



the
GARD
center

GILBERT AGRICULTURAL & RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

ANNUAL

REPORT

September 2013–August 2014

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GARD Center

Annual Report

September 2013 –
August 2014

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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 institution through which young men and women are empowered to improve their living standards

Our Mission

To provide training programs that facilitate the development through life skills, agriculture, entrepreneurship, technical vocational skills and business development services

Message from the Secretary of GARD Center's Board of Directors:



For twenty-four years the GARD Center has weathered several challenges while providing vocational training to vulnerable youth who aspire to change their economic dependency into becoming employable skilled professionals.

It is commendable that with a handful of professionals led by a dynamic visionary, the GARD Center has outlived other organizations of its kind and has performed beyond the expectations of many. The stories chronicled in this annual report are glimpses of the labour of love, determination, dedication and contributions from partnerships forged with generous donor agencies, staff and students, the Board of Directors and the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and Americas Gilbert's Estate.

With continued resolve to empower and improve the living standards of those who enter the doors of the GARD Center there is hope for the future. Therefore, we are making an appeal to individuals, organizations, businesses and donor agencies to continue or join in giving your resources towards transforming lives.

With every good wish

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patmore C. Henry'.

Patmore C. Henry (Rev.)
Board Secretary

Executive Director's Message

This has been a very eventful year with new projects, new staff and courses. To top it all off, a national award was given for our work with youth, which I accepted on behalf of my staff and volunteers who have made this recognition possible. The GARD Center continues to take its work seriously in an environment of 19.9% unemployment amongst youth between the ages of 20 – 24 years and with 21% of the nation's youth, ages 15-24, living in households with a per capita consumption of approximately \$EC 6,000/annum, which is below the poverty line.



The GARD Center has a tremendous role to fulfill in meeting the needs of vulnerable young men and women who have found themselves lacking with employable skills, coupled with poor literacy and often times psychological issues that require special attention.

It is with our team of men and women that have brought their talents and passion to GARD Center, that have made it possible for the success of our programs and services that have been offered over the years. Many thanks also to our partners and friends of the GARD Center who continue to support us with the necessary human and financial resources. Efforts continue to find innovative ways to generate the needed funding for our programs and lessen the dependency on international project funding which is finding its way to other countries in need. As we near our 25th year in existence may God continue to bless our work, staff, volunteers and those who enter our doors looking for a second chance to succeed.

Yours faithfully

Executive Director

2013 - 2014 Board & Advisory Committee Members

Board Members

- Rev. Otto Wade, Chairperson
- Dame 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



Roberta Williams
Executive Director



Joycelyn Humphreys
Principal



Angela Ephraim
Communication/Admin Officer



Kraig Moore
Accountant



Kareem Francis
Project Manager - EU



Kathleen Forde
Project Manager - PDV/GARD
Center Youth in Agriculture
Empowerment Project



June Jackson
Job Placement Officer

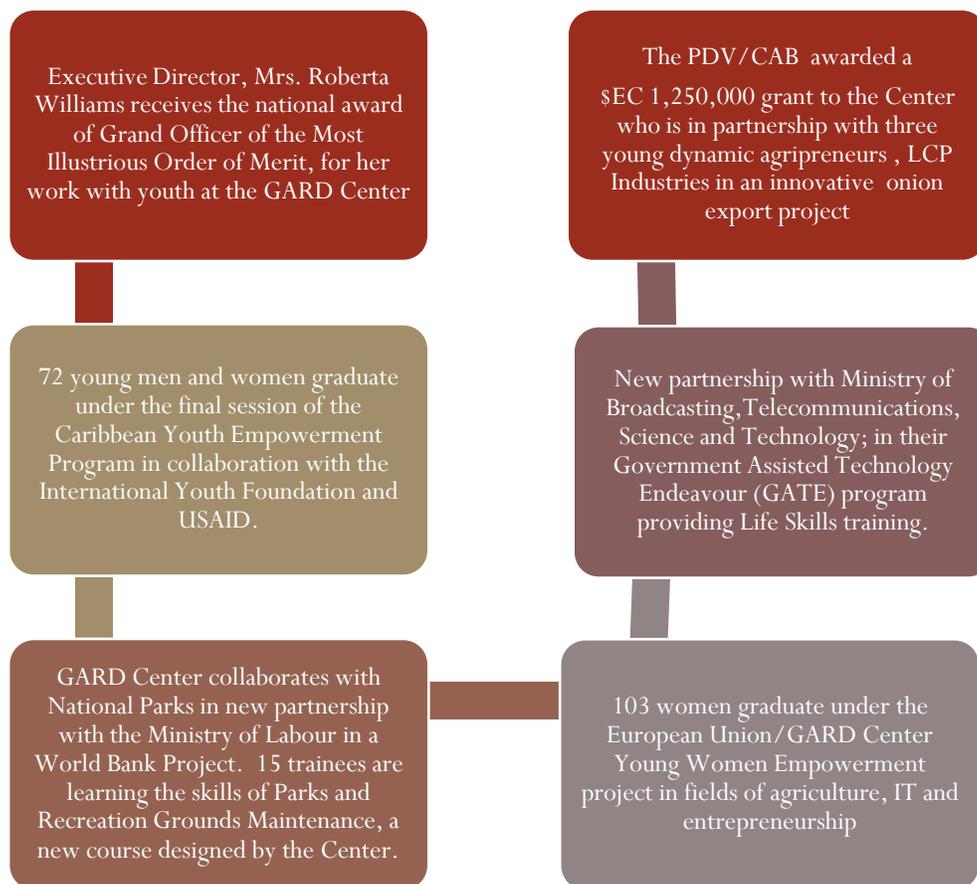


Jay Peters
Operation Foreman



Johan Oliver
Business Development Officer

Highlights from 2013-2014



Visitors

The Center hosted a number of visitors this year. A group of Methodist Ministers from the United Methodist, New York Conference USA, visited the Center as a part of their tour to meet the President and Secretary of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas.

Professor Andy Wetherill from the University of Delaware assisted the Center at its Career Week by presenting a lecture on the opportunities available in the agriculture sector. Mr. Wetherill is an Antiguan living in Delaware, USA.

On Wednesday, 13 November 2013, Mr. Koen Rossel-Cambier, Project Officer of the European Union Delegation to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean visited the staff to discuss the progress of the Young Women Empowerment Project. He was accompanied by a local representative, Mrs. Juray Roberts from the office of the National Authorizing Office. In addition, Dr. Mure, of the French Embassy and French representatives living in Antigua came to see the Center and discuss the programs and services being offered.

Staffing & Staff Development

The Center's staff said goodbye to Mrs. Latoya Friday, Job Placement and Business Mentoring Coordinator in October 2013. Mrs. Friday is a great loss to the Center for her contributions were invaluable, she was responsible for establishing the Center's first Job Placement Program and the Business Mentoring Program. Her commitment in placing GARD Center as one of the leading youth employment facilities has brought over 30 employers on board who actively engage our trainees in internships and employment. She will be sadly missed. Another farewell was extended to Ms. Cariene Winston, the Junior Clerk. The Center has been fortunate to have had Ms. Winston during the busy period of the Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program training sessions. Ms. Eureka Mack joined the Center as a Junior Clerk, one of the Center's graduates. She was on the Ministry of National Security and Labour, New Work Experience Program.

The Center on the other hand was successful in employing another passionate individual to replace Mrs. Friday. Mrs. June Jackson one of the Center's part-time instructors, a trained teacher was taken on board. Her previous experience with GARD Center and its trainees enabled her to fit in quickly and to continue the important work of assisting the Center's trainees and graduates with their future plans. The staff welcomed Mrs. Jackson to the GARD Center family.

