



Food and Agriculture Organization
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STRENGTHENING CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES, CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND RISK MANAGEMENT

June 2019

SDGs:



Countries:

Regional Latin America and the Caribbean

Project Codes:

TCP/RLA/3606

FAO Contribution:

USD 489 000

Duration:

1 September 2016 – 31 December 2018

Contact Info:

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Implementing Partners

ITAIPÚ BINACIONAL (a state-owned binational initiative between the governments Brazil and Paraguay) and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR).

Beneficiaries

Direct

Ministries of: i) Agriculture; ii) Environment; iii) Natural Resources; iv) Planning, and v) Health.

Relevant technical agencies and institutions from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

The Regional Committee on Hydraulic Resources (CRRH) of the CELAC Working Group on the Environment and the Central American Integration System (SICA).

Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), such as: i) technical research centres; ii) producer associations; iii) chambers of commerce, and iv) other NGO sectoral partnerships.

Indirect

Smallholder farmers and rural communities, field technicians and local civil society organizations

Country Programming Framework

Strategic Objectives

SO2: Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable.

SO5: Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

Regional Initiatives

Regional Initiative 3: Sustainable use of natural resources, climate change adaptation and disaster risk management; Results 1, 3 and 4.

Priority Areas

Priority Area 5: Improve the resilience of livelihoods to threats and shocks; Activities 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.2, 2.1.2, 2.1.3 and 2.2.2.

Impact

Improved food and nutrition security and a reduction in the vulnerability of countries and farming communities to climate change and disasters through the improved use of natural resources by working towards fully sustainable agriculture.



BACKGROUND

The risk of disasters in agriculture is increasing as a result of the growing exposure of people, their livelihoods and assets, to extreme natural events and climate change. The unsustainable management of natural resources reduces the resilience of food systems even further, creating new risks and directly affecting food security.

Countries have requested the support of FAO for disaster risk reduction and to help combat climate change, understanding that the sustainable management of resources for agriculture and food security is a prerequisite to guaranteeing the resilience of the sector.

The objectives of this project were to establish institutional arrangements and mechanisms to foster cooperation between countries on these issues, and enhance capabilities for good practice implementation, geared towards bringing about change based on a sustainable template for farming production and development, as an essential requirement to guaranteeing food security for future generations.

In addition, the need to reinforce dialogue on, and action in, regional and subregional areas was proposed to help promote coordinated initiatives among different countries through specific tools, such as policy, programme and system development. This allowed the project to further tap into existing funding, including for the monitoring and early warning mechanisms for droughts, animal pest and disease control, disaster risk management and climate change mitigation, for the sustainable management of resources, especially water.

IMPACT

By working towards a fully sustainable agriculture and improving the use of natural resources, food and nutrition security were enhanced and the vulnerability of countries and farming communities to climate change and disasters was reduced.



ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

The outputs of the project extended beyond what was originally envisioned, both in terms of number and significance. In terms of policy planning and instruments, CELAC developed their Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the Agriculture Sector and Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean. This instrument was constructed by CELAC member countries and the main subregional organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean to agree on coordinated action in strategic areas for cooperation between countries to support their local and national agendas.

Following the recommendations of the international meeting of ministers and high-level officials of the agriculture sector at the “Sustainable Agriculture to Strengthen Food and Nutrition Security”, held in Lima in June 2016, agreement was reached on guidelines for the design and implementation of agricultural insurance for family farming through a public-private partnership, based on the experiences of Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay.

The project mobilized resources to train countries on how to access environmental and climate funding. A subregional workshop held in the Caribbean was set up to establish a collaboration between FAO, the Ministries of Agriculture and focal points for the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in the Caribbean Ministries of the Environment. The training and monitoring that took place enabled seven countries to access or be nominated for

GCF funds, including two subregional proposals for the Caribbean and a national one in the pipeline for GEF.

A new tool for monitoring and early warning called the Monitoring System for Agricultural Drought was created for Central America, improving capacities for forecasting crises and food insecurity due to damage to staple crops. This subregional monitoring platform enabled the implementation of national level analysis platforms for decision-making on early action to mitigate the impact of events. This technology also offers exciting opportunities for future development, such as measuring production losses in tonnes.

In addition, the successful methodology of the training programme for the sustainable management of natural resources, implemented in partnership with ITAIPÚ BINACIONAL, benefited decision-makers, technicians and researchers from all the subregions that received training. This further enabled government authorities to take part in a field programme in Brazil and Paraguay. A virtual community was also created to help participants put the theory they had learned into practice and subsequently report monitoring activities to communities.

The key success factors were the alignment of products to the needs of countries, together with the active involvement of countries in the design and implementation of the activities.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN

The project was implemented in accordance with the established plan and the budget was appropriate for the implementation of activities. Output 4, “Monitoring System for Agricultural Drought in Central America”, was delayed by five months but was addressed in an agreement with the Regional Committee on Hydraulic Resources (CRRH), an organization within the Central American Integration System (SICA). This increased the coverage of the System to all SICA countries, which originally only included the four countries from the dry corridor: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Great efforts were invested in country cooperation, helping to mitigate the risks of changes in government technical staff. This was done by setting up an implementation mechanism involving countries and subregional organizations for the activities that were heavily dependent on the leadership of the countries.

The main challenges throughout the process included the following: (i) the need to generate greater capacities for gender mainstreaming, both technically and in terms of the fulfilment of rights; and (ii) the need to incorporate themes on climate change, the sustainable use of resources and disaster resilience in ministerial planning as part of a holistic and intersectoral approach to the 2030 Agenda.

FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

- Upscale national use of the Central American Early Warning System for Agricultural Drought in Costa Rica El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama throughout 2019 and 2020.
- Link reports on agricultural drought to contingency plans, which would enable the reduction of impacts and help guarantee food security in cases of agricultural drought.
- Develop regional strategies for disaster risk management in the agriculture sector and food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean as ideas to be used as initiatives for south-south cooperation, and to strengthen the work plans of Latin American and Caribbean subregional organizations.
- Report on the implementation of priority initiatives for the implementation of the Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management to the CELAC Family Farming Working Group.

- Promote the Regional Programme for Strengthening Agricultural Health and Mobilizing Resources in Latin America and the Caribbean (PRSA-ALC) to support greater coordination between managers of agricultural emergencies and agencies responsible for agricultural health, within the implementation framework of the Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the agriculture sector and food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Promote awareness raising for technicians and decision-makers in order to facilitate the integration of a gender-sensitive approach to risk management policies, climate change and the sustainable use of resources, and improve the effectiveness of these programmes.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity development

The participatory process to prepare the strategy strengthened capacities in disaster and climate risk management for technicians and decision-makers from the ministries of agriculture, as well as for sectoral and subregional risk management organizations. A common ground of understanding was established through the process, which enabled countries to analyse overall areas of action where disaster risk management and adaptation to climate change were essential. From a strategic perspective, this helped generate capacities for south-south cooperation, including the alignment of templates to guarantee minimum standards and extend regional and subregional analysis, as well as to help set out sectoral themes for the sustainable development agenda.

Guidelines were created for the design and implementation of agricultural insurance for family farming outline. This laid the foundation to establish minimum and ideal conditions that are necessary for risk transfer instruments to cover the needs of smallholder farmers and producers, which should also be sustainable over time. The guidelines also filled an important knowledge gap in a region that has a great interest in developing these types of instruments.

A key partnership with *ITAIPIÚ BINACIONAL* also helped strengthen the organizational and institutional capacity of networks, public and private institutions and organizations to promote innovation, transition to more sustainable agricultural production systems and implement good practices at the local level.

Finally, national authorities that were designated to act as focal points for the Green Climate Fund (GCF) received support from FAO to help them understand the impact of climate on agriculture, the transformative potential of the GCF to strengthen resilience in rural areas and its contribution to sustainable development.

2. Gender equality

The men and women who participated in the training, as set out in the formulation of the project, were the beneficiaries of this project. During the project, additional efforts to train decision-makers were identified as necessary to complement this, in order to help them understand the relation between gender-sensitive approaches and the effectiveness of policies and programmes on resilience and sustainability. This also included raising awareness of the alternatives at their disposal to enable them to incorporate this scope into programming.

3. Environmental sustainability

The project strengthened planning capacities for the sustainable management of natural resources, which are being replicated and will be translated into good practice at the town level. It should also be noted that good risk management is sound environmental management, given the direct and very evident relationship between natural resource degradation and increased risk. Therefore, good risk management is a key principle of CELAC's Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the agriculture sector and food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean.

4. Human rights approach - in particular the right to food

The strengthening of early warning and early action systems, contingency planning and other action areas of risk management, sustainability and climate action that were developed during the project reinforced the right to food. This was achieved by protecting supplies, production, distribution and access to food during states of alert and disasters, as well as by promoting resilient agriculture. These systems help to support the protection of life, health and the environmental, economic, physical, social and cultural assets of the rural population, as well as to protect against the impact of climate and other threats.

