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HANDCRAFTS PRODUCED BY THE ARTS AND CRAFTS TRAINING CENTER ON ST. LUCIA:
ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Prepared by
Creative Associates, Inc.
for
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SUMMARY OF STUDY

Creative Associates, Inc., carried out this study for the Ministry of Community Development in St. Lucia under USAID work order number 538-84-175. The purpose of the study was 1) to assess the products currently being produced by the Arts and Crafts Training Center, which was started under the St. Lucia Youth Development Project and conducted by the National Organization of Social Responsibility from 1980 to 1984, and 2) to recommend ways of improving the design, quality, and marketability of these handcraft products.

The study illustrates that there is potential for a viable handcraft industry in St. Lucia that can be organized and promoted through the Arts and Crafts Training Center. Currently, the artisans of the island produce the following handcrafts:

- o woven goods of straw, sisal, reeds, or grass--such as hats, bags and purses, baskets, table mats, and floor mats;
- o wooden products--such as furniture, sculptures, and miscellaneous items;
- o batik, tye dyed, and silk-screened products; and
- o products made from clay.

Training is required to upgrade the skills of the artisans, and the Arts and Crafts Center needs some organizational development and technical assistance to establish itself as a managing agency of handcraft producers--one that controls and regulates the production and marketing process and initiates product innovations. With this assistance, the handcraft industry in St. Lucia could generate more income for the producers and could work toward the goal of self-sufficiency. Specifically, technical assistance is needed in the following areas.

Raw Materials. Though St. Lucia has a sufficient amount of raw materials for woven, wooden, and clay products, the handcraft producers need more production materials for finishing the products, such as buttons, thread, zippers, and varnish. For the production of batik, tie dyed, and silk-screened products, as well as new product lines, there would be a need for the import of raw materials. These products must be imported in ample quantity and variety. The Arts and Crafts Center could function as a buyer for the producers and make bulk orders of these products and raw materials..

Quality of Handcraft Products. Though some artisans are quite skilled in their craft, most of the products are not up to market standards as of yet. Consequently, training is needed to improve the technical skills of the artisans, develop new skills, and provide a wider and better range of styles and designs for their products. In addition, the Arts and Crafts Center should enforce higher standards for quality control.

Marketing. Presently, most of the handcraft products are sold in the local market, but excellent potential exists for a profitable tourist market as well as possibilities for other markets within the Caribbean and countries farther abroad, which could be pursued as long-range goals. A thorough and complete market analysis should be conducted and a marketing plan devised accordingly. Perhaps new products could be developed to appeal to identified markets.

There are some private craft enterprises that are functioning well on the island. These businesses demonstrate that there is a potential market. Furthermore, they have offered and could continue to offer opportunities for apprentices and full-time employment of skilled handcraft producers. Other industries have also shown an interest in the work force of artisans on the island, who could perform labor-intensive tasks, such as smocking and embroidery.

Management. Handcraft producers need to have a working knowledge of basic business, such as record keeping, inventory control and pricing structure. Staff at the Arts and Crafts Center also need to understand these basic issues and more complex management issues, such as marketing and distribution systems--including tariffs, labeling, and other export requirements.. The Regional Non-Formal Skills Training Center in St. Lucia has expressed an interest in providing such training and would be an appropriate source of technical assistance.

Organizational Development. The Arts and Crafts Center was conceived as an independent, non-profit organization with a board of directors selected from interested and qualified representatives from the private and public sector. While still in its fledgling stage, the Center could be developed to encourage and support the development of a handcraft industry on St. Lucia. The Center would need the continual support of the St. Lucian government, which now provides a site, transportation, and a waterfront store. Additional funding and support would be needed to increase staff and their skills so that the Center can function as a marketing agent; facilitator of technical assistance to artisans; buyer and distributor of needed raw products; and distributor of finished products to the market place.

If the handcraft industry on St. Lucia is developed, it could become an important and needed source of income for the island.

I. METHODOLOGY

A. Duration of visits

Barbados, November 19-21; St. Lucia, November 26-30; Barbados, December 1-5.

B. Site Visits and Interviews

1. Barbados

Kimberly Finen--USAID Development Office

Robin Philips--USAID Economics

Gordon Dugan--U.S. Embassy, Economics

Ambrosio Ortega--USAID, Human Resource Development

CAIC (Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce)--Omar Rajaman,
Eisenhower Douglas, and Betty Russell

2. St. Lucia

Mrs. Aldith Isaac--Permanent Secretary

Anthony Herman--Manager of Arts and Crafts Training Center

Brian Fluck--OAS Consultant: Regional, Non-Formal Education Skills
Training Center

Andrew Proctor--Coopers and Lybrand

Sharman Gardener--Chamber of Commerce

Management--Bagshaws, Caribelle, Eudovics, Ciceron Joiners

St. Lucia Tourist Bureau

Venders--market stands

Artisan groups and artisan family groups in Choiseul area

Shops selling a mixture of tourist items

3. Data

Statistics on tourism were collected from the Bureau of Tourism. There was no data available on data of sales for the handcraft industry.