The Center once again was recognized for its contributions to this Nation. The Executive Director was awarded the Grand Officer of the Illustrious Order of Merit by the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda, on 1 November 2013. This national award was accepted by the Executive Director on behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and many volunteers who have made significant contributions to the programs and services offered by the Center. The Executive Director was deeply touched.



Executive Director receiving the Grand Officer of the Illustrious Order of Merit from the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda

Table 1

Staff Name	Activity	Location	Dates
Kareem Francis	Public Policies for Rural Women: Economic independence, rights and fight against hunger	Santo Domingo	Oct. 2013
Angela Ephraim	Regional Civil Society conference on Consultative mechanism for engagement meeting	Grenada	May 2014
Johan Oliver	National Consultation on Community Based Niche Tourism Products	Antigua	July 2013
Johan Oliver	Branding & Packaging workshop		July 2013
“ “	Global Entrepreneurship Congress (GEC)	Moscow, Russia	March 2014
“ “	Marketing and e-Business workshop	Antigua	Sept 2013
“ “	Creativity for Employment and Business Opportunity (CEBO)	Trinidad	April 2014
Jocelyn Humphreys	Workshop on Analyzing Data & Using Empirical Information to promote Effective Policy Planning & Decision Making	Antigua	March 2014
“ “	National Centre for State Courts’ Regional & National Policy Framework for Diversion Workshop	Antigua	October, 2014

GARD Center Strategy Planning Sessions

The strategy planning exercise has been successfully completed with all sub-groups meeting to “flesh out” the ideas, activities and persons identified to carry out specific duties. Many thanks to all of the stakeholders who took time to share their points of view. A new Vision and Mission were developed to better encompass the diversification of the Center’s programs and services, which is reflected earlier in this report.

The program areas or pillars for the Center **are** *Agriculture, Youth Services and Entrepreneurship*. The objectives of these programs areas follow:

Table 2

Program Area	Objectives
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People trained to provide agricultural services. i.e. Pesticide application, tree pruning, harvest and post harvest handling, tractor operations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate implementation of good agricultural practices on farms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate agriculture/tourism linkages
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide specialized agricultural business training for youth
Youth Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide life skills training
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a personal development mentoring program
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical vocational training
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide literacy, numeracy and ICT training
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide internship opportunities
Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to financial counseling and start up loans and grants
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to business monitoring/mentoring
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training in entrepreneurship
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to marketing advice and other business services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network with public and private sectors

Courses and Workshops

Table 3

Course	No. of Participants	Date Held
EU Courses		
Weaving & Textile	7	Nov. '13-Mar '14
Yacht Maintenance	15	Aug'14 - ongoing
Basic cookery/Food and Beverage	20	Oct'13-May'14
Exceptional Hospitality Executive Provisioner	20	Feb'14-May'14
ICT	14	June-Oct'13
ICT	12	Sept'13-Jan'14
Agriculture	15	June-Sept'13
Agriculture	6	May –Aug '14
Business Enterprise 1	15	July-Sept'13
Business Enterprise 2	9	Apr-July'14
Business Enterprise 3	5	Apr-July'14
Business Enterprise 4	11	Aug'-Dec'13
Computer Repair	8	Apr-Aug'14
Other courses		
Entrepreneurship (Her Majesty's Prison)	12	June 2014

Exchange Trips

Ms. Waszara Mack and Mr. Winston Laville, two of the Center's young agripreneurs travelled to the Annual Denbigh Agricultural Industrial & Food Exhibition 2014 in Jamaica. It was an excellent opportunity for them to network with other youth and exchange information and experiences. This trip was sponsored with funds from the CIBC First Caribbean International Bank and the Caribbean Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Livelihoods in Barbados.

Exhibitions & Displays

Global Entrepreneurship Week

The Center participated in Global Entrepreneurship Week with a number of radio and television interviews and presentations.

- A Small Business Enterprise Tutor, along with a Mentor, and one of the young entrepreneurs made television and radio interviews to speak about Global Entrepreneurship Week which was celebrated from Nov 18th- 24th.
- Organized a Business Plan writing competition for the young women who had completed the Business Enterprise Course to enhance competition and creativity amongst them.
- Made a television appearance on ABS Good Morning Antigua Show and radio interviews along with the Center's ICT tutor, to promote the ICT and Small Business Enterprise evening courses.

Projects

IYF/USAID Caribbean Youth Empowerment Program

Five years ago a strategic partnership was formed with the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). In 2013 this came to an end. Each partner brought much to the table:

- Experienced and committed staff and volunteers from GARD Center, who have a passion for working with youth and more specifically the vulnerable in this society. These persons have brought much recognition for the Center from both the public and private sectors.
- USAID brought the needed finances to pay trainers and additional staff; purchase equipment, training materials; stipends to assist a selected number of trainees with bus fares, lunches and in some cases day care for their children.
- IYF brought support and commitment to share their expertise to help build the capacity of GARD Center 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 confidence that has been placed in the Center.

Three hundred twenty-six (326) young people have graduated in the CYEP program since its inception in 2009. Over 50% of them have entered the workforce with improved technical skills and higher self esteem. Over 90% of the employers have indicated that they are very satisfied with the quality of young graduates coming out of this program. Approximately 6% of the graduates have established enterprises in farming, agro-processing and IT. Two new courses were designed and conducted by the Center in Yacht Maintenance and Garden Technician. Other courses which were available for the youth included basic cookery, food and beverage, sound engineering, computer repair, office administration, agriculture, welding, and plumbing.

EU/GARDC: Empowerment of Young Vulnerable Women of Antigua and Barbuda in their Income Generation Project

The results of this project are promising and can be viewed as a success. As of February, 2014 the first graduation had 103 women who were enrolled in Agriculture, Entrepreneurship, Information Technology, Basic Cookery, Office Administration and Food and Beverage. Of those who were enrolled in the technical vocational courses, 57% were placed in jobs, despite the difficult economic situation still affecting the nation with businesses closing or laying off staff. Ninety-eight percent of the employers were extremely satisfied with the quality of graduates sent to their firms. This is a great achievement for the Center.

The entrepreneurial side was not as successful, however working with vulnerable youth who want to go into business requires more attention in assisting them to deal with their present economic situations. Often times these youth who have the desire to start a business have serious financial challenges which requires them to get a job first to meet their most immediate and basic needs to survive. The Business Development Unit will have to help by keeping in close contact with these women and other clientele and observe possible avenues where their jobs can still be held along with starting their businesses on a smaller scale until they are financially better equipped to scale up their enterprises.

There were many challenges and hurdles the trainees had to overcome to successfully complete their respective courses. Gratefully, with the financial assistance provided by the EU to the students in the form of

transportation and childcare stipends, some of the burdens were alleviated. For others the financial burden at home was too great to bear and they were forced to find jobs and drop out of the program.

Petro de Venezuela Caribe Antigua and Barbuda (PDV CAB)

PDV CAB is a government owned company which is responsible for the operation of the Petro Caribe Initiative, including the eradication of social inequalities through the funding of infrastructural projects, accepted a proposal submitted by three young agripreneurs called LCP Industries and the GARD Center. This Project was intended to increase employability of the Nation's youth in the Agriculture sector producing onions for export. It also is to encourage youth to see agriculture as a business and as a worthy occupation. The goals of the project are in keeping with the national efforts in respect of the Zero Hunger Challenge. The amount of EC\$1,250,000.00 has been granted to the GARD Center to implement the Project. Most of the funds were for the purchase of equipment i.e. tractor, seeder, boom sprayer, harvester, topper, onion bagger, dryers etc. thirty acres will be under production in phase 1 with additional farmers added under contract to grow onions for export. GARD Center will be farming 10 acres and using this acreage under an incubator concept for youth to start their own businesses. Mrs. Kathleen Forde was hired as Project Manager by PDV CAB. She brings a wealth of experience in post harvest technology.

