



PROJECT SUMMARY

Ref No.: MRIC/RRIGS-22-01	Title: Utilisation of oyster shell waste into new value-added products in Rodrigues to bolster sustainable economic and social growth
Local Company: Sea Pearl of Rodrigues Multi-purpose Co-operative Society Ltd	
Project Leader	
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TECHNICAL ABSTRACT	
<p>Sea Pearl of Rodrigues Multi-purpose Co-operative Society Ltd (SPRMPCS) is a multi-purpose cooperative society that has paved the way for the establishment of the very first oyster farms for half-pearl culture in Rodrigues. At the core of its action is the aim of developing means of alternative livelihood for locals through an environment-friendly business that would decrease fishing stress on the lagoon and preserve local biodiversity.</p> <p>Having launched its project in 2016 with support from the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme, SPRMPCS has since initiated the cultivation of <i>Pinctada margaritifera</i>, a variety of oysters deemed to produce the highest quality pearls out of all pearl oysters. A valuable economic resource, these bivalves are manually inseminated to produce half-pearls (locally known as “Mabé”) that are then harvested and used to produce local jewellery which are sold to tourists/locals.</p> <p>While the project has had encouraging results, SPRMPCS wishes to research and implement ways to optimize and upscale the culture of pearl oysters and its commercial</p>	



applications to bring about more sustainable economic growth and innovation to Rodrigues. SPRMPCS believes that oyster farming – which in and of itself is already an innovation for Rodrigues – possesses significant potential for further innovation, growth and green job creation, perfectly aligning with the RRIIGS' aim of promoting research and innovation in Rodrigues.

The project would be:

1. Setting up the very first half-pearl jewellery workshop of Rodrigues where the oysters and their half-pearls will be cut and turned into jewellery and other crafts
2. Capacity building for young Rodriguans in local half-pearl jewellery making
3. Research into the possible integration of half-pearl powder (a natural by-product of SPRMPCS's jewellery-making venture) into pharmaceutical and cosmetic products. Positive results would open the door for manifold potential innovations and commercial applications: for example, development of a Made in Rodrigues organic cosmetic line or sales of said powder to outside parties.

These upscaling activities would inevitably lead to job creation in Rodrigues and present high potential for the empowerment of local communities and to stimulate further upscaling/innovation.

Key Words: Oyster farm, pearl culture, local jewellery, sustainable economic growth