

Foresight and Systems Thinking for Strategic Planning for Sustainable Development Goals in the Dominican Republic

Concept Note and Agenda

Hybrid Training of Trainers Workshop

10-12 July 2024

1. Event Description

Following the request of the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development of the Dominican Republic, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government and its Financing for Sustainable Office (FFSDO) in partnership with UNITAR will hold a capacity building workshop on “Foresight and Systems Thinking for Strategic Planning for Sustainable Development Goals in the Dominican Republic”. The first capacity development activity will be a Hybrid Training of Trainers Workshop that will be held from 10 to 12 July 2024.

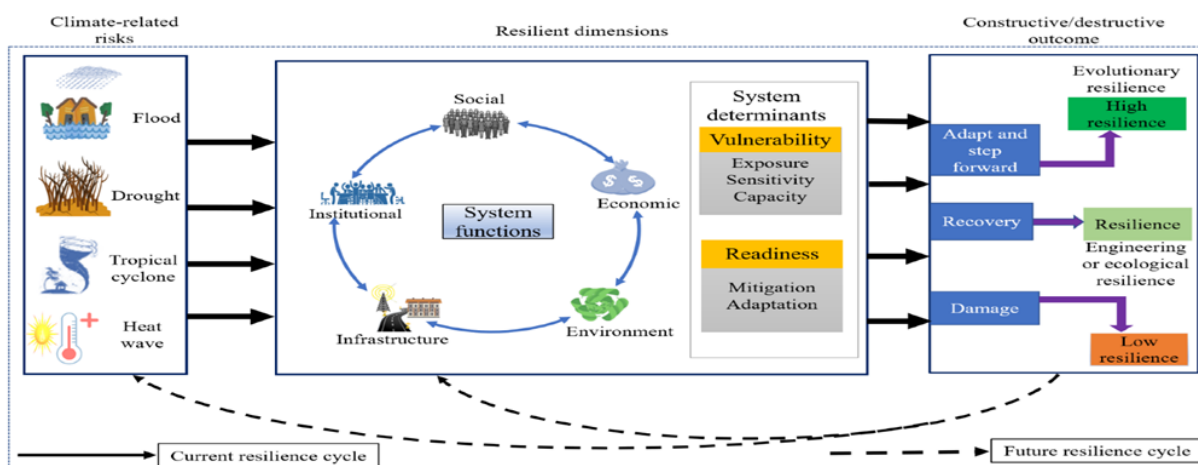
2. Background

The Dominican Republic (DR) has experienced steady economic growth over the last two decades, making it the largest economy in Central America and the Caribbean. In 2023, the DR's economy grew by 2.4%, primarily driven by tourism, public investment, and a flexible monetary policy. Despite these positive trends, the DR relies heavily on tourism and lacks a consolidated manufacturing sector. Economic growth has been severely interrupted by the pandemic in 2020, showcasing the vulnerability to external shocks. Additionally, the country faces significant challenges arising from climate change, insufficient human capital, