

AVANTI

Advancing Knowledge
for Agricultural Impact



Summary Report of the Peru AG-Scan:

Lessons learned and
key areas identified



April 2021

Background

Advancing Knowledge for Agricultural Impact (AVANTI), an initiative of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), developed and supports the implementation of the Agricultural Scan (AG-Scan) – a self-assessment tool. The AG-Scan is a facilitated process for an in-depth reflection around the agricultural and rural development sectors' capacities for results-based management (RBM) of specific countries; and their ability to measure achievements against the SDGs. This in turn provides information to develop an Action Plan to improve governments' capacities to measure achievements against the SDGs.



Findings from the AG-Scan self-assessment

AVANTI Peru focused its implementation through the General Directorate for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Agricultural Policies (DGSEP) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MINAGRI). The self-assessment workshop on RBM capacities was implemented in September 2018. More than 40 representatives from government institutions, primarily from MINAGRI, analyzed the five RBM pillars, Leadership, Evaluation and Monitoring, Accountability and Partners, Planning and Budgeting, and Statistics. Each area was scored on a scale of 1 to 4 that evaluated its position in the progress: 1 awareness; 2 exploration; 3 transition; 4 full implementation.

Leadership (results-focus and institutional culture)

Leadership

Leadership, scored 1.5 out of 4, and was analyzed through four components that allowed us to understand the situation in this respect: (a) The 'Commitment' subcomponent was rated 1 because the SDGs are not yet an explicit part of the sector's agenda or that of its authorities, which makes it difficult to incorporate and implement them systematically in the MINAGRI; (b) The 'Results-orientation' was also rated 1 because management by results is soon to be applied; (c) the 'Consultation' component on public policies was scored as 2,

because the National Agrarian Policy preparation was carried out in a participatory manner although it does not incorporate the subnational levels of government; and (d) 'Learning' was scored as 2 because there is directorate-level awareness of the need to learn from the experiences and to develop capacities to face the changes.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning (capacity and processes)



In MINAGRI many instances have M&E competencies, scored 1.9 out of 4. There is a specific direction for M&E for each management instrument, therefore policies, plans and budgets are in the hands of different bodies. There is no continuous flow of information that would make it possible to see how M&E contributes to the feedback of management instruments and decision making.

Consequently, the components 'Managing for Results Framework' and 'Alignment and Harmonization of Reporting' were given a score of 1. On the other hand, the 'Capacities for M&E' and 'capacity for data processing' are in transition (3), but heterogeneous.

However, in view of this reality, MINAGRI issued the directive '*Procedures for the submission and consolidation of information for the monitoring and evaluation of National and Sectoral Policies, Sectoral Plans, standards related to agricultural matters, and objectives of the programs and special projects of MINAGRI*'. This is to ensure the

flow and quality of information from all its divisions to guarantee the M&E of performance for decision making by senior management, leading to the improvement of the institutional management of the sector.



Accountability (for performance and outcomes)

The 'Accountability' and 'Transparency' components are assigned a level of progress 2 because, for example, of the lack of

instruments or mechanisms to report more comprehensively and amicably on the achievement of goals or budget execution; and because of the fragility of the continuity of policies and plans in the sector.

The 'Legal and policy framework' components for rural organizations and 'State support for the development of non-state actors' capacities in accountability' also remained at an exploratory level because there are regulations that favor the participation, formalization and development of grassroots organizations. However, their performance is very heterogeneous; some of them influence political decisions (e.g. in the forestry sector or to facilitate tax benefits) and others are only of operational nature. There exist initiatives for capacity building but there are asymmetries in access to information.

The component of 'State actors' capacity for results-based management' received the score of exploration because although there is a favorable trend toward RBM and its most widespread tool, budget programs, there is still not full knowledge and application of RBM. The 'Public Access to Results' component obtained a score of 3 because MINAGRI has different mechanisms for disseminating agricultural information, although the language and means for disseminating results of ministerial management still need to be improved, as well as segmenting the target audience (men, women and farmers, entrepreneurs and others).



Planning and budgeting (for performance and outcomes)

The country's proposal regarding the SDGs is their gradual integration into multi-level

planning, which is why the evaluation of the eight components was carried out in relation to the incorporation of the SDGs. There was a consensus among the participants that at the time of the self-assessment neither the planning nor the budget took the SDGs into account.

The full incorporation of the SDGs into the planning and budget will be a long process that is expected to be achieved by 2021, while the actions taken by some MINAGRI divisions in this regard are isolated.



Statistics (data for RBM)

This component has scored an average of 3 because the Agricultural Statistics Department systematically collects diverse information on the sector that is

used to make decisions at different levels and has procedures to validate the quality of the data.