4. Other Observations

Observations were made of tourists at the docks and in the hotels, market place, and a selection of shops selling handcraft items.

II. POTENTIAL FOR A HANDCRAFT INDUSTRY IN ST. LUCIA

A. Need for a Handcraft Industry

Currently, an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 artisans on the island of St. Lucia produce a variety of handcrafts.¹ These include

- o woven goods of straw, sisal, reeds, or grass--such as hats, bags and purses, baskets, table mats, and floor mats;
- o wooden products--such as furniture, sculptures, and miscellaneous items;
- o batik, tie-dyed, and silk screened products; and
- o products made out of clay.

Despite the extent of its work force, the handcraft industry on St. Lucia has met with little success. The products have not been able to compete with those produced on other islands because the artisans' skills in design, production, and marketing are still minimal. However, their potential should not be ignored.

St. Lucia is plagued by high unemployment--in 1982, 27 percent of the 52,000 people in the work force were unemployed.² The situation is even more severe among the young people whose unemployment rate is estimated to be approximately 40 percent. Enterprise development is needed to alleviate this problem, and a handcraft industry is one viable option.

¹ Figures are estimates of the Government of St. Lucia.

² Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Statistics, Economic Review 1982, March 1983; Government of St. Lucia, Annual Statistical Digest, 1982, April, 1983.

B. Feasibility of a Handcraft Industry

A handcraft industry in St. Lucia could offer many individuals a means of self-employment. It is an industry that can appeal particularly to women because it can be structured as a cottage industry, which allows them to work at home. Thus, the women are able to work and also meet their domestic responsibilities. The industry does not depend on extensive technology; very little equipment needs to be imported to get this industry off the ground. Furthermore, there presently is no need to train more artisans; St. Lucia has an adequate work force of handcraft producers. However, technical assistance is needed to upgrade the quality of work so that it is appropriate for the markets available. Though many people on the island have basic skills and an obvious interest in the industry, their work lacks refinement in both design and technique; consequently, they have been unable to earn a living from their work.

A basic organizational structure for the industry is already in place. Through the Youth Development Programme funded by AID, the Arts and Crafts Training Center has been established at Choiseul. This center has trained 64 youths and has improved the handcraft industry by providing means of quality control, production scheduling, and marketing. Though the project ended in June of 1984, Anthony Herman, the former Project Manager, continues to direct the cottage-industry system the center has now established, with enthusiastic support from the St. Lucian government.

But more has to be done to firmly establish the organization. A board of directors has to be selected and by laws formed that would govern the operations of the organization and its activities at the Arts and Crafts Training Center.

The St. Lucian government recognizes the importance of this industry for the island's economic development. In fact, in June of 1984, the Ministry of Finance and Planning developed a concept paper outlining its plans to establish a National Craft Centre. The government is aware that, though there are some handcraft producers with remarkably good design sense and skill, the quality of handcraft products on the island varies greatly and that new products and markets must be developed if the industry is to become profitable. To stimulate and support this industry, they plan to include a National Craft Centre in the proposed Pointe Seraphin Tourist Facility, a new port designed to receive cruise ships. The purpose of the proposed Craft Centre is to develop the skills of handcraft producers and to function as a cooperative by purchasing production materials, locating markets, and processing, packaging, and selling the finished products. In other words, the government plans to continue what the Choiseul center has already started.

Not only is the interest in the handcraft industry high, so is the demand for handcraft products and skills. Currently, many St. Lucians use the handcraft products--the accessories and other items of apparel as well as the household goods. There is also potential for a profitable tourist market if the quality of goods were to improve (see Section V, Marketing). In addition, there is a possibility of marketing these products on other islands in the Caribbean or farther abroad. St. Lucia, with its work force of handcraft producers, appeals to industries looking for areas where labor-intensive assembly or decorative work is feasible. For example, Bayles Brothers, a children's wear company with headquarters in Cincinnati, currently has some assembly done on Barbados, and they are investigating St Lucia as another possible location. Also, Hallmark Card Company and a number of industries, such as a major glove manufacturer, are viewing St. Lucia as a potential assemblage area.

The potential for a successful handcraft industry does exist on St. Lucia. As this report will illustrate, the island has the raw materials, skilled and motivated labor force, and accessibility to viable markets that are essential for success. What the industry needs at this point is an organization that

- o can help the producers refine the design and quality of their products by providing additional training in handcraft skills and business management;
- o locate and purchase production materials the handcraft producers need;
- o serve as a center for quality control and standarization;
- o research and develop new product lines; and
- o locate and provide accessibility to new markets.

Technical assistance to establish a national handcraft industry in St. Lucia is both warranted and needed. The rest of this report will review recent activities in the island's handcraft industry, describe its current status and needs, and outline how technical assistance could be used to improve the income of the handcraft producers on St. Lucia and to build an industry that can provide a long-term source of income.

A. Focus on Training

The Arts and Crafts Training Center was established in the southern town of Choiseul through the St. Lucia Youth Development Programme (YDP). This center was the result of a contract that the National Office of Social Responsibility (NOSR) signed with USAID in August of 1980 to develop five national training centers, each specializing in a distinct area of employable skills. The initial goal was to train 1,100 youth.

Because of the limited employment opportunities open to youth on the island, the plan proved to be too ambitious. NOSR recognized this fact as soon as it initiated the YDP; consequently, with the concurrence of both USAID and the Government of St. Lucia, NOSR revised the project plan. The number of projected trainees was reduced to 600 in the first quarter of the project and then to 240 late in 1981. Also in 1981, the number of planned training centers was reduced from five to two. Yet at the same time, the project was expanded with plans to fund new training outreach centers that would serve 480 trainees. The outreach plan, however, was not feasible and was later dropped entirely; USAID reassigned the monies designated for the plan to the Regional Skills Training Project sponsored by the Organization of American States.

The final products of the YDP were two training centers, one for handicrafts and one for agro-processing. The Arts and Crafts Training Center graduated one group of 42 trainees in 1983 and one group of 22 in 1984. The center for agro-processing, located in the mid-country town of Dennery, graduated a group of 32 trainees, for a total of 96 in all--far below the initial and revised goals. More artisans, however, were trained in handcraft production than the numbers indicate because many of the trainees taught

members of their families the skills they had acquired through the program. Consequently, the YDP had broader impact than is immediately apparent.

B. Focus on Enterprise Development

During the course of the project, NOSR changed its approach: it realized that along with training, it had to develop self-employment opportunities for the trainees. Thus the project focus shifted from training for employment to the development of small-scale enterprises for self-employment. Gordon Kunde, who assumed the role of Project Director in January of 1983, worked to transform the two centers into self-sustaining enterprises.

The trainees were offered additional training in enterprise development, including quality control, production scheduling, and marketing. The staff at the training centers began to devote more time to marketing and supervision of production and less on training.

The shift in emphasis was necessary and appropriate. As interviews conducted by World Education, Inc., (the project's evaluator) indicate, employment is not available for the trainees in either private or public organizations. In fact, after the primary training cycle, virtually all of the graduates chose to remain with the centers, suggesting that other opportunities for employment were simply unavailable for most, despite their training.¹

The project demonstrated that the employment problem in St. Lucia cannot be alleviated through training alone. Enterprises must be created simultaneously to increase the demand for skilled labor, and these enterprises should build on the skills of the St. Lucians.

¹ Micheal Useem, "The Formation of Small-Scale Enterprises in Handicraft and Agro-Processing on St. Lucia," Final Report, April 23, 1984, pp. 11-12.

Currently Anthony Herman, the former Project Manager of the handcraft center, continues to seek new markets for handcrafts produced by the trainees, by family members these center graduates have trained, and by other handcrafts producers. His salary is paid through commission from the sales. In addition, the St. Lucian government is enthusiastic about his efforts and provides him with government vehicles for transportation and secretarial services.

In the last year of the project, the center was meeting only an average of 10 percent of its operating costs. But the costs were high because each trainee in the project was receiving a stipend regardless of their rate of production. Now the trainees are working on consignment. The sales conducted through the center average about 1000 dollars a month, according to Anthony Herman. Without further technical assistance, however, it is doubtful whether the Arts and Crafts Training Center will be able to continue for long. Production and marketing practices must be improved before the handcraft industry on the island can generate enough income to support the artisans.

IV. RAW MATERIALS

A. An Inventory

A variety of raw products, common to most of the Caribbean islands can be found on St. Lucia. They include bamboo, sisal, several grasses and vines suitable for basketry, seeds, gords, brown coral and shells for jewelry, as well as a range of woods still found in relative abundance on the island--such as mahogany, coconut, teak, red cedar, white cedar, and pine. Most of these raw products are readily available at no cost. In most cases, producers simply gather, cut, or pick their supplies, or they buy them at reasonable prices from each other. There is a limited barter-exchange arrangement among some producers that helps them obtain raw materials they cannot gather easily.

All other materials for handcraft production must be imported. A limited range of imported materials needed for finishing of their products are available on the island. Such things as thread, linings, colored rafia, buttons, paints, varnishes, findings for jewelry and all materials used for silk screening and batik are imported. A few of these come from the Caricom at a relatively low cost and enter duty free. The rest are imported from the U.S. and the Far East at considerably higher costs.

