

# Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) Project

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*Mauritius*



# The Project

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- **Funded by MOL Mauritius International Fund**
- **Title of Project** – *“Contributing to healthy lives in Mauritius through sustainable agricultural production and Participatory Guarantee System certification of small-scale organic vegetable producers”.*



# Project Partners/Collaborators

- University of Mauritius, UoM
- International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, (IFOAM)
- Inter-Continental Network of Organic Farmers Organizations, (INOFO)

**KUMA SERTIFIKA ORGANIK PE DEVELOPE**  
F.A.L.C.O.N Association avek collaboration Universite Moris fin gagne ene proze finanse par Mitsui O.S.K Lines (MOL- Mauritius International Fund) pour ene proze 3 ans- 2022/2024 avek ene tite **"Contributing to healthy lives in Mauritius through sustainable agricultural production and Participatory Guarantee System certification of small-scale organic vegetable producers"**

**KIETE SA SERTIFIKA PGS ORGANIK**  
(Système de garantie participatif) est une initiative d'assurance qualité qui est pertinente localement, met l'accent sur la participation des parties prenantes, y compris les producteurs et les consommateurs et opère en dehors du cadre de la certification par une tierce partie.

**LIMPORTANS ENE SERTIFIKA ORGANIK**  
Ene sertifika organik li sertifie par ene 3eme parti pu done lasirans a ene consomater ki zot produit li garanti li:  
Propre: ene produi san produi simik  
Bon: ene produi ki gousteu et so kalite resistan  
Sain: ene produi ki bon pour la sante  
Ekitab: ene produit ki value for money (kass pa al dan delo)

**LAVANTAGE ENE CERTIFIKA ORGANIK**  
Planter kapav sertifie so produi organik  
Planter ki sertifie organik kapav vend so produi plu cher  
Consomater ena confians lor produi li pe achete  
Cre ene rezo entre ban consomater et planter  
Planter pu kapav met zot produi organik dan ban marche/stall organik

**SERTIFE ORGANIK**



## Project Rationale



- Large number of small and medium farmers in Mauritius are growing vegetables and fruits using the principles of organic farming.
- However, many are not certified officially.
- National standards recently been developed under an FAO-funded programme, but there is no designated certifying body yet.
- Organic Bill not yet promulgated.
- High cost of third-party certification.
- Requirements of certification agencies too stringent for small farmers.

# Project Aim

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- The Project aims to train and develop the capacity of small and medium scale farming communities in Mauritius to enable them to produce organic farming and/or Climate-Smart Agriculture and get the economic and social benefits from these practices, and as well improve their livelihood and quality of life.
- The project is of national importance for organic planters and agricultural cooperatives as a local PGS organic certification system would help planters to acquire an affordable and doable organic certification instead of the expensive third party labelling systems.



# Project Objectives

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- Create awareness among farmers on Organic Farming, informing them of the various techniques involved, in particular for maintaining soil health and fertility, and controlling pests and diseases using natural methods and as such avoid higher and more frequent dosages of fertilizers and pesticides to counteract the reduction in soil fertility and increase in pests and disease problems.
- Providing farmers who are already adopting Organic Farming practices, an opportunity to get an Organic certification.
- To assist farmers that are keen to adopt sustainable methods of production (although not necessarily Organic) that will enable them to cope with climate change, and also help them in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions (Climate Smart Agriculture).
- Provide farmers with an appropriate market for sale of their organic/CSA grown produce.



# The Four Pillars of PGS

01

Participatory Approach

02

Shared Vision

03

Transparency

04

Trust



# Project Activities

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## WP 1

Training interested farmers on Organic Agriculture, CSA techniques, and on PGS operations and benefits.

Training of farmers to be able to retain their PGS status, and also to those who were not granted PGS status in order to reach the PGS level.

## WP 2

Developing PGS guidelines relevant to the Mauritian context, in consultation with the relevant farmers and other key stakeholders.

## WP 3

Setting up the operational structure of a pilot PGS in the north of the island, initially for members of the Falcon Bio-Organic Farming Cooperative Society Ltd.

## WP 4

Testing the PGS Mauritius as a pilot project.





# Key Features of PGS in Mauritius

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- Original and socially innovative project, being envisaged for the first time in Mauritius.
- Does not entail huge expenses and complicated documentation.
- Will contribute to building community trust and social cohesion.
- Help in creating community leaders and role models among the planting communities.
- Valorise and encourage small scale planters.



# Direct and Indirect Benefits of PGS in Mauritius

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- Safer and healthier food to the public
- Create a niche market for PGS certified produce
- Bring planters closer to being certified fully organic
- Attract more youth to agriculture and related activities
- Increase smallholder access to markets with consequent empowerment of the planters and local communities.

# Direct and Indirect Benefits of PGS in Mauritius

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- Provide planters with a recognised and acceptable label that will valorise their produce and fetch higher prices on the market.
- This in turn will help in increasing revenue for the small vulnerable farmers, and provide them with an avenue of almost equal opportunity with the more formal organic production systems.
- With few years of experience of the PGS status, they may be able to upgrade to full organic status relatively easily compared to those who are striving to transfer straight from conventional production to organic production.

# Direct and Indirect Benefits of PGS in Mauritius

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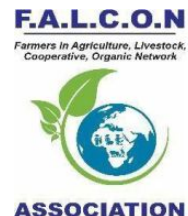


- Create a market for environmentally friendly and safer farm inputs, e.g. biofertilisers, biopesticides, biocontrol agents, mechanical traps for pests, compost, composters, unconventional planting materials, locally sourced devices for drip irrigation, etc.
- Create new kinds of entrepreneurs and jobs in the manufacture and supply of such innovative farm inputs, which will attract follow-up investment and stimulate innovation.

