it attractive to those who require that accountability in an NGO.

As a Board, we record our thanks to the Executive Director, who has continued to have great visions for GARD Center. We extend our thanks to members of the staff and all those who in any way have enabled a very positive year in the life of GARD Center.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I also record our thanks to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and to all the international partners who have enabled many of our young men and women to have a second chance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Otto O. Wade'.

Otto O. Wade
Chairperson
GARD Center Board of Directors



Executive Director's Message

As GARD Center rises to new heights in its programs for vulnerable youth, meeting the needs of young men and women who face difficult challenges from within and outside of their own families and communities, the Center is becoming a household name for the place to go where second chances can be realized. We take pride knowing that many lives are touched, improved and changed through our programs and services. Our own challenges as a non-profit development NGO demand constant vigilance in sourcing innovative ways to raise funds and form partnerships to be in a position to continue this vital work. This year's new partnership with the European Union displays the confidence that international organizations have in the work of the Center. As we near our 25th year in existence, this recognition is the result of the hard work of very committed staff and volunteers throughout the years. May God bless them all.

As we come to the end of a four year partnership with the International Youth Foundation/ United States Agency for International Development, this partnership assisted GARD Center in building our capacity in the areas of: monitoring and evaluation, reporting and documentation, training of trainers, exchanges with other partners and organizations with similar missions, valuable new and long lasting friendships. The members of the GARD Center Board and staff are sincerely grateful to IYF and USAID for the trust and knowledge sharing that has evolved.

One of the most exciting hallmarks for us this year was the launching of our new Business Development Unit located in St. John's. We are indebted to the Directorate of Gender Affairs with special mention of Ms. Sheila Roseau the former Director who graciously accepted our request for a room in their new headquarters. This is quite a milestone for GARD Center to expand their facilities to another location in the country. To God be the glory.

Yours faithfully

Executive Director

2012 - 2013 Board & Advisory Committee Members

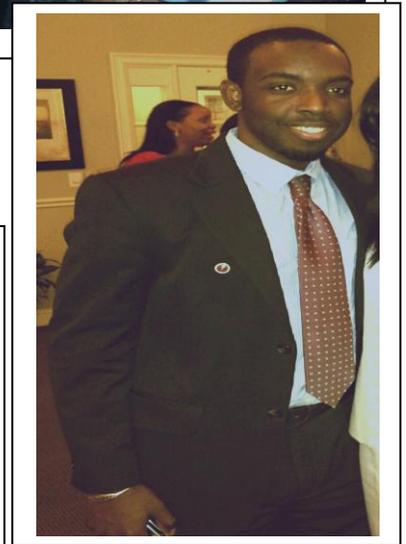
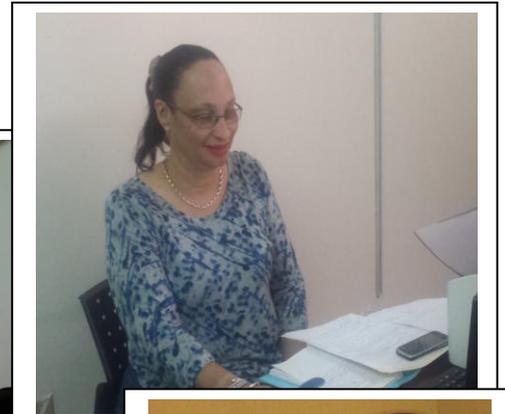
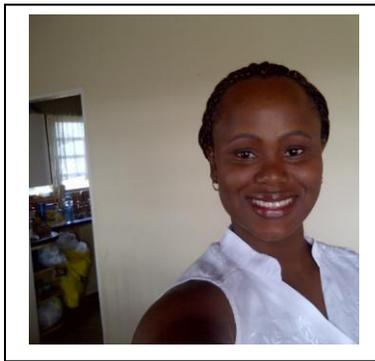
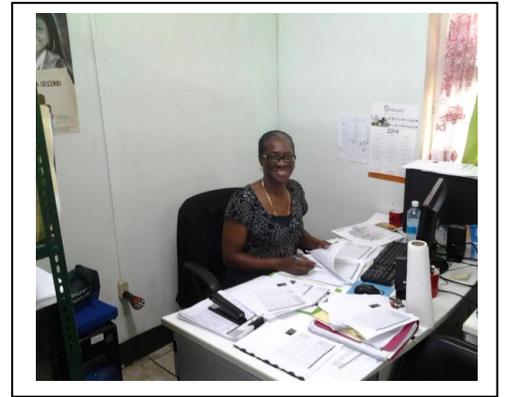
Board Members