Lessons learned

A. Commitment is key for the incorporation of SDGs in the management

Lesson 1: AVANTI's commitments and progress need to be institutionalized, so that (a) the processes continue even if officials are changed, (b) the Action Plan is binding on the different bodies that must take action and can allocate human and financial resources, and (c) to achieve a homogeneous knowledge of the SDGs among sector leaders.

Lesson 2: It is necessary to explicitly determine how to make the articulation of the SDGs operational for the implementation of sectoral policies and plans, which would contribute to making the SDGs part of the sector's agenda.

B. Need for articulation between policy, planning and budget

Lesson 1: The articulation between policy, plans, budget and an integrated M&E system is indispensable for the systematic incorporation of SDGs in the management of MINAGRI and the sector. If this is not done, it will not be possible to set targets for the SDG indicators linked to the sector and thus monitor the achievements made.

Lesson 2: The achievement of some SDGs linked to the agricultural sector falls to several institutions. The articulation of plans and actions with other public sector actors is therefore indispensable, not only to receive and give information but also to share experiences and generate joint learning.

C. M&E indispensable for decision making

Lesson 1: The integration of the different existing M&E systems in MINAGRI and the development of an M&E strategy in coordination with the bodies, programs, special projects and should be a short-term objective to make the information accessible to all decision makers.

Lesson 2: Two requirements for strengthening the M&E capacity of MINAGRI are the need to strengthen the capacities of human resources and the use of adequate instruments and tools.

D. Primordial: The quality and usefulness of statistical information

Lesson 1: Contributing to the evidence-based decision-making process requires improving the coordination of MINAGRI's statistical services to avoid duplication, enhance efficiency in production and ensure the quality of information.

Lesson 2: Strengthen staff capacity in SDG-related statistics (indicators, methodologies, data use and dissemination, and others) to generate and process information to inform M&E of the SDGs.

Conclusions and way forward

According to the perception of the actors who participated in the self-assessment workshop, the AG-Scan contributed to inform and raise awareness on the SDGs and reflect on the situation of MINAGRI in relation to RBM. It also helped learn how to use tools that with the necessary adaptations can be replicated in various processes of institutional reflection.

The workshop provided an opportunity for the various MINAGRI actors whose functions require

permanent articulation and coordination to reunite. This subsequently led to the creation of working groups linked to the actions proposed in the Action Plan.

The AVANTI process generated expectations both within and outside MINAGRI. The DGSEP shared the process in various forums, one of which was a government mission to Honduras at the invitation of the Peruvian Cooperation Agency (APCI), which allowed the experience of AVANTI's implementation to be shared with officials from the Honduran planning department.

The Directorate of Agricultural Statistics has experience in collecting information and procedures to verify data quality, but in relation to the SDGs it will be necessary to: (a) establish proxy indicators between those that currently collect periodic information and the SDG indicators linked to the sector; and (b) adjust existing mechanisms (surveys, agricultural census, and others) or design new mechanisms and/or procedures for collecting information to feed the M&E of the SDGs in MINAGRI.

A post-process analysis allows us to highlight that a certain level of anchorage has been generated in the technicians who participated, which allowed for the promotion and execution of actions that have enabled the gradual incorporation of SDGs in some fields of action. However, this has been difficult to achieve due to the high turnover of civil servants in the ministry, including senior management,¹ and now in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, which requires the sector to address short-term priorities.

The Action Plan needs to be approved by a ministerial Resolution,² which would make it binding and give it more force.

¹ In recent years, Peru has been facing deep political instability (presidential vacancy, closure of the congress, new congressional elections), coupled with an exponential increase in social conflicts and the impact of the pandemic (higher number of infections and deaths per million inhabitants) and on the economy (13% drop in GDP to date).

² Since the beginning of the coordination with MINAGRI for the development of AVANTI, four ministers have followed suit. In the same period, there has been a change of two Director-Generals of the Directorate General of Monitoring and Evaluation of the DGSEP and of the Directorate of Monitoring and Evaluation of Policies, neither of which participated in the process.

SDGs in Peru

Peru assumes that the SDGs should be integrated into the country's development objectives through its integration into strategic plans at the national, sectoral, subnational and thematic levels. For the implementation and M&E of the SDGs, the proposal is to rely on the existing institutional framework, which means: (a) the entities that assume a role with respect to the SDGs do so within their legal framework, competencies and functions; and (b) they do not have a specific budget allocation. Following the operational proposal:

- a) The National Center for Strategic Planning (CEPLAN),³ the governing body of strategic planning in the country, has assumed the role of focal point for the implementation of the SDGs and has presented a Voluntary Report to the UN (July 2017).
- b) The National Institute for Statistics and Computer Science (INEI), as part of its functions, has developed the 'Monitoring and Tracking System for the Sustainable Development Goals Indicators', based on the global framework of indicators developed by the United Nations Statistical Commission.

³ CEPLAN is the specialized technical body, attached to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, which exercises the steering role of the National Strategic Planning System.