



Livestock Adaptation in drought areas of Camagüey Province

Quick Country Facts

According to data provided by United Nations, Cuba ranks 105th among 182 countries for its hydrological potential. Water is the most threatened natural resource in the country.

Approximately 14% of Cuba's territory is affected by desertification, corresponding to 1.5 million hectare of soil.

Cuba is highly affected by soil degradation: 46% of agricultural land is qualified as having very low productivity and 30% as having low productivity.

The situation

Camagüey has a long livestock tradition and is known as one of the best cattle ranching areas in Cuba. However, it is highly susceptible to climate variability, and increased duration of the dry season. Desertification and drought are affecting Camaguey more than other Cuban provinces. This phenomenon has produced a negative impact in its main productive activity (milk and meat production). It is expected that further productive losses will be felt if the province does not develop an adaptation strategy for the livestock sector, taking into account climate models and predictions.

What CARE wants to achieve

Agricultural cooperatives develop and implement disaster risk reduction strategies using climate models and predicted effects on the agricultural sector.

Increase the capacity of cooperatives to develop and implement adaptation strategies in the livestock sector, including the application of new technologies;

Cooperatives and population linked to the livestock sector have increased access to information which helps them to integrate climate vulnerability and adaptation strategies in the development of local plans and policies.



Women's focus: I am powerful

At the moment in Cuba only 7% of cooperative members are women. In the beneficiary cooperatives, only 15.7% of members are women.

There are documented cases of people (generally women) who work in cooperatives but are not associated as members nor receive pay or recognition for their contribution, in contrast to their husbands and fathers, who receive full benefit of membership. This excludes women from the political participation in cooperatives, and from access to paid work.

One of the project's goals is to facilitate employment for women in the selected cooperatives. It aims to build the capacity of women to become integrated in cooperative management. The project contributes to disseminating the work and contribution of women in the livestock cooperative sector – traditionally

Project background and information

The project responds to the 2012 EU call for proposals for the program "environment and sustainable administration of natural resources, including energy", in the priority of climate change. The proposal is implemented in 8 agricultural cooperatives (UBPC) located in four municipalities of Camagüey - Guáimaro, Minas, Nuevitas and Sibanicú.

The Meteorological Society of Cuba (SOMETCUBA) and the Cuban Association of Animal Production (ACPA) are the local partners with which CARE Cuba implements the project.

The Project objectives are: to contribute to the development of strategies for the reduction of vulnerability to climate change in the livestock sector of Camagüey; to increase the adaptation capacity of 8 cooperatives in 4 municipalities affected by drought via with the consolidation of an agrometeorological system; to introduce practices to revert the advance of degradation and desertification in the region.

What CARE and its partners have achieved to date

Participatory assessment of climate vulnerabilities and adaptation capacities of cooperatives members, and prioritization of interventions for improvement of the cooperatives' disaster risk reduction plans, emphasizing adaptation to prolonged droughts.

Installation and capacity building in the use of an on-line GIS system, agricultural biophysical models and meteorological applications in 8 Cooperatives and the Provincial Meteorology Centre. Training of personnel in the use and operation of a monitoring, surveillance, forecast and early alert system for meteorological, agricultural and hydrological drought.

Design and implementation of a training program for cooperatives members in agricultural practices adapted to climate variability, and

support them with investments to implement their adaptation strategies.

Systematize the experience and the new technologies applied, and disseminate best practices and lessons learned. Disseminate information, educate and train local population on how to handle drought conditions.

Achieved results: The project was temporarily put on hold by the EU until its approval by the Cuban government counterpart. During this period, the cooperatives received training from the Cuban Association of Animal Production and the Meteorological Society of Cuba in cooperative administration and climate change adaptation practices. CARE supported with inputs to strengthen their technical capacity related to adaptation practices.

The results of implemented activities thus far include

Cooperative members improve their knowledge and capacities in cooperativism, administration, management methods and techniques, vulnerability and risk management, and strategies for adaptation to climate change.

Beneficiaries increase their knowledge of soil conservation and improvement practices, sustainable use of water resources, selection of improved pastures, planting process for different varieties of grasses and animal food, and silvopastoralism.

Cooperatives managers have defined strategies to tackle threats and impacts of climate change in their territory, designed with the participation of the communities.

Participatory Strategic Planning carried out in every cooperative, taking into account adaptation strategies and incorporating a gender equality declaration policy.

Cooperatives have their first version of a business plan for sheep and goat production, bull rearing and fattening, and milk production. They established areas for silvopastoralism, plant nurseries and seed banks.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Starting date: March 2011

Closing date: December 2014

Donors: EU, CARE France, Cuban Government and Local Partners

Partners: MINAG, SEF, ACTAF, ACPA, SOMETCUBA

Beneficiaries: 747 cooperative members and technicians of 8 UBPC, local and provincial farmers related to livestock sector (15.7% of which are women).