- Rev. Otto Wade, Chairperson
- Mrs. Eusalyn Lewis, Vice Chairperson
- Rev. Patmore Henry, Secretary
- Mr. Kirthley Maginley, Member
- Mrs. Maudlyn Richards, Member
- Mr. Neil Gomes, Member
- Ms. Denise Hodge, Member
- Mr. John Mussington, Member [Barbuda]
- Mr. Avondale Thomas, Member
- Ms. Jacqueline Yearwood, Member
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture
- Mrs. Roberta Williams, Executive Director, Member

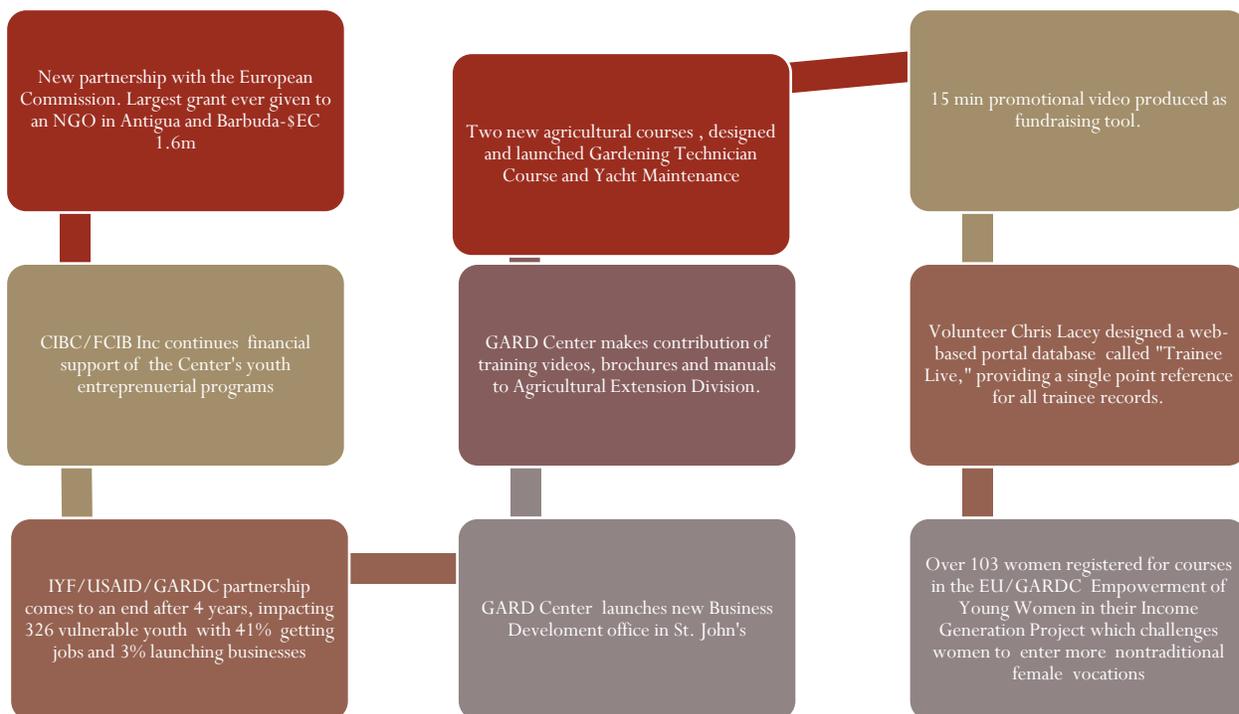
Advisory Committee

- Prof. Richard Braithwaite, University of the West Indies, Trinidad
- Dr. Brian Cooper, Agricultural Consultant
- Mrs. Kathleen Forde, Agricultural Consultant
- Ms. Jennifer Maynard, Agro-tourism Consultant to the Ministry of Tourism

Staff Members and Volunteers



Highlights from 2012-2013



Visitors

The Center's staff had the pleasure of visits from a number of persons during this reporting period. The Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program's Director, Petula Nash, visited the Center from 17th-19th September to conduct an *Organisational Development Assessment* of GARD Center, as well as to attend a Consortium meeting and meet with the new Project Accountant, Mr. Kraig Moore. The assessment proved to be a useful tool in identifying priority areas for GARD Center to address. Frances Portillo, Professor at Portland State University Graduate School of Education arrived in November to conduct a *Training of Trainers* session for CYEP instructors.

