



# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

## ONGOING PROGRAMMES

### Fit For Market (FFM, FFM SPS, FFM+)



### ACP Business-friendly



### ICR Facility



### DIRECCT



### ACP Quality Infrastructure



### FO4ACP



### EURIZ



### Business ACP



## DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTIONS

**Fit For Market** programmes support companies in the horticultural sector and their environment to ensure their international access to horticultural and national markets while complying with sanitary and phytosanitary regulations and market requirements, individually or collectively. Support includes food safety, environmental management, social compliance and business management. The main types of support are related to the implementation of a management system (on social themes, environment, quality) meeting the requirements of international certification standards required by customers (GLOBALG.A.P., HACCP, Rainforest Alliance, SMETA, etc.). Set up in the continuity of FFM past programmes, the new FFM Plus (FFM+) programme support is tailored to facilitate the transition of ACP horticulture towards more sustainable food systems, addressing the priority areas identified in the Farm to Fork strategy of the European Green Deal.

**FFM SPS** supported the compilation of dossiers, and implementation of measures set out in order to enable mango exports to the EU. The country, being among the ten ACP countries most subject to notifications and/or interceptions by the EU under its food-feed safety requirements and plant health regulations, also benefited greatly from the monitoring activities funded under the FFM SPS programmes. **FFM**, in collaboration with the *Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana*, organised a series of webinars on market access for processed products in the pineapple, mango and avocado sectors. Following on from those webinars, training organised in March 2021 focused on commercial negotiation, and in April 2021 group training focused on “Market access: How to make an informed business decision regarding the market to target in the Caribbean”.



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In June 2022, a training in organic agriculture and production was held with participants from horticulture companies, associations of banana producers and other organic crops, representatives of the Departments of Organic Agriculture, Extension and Plant Health of the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo.

**Fit For Market** and the **Caribbean Agribusiness Association** have signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at promoting and strengthening the development of agribusiness in the Caribbean, improving competitiveness through increased capacity to produce better quality food and more secure, better market access and strong business and management skills.

COLEAD, through FFM and FFM SPS, in collaboration with the **Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture**, has launched the Caribbean Agrifood Business Series to support a more resilient and greener agricultural and agrifood business sector in the Caribbean.

This Caribbean Agrifood Business Series aims at **(i)** exchanging ideas and best practices on selected priority issues; **(ii)** showcasing successes of smallholders, businesses and micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs); **(iii)** promoting and documenting forthcoming innovations and technologies benefiting smallholders and MSMEs; **(iv)** promoting networking amongst various stakeholders in the food chain; and **(v)** disseminating research findings.

**ACP Business-friendly** is designed to achieve two key outcomes:

- Adopting and implementing business-friendly, inclusive and responsible national policies and legal frameworks.
- Strengthening productive, processing, promoting and marketing capabilities and value chains.

As part of the macro-level intervention of the **ACP Business-friendly Programme**, the World Bank is supporting the country's investment policy on strategic FDI promotion with a focus on addressing nearshoring, as well as the design of efficient and transparent investment incentives, and the assessment and design of an investor grievance management mechanism. A set of recommendations emerged from the nearshoring report prepared by MICM with World Bank assistance. The implementation of a component focused on the preparation of an incentives inventory was also started. The inventory will help Ministry of Industry, Commerce, and MSMEs (MICM) understand better the full range of fiscal and non-fiscal tools existing at the national level. A first draft of the branding brochure highlighting the DR's strategic position as an industrial and logistics destination for FDI in the context of nearshoring was delivered. In addition, the MICM together with the WB attended the Peer-to-Peer Learning Event held in December 2022 in Angola, where senior MICM officials presented the nearshoring report prepared earlier in 2022.



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The project is also reviewing and complementing work initiated by the government to improve the approval of companies in special economic zones (SEZs) and industrial parks (IPs) and supporting the diagnostics of the regulatory framework on business and project establishment in two special regimes: "Border development" and "Logistics". The ACP Business-friendly will also support the **Alliance for Development in Democracy (ADD)** through the publication of Dominican Republic's nearshoring strategic report, a note on FDI performance and policy analysis of DR vis a vis ADD countries with recommendations and provide support to DR in the context of the ADD in getting ready for the adoption of the Investment Facilitation Agreement.

