Matching FAO’s expertise to the Dominican Republic’s development priorities

FAO assistance in the Dominican Republic is shaped by the 2012-2017 Country Programming Framework (CPF), which addresses three priority areas:

- **Food and nutrition security and poverty reduction**, by developing policies and strategies to strengthen capacities in rural areas and national institutions
- **Strengthening family farming**, by creating a Family Farming Committee that delivers training in the management of production systems and facilitates access to local markets, while strengthening outreach services and improving the legal framework
- **Integrated watershed management, efficient use of natural resources, risk management and climate change**, by setting up early warning systems to control disease and strengthen the resilience of communities to natural disasters.

The CPF reflects the Government’s priorities falling within FAO’s mandate, ensuring maximum complementarity with national development plans, in particular the National Development Strategy Law (END) 2012-2030, the Agricultural Sector Strategic Plan 2010-2020 and the sector’s multi-annual and operational programmes, as well as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

**New CPF formulation**

Consultations and drafting of a new CPF are underway.

As an example of the commitment demonstrated by provincial stakeholders in adopting planning and public participation mechanisms, it is worth highlighting the start of the set-up process of the provincial REDSSAN in Monte Plata with FAO support.
Building community resilience to drought

While data on the impact of El Niño and La Niña in the Dominican Republic are limited, the effects of these phenomena have contributed to climate variability in the region. According to the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Environmental Funds (REDLAC), approximately 1.6 million people in the Dominican Republic were affected by drought between 2014 and 2016. The lack of comprehensive and timely data is one of the fundamental constraints to drought risk management and the provision of technical assistance.

With funding from EU’s European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), FAO is working with WFP, Oxfam and Plan International to ensure that production systems are able to mitigate the effects of drought and protect the agricultural livelihoods of the most vulnerable rural populations. An assessment carried out by FAO, Oxfam and WFP in 2015 demonstrated that rainfall shortages had caused livestock deaths and resulted in a decline in crop production of up to 60 percent in some areas.

The project is based on a flexible and forward-looking plan designed to address multiple risks, including drought management that takes into consideration food security, resilience and adaptation to climate change. Project activities are strengthening early warning capabilities, governance and good farming practices of communities in the provinces of Montecristi, Dajabón, San Juan and Elías Piña, as well as the analysis and response capacity of national and provincial institutions linked to the National Emergency System.

Investing in rural development to change migratory flows

As in other countries of the region, rural youth in the Dominican Republic are facing increasing difficulties in obtaining decent employment that provides a reasonable income and job security as well as social protection for their families. The lack of opportunities has resulted in high youth migration to cities and a consequent drop in agricultural production, with the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti being one of the most affected areas.

With assistance from FAO, IFAD and PROCASUR Foundation, Dominican Republic’s Ministry of Agriculture is now implementing the regional project, “Strengthening Decent Rural Employment for Women and Young Men in the Caribbean”. The project, which has been implemented in nine other countries in the region, offers viable alternatives for beneficiaries to take advantage of available resources in rural areas, thereby reducing migration to cities.

In the Dominican Republic component of the project, four good practices were identified and then tried by young people both from the Dominican Republic and from Haiti. Known as “Learning Routes”, this experience helped the young trainees to identify employment opportunities in agricultural as well as non-agricultural activities to replicate them in their communities and thereby helping to halt migration.

“People’s participation and political commitment at the highest level are fundamental to achieving food security”
José Graziano da Silva
FAO Director-General