Other visitors included officials from the World Bank and the Caribbean Examination Council to discuss the Center's involvement in some upcoming proposed projects. Two USAID teams met with GARD Center staff to conduct surveys: 1. Caribbean Youth Assessments and 2. CYEP evaluations.

Claus Eckelmann, Forestry Consultant with the UN/FAO met with the Executive Director to discuss potential collaborative efforts in developing ideas for livelihood projects utilizing forest based products.

Rotarians visited and held discussions with Chris Lacey about an ICT project that they want to submit to the Czech government for funding.

Staffing & Staff Development

The core management team was enhanced by the arrival Ms. Kareem Francis who was hired as Project Manager of the EU Empowerment of Young Women of Antigua and Barbuda in their Income Generation Project and Mr. Johan Oliver the new Business Development Officer. The staff and board members said farewell to the British Methodist volunteers, the Lacey's who spent 2^{1/2} years with the Center. Their valuable contributions have left a permanent mark on the shaping and molding of the Center's organizational management. They will be sadly missed.

A number of opportunities for training and conferences were made available to the staff to upgrade their skills and provide forums for exchange of ideas and networking as well as the Center's trainees, see Table 1.

Table 1

Staff Name	Activity	Location	Dates
Johan Oliver	Financial Empowerment Community first Cooperative Credit Union	Antigua	April 2013
" "	info session/lecture with Intellectual Property, Inland Revenue and Bureau of Standards	Antigua	June 14, 2013
" "	Branding & Packaging workshop hosted by the Ministry of Trade and the Antigua & Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA)	Antigua	July 17-18, 2013
Angela Ephraim	Caribbean Center of Excellence hosted the Youth Entrepreneurship Programme for the Eastern Caribbean Sensitization Workshop	Barbados	December 4-6, 2012
Roberta Williams	IYF/USAID CYEP Youth Employability conference	St. Lucia	June 25-26, 2013
Roberta Williams and trainee Genardo Matthias	Youth Entrepreneurship Conference	St. Vincent	February 2013

GARD Center Strategy Planning Sessions

The staff and several board members have started the process of developing a three (3) year strategy plan for the Center. Many thanks to Sue Evan-Wong who agreed to coordinate this important process. A preliminary report has been released that covers the discussions/ideas that were generated for those few days. The next step is to meet in separate groups concerning the three pillars which are, Youth Services, Entrepreneurship, and Agriculture, to develop the objectives.

Courses and Workshops

Table 2

Course	No. of Participants	Date Held
CYEP Courses		
Tour guiding	14	June 18-Oct 5, 2012
Yacht Maintenance	39	July 16-Nov. 2 2012
Basic cookery/food and Beverage	26	Sept. 10-June 28, 2013
Welding	8	Sept 10-June 28, 2013
Office Administration 1	17	Oct. 15, 2012-March 1, 2013
Agriculture	12	Oct. 22, 2012-March 1, 2013
Office administration 2	20	Feb 11-June 22, 2013
Computer Repair	8	Feb. 18-July 6 2013
Gardening Technician	18	June 17- on-going
Other courses		
Entrepreneurship (Her Majesty Prison)	12	May 8-9, 2013

Exchange Trips

Opportunities sometime avail themselves through the Center's partnerships to provide exposure for trainees to travel abroad. Many thanks to the Center of Excellence in Barbados for assisting Mr. Whitfield Joshua an Agricultural graduate to attend the Barbados Agrofest 2013. Mr. Joshua has a natural ice cream and smoothie business which caused a lot of interest at the Agrifest. The experience was a very rewarding one and he returned with much enthusiasm and ideas on how to improve his business, particularly in the areas of marketing.



Fig. 1 Whitfield at Barbados Agrifest 2013

Exhibitions & Displays

National Agricultural Exhibitions and Caribbean Week of Agriculture: October 2012 and May 30, 2013

GARD Center participated at both the National Agricultural Exhibitions during this reporting period with a display booth, highlighting its contributions to the agricultural sector in training, publishing of training videos, booklets and factsheets on various agricultural topics, and micro-credit. The Executive Director, Mrs. Roberta Williams made an official handing over to the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. Minister Hilson Baptiste at the Exhibition in May 2013, with the publications that were produced with support from the Technical Center for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) during the National Agricultural Week.