The supply of these imported goods is erratic and unreliable. All producers complained of the extremely limited range of supplementary materials that are available on St. Lucia. Artisans have no input or control over what is imported. They buy individually in very small amounts; consequently, they do not believe that their requests for different materials carry much weight.

B. Recommendations

1. Import More Production Materials

Lack of production materials is one of the major constraints to developing variety in presently produced goods and has inhibited experimentation with new product lines. As designers begin developing new lines, materials such as fine cotton cloth, thread for knitting and crocheting, and dyes will be needed. A better information system about what is available within the Caricom market system would be very valuable. Also, the Ministry of Community Development is willing to give preferential entrance to some of the goods artisans need that are not available through Caricom. But no new goods have entered under this system so far.

2. Linkages Through Larger Companies

A number of new garment and textile firms are newly arrived on St. Lucia. Several more are currently looking seriously at opportunities there. If handcraft producers could gain access to the raw products the larger companies will be importing and to their sources and import channels, they would expand their options.

3. Cooperative Purchasing for Raw Materials

A system of group purchasing or ordering could be established to help small artisans get needed supplies. By ordering in bulk, the artisans could obtain a greater variety and quantity of products. A number of such buying arrangements exist in Uruguay, Peru, and Ecuador. Some of these function as cooperatives: a few private designers purchase for small artisan groups; some designers who work as trainers also buy for artisans in this manner. Likewise, the Arts and Crafts Training Center could act as the buyer and distributor of the imported production materials.

V. FINISHED PRODUCTS

A. Woven Goods of Straw, Sisal, Reeds, or Grass

Hats, purses, bags, table mats, floor mats, hot pads, and baskets make up the bulk of hand-woven or plaited items produced in St. Lucia and at the Arts and Crafts Center.

1. Hats

Description: Handcraft producers who make hats use a limited number of designs and techniques. Narrow and wide brim models are made out of solid stripe weaving. There is almost no color variation and little variety in weaving techniques. The product is stiff, ill-fitting, and uncomfortable. The handcraft producers currently are not using all the raw material options available, and they do not mix fibers to add variety or color. Nor do they add decorative touches such as silk-screened or batik scarves.

Recommendations: Most hats are currently made of rather stiff banana leaf fiber. Other softer grasses and sisal should be used. More interesting weaves and more attention to style, size, and comfort are needed to increase sales, especially among tourists. Locally made tie-dyes, batik, and silk-screened scarves would make the hats more fashionable.

Quality of the hats is irregular at best and must be improved for the tourist and export market. Also improved quality would draw more business from the St. Lucians.

2. Bags and Purses

Description: Simple purses and bags are made by all groups. Handles, closures, and sizes vary somewhat, and a limited number of shapes are available. Some purses are lined but with low quality material. The stitching is often uneven or unattractive; closures may not be practical.

The purses are decorated with simple designs, mostly of flowers and leaves.

Recommendations: The bags and purses need better closures, sturdier handles or carriers, more practical shapes, as well as different and varying decoration and fashion finishes. St. Lucians buy and use the purses and bags, but there is very little competition. To enter the tourist or export market, there is a need for better designs and improved quality control.

3. Baskets

Description: The artisans also make oval or round fruit and bread baskets. They are constructed well but lack variety in design. Only a few baskets are decorated, and none of the weaving materials are dyed.

Recommendations: The baskets could be designed for a much wider variety of uses. Baskets designed for such items as french bread, baking dishes, or wine bottles would appeal to the tourist market. Fine weaves and colorful designs should be used. Also, the artisans could use a combination of fibers in their products to vary the texture.

4. Table Mats and Floor Mats

Description: The table mats can serve as place mats or hot pads. There are basically two types of weaves available. A coil weave of banana fiber and a waffle weave, with a braided trim, also of banana fiber. In general, the coil mat is too thick, too irregular for dishes and glasses to sit properly, and too small for the export market. The waffle weave is also too small. Both weaves lack variation in color or design. Local hotels and residents are purchasing these in limited numbers. Floor mats are made in a variety of sizes, shapes, and designs. They are generally well done and practical for tropical use. They are used locally by almost every household.

Recommendations: The table mats would be more practical and appealing if a flatter and more consistent weave were used in some cases, if

more attention were given to design, and if color were introduced.

The floor mats were very interesting. Perhaps artisans could experiment with color. It would be valuable to determine whether the floor mats would be marketable on other islands.

5. General Skills Level

The weavers' technical skill is satisfactory, but they are eager to learn new patterns and designs that would upgrade their skills level.

B. Wood Products

1. Furniture

Description: A large variety of furniture is made of several types of woods. The designs are simple and seem to meet the basic needs of the local market. The quality of finishing is poor, however. Drawers and doors do not always close or stay shut. Handles and hinges are of low quality and design. Often the wood is not seasoned and tends to warp. Hotels and the St. Lucians use the locally made furniture.