Camp GROW

“Camp GROW seeks to bring children together for two weeks to cultivate an appreciation for and understanding of the natural environment and its links to healthy and sustainable communities. Through a variety of outdoor and experiential learning activities, the camp will highlight Antigua and Barbuda's unique ecology while fostering responsible environmental stewardship. The camp also aims to increase children's knowledge of local agricultural practices and how agriculture impacts our lives.”

Camp GROW is a partnership between the Environmental Awareness Group (EAG) and the Gilbert Agricultural and Rural Development Center (GARD Center). In 2014, 46 campers ages 7-12 were selected from around Antigua to participate in this activity. Local community members and organizations donated their time and expertise, along with a staff of 9 persons, to assist throughout the process. Camp GROW served to empower children and inspire leadership through the development of life skills such as decision-making, critical thinking and teamwork. It provided opportunities for campers to have fun and get their hands dirty while developing a relationship with the world around them.



Campers' Bird watching

Approximately 60% (25 campers) came from low income families and received full scholarships. This diverse mix proved to be beneficial because campers were able to interact with other children from a variety of backgrounds and learn from each other.

Four field trips were scheduled throughout the camp: McKinnon's Pond, Christian Valley, Tilagro Fish Farm Antigua and Great Bird Island.



A Camp Expo was planned for the last day of camp to showcase what campers learned over the two week period and gave them an opportunity to share songs, skits and art projects with friends and family members. Sponsors and parents were invited to this closing exercise.

Pan American Development Foundation (PADF)

PADF gave the Center a grant in the amount of US\$17,226.00, which was used to secure an offsite location at the Antigua State College (ASC) to conduct the 6 week remedial Math, English and Life Skills courses for the students who were desirous of attending the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute (ABHTI) during the summer from July 9th to August 16th. After completing the 6 week stint at the ASC, the students returned to the GARD Center in Mercers Creek to undergo IT training to hone their use of the Internet and Microsoft Suite.

Mill Reef Fund

Mill Reef continues to be a Gold sponsor for Camp GROW. Funds are used for the salaries of the Camp Director and counselors which is critical to the program. Special thanks to the Mill Reef Fund for their continued interest and support in the Center's work.



Two of Camp Grow counselors

CIBC/First Caribbean International Bank

The Center's Business Development Unit has received a much needed financial boost from the CIBC/First Caribbean International Bank to support its programs with young entrepreneurs. Funds have assisted in training, administrative support and trainee exchanges. Heartfelt thanks to the bank for their commitment to young entrepreneurs and to their support to the Center's Business Development Unit.

United Methodist Women (UMW) - Women's Division / General Board of Global Ministries

The UMW's small grant contributions have supported our training projects with funds for tutor fees, staffing, training materials, supplies and other essentials. These funds are extremely valuable in strengthening our programs and meeting any shortfalls in the proposed training programs and services. Funds were used in two of our employability projects which graduated over 200 young persons.

UK Methodist – NMA, Project Manager's Salary

The fourth year of a five year grant that pays the salary of the Center's Principal, Mrs. Joycelyn Humphreys has continued to make a significant contribution to the staffing of the Center. Mrs. Humphreys' important role as Principal has provided the necessary care and attention to the welfare of all the trainees, meeting their academic, personal and spiritual needs. This position is critical in helping the trainees to deal with the many challenges they face both at home and in their respective communities. The impact of her work is reflected in the low dropout rate which would be significantly higher without Mrs. Humphreys.



Joycelyn Humphreys in a training session

FAO/GARD Center Forest Based Project

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the GARD Center have collaborated on a programme to increase the awareness of forest based products as it relates to sustainable livelihoods. The project is twofold in nature and one component deals with encouraging the charcoal producers to improve on their current marketing and packaging options. The other component deals with training craft producers to use forestry based products for their merchandise. Sessions were held in:

1. Entrepreneurship

2. How to apply for a loan from the GARD Center Revolving Loan fund managed by a Credit Union
3. Pond Grass Weaving
4. Varied craft with bark
5. Seedwork
6. Pricing and Sales consultation
7. Marketing
8. Packaging and labeling



Seed jewelry craft from wild Tamarind seeds

The GARD Center/FAO project partnered with the Britt Antigua for a Customer Service session on Thursday 5th June, 2014. The purpose of the workshop was to attract about fifty persons from the public who are involved in small businesses, private sector, government organizations etc. Three vendors were taken to Grand Pineapple Beach Resort in May to showcase the craft items that they currently make. A summary of the project goals and objectives was given to the participants and each vendor then came with samples of their arts and craft. In some cases vendors use recycled material such as paper and unused lumber from lumber yards and clearings to create craft items.

Soap Crafting Project for HIV/AIDS immigrants

A Soap Crafting course was conducted for an HIV/AIDS/Migrant group of young men and women, sponsored by the German Government. It was a four week course and over 300 pounds of fragrant soaps were produced. Mrs. Cheryl Samuel a graduate of GARD Center's Soap Crafting Course many years ago was hired as the tutor. The group will use the label Nirvana Eden. Before the course had finished two businesses had indicated an interest in purchasing their soaps.



New Partnerships

- **Grand Pineapple Beach Resort**

The Center partnered with Grand Pineapple Beach Resort, a brand of Sandals through its Hospitality Training Program (HTP) which offers youth with little or no experience in hospitality, practical exposure. This partnership was enhanced by the Sandals St. Lucia Resort and their Training and

Development Manager who took part in the “Investing in the Future: Empowering Young People” Youth Employability Conference in that country earlier this year, a International Youth foundation initiative. Three trainees were employed directly after training, while the others received recommendation letters from the General Manager which credits their performance during training. The GARD Center’s Executive Director addressed the graduates at the graduation ceremony at Grand Pineapple Beach Resort.

- **Ministry of Broadcasting, Telecommunication, Science and Technology**

A new partnership with this ministry in the Government Assisted Technology Endeavour (GATE) program was officially established with a MOU stating that six of the Center’s graduates in computer repair would be accepted into the initial program and GARD Center would offer its life skills program to all of the GATE trainees. This is a significant opportunity for the Center to export its courses to other training institutions and organizations.