The Center also participated in the Antigua and Barbuda Horticultural Society Flower and Garden Show which was held at their new site on the Friars Hill road. The Center mounted a display of its programs and courses and had persons sign up for the composting and back yard gardening classes. GARD Center was also represented at the International Women's Day Street Fair with display booths promoting GARD Center's work with women and youth.



Fig 2 GARD Center at International Women's Day

Projects

IYF/USAID Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program

During the period of September 2012 to August 2013, one hundred and thirty eight (138) youth were trained under the Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program in the following courses: Tour Guiding, Yacht Maintenance, Office Administration, Agriculture, Computer Repair, Basic Cookery, Food & Beverage, Welding and Gardening Technician. Of these, 48% were female and 52% male.

Sixty –six young men and women graduated in May 2013. The ceremony was held at the Ebenezer Methodist Church. Special guests who attended the program were: Their Excellences, Sir Eustace and Lady Frances, Mr. Mansfield Blackwood from USAID Barbados, Andrew Devenport, CEO at the Prince's Youth Business International (YBI) Trust in the United Kingdom and the Hon. Minister Errol Cort.



Fig. 3 Computer Repair Class held at Project Hope



Fig 4. Yacht Maintenance trainees

Forty students registered in the Yacht Maintenance course of which two were females. The technical areas of the training were conducted at Woodstock Boat Building Facility at English Harbour. A partnership with Antigua & Barbuda Institute of continuing Education yielding seven (7) students trained in the Welding course. Another partnership with Antigua & Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute saw nineteen (19) students trained in Basic Cookery and Food & Beverage Service. The Center was pleased to partner with the Hope Institute where classroom space was made available to conduct the Computer Repair classes. All other classes were fully housed at the GARD Center facility at Mercers Creek.

EU Empowerment of Antigua and Barbuda in their Income Generation Project

The first phase of courses is well on the way. Agriculture, ICT and Entrepreneurship day courses are held at the Center, while the evening courses are held at two Government Access Centers at Bolans and Seaview Farm schools.

In February 2013, the project was officially launched with a media blitz on local television, radio and the press.

A promotional event was organized to encourage young women to “think outside the box” which led to the soft launch of the Business Development Unit with a program dubbed “Going Against the Grain.” Young women interested in pursuing businesses were given an opportunity to listen to and interact with other women who had chosen non-traditional careers and some who had taken risks to pursue their passion.



Fig 5. Women in ICT course

Mid-April, 2013 a two (2) day Registration Fair was held to introduce young women to the GARD Center team and the course offerings for that year. The number of persons attending the Fair on the two days was overwhelming with over two hundred (200) young women coming to register.

Over the course of the year, meetings were held with various partners to organise gender sensitization training, outreach programs, discuss microfinance opportunities, impact studies/consultations on youth and women and their roles in society.

The BDU staff (Angela Ephraim and Johan Oliver) officially moved into the new facilities in St. John's in August. Furniture, a desk, couch and coffee table were donated by Townhouse Mega Store.



Fig 6. New BDU Office, Johan Oliver Business Development Officer meeting with trainees and Brenda Carrott, Media Consultant

Camp GROW

Camp GROW 2013 was hosted from August 12th- August 23th by the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG) and the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Center (GARD Center). The two-week youth summer day-camp brought 37 Antiguan children between the ages of 8 – 11 years together to cultivate an appreciation for, and understanding of the natural world. Through a variety of outdoor and experiential learning activities, Camp GROW raised the environmental consciousness of its young participants and offered its camp counselors valuable experience working with youth.



Fig. 7 Campers of 2013

Some of the activities involved tours to Alvin Christian's farm, Themba Bio Fuels, Tilagro Fish farm and Great Bird Island. The campers were exposed to a variety of arts and craft projects, composting, gardening, beekeeping and birding. Many thanks to the camp's Gold sponsors the Mill Reef Fund and Sandals Foundation, who have willingly come on board to ensure the continuation of this exciting environmental camp. In addition, special mention is made of the Eastern Caribbean Amalgamated Bank (ECAB) who contributed all the camp "T" shirts and bags. Other sponsors included Horizons Supplies Limited, the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force, Stingray City Antigua, Antigua Nature Tours, Sugar Ridge Resort, Mr. Peter Reitz, Waterscaping Limited, Premier Beverages and West Indies Oil Co. Ltd.

