CARE in Cuba
Recuperation of agricultural productive capacity post-hurricanes

May 2009—May 2011

Quick Facts

- The 2008 Hurricanes Gustav and Ike caused approximately $8 billion in damages to Cuban infrastructure — including agricultural farmland, buildings and farming machinery.

- Agricultural recovery proceeded slowly, leaving local populations vulnerable to food insecurity, and jeopardizing their ability to recover their means of subsistence.

Project Information

After CARE completed its initial emergency response, which included the distribution of hygiene kits, aquaboxes, and non-food items to affected populations — efforts turned to designing interventions that would support Cuba’s recovery from hurricane damages.

Given CARE Cuba’s experience and solid partnerships in the agricultural and food security sector, we knew we had expertise to offer in the recovery of productive infrastructure and productive capacity.

We developed a partnership with a consortium of long-standing Cuban agricultural NGOs, including ACTAF, ANAP and ACPA. We also joined forces with two European NGOs — OIKOS (Portugal) and WeltHungerHilfe (Germany) for the implementation of this initiative.

Project’s objectives included:

- Identify damages and priority recovery needs in all cooperatives participating in the project, located in two Cuban Provinces highly affected by the hurricanes (Holguin and Piñar del Rio);

- Reconstruct or rehabilitate priority infrastructure; and support with agricultural replanting and recovery of local livelihoods;

- Build capacity for disaster risk reduction and preparedness at the farm, cooperative and municipal levels;

- Increase productive levels over the life of the project, thus contributing to a recovery in local food security and livelihoods.

THE SITUATION

The passing of hurricanes Ike and Gustav caused widespread destruction on the island of Cuba in 2008. As Cuba is highly susceptible to hurricanes, it is important to support efforts that build capacity for disaster risk reduction.

WHAT CARE WANTS TO ACHIEVE

Support the rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure; strengthen local capacities for integrated disaster risk reduction; work with local governments in risk prevention and management in the agricultural sector.

Complement this intervention with the rehabilitation of housing in Holguin and Piñar del Rio (Urgence Habitat project).
What CARE and its partners have achieved:

- Development of participatory agricultural recuperation and rehabilitation plans at the cooperative level.
- Capacity building program implemented with approximately 4200 farmers in 8 municipalities on themes including: soil recuperation and conservation; post harvest practices and harvest storage; food conservation and canning; maintenance and protection of irrigation infrastructure; and household economy diversification — among others. The capacity built will allow farmers to be better prepared and more resilient in the face of future hurricanes.
- Establishment of small-scale greenhouses for seedlings production and replanting.
- Repair and rehabilitation of agricultural irrigation systems, tools, tractors, and cooperative infrastructure that was affected by the hurricanes.
- Development of Disaster Risk Reduction plans in the cooperatives involved in the project, whereby farmers develop vulnerability maps; early warning systems; and mitigation strategies to put in place in case of future hurricanes.
- Support Municipalities and Cuban partners in building their capacity to mainstream disaster risk reduction in their plans and projects in Holguin and Piñar del Río.

Quick Project Facts:

Start Date: May 2009
End Date: May 2011
Donor: European Union
Partners: ACTAF, ACPA, ANAP, OIKOS, WeltHungerHilfe