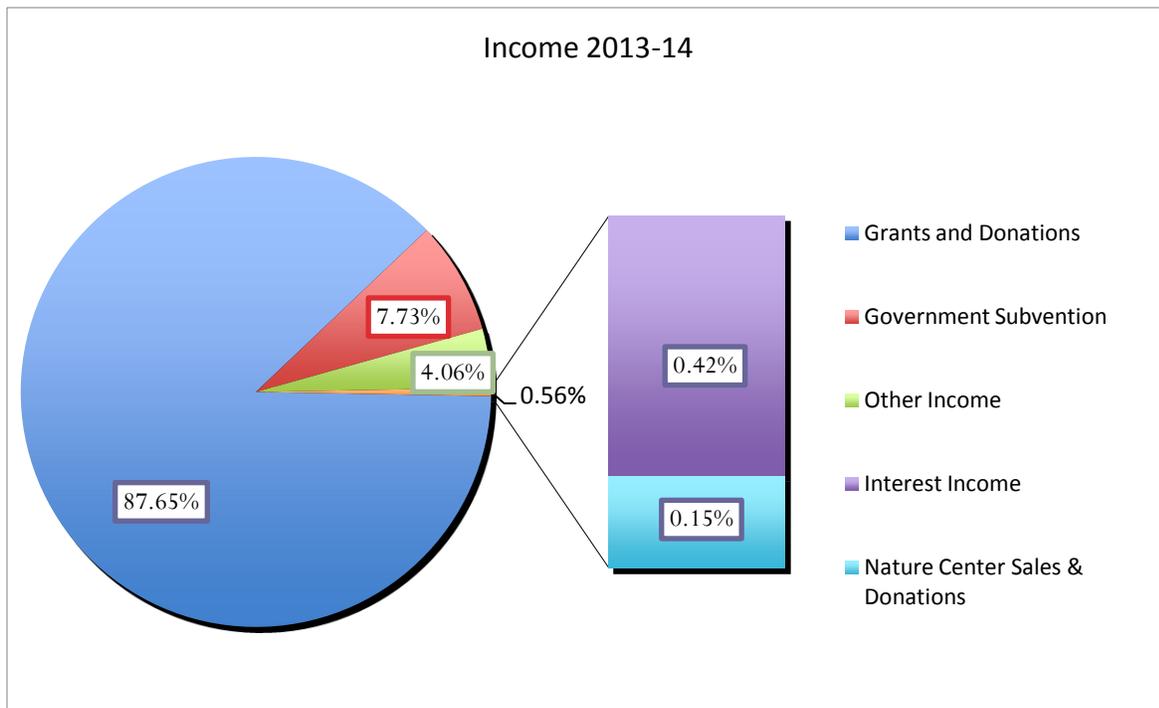
**GARD Center Graduate working with the
GATE Programme**

Financial Statements

Revenue September 2013– August 2014

Income

Grants and Donations	897,631.74	87.65%
Government Subvention	79,200.00	7.73%
Other Income	41,530.22	4.06%
Interest Income	4,254.91	0.42%
Nature Center Sales & Donations	<u>1,500.00</u>	0.15%
Total Income	<u>1,024,116.87</u>	