Mill Reef Fund

Mill Reef continues to be an important partner in supporting the work of the Center. Once again they were a gold sponsor for Camp GROW providing funds this year to pay the new Camp

Director and counselors as the US Peace Corps volunteers have completed their terms, and all local staff is now managing the camp. A sincere thank you to the Mill Reef Fund for providing the funding needed to allow this smooth transition to take place.

Barbuda Flamingo Reintroduction Project: Feasibility Study

The goal of this project is “To determine the feasibility of successfully re-establishing the Caribbean Flamingo to its former haunt, Barbuda.” Three of the major objectives were:

1. Conduct an ecological assessment of ponds (flashes) and wetland habitats of Barbuda and identify the most appropriate locations for flamingo re-introduction and to develop a monitoring plan that can be used throughout all the phases of the project;
2. Provide community leaders with the training and support to allow them to meaningfully participate in the project’s implementation and management;
3. Engage stakeholders in the context of assessing the socioeconomic feasibility of reintroducing the Caribbean Flamingo.

The ecological assessment and capacity building aspects have been funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme. The GAP analysis has been kindly funded by the Embassy of the United States of America to the Eastern Caribbean and it is the result of the GAP Analysis which this report addresses.

Both the Stakeholder Analysis and Engagement Plan and the Economic Impact Assessment were carried out by Dr. Carmen Lake, a veterinarian who is also noted as being responsible for establishing the Environmental Awareness Group’s Christian Valley Birding Trail in Antigua – the first of its kind in the country.

Both the Economic Impact Assessment and the Stakeholder Analysis made several recommendations. The most significant recommendation dealt with integrating flamingos into the island’s avitourism product, since the population Barbuda can sustain is a relatively small amount compared to other islands with birds. Other recommendations included ways to ensure protection of the birds, monitoring the reintroduction process, fundraising, improving avitourism attractions on the island and public education and awareness.

CIBC/First Caribbean International Bank

A new MOU was signed with the Center of Excellence in Barbados to receive additional funding from CIBC/First Caribbean International Bank’s Regional Youth Entrepreneurship Program to the tune of \$US10,000 annually for 3 years for the GARD Center. This of course is welcomed funds for our Business Development Unit. A special thank you is extended to CIBC/First Caribbean International Bank for their support to youth entrepreneurs and to the Center’s business development programs for the youth of this nation.

Women’s Division - United Methodist Women / General Board of Global Ministries

The Women’s Division of the United Methodist Women has continued to provide small grants to assist the Center in its vocational and entrepreneurial training programs for youth and women. Funds were utilized this year for tutor fees, training materials and administrative support in a two year project designed to provide vulnerable youth with both technical and soft skills in order to optimize their employability.

UK Methodist – NMA, Project Manager’s Salary

The major focus at the Center was the Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program (CYEP) which continued and offered new courses in Tour guiding, Office Administration, Yacht Maintenance, Agriculture, Food & Beverage and Basic Cookery. All of this was possible as a result of the Center forging new partnerships with other vocational training institutions in order to diversify the types of courses available to vulnerable youth. Over 180 trainees were targeted in the program and were trained in remedial Math and English, ICT and life skills in addition to their technical courses. The CYEP program will be completed in October 2013. Despite the economic situation in the country, trainees are still being placed in internships and hopefully employment would follow.

Many thanks to the UK Methodist Church for their contribution towards staffing. This position has made a significant difference in the quality of support services to the young men and women in the programs

