



Project status: Prepare



Assess



Commit



Act



Scale & Exit

# Act Phase - Lessons Learnt & Success Factors in Saint Lucia

**Name of Partnership:** Saint Lucia Water Stewardship Partnership

**Location:** The 'Saint Lucia Water Stewardship Partnership' operates in the mountains surrounding the town of Vieux Fort at the southern tip of the East Caribbean island of Saint Lucia

**Sectors involved:** National water supply utility (WASCO) and multi-national beverage industry (HEINEKEN)

**Partners:** Tripartite arrangement between the Water and Sewerage Company Inc. (WASCO), the Windward and Leeward Brewery Ltd. (HEINEKEN), and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH



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This partnership formed to achieve several objectives in a participatory manner. Among the objectives were to identify fast-working, effective measures to improve erratic water supply and security in the Vieux Fort area at the southern tip of the island of Saint Lucia, to collectively secure the water supply for communities and businesses in the area, and to generate and foster active participation from villagers and civil society organizations in collaboration with the public water utility and private businesses in the area.

## Lessons learnt and success factors during the Act Phase:

After partners had committed to water stewardship cooperation in the Vieux Fort area of southern Saint Lucia in early 2015, they signed a 'Letter of Intent' (LoI) in July 2015. This, in turn, paved the way for entering into financing agreements by the end of 2015 between GIZ and WASCO and HEINEKEN and WASCO respectively.

In parallel, the 'Saint Lucia Water Stewardship Partnership' developed a business case before the end of 2015, which foresaw the development of extra water storage capacities and supply systems in up to three mountainous villages located in the headwaters of Vieux Fort.

As soon as the business case had been approved by all parties involved, WASCO launched the tender for an additional 75,000 imperial gallon glass-fused to steel potable water tank in La Haut village according to official tender procedures in Saint Lucia and through government facilities. The contract was awarded to a Saint Lucian company in early April 2016 but actual work on the ground was delayed by a couple of months due to an unforeseen administrative obstacle.

In parallel to the tendering and contracting measures, WASCO organized meetings with civil society organizations (CSO) and community groups made up of churches, schools, youth and sports councils, mothers and fathers groups, wellness centers, community leaders, hotels, and businesses such as the mini bus association.

On 27 September 2016, the 'Saint Lucia Water Stewardship Partnership' celebrated the successful conclusion of the first partnership project through the handing over and commissioning of the 75,000 imperial gallons water tank at La Haut. The

handing over and commissioning coincided with the imminent arrival of tropical storm Matthew, which started to offload torrential rains only a day later and pummeled the island with gusty winds throughout the following night before it developed into a hurricane that devastated Haiti a few days later.

As a result of this unfortunate natural disaster and subsequent on-and-off heavy rainfalls that lasted for several weeks, the tank at La Haut could not be refilled for many weeks.

Matters were complicated further by the resignation of WASCO's General Manager at the very same time (September/October), which came in the wake of snap elections that had been called for in early June 2016, and which had led to a change in government and administration. A new general manager took office in early April 2017.

The above natural disaster and the equally unexpected critical staff fluctuation at WASCO, both reminiscent of a black swan event, which is inherently unpredictable, demanded a high level of flexibility and lots of extra efforts from the 'Saint Lucia Water Stewardship Partnership'.

But, most encouragingly, it now turned out again that a partnership based on the concept of mutuality of interest, which in turn believes that people and organizations are most likely to cooperate if it is in their own interest, is not easily shaken. In fact, commonality of interests is the basis for continued commitment.

In practical terms, the applied concept of shared interests proved to be a self-enforcing strategy from which no party involved had a fundamental interest to depart, in particular since it also allowed for the distinctive character of each of the partners to be visible.

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