Recommendations: The marketability of the furniture products could be increased if the designs were improved to be more appealing and comfortable. Also, with better quality control, the finishing of each product would improve. Research of market potential for products on other Caribbean islands is also a necessary step.

2. Sculptures

Description: A few private carvers are doing some fairly interesting sculptures with beautiful woods. There is apparently a local market.

Recommendations: No real marketing effort has been made to place the sculptures in hotels or public places or to develop advertising materials; consequently, tourists are not aware of these products. Another problem is

that an export packaging system for these large sculptures has not been established. These issues need to be addressed before the artisans can market the sculptures with success.

3. Other Items

Description: A number of small wooden items are made for kitchen use, decoration purposes, storage, or carrying. Boxes, spoons, forks, nut crackers, trays, nut and salad bowls, wall masks, and plaques are a few of the items made. Finishing and design are of low quality.

Recommendations: With improved finishing these products could appeal to the tourist as well as the local market.

C. Batik, Tie Dye, and Silk Screening

Description: The YDP began a modest program in textiles, but it never attained a high degree of success or skill. Some fairly good private workshops are selling to the local and tourist market. One workshop produces good designs on a fabric, which is primarily polyester. It makes mats, napkins, wrap skirts, beach covers, wall decorations, men's and women's shirts and tops, and a variety of bags and purses. Quality control is excellent. Considering the low quality of the fabric and the obscure location of the outlet, the workshop is amazingly successful. Another private outlet does good work on pure sea island cotton. Style and design are good and quality is generally high.

Recommendations: Though the dying is of good quality in the private sector, the YDP trainees need more training in this area. Further training is also needed in the area of clothing design so that the artisans can produce fashionable wear out of quality batik, tie-dye, and silk-screened fabrics. Natural fabrics would have more appeal; however, a source other than sea

island cotton should be used; it is too expensive for the artisans and supply is very limited. The U.S. or the Far East could be possible sources.

D. Clay

Description: Pottery making seems to be one of the older traditional skills in St. Lucia. It was not included in the YDP training program. The soil is apparently good, and the artisans certainly have the basic skills. There is not much glazing done and the firing process is not hot enough to provide a durable and long-lasting piece. The local market would most certainly accept a better product with enthusiasm. Hotels and locals use the ashtrays, bowls, planters, and cooking stoves.

Recommendations: To improve the clay products, artisans need to use a kiln firing process, training in design, and better glazing techniques. Pottery products could be highly marketable on other Caribbean islands because appropriate clay is not often available in this region.

E. Recommendations for Additional Designs or Products

To produce more marketable products, the artisans need to use more interesting designs and more colorful materials. In addition, they need to expand their products lines. Some new product ideas might include those listed below.

- o woven sisal or banana fiber beach mats that roll up with handles or carrying straps
- o woven plate covers for outdoor use
- o light covers or lamps for local or inter-island export
- o baskets or trays for packing Aunt Lucies products (from the agro-processing center) as gift items for tourists
- o wooden and soft toys for children

- o ceramic and wooden Christmas decorations
- o wooden buttons, beads, and belt buckles
- o hand-smocked or embroidered children's wear
- o custom designed spice baskets to package locally grown spices and herbs
- o a jewelry line using the local woods, coral, shells, and seeds
- o wooden under plates, similar to those featured in the Ralph Lauren country line
- o small wooden items suitable for souvenirs, such as carvings or decorative boxes

In addition to the products listed above, which would have local and tourist appeal, a line of beach wear could be developed for both the tourist and export markets. St. Lucian artisans have skills in crocheting, knitting, embroidery, and sewing, and all of these skills lend themselves to beach wear production. Cotton cloth and a variety of threads and decorations would need to be imported, but this would not be a major constraint. There are many examples of successful export businesses that import raw materials. Haiti, for instance, imports cloth and thread to make embroidered baby clothes for the European market. Israel also has thriving export businesses in both clothing and jewelry that require imported raw materials. If the artisans produced beach wear designs of high quality, they would have an obvious ready market in the Caribbean region, and beach wear production could become a profitable enterprise.

The chart on the next page indicates which of the markets available--the local, tourist, or export--for which the products would be appropriate.

ITEMS	LOCAL	TOURIST	EXPORT
<u>Woven goods</u>			
Purses	X	X	
Bags	X	X	
Mats	X	X	
Table Items	X	X	
Baskets	X	X	
<hr/>			
<u>Wooden Items</u>			
Furniture	X		
Sculptures	X	X	
Bowls	X	X	
Trays	X	X	
Boxes	X	X	
Jewelry	X	X	X
<hr/>			
<u>Textiles</u>			
Batik	X	X	X
Tie Dye	X	X	X
Silk Screen	X	X	X
<hr/>			
<u>Clay</u>	X	X	X
<hr/>			
Beach wear	X	X	X

VI. MARKETING

A. Present Situation

St. Lucian artisans presently have an extremely restricted market. In many cases, the products are below tourist market standards, leaving the local market as a prime target. Since the local market is only about 130,000 people, it is an extremely limited one. In general, local products are priced very high considering quality and design; consequently, a number of imported items are available at competitive prices.