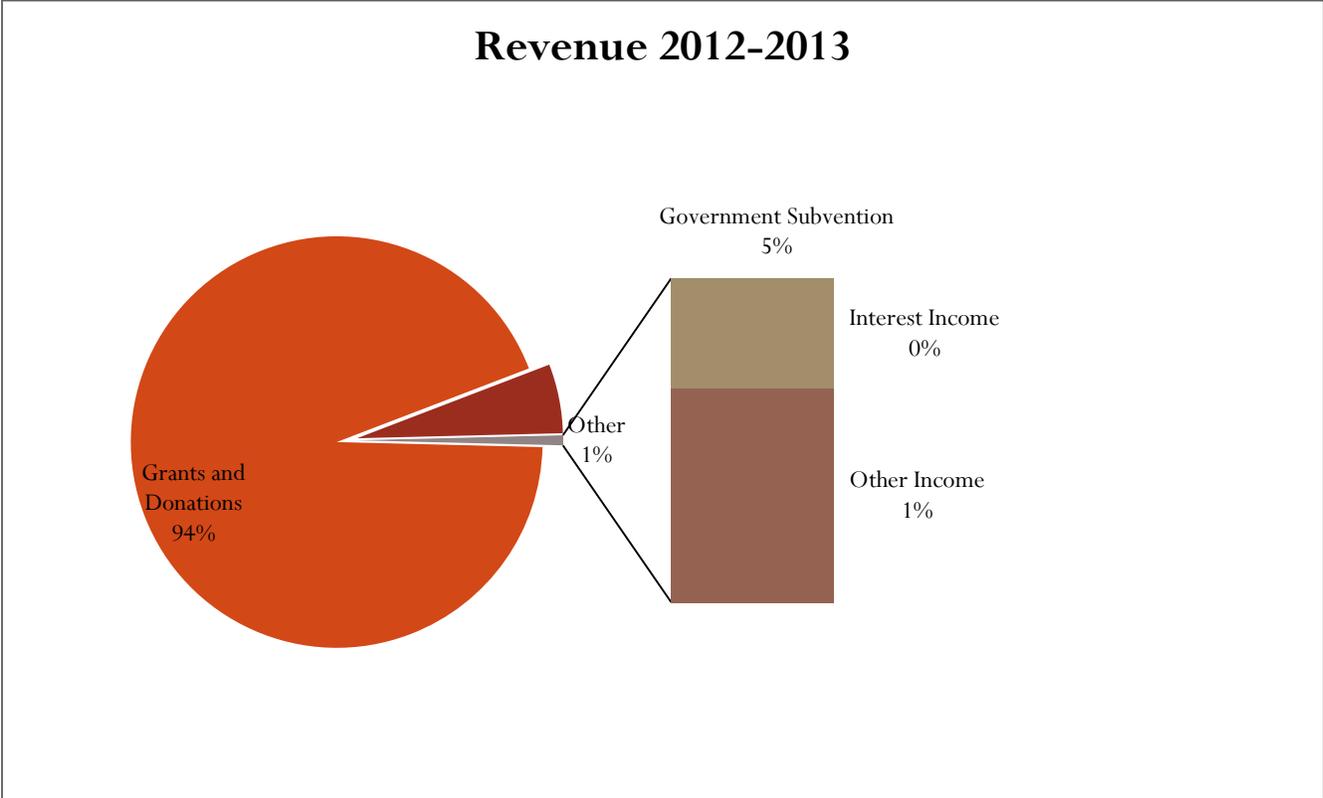


Fig.8 Joycelyn Humphreys overseeing the work of a computer repair trainee

Financial Statements

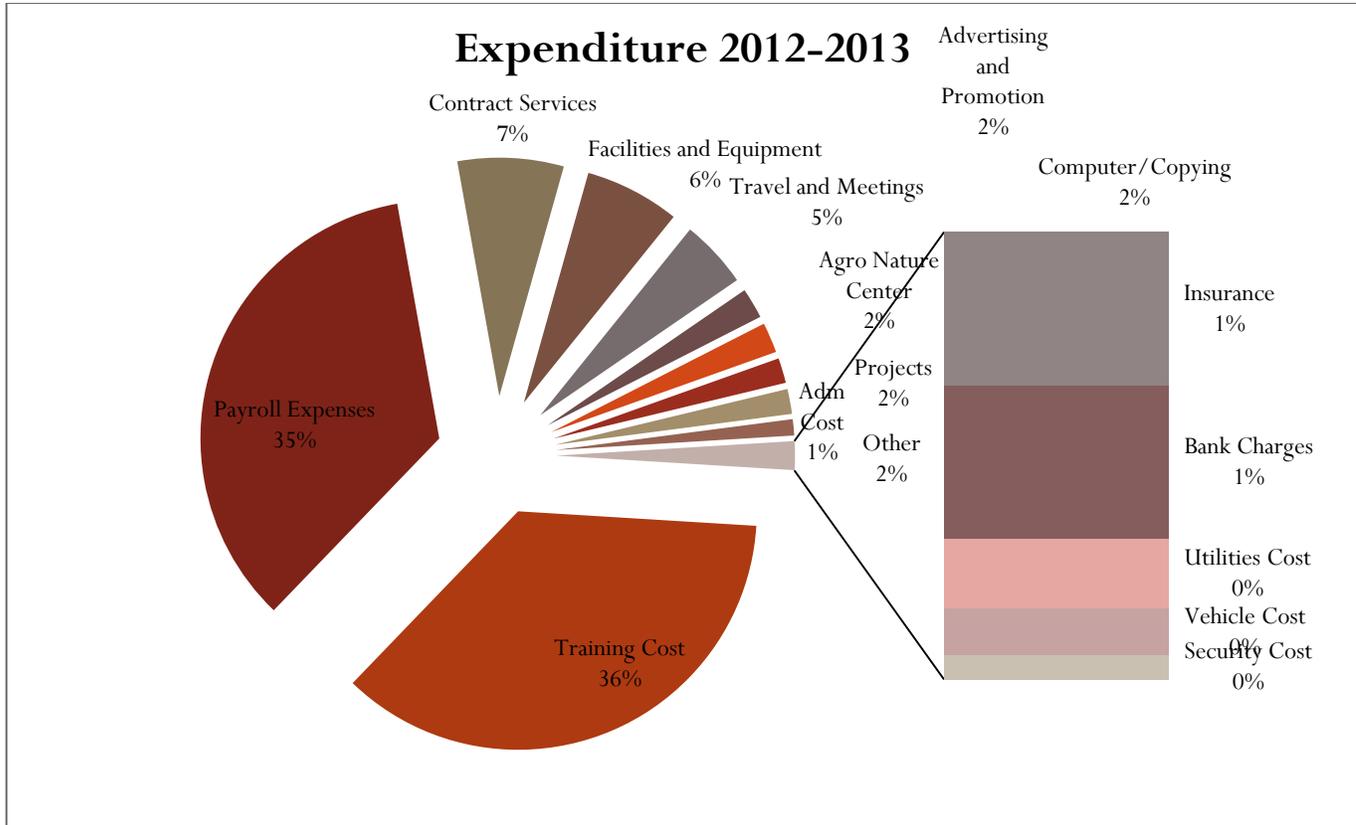
Revenue September 2012 – August 2013

Figure 9



Summary of Financial Figures

Figure 10



Expenses September 2012 – August 2013

Table 3

Sep '12 - Aug 13		
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Grants and Donations	1,365,983.59	93.78%
Government Subvention	79,200.00	5.44%
Interest Income	3,859.24	0.26%
Other Income	7,479.58	0.51%
Total Income	1,456,522.41	
Gross Profit	1,456,522.41	
Expense		
Training Cost	433,927.29	36.22%
Payroll Expenses	419,045.30	34.98%
Contract Services	85,982.11	7.18%
Facilities and Equipment	77,145.76	6.44%
Travel and Meetings	55,396.01	4.62%
Advertising and Promotion	24,824.06	2.07%
Computer/Copying	24,578.48	2.05%
Agro Nature Center	20,334.17	1.70%
Projects	20,216.14	1.69%
Adm Cost	13,160.23	1.10%
Insurance	8,006.89	0.67%
Bank Charges	7,948.48	0.66%
Utilities Cost	3,658.84	0.31%
Vehicle Cost	2,430.10	0.20%
Security Cost	1,253.50	0.10%
Total Expense	1,197,907.36	
Net Ordinary Income	258,615.05	
Net Income	258,615.05	

Acknowledgements

As we approach next year in our 25th year as a development NGO, there are so many individuals, and organizations that have contributed to the success of this institution. So much goes on behind the scenes that involve personal sacrifice not only of staff members, volunteers and our trainers but also of their respective families. So I wish to say a sincere thank you to all the families who have continued to support their relatives in their work and in a number of cases have even offered their own expertise to assist the Center. May God continue to bless you all.

Funding the Center's programs and services has been a great challenge, and we are very proud of the partners who want to support the work that we are doing and to share their expertise and other kinds of resources. A sincere thank you to the International Youth Foundation, US Agency for International Development, the European Union, Pan American Development Foundation, General Board of Global Ministries, the Methodist Church UK and locally to the Environmental Awareness Group, Mill Reef Foundation, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, Pannell Kerr Forster, and of course our own Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas. These partnerships continue to impact positively on the lives of the vulnerable we serve.