# Expected Outputs

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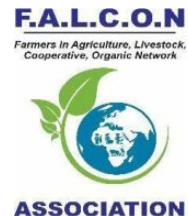
- A large number of small farmers will adopt organic and/or Climate Smart Agriculture vegetable and fruit production, produce healthier and safer foods for consumers, with less environmental pollution by toxic agrochemicals and fewer greenhouse gas emissions.
- It is expected that the PGS Mauritius and CSA will serve to encourage the transformation of Mauritian agriculture towards a more sustainable production system, resulting in high-quality produce, and will make organically/CSA grown food available and accessible to consumers, while at the same time increasing smallholder access to markets with consequent empowerment of the farmers and local communities.
- Farmers are expected to be able to increase their crop yields and thereby their revenue and improve their livelihood and quality of life.
- The conversion to such agronomic practices would thus help farmers economically, environmentally, and socially – which is the true definition of sustainable community development.



# Synergies of the Project

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- The project is in line with Government's vision of Biofarming and encouraging farmers to adopt environmentally-friendly and climate-resilient methods of food production.
- The project will contribute to Government's effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and thereby meet international commitments to the UNFCCC and other platforms.
- The project helps to address consumers' demands for healthier and safer foods that are also environmentally-friendly.



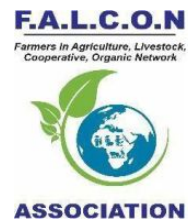
# Project Activities During April 2022 - 31 March 2023

| Month          | Activities   |
|----------------|--|
| April 2022     | Recruitment of Project Assistant to provide Technical Assistance.  |
| May 2022       | Setting up a Steering Committee which consisted of the Lead Applicant and Partners, and an Advisory Committee which included some members of the Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security and Ministry of Cooperatives.   |
| June 2022      | Setting up an Advisory Committee which included members of the Steering Committee together with key officials from the Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security and Ministry of Cooperatives. Physical meetings were held of the Steering Committee and the Advisory Committee. |
| July 2022      | Registration of interested farmers in the project.   |
| August 2022    | Registration of farmers continued.<br>Field visits for farmers of about 25 cooperatives were done to establish the training framework.   |
| September 2022 | Sensitization program was carried out through launching ceremony of PGS Certification Project and detailed framework of its application in small islands.  |



# Launching of PGS Project

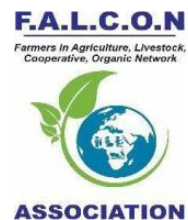
- At Romaschandraduth Burrenchobay Lecture Theatre at UoM, Reduit in Collaboration with RIDC Co. Ltd, IFOAM, INFO & UoM – 08 September 2022





## Project Activities During April 2022 - 31 March 2023 contd.

| Month            | Activities for the Reporting period   |
|------------------|---|
| October 2022     | Sensitization campaign initiated, with notices posted on social media, and posters affixed in strategy points.  |
| November 2022    | Sensitisation session on Climate Smart Agriculture was held for farmers, officers from the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agroindustry and Food Security, with the help of the partnering University of Mauritius academics. |
| December 2022    | Following the above activities, there was an interest among farmers to form part of the project, and registrations were done for a greater number of farmers during this month.   |
| January 2023     | Training of first batch of registered farmers on (i) Organic Production (ii) PGS and (iii) CSA Production   |
| February 2023    | Training of second batch of registered farmers on (i) Organic Production (ii) PGS and (iii) CSA Production  |
| March-April 2023 | Development of PGS guidelines relevant to the Mauritian Context with the assistance of international PGS Experts, policy makers, Extension Officers, and end-users (Ongoing).   |



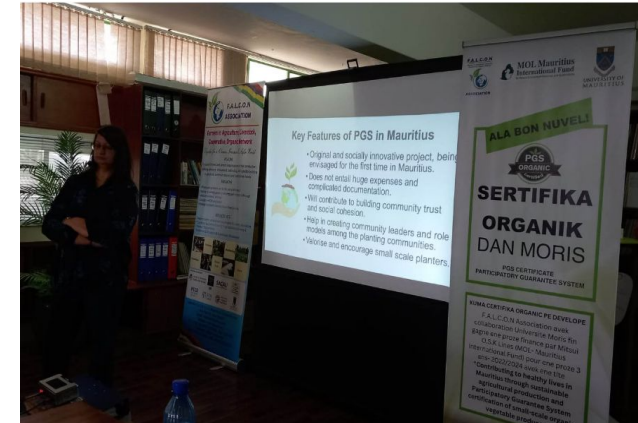
# Sensitisation on Climate Smart Agriculture with Beneficiaries

- At UoM in November 2022



# Activities of PGS Project

- Workshop with Farmers at St Pierre, Small Farmers Welfare Fund (SFWF) on 07 April 2023



# Activities of PGS Project

- Workshop with Farmers at Belle Mare at Mauritius Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Federation (MANCEF) on 20 April 2023



# Activities of PGS Project

- Training at University of Mauritius on Good Hygienic/Safety Practices at Farm Level – 17 May 2023

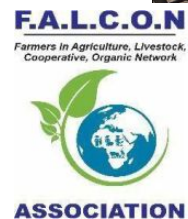
## Objectives of the Training

- ✓ To provide an overview of food hygiene issues at farm level
- ✓ To underline the importance of identifying potential food safety hazards at farm level and the need to control them at this stage.



# Meeting at F.A.L.C.O.N Farm

- Meeting with MOL Representative at FALCON Farm



*Thank you for your attention!*