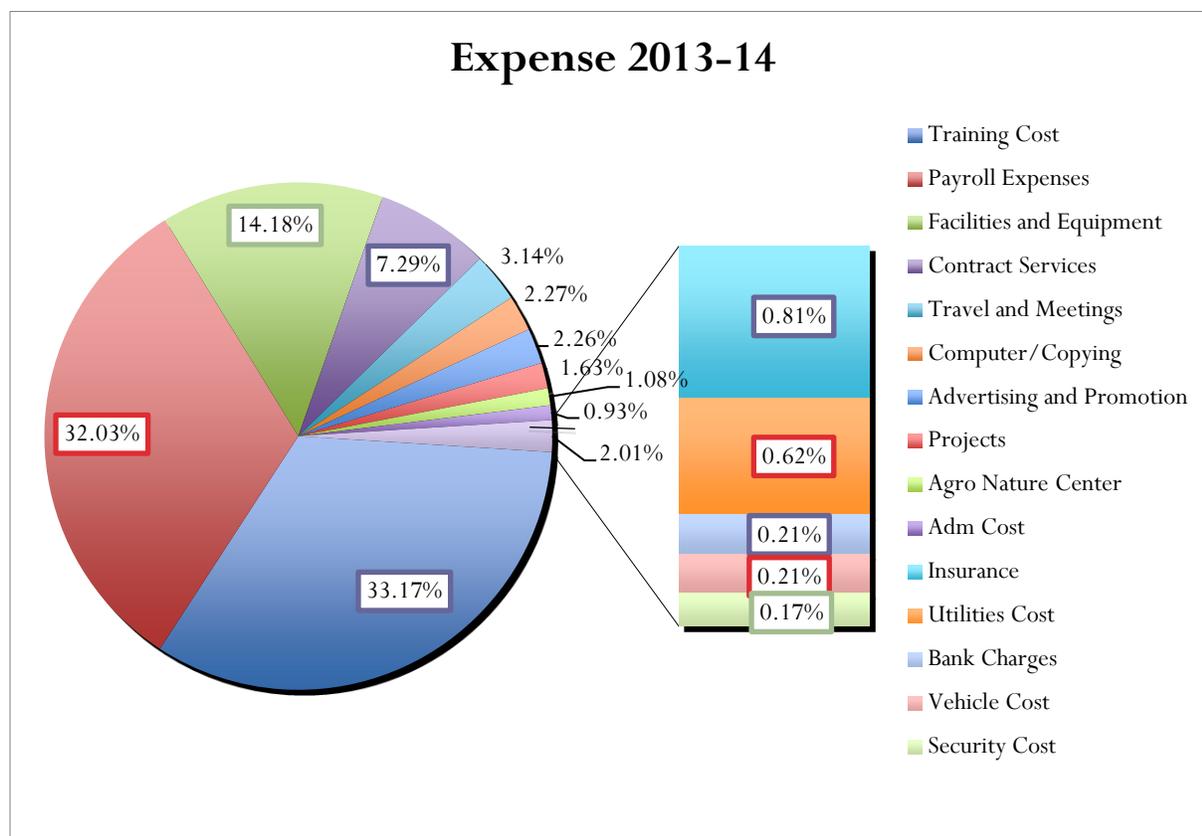


Expenses September 2013 – August 2014

Ordinary Expense

Expense

Training Cost	381,972.83	33.165%
Payroll Expenses	368,956.20	32.035%
Facilities and Equipment	163,334.28	14.182%
Contract Services	83,936.80	7.288%
Travel and Meetings	36,191.97	3.142%
Computer/Copying	26,192.33	2.274%
Advertising and Promotion	25,977.32	2.256%
Projects	18,737.92	1.627%
Agro Nature Center	12,492.99	1.085%
Administrative Cost	10,732.59	0.932%
Insurance	9,279.00	0.806%
Utilities Cost	7,133.53	0.619%
Bank Charges	2,415.85	0.210%
Vehicle Cost	2,363.32	0.205%
Security Cost	2,012.50	0.175%
Total Expense	<u>1,151,729.43</u>	



Ordinary Income/Expense 2013 – August 2014

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

Grants and Donations	897,631.74	87.649%
Government Subvention	79,200.00	7.733%
Other Income	41,530.22	4.055%
Interest Income	4,254.91	0.415%
Nature Center Sales & Donations	<u>1,500.00</u>	0.146%
Total Income	<u>1,024,116.87</u>	

Gross Profit 1,024,116.87

Expense

Training Cost	381,972.83	33.165%
Payroll Expenses	368,956.20	32.035%
Facilities and Equipment	163,334.28	14.182%
Contract Services	83,936.80	7.288%
Travel and Meetings	36,191.97	3.142%
Computer/Copying	26,192.33	2.274%
Advertising and Promotion	25,977.32	2.256%
Projects	18,737.92	1.627%
Agro Nature Center	12,492.99	1.085%
Adm Cost	10,732.59	0.932%
Insurance	9,279.00	0.806%
Utilities Cost	7,133.53	0.619%
Bank Charges	2,415.85	0.210%
Vehicle Cost	2,363.32	0.205%
Security Cost	<u>2,012.50</u>	0.175%
Total Expense	<u>1,151,729.43</u>	

Net Ordinary Income **-127,612.56**

Surplus/(deficit) for the year **-127,612.56**

Acknowledgements

The GARD Center has so many persons, organizations and partners to thank who have supported and shared the vision of an institution which has touched and shaped many lives for the better. Working with the vulnerable takes much time, patience, passion and needed financial and human resources to have any serious impact.

We must again extend a heartfelt 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 Fund, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, Pannell Kerr Forster, CIBC/FirstCaribbean International Bank and regionally, the Caribbean Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Livelihoods in Barbados and of course our own Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas.

There are never sufficient words to express the gratitude for the staff members and volunteers who work at the Center. Without them and their passionate commitment, the successes of the work at GARD Center would not be as far reaching as it is up until today. May God bless them all.

