



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

SUMMARY REPORT

Evaluation of FAO's country programme in the Dominican Republic

2018–2022





Abstract

This evaluation was carried out to provide input for the development of the next Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Country Programming Framework in the Dominican Republic and has consisted of the assessment of the strategic positioning of FAO in the country, and the identification of the main contributions in each of the priority areas and transversal themes (gender and economic inclusion of groups in vulnerable conditions and climate action) during the period 2018–2022.

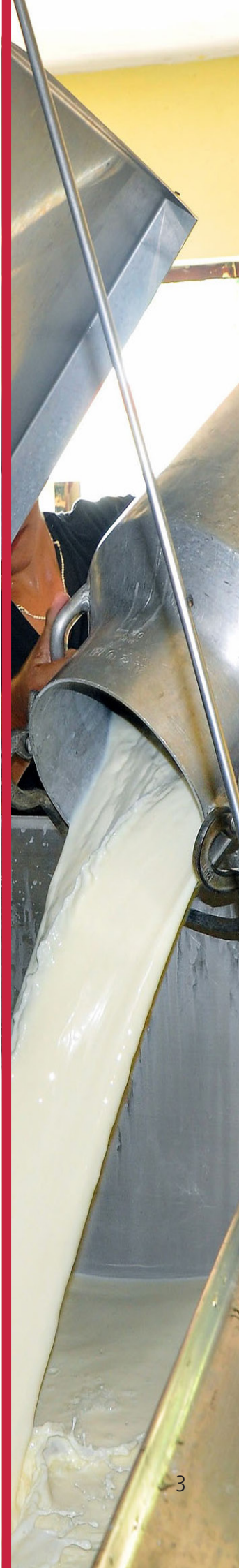
The evaluation found that FAO has been a reference point on key issues for the food, agricultural and rural sector. For example, FAO has had influence on public policies on food security and has strengthened capacities to promote associations and the adoption of innovative practices in areas such as climate-smart livestock farming. On the other hand, there is potential to strengthen collaboration between partners who have common objectives with the organisation, especially in the face of emerging issues.

The evaluation recommends continuing to support key initiatives such as the development of food and nutrition sovereignty and security networks in the territories and redoubling efforts for the effective inclusion of small and medium-sized producers in associations. In addition, it is recommended to strengthen internal mechanisms that facilitate gender mainstreaming and resilience to climate change and adapt measurement and analysis instruments to report medium and long-term programme results.

Executive summary

- 1 Within the framework of country programme evaluations, aimed at accountability and identification of lessons learned and recommendations to improve cooperation, the FAO Office of Evaluation carried out the evaluation of the FAO country programme in the Dominican Republic in the period 2018–2022. This report presents the findings of the evaluation on the strategic positioning and relevance of FAO in the national context, as well as the main contributions and influencing factors in the implementation of the country programme.
- 2 The Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2018–2022 establishes three priority areas for FAO cooperation with the Government of the Dominican Republic: i) institutionality of food security with a rights-based approach; ii) promotion of inclusive and sustainable development in rural territories; and iii) comprehensive management of natural resources and risks in promoting a sustainable and resilient agricultural sector. The evaluation analyses FAO's work in these three areas and two transversal themes (gender and economic inclusion of groups in vulnerable conditions and climate action).
- 3 The evaluation has a formative approach. Based on the analysis of the answers to the three questions, opportunities, challenges, and lessons learned are identified as inputs to consider for the design of the next CPF. To answer these questions, the evaluation used qualitative methods for data collection and analysis. It included a document review and information gathering, with the contributions of 110 informants obtained through 76 interviews, three focus groups and two strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis. In addition, the evaluation benefited from the participation of a consultative group made up of focal points from the ministries of the programmes' counterparts. The main limitations of the evaluation were the availability of key informants given the high turnover of internal staff and counterparts in the period analysed, and gaps in information on medium and long-term results of the programme.
- 4 Regarding strategic positioning, the evaluation found that FAO is a reference point on Food and nutrition sovereignty and security networks, family farming, and climate-smart livestock farming. In particular, it has shown a high influence on the legislative agenda. FAO has been consistent in addressing the most relevant development challenges and needs in line with national priorities. In addition, it was flexible in adapting to changes in public policies and response to emergencies. The FAO Country Office relied on the capacity of headquarters, the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Subregional Office for Mesoamerica to address emerging needs.