UNIDO is implementing the meso-level component of the ACP Business-friendly programme. Investment promotion interventions are aimed to facilitate the process of identifying, mobilizing capital, knowledge, and technological resources for a more targeted investment development impact. **ProDominicana** is supported in the compilation and updating of its FDI Business Directory as a first step towards strengthening the organization's FDI intelligence capacity. The programme also supported the coordination between the Market intelligence and Aftercare Service departments through regular technical support provided to the designated technical staff of 4 ProDominicana officers and helped establish cooperation with the **Central Bank of the Dominican Republic (BCRD)**, the **National Council of Export Free Trade Zones (CNZFE)**, and the **Association of Foreign Investment Companies of the Dominican Republic (ASIEX)** for the broad sample compilation process and awareness raising among FDI companies. An assessment of the data verification campaign was undertaken in the end of 2022 seeking improvements in how ProDominicana can better engage with existing FDI. The Digital Investment Profiling System (DIPS) and the "Invest-in-ACP" portal, serve to augment the efficiency and regional-level scalability enabling IPAs/IPIs to do networking and to digitally manage the entire workflow of investment monitoring and opportunity profiling and promotion. DIPS is now available in Spanish and survey questionnaire modules that will be rolled out upon completion of the Business Directory updating task, will be implemented in native language. UNIDO supported ProDominicana in the implementation of the investment opportunity profiling work: 48 investment opportunities are now published on the "Invest-in-ACP" portal. This profiling work was also extended to other IPAs in the country through the delivery of 4 capacity building sessions.

To date, 8 COMFAR (Computer Model For Feasibility Analysis and Reporting) training were undertaken in Santo Domingo and Santiago with participation of representatives from ProDominicana and other MDAs. As a result, 29 officials received certification on carrying out feasibility analysis of investment projects. By end of 2022, UNIDO was supporting 13 Dominican Republic promotion institutions with full accessibility to the software and provision of advisory support.



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At the micro level, ITC under its Alliances for Action programme supports the cocoa sector in Dominican Republic. The country is a leading producer and exporter of cocoa, which sustains a large number of farmers and generates employment in the country. The programme is promoting adoption of climate smart practices, including agroforestry, to replant cocoa plantations and income diversification for smallholder farmers. It also encourages values-based value chains for farmer cooperatives and processors to tap into international markets focusing on sustainable practices. Key achievements for ACP Business-friendly in Dominican Republic include:

- 2 MoUs signed –with **Cooproagro** and **Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE)**– to promote climate smart practices for diversification and sustainable cocoa production as per EU Green Deal policies;
- Cocoa processors participated in 4 international trade shows and collaborated with pastry chefs to develop new products and recipes, with support from the project;
- 3 new prototypes and 8 recipes were developed with cocoa in collaboration with the Basque Culinary Centre.

To facilitate inclusive finance and investment for the alliances, UNIDO and ITC have been working with **ProDominicana**, **Cocoa Commission** and **Cocoa Department of the Ministry of Agriculture** to identify investment opportunities for the installation of a laboratory that can certify organic products for export to the European Union.

At regional level, ITC worked closely with **Caribbean Export** as a key regional partner for the project. Both agencies worked together to organize a detailed training on the European Union (EU) organic regulation with the collaboration of an international certification body that provided practical information to exports. During 2022, UNIDO and **CAIPA** continued their collaboration with the aim to extend technical assistance support to Caribbean IPAs in their effort to promote investment in the region. Considering the intervention in the Dominican Republic as hub, UNIDO further expanded investment opportunity profiling work to become more reflective and inclusive of other countries of the Caribbean region. A technical session on the DIPS portfolio was presented to CAIPA members, comprising 32 participants from 13 Caribbean countries, after which CAIPA shared a list of investment projects, which could be showcased on the "Invest-in-ACP" portal.





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The **ACP Quality Infrastructure (QI)** programme supports ACP policy makers, institutions and private sector actors to (i) enhance the regional Quality and Regulatory infrastructure governance; (ii) strengthen the availability of the value chain-specific QI services; (iii) promote quality culture and practices. The programme complements and builds on the ongoing achievements of the ACP Business-Friendly programme reinforcing the UNIDO's programme action (Meso-level component). ACP QI was officially launched in the Caribbean at the 41st Meeting of the **CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ)** Council, in October 2022.