5. Technological sustainability

As part of the Monitoring System for Agricultural Drought, a technological tool based on the satellite imagery analysis of the Agriculture Stress Index System (ASIS) was installed on a server managed by CRRH, a technical organization of SICA (based in Nicaragua). A user manual was also created. This technology was developed by FAO and has the advantage of being automatic and easy to operate and feeding off free satellite imagery for the countries, thanks to agreements among FAO, the European Commission and the Flemish Institute for Technological Research (VITO). Through FAO, appropriation by national institutions is guaranteed.

6. Economic sustainability

Additional funds were raised to calibrate the Drought Monitoring System at a national level in SICA countries. The improvement of agroclimatic information services is a key component in FAO efforts to raise national and regional funds, and more importantly for the countries themselves. Priority areas in the Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the agriculture sector and food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean helped place these types of key issues in the agendas to establish national budget allowances and mobilize technical resources, as part of the cooperation.



DOCUMENTS AND OUTREACH PRODUCTS

- ❑ Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the Agriculture Sector and Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean (2018-2030). Available at <https://bit.ly/2qsoKoG> (Spanish) and <https://bit.ly/2MACHhM> (English). 41 pp.
- ❑ Insurance for family farming: guidelines for design and implementation. Available at <https://bit.ly/2P4Q3Tp>. 62 pp.
- ❑ User manual: Agriculture Stress Index System/Country ASIS. Available at <https://bit.ly/2MEKStp>. 72 pp.

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Expected impact	Improved food and nutrition security and a reduction in the vulnerability of countries and farming communities to climate change and disasters through the improved use of natural resources by working towards a fully sustainable agriculture		
Output 1	Institutional frameworks and mechanisms that strengthen cooperation of countries for disaster risk management, climate change adaptation and the sustainable management of natural resources		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
		3	Yes
Activity 1.1	Proposals for work on public policies on sustainable agriculture of CELAC countries		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The output was adjusted to gather recommendations from the scheduled international "Sustainable Agriculture to Strengthen Food and Nutrition Security" meeting of ministers and high-level officials of the agriculture sector, held in Lima in June 2016. Countries prioritized the following specific topics from the sustainability agenda during the meeting: climate change, risk management and insurance. Climate change adaptation and risk management were covered in the Regional Strategy Framework. Guidelines were also established based on the experience and lessons learned in the region to strengthen public policies on insurance to address the current lack of risk transfer instruments for family farming.	
Activity 1.2	Risk management strategy for agriculture and food and nutrition security of CELAC countries for mobilization of resources and South-South Cooperation		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments		
Activity 1.3	Design programme for the mobilization of resources with both south-south and triangular cooperation to strengthen national systems for the control of pests and diseases (agricultural, livestock, aquatic and forestry)		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	A regional programme was developed that was subsequently presented by FAO at the Antigua Meeting for the Operational Mechanism of the Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in Agriculture of CELAC. This included the support of the Regional International Organization for Plant Protection and Animal Health (RIOPPAH) and led to the prioritization of an initiative to strengthen risk management for animal and plant health within the strategy implementation framework.	
Activity 1.4	Implementation of an Early Warning System (EWS) for agricultural drought in the Dry Corridor of Central American (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua)		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The scope of this output was increased from the four countries within the Dry Corridor of Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) to the eight countries within the Central American Integration System. This also benefited Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic and Panama.	
Output 2	Capacity building of key stakeholders for the implementation of strengthened practices on the sustainable management of natural resources, risk management and adaptation to climate change		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Number of trained decision-makers	40	Yes
Baseline	0		
Comments	Target was surpassed, with a total of 120 people trained.		
Activity 2.1	Training course for decision-makers for the implementation of good practice for the sustainable management of natural resources		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	A total of 83 people were trained on territorial development planning. Of those trained, 33 participated in a field programme to understand the methodology developed by <i>ITAIPÚ BINACIONAL</i> , how it was implemented and the specific results achieved on sustainable development. They also developed work plans.	
Activity 2.2	Training course to access sources of environmental and climate funding		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	Training was given on the raising of green funds (GCF and GEF) for focal points in the Caribbean Ministries of the Environment and the Ministries of Agriculture for 16 Caribbean countries and three Caribbean subregional organizations. At the time of writing the report, "Readiness" proposals were approved for Guyana, Nevis and Saint Kitts, with Barbados in development, while Granada, Guyana, Haiti and Jamaica had concept notes for access to the GCF. There are also three proposals under development for GEF.	

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