- 5 In terms of the institutionality of food security with a rights-based approach, the main contributions were the influence on public policies for the establishment of a food and nutritional security system, as well as for institutional strengthening, introduction and promotion of healthy diets based on sustainable food. Positively valued by counterparts and beneficiaries, these contributions have allowed the issues of food sovereignty and nutritional security to be positioned on the public agenda so strengthening the regulatory framework based on pilot experiences. Moreover, they have strengthened the technical capacity of institutions and their role in food and nutritional security.
- 6 In the area of promoting inclusive and sustainable development in rural territories, FAO's contribution focused on the influence on public policy for the promotion of family farming, the introduction of innovative practices based on technology for farm production, such as the introduction of the production model in shadehouses, the strengthening of capacities and associations, and the introduction of the production model.
- 7 In the area of comprehensive management of natural resources and risks in promoting a sustainable and resilient agricultural sector, the main contributions are the influence on the framework of public policies on climate change and hydrometeorological risk management. These being delivered with varied advances in the implementation of legal and planning frameworks, the introduction of the climate-smart livestock model as a solution for reducing emissions, and the strengthening of capacities for the governance of water resources.
- 8 In relation to transversal issues, FAO has partially implemented gender policy at the level of incorporating gender safeguards in the preparation of all projects. However, this is not met in a systematic and transversal manner during the implementation of the projects (for example, affirmative actions, and differentiated results between men and women).
- 9 Regarding the mainstreaming of climate action, FAO generally incorporated climate resilience actions into climate-smart livestock and drought resilience initiatives. Climate action was partially included in the formulation of some projects.
- 10 The evaluation identified that the establishment of synergies, intersectoral articulation and FAO's capacity to mobilise technical assistance contributed positively to enhancing its response capacity. However, the rotation of interlocutors from government counterparts and the limitations of the technical-administrative structure of the Office in the country to meet the growing demand for technical assistance were factors that had a negative impact on the implementation of the programme.
- 11 On the other hand, there is potential to strengthen collaboration between partners who have common objectives with the organisation. The process of developing a new collaboration framework between the United Nations (UN) and the Government of the Dominican Republic has increased FAO's coordination space with other UN agencies, funds, and programmes, with the potential to expand collaboration, especially in emergencies.
- 12 FAO presents a series of opportunities in each of the priority areas as added value. These include, convening, articulating, and collaborating with other agencies and partners to complement development initiatives, scaling pilot initiatives; advocating to strengthen the approaches under its mandate; and providing innovations and technical knowledge.
- 13 Meanwhile, among the priority areas, several challenges are identified, such as the definition of continuity strategies for the achievements obtained under them and the consolidation of the technical support structure to sustain the growth of the programme. The Office reports information on activities, products, and short-term results with opportunities to strengthen processes to measure the medium and long-term results of the programme.
- 14 The evaluation makes six recommendations to improve FAO's positioning and contributions in the country. These include continuing to support key initiatives such as the development of food and nutrition sovereignty and security networks in the territories; redouble efforts for the effective inclusion of small and medium producers; strengthen internal mechanisms that facilitate gender mainstreaming and resilience to climate change; strengthen continuity strategies for initiatives and processes to measure medium and long-term results; and consolidate the programmatic and operational structure of the Office in the country. In promoting these issues and responding to emerging issues, FAO can explore potential synergies with other agencies that have similar objectives within the new UN cooperation framework.





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