Spain and FAO

Working to guarantee global food and nutrition security

In the last two decades, Spain has worked closely with FAO, primarily focusing on the fisheries sector and the promotion of policies that guarantee the right to food, protect plant genetic resources and food security. Cooperation also includes support in the form of human resources contributed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment (MAGRAMA) and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) under FAO’s Associate Professional Officers Programme.

Sustainable livelihoods
– A common objective

Spanish cooperation has always been closely aligned with FAO’s strategic objectives and regional priorities, with support and technical assistance mainly provided through the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). This channel is currently being strengthened through FAO’s partnership with the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP), which assists and cooperates with governments in support of their national policies. The overall goal of Spanish cooperation is to contribute to human development, poverty eradication and the full realization of fundamental human rights. In recent years, development and humanitarian assistance has centred on three high-priority geographical areas:

- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Near East and Northwest Africa
- Sub-Saharan Africa

Thematic areas of special interest to Spain and FAO include:

- Contributing to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition – ensuring the fight against hunger is high on the political agenda of regions affected, and taking action to revitalize family farming.
- Improving access to and sustainable management of land and water resources.

FAO Information Office and resulting partnerships

An FAO Information Office has been fully established in Spain, with office space provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment (MAGRAMA). This development has favoured strong contacts with various Spanish entities working in areas of common interest to Spain and FAO. Of particular note is collaboration with AECID to promote agroecology; the partnership with the Spanish National Museum of Natural History to promote and increase awareness of the International Year of Soils; and awareness-raising activities undertaken with other UN agencies, civil society, AECID and universities to support the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is understood that achievement of SDGs represents an opportunity to end hunger.

FAO recently signed collaboration agreements with a number of Spanish entities: the Autonomous Regional Government of Galicia; Valencia City Council; the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP); the Spanish and Portuguese-language media company, PRISA Group; Carlos III University; the Polytechnic University of Madrid; and publicly-owned enterprises such as the Spanish Development Fund, COFIDES, and agrarian transformation company, Tragsa.

Strengthening communities and institutions

Since 2007 a series of initiatives supported by AECID have focused on water access and management, food security and agropastoralism in the West Africa region – targeting the Niger and Mali in particular.

In East Africa, a recently launched project is under way in South Sudan, where community resilience is being strengthened through sustainable agro-pastoralism activities.
The new 2030 Agenda: Towards the Zero Hunger Generation

A decade of work and experience in Latin America and the Caribbean

Spain has been supporting a project under the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean 2025 Initiative. This follows concerted action taken by Spain and FAO in 2006 to secure the regions’ commitment to eradicating hunger within a generation.

The results of the regional initiative have been outstanding. Latin America is one of the world’s highest-performing regions in this regard, aided by Spain’s contribution to the setting up of a Policy Training Unit, Parliamentary Fronts Against Hunger and the Right to Food Observatory.

The success of the Zero Hunger Initiative in Latina America has been such that a number of projects being have been applied to food security governance and incorporated in national legal frameworks in other regions as well as at the global level. Examples include “Coherent Food Security Responses: Incorporating the Right to Food into Global and Regional Food Security Initiatives” and “Integrating the Right to Adequate Food and Good Governance in National Policies, Legislation and Institutions”.

Considering their experience, FAO, Spain and countries of Latin America have played a fundamental role in integrating matters related to food, nutrition, support for sustainable family farming and efforts to combat climate change into the Sustainable Development Goals.

SDGs – a shared responsibility

In recent years, it has become evident that the lead challenges concerning production, food, environment and nutrition affect every country in the world in an increasingly direct and interconnected way. Spain is not immune to challenges such as soil erosion, child malnutrition, the need to reduce greenhouse gases, a lack of generational replacement in family farming, overexploitation of marine resources, increasing obesity among the population and food waste.

Member countries recognized such challenges when approving the SDGs. For its part, Spain is taking an active role in promoting international fora to identify global responses and forge commitments at the national level.

Nutrition

One clear case in point has been Spain’s involvement in promoting the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), which approved the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the associated Framework for Action. Since ICN2, Queen Letizia of Spain has been FAO Special Ambassador for Nutrition.

Fisheries

In the fisheries sector, there has been solid cooperation between MAGRAMA and FAO, including promotion of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Vigo and the provision of “Advice, Technical Support and Establishment of Cooperation Networks to Facilitate Coordination to Support Fisheries Management in the Western and Central Mediterranean” – the COPEMED programme which has an office in Malaga. Spain also supports initiatives such as Globefish and the Global Record of Fishing Vessels.