The tourist market is an available market for the artisans of St. Lucia. The tourist industry is steadily increasing on the island. In 1983 some 62,000 tourists visited the island, and in 1984 the figure increased to about 72,000. The number of cruise ships docking at the island has increased from 56 in 1983 to 83 in 1984 with each ship carrying from 300 to 800 passengers¹. But the marketing effort to sell St. Lucia or its products to the tourist market has not been extensive as of yet. Because the general ambiance at the port is not very agreeable, many tourists do not even get off the ships. As a result, few tourists even enter the small handcraft shop set up at the dock. Lack of promotion of the shop and its wares amplifies the problem. A large and lucrative market is simply sailing past. Furthermore, the goods that are on sale have little appeal for the tourist because prices are high, the quality of the products is low, and the designs have no flair.

Two companies, however, have been successful with the tourist trade. One private company, Bagshaws, does some marketing, provides information about its

¹ St. Lucian Tourist Board, St. Lucia Port Authority and the Government Statistics Department, 1984.

products and arranges transportation to its shop. Caribelle, another handcraft shop, is located near the dock; consequently, it too receives much of the tourist business.

St. Lucia is not currently exporting many handcrafts to other Caribbean countries or to any other region. It appears that some islands would be a ready market for certain products because of their proximity and because there are favorable trade agreements between the islands.

B. Recommendations

1. Local Market

Products must be designed with the needs of the local market in mind. Good local market research will undoubtedly produce countless items that the local handcraft producers can provide. The artisans must improve the quality of their goods and lower their prices to compete with imports from the Caribbean and Far East. Prices of St. Lucien handcrafts must be competitive before the artisans can bring up sales. If they lower their prices, they can sell more and increase their income with increased volume of sales. To keep their costs low, they need training in cost analysis so that they can gain higher profit margins.

2. Tourist Market

The tourist is looking for high quality, well-designed, attractive, reasonably priced gifts or souvenirs from St. Lucia. Producers must meet the market demand. In addition, a real marketing effort will be needed to assure high sales. Ships, air arrivals, tourist agencies, and all hotels should have access to products or information about where products are available.

If the government plan to establish a National Tourist Center at Pointe Seraphin is implemented, the proposed handcraft sales outlet to be located in the port could play a major role in marketing St. Lucia's handcrafts.

3. Caribbean Market

A major effort to locate off-shore markets throughout the Caribbean should be made. The needs of nearby countries should be evaluated to see if St. Lucia can in some way meet that market demand. For example, because clay is available on St. Lucia, pottery holds promise for Caribbean markets. Currently, Barbados is importing a range of items from Caribelle, one of the private craft industries on St. Lucia.

4. U.S. and Other Markets

Other markets, such as the U.S. and Europe, will be more difficult to enter, but entrance to these markets should be a long range goal. Cottage assembly work, such as embroidery, smocking on children's and adult women's wear, and sewing offer further possibilities for the employment of St. Lucia's artisans. With a number of countries looking at St. Lucia, there needs to be better promotion of the human resources and favorable atmosphere St. Lucia can provide.

VII. PRIVATE HANDCRAFT ENTERPRISES IN ST. LUCIA

A. Description of Private Handcraft Enterprises

A few private craft outlets are operating successfully on St. Lucia. If the individuals and family groups who work independently on St. Lucia hope to succeed, they must bring their work up to or beyond the private industry standard.

The best private industry work is in batik and silk screening. Bagshaws is a family-owned company doing silk screening and painting on rather heavy polyester/cotton fabric. Designs, painting, and color are good. The style and cut of clothing is poor, but in spite of this sales seem to be brisk. They are doing table mats on Irish linen that are excellent.

Much of their success is due to their effective marketing system. Tourists from hotels and arriving ships receive information about Bagshaws, and many tours stop there. The location of the shop is not easy to reach, but their system for bringing in trade works well. Quality control is excellent: their standards for cutting, sewing, and finishing the garments are high and consistent.

Caribelle is another company located in an attractive shop near the city center that sells a variety of textile items: batiks, tie dyes, and silk screens on sea island cotton. Prices are somewhat higher, but clothing designs are far superior, and quality is good. Caribelle is presently employing a number of trainees from the YDP. Both Caribelle and Bagshaws use a workshop production arrangement rather than the home/cottage industry, which undoubtedly helps quality control.

A few private craft shops carry a variety of the better local products as well as a selection of regional Andean, Mexican, and Oriental crafts. All of these crafts sell at high prices.

These shops also carry the work of a few jewelry makers. Local artisans work in brown coral, making bracelets and earrings. Some foreign artisans are assembling necklaces using local seeds, shells, and bone. It is now prohibited to use black coral. Several shops carry hand-smocked and embroidered baby clothes made by one small private group of about six workers. Quality is fair. This same shop carries a few hand-crocheted tops and blouses of satisfactory quality, but the fit is not consistent.

St. Lucian handcraft producers must understand that in order to compete with the private handcraft businesses, they must

- o improve product design;
- o improve quality control;
- o maintain a steady, available, and changing supply of products; and
- o develop better marketing systems.

B. Possibilities for Interfacing with Private Firms

Private industry has hired a few students from the YDP. In addition, a few trainees from the Regional Non-Formal Training Center are presently apprentices with these private firms as part of their training. It seems certain that if artisans with better skills emerge from any new program, private industry will be interested in hiring those with skills in management, production, or design. Furthermore, competition from more skilled handcraft producers should bring better and lower priced products.

VIII. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A. Choiseul as the Base for Technical Assistance

The base for providing most of the technical assistance should be the Arts and Crafts Center at Choiseul. It is located within the artisan community and has been functioning as the real handcraft center of St. Lucia. Moreover, most raw materials are found in this area, and family groups are already working in a loose cooperative arrangements. Though the government's plan to place a handcraft shop at the proposed Pointe Seraphin is a good one, Choiseul is a more convenient location for training as well as production and marketing management.

The original plan for the YDP was to use Choiseul as a training and production center with a gallery/display area and a sales outlet for products. After the closing of the project in June 1984, Anthony Herman, former Project Manager, began a cottage industry plan for continuing handcraft activities. Present sales, although limited, are now entirely produced at home by trainees and family members who have acquired those skills. This system is working well and should continue. Within this system, the Center could be used for training seminars and workshops, work space, storage, supply distribution, and quality control. But because of the limitations of staff at the Arts and Crafts Center, consultants will be required to provide the expertise needed to upgrade skills, improve product design, and expand product lines.

B. Production Materials

In order to upgrade their products and provide more variety, the artisans need to import a wider range of production materials: for example, cotton

fabric, thread, notions (i.e., snaps, zippers, buttons); dyes and decorative trim; lining materials; varnishes and stains; materials for glazing pottery; handles and hinges; jewelry findings; and new materials that product development may require. A production specialist is needed on St. Lucia who can identify the best sources of needed raw materials, facilitate entry of these materials, order the products in bulk, manage distribution of the products, and maintain an inventory of supplies. The individual to be trained in this area should be a St. Lucian, and the training should not be conducted until decisions have been made about new product lines. Training will be short-term and might be provided by one of the production specialists recruited for training in design and production techniques.

C. Production

The artisans on St. Lucia need the following types of technical assistance in order to improve the quality and variety of their products. Most of the technical assistance needed to develop the skills of the artisans would be of 3 to 5 months in duration. Technical assistance in design, product development, and management would be of shorter duration--3 to 6 weeks. Specialists are needed to provide training in the following areas.

- o Weaving
- o Carving
- o Furniture making
- o Batik techniques
- o Knitting, crocheting, embroidery, smocking, and sewing
- o Jewelry making
- o Design principles
- o Product development

- o Management procedures
- o Marketing
- 1. Upgrading Skills Taught Through YDP

Short-term training is needed to upgrade the basic artisans' skills taught in the YDP, which included weaving, carving, furniture making, and batik techniques. Qualified artisans other than the YDP trainees can be selected to attend the training seminars as well. The best artisans in these various skills areas should attend these workshops. Later they could serve as trainers for other groups of artisans on the island.

2. Upgrading Other Skills and Introducing New Ones

Artisans need training in knitting, crocheting, embroidery, smocking, and sewing. The Regional Non-Formal Skills Training Center funded by USAID and the Organization of American States (OAS) seems willing to provide this training. The Regional Center offers a training package that includes sessions at the Center and an apprenticeship in a local business. Another option might be to provide short-term training in each of these skills at the handicrafts center by using consultants. The production of jewelry and accessories, such as belts and belt buckles, should be introduced. The types of raw materials readily available on the island make jewelry and accessories sound candidates for new product lines. Designers, hired on a short-term basis, could provide the training needed.

3. Design and Product Development

Several short-term consultant designers could give St. Lucian products new direction and individuality. Technical assistance in textiles, weaving, jewelry, and wood work is needed to improve present lines and to develop a wide range of new products (See Section IV, Finished Products). If St. Lucia wants to pursue an export market, even in the Caribbean, products

must meet higher standards at lower prices to be competitive. These designers should also examine ways to package and present these new products.

D. Marketing

A marketing specialist is needed to research the market, introduce new markets, and expand old ones. The market specialist should explore both local and off-shore markets. The marketing specialist should also examine current price structures to determine competitive prices for the type and quality of products the artisans will produce. Anthony Herman has received some training in marketing. Perhaps he could receive additional training, either aboard or in St. Lucia, to assume the role of the market specialist.

E. Management

If the St. Lucia Arts and Crafts Center is to develop a handcraft industry, its staff and the handcraft producers themselves must have a range of business skills. Managing, marketing, cost analysis, inventory control, basic accounting, and record keeping are vital to the success of any plans to develop a national handcraft industry. The best option for training in these areas lies in the Regional Non-Formal Skills Training Center in St. Lucia. The Training Center is presently developing plans to incorporate management training into its present program. Mr. Fluck, a trainer at the center, was enthusiastic about the possibility of developing a program to provide the management skills needed in the handcraft and export business.

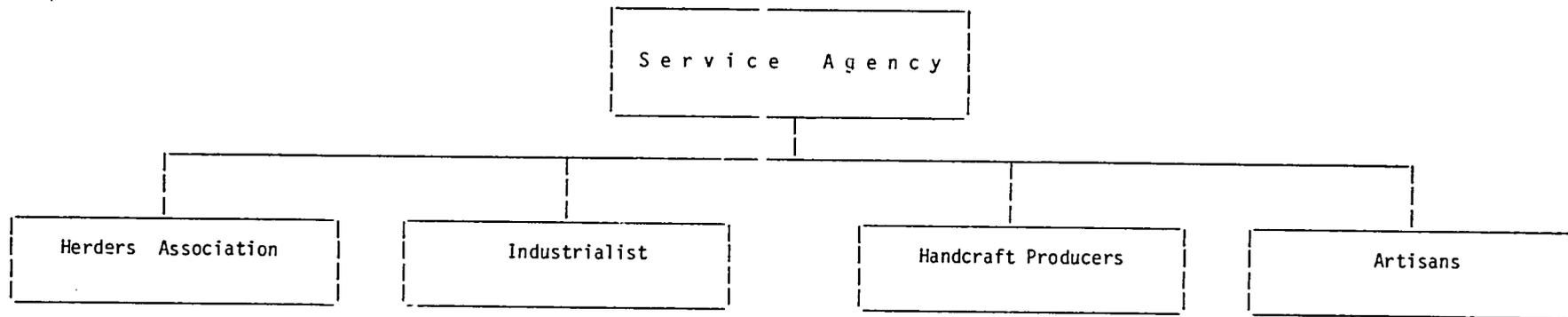
Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP) might also provide management training. BIMAP has done extensive work with mini businesses and is a possible source for the type of training needed. Another option is the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC). This organization also has organized basic skills training in management for small enterprises.

IX. CONCLUSION

Artisans in St. Lucia have a solid base for developing a viable handcraft industry, if they receive the necessary training and managerial support. Many of the key elements necessary for success are already in place.

- o There is a large group of artisans on St. Lucia with basic skills, some of whom were trained by the YDP; consequently, there is no need at present to expand the work force.
- o The artisans are enthusiastic about their work and anxious to perfect those skills.
- o There are three markets readily available for the handcraft products: the local, tourist, and Caribbean markets.
- o The St. Lucian government has expressed a strong interest in supporting any efforts to build up a handcraft industry on the island and is currently supporting the Arts and Crafts Training Center with transportation and secretarial services and a waterfront store. The government also has plans to establish a handcraft outlet as part of its proposed Tourist Facility at Pointe Seraphin.
- o The YDP established a structure for handcraft production--the cottage-industry framework.
- o The Arts and Crafts Training Center has already established itself as a location for skill development as well as management and marketing assistance and is conveniently located within the artisan community.

With additional support, the handcraft industry could generate more income for the artisans on the island. As the industry develops, it could provide more employment for those in related fields, such as sales and tourism, and thus have even greater impact on the economic development of St. Lucia.



The service agency will work with one or several associations of herders in two areas:

- o It will provide technical assistance in starting and classifying fiber
- o It will negotiate contracts for herder associations to provide graded/classified fiber to Forno and Fotrana for spinning.

The service agency will work with industrialists in four specific areas:

- o It will provide T.A. in dyeing fiber blend and weight of yarn to be spun.
- o It will serve as the intermediary for handcraft producers by coordinating the ordering of yarn. And, the service agency will receive the spun yarn for distribution to producers.
- o The Service Agency will provide design T.A. to industrialists for the development of fabric, home furnishings such as blankets, thrower
- o It will provide T.A. in market analysis for home furnishing and yarn goods produced

The service agency will direct much of it's T.A. energies to their group. It will provide a full range of services including:

- o Coordination of buying and distribution of yarn from industrialists.
- o T.A. in product design
- o T.A. in market analysis
- o T.A. in Quality Control systems
- o T.A. in organizational development.

Artisans will be the indirect beneficiaries of S.A. activities. They will directly benefit from work preparation seminars available to novice artisans interested in joining the artisan workforce.