**ICR Facility** focuses on supporting private and public stakeholders and regional institutions, to improve their investment climate and business environment by facilitating public-private dialogue, among other actions. In the Caribbean, ICR Facility supported the **Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA)** with technical assistance to improve the credit reporting in 15 CARIFORUM countries through a systems assessment and a public-private consultation session. The intervention provided an in-depth assessment of credit bureaus and collateral registries in the region, and highlighted opportunities for reform at the regional level.

In addition, the **Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA)** received support to analyse the insolvency frameworks around the region. A state-of-the-art report is now publicly available reviewing the region's insolvency processes. It identifies and addresses the most significant country-level deficiencies, broader regional patterns and important gaps in institutional capacity with suggestions for improvement. It was discussed in a regional validation workshop and can now serve as a good basis for national authorities to improve insolvency procedures in the region.

The ICR Facility also provided advisory services to the **Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)** to assess how CDB could structure its private sector lending and in assessing the feasibility of a supply chain and trade finance facility for the Caribbean region.

At regional level, delivery to its members of economic services in priority value chains stands as a major component for **FO4ACP**. This programme aims to increase the incomes and improve the livelihoods, food and nutrition security, and safety of organized smallholders and family farmers by strengthening regional, national and local farmers' organizations. Mapping and the systematisation of information regarding farmers' organisations is a flagship activity of that component. This mapping exercise provides key insights into the legislation and institutional rules governing the establishment of farmers' organisations, unions or associations in different countries.



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In collaboration with **PROCASUR**, an online interactive platform and application was developed to create an innovative learning environment for training programmes addressing farmers' organisations. The platform is an important tool for sharing experiences, knowledge and good practices directly among peers. Under the FO4ACP programme, FAO and PROCASUR undertook the mapping of 30 farmers' organisations whose membership range in size from 7 to 700 producers. In the Dominican Republic, FO4ACP supported the delivery of economic services in priority value chains through activities coordinated by **CLAC**, **Trias** and **Acodea**. Trias provides training on women and youth entrepreneurial leadership and supports annual planning and evaluation workshops.

**DIRECCT** (Digital Response Connecting Citizens) is implemented jointly by Agence française de développement (AFD) and the Belgian development agency, Enabel.

In the Caribbean, DIRECCT supports the **Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)**, which is setting up a unified system for collecting and managing public health data in the countries of the Caribbean community. This investment in the health security supports integration of real-time digital surveillance systems to enhance risk assessment, monitoring, prevention and control of established infectious diseases and new and emerging public health threats by CARPHA and CARPHA Member States. CARPHA also coordinates capacity-building of Member States' Ministries and Authorities of Health to implement these systems for local, sub-regional and regional surveillance, with a focus on gender equity and human-centred technology.

Another activity undertaken at the Caribbean regional level is the Virtual E-Commerce Accelerator Programme (VEAP), implemented by **Caribbean Export (CEDA)**. VEAP is aimed at building capacity of Business Support Organisations (BSOs) and firms to adopt e-Commerce technologies and processes leading to broader and more effective market reach, customer engagement and export sales.

**EURIZ** guarantee helps to increase credit accessibility for MSMEs, by engaging in cooperation initiatives with a wide variety of financial institutions. Implemented by PROPARCO (AFD Group), EURIZ covers agricultural and agri-business, health, education, digital, and microfinancing companies owned by women or young people, who are facing increased difficulties in accessing finance. In 2020, Proparco has allocated a EURIZ portfolio guarantee equivalent to €5 million to **BANFONDESA**, a financial institution in the Dominican Republic, to allow it to develop its activity for microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the country.



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When announced, this risk-sharing tool was expected to cover 70% of the eligible loans allocated to Dominican MSMEs by the bank, to support the growth of microenterprises and SMEs in the Dominican Republic, especially young start-ups and green MSMEs owned by women, the under 25s and those operating in the agriculture, health, education and digital sectors.

A total of some 150 MSMEs should be supported by this guarantee and some 450 jobs supported over the next few years.

## MORE INFORMATION

- [Read the Monitoring Report 2021:](#)

<https://businessacp.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Annual-Report- online-version.pdf>

- [Visit the "Programmes' Highlights" page on the Business ACP website:](#)

<https://businessacp.com/en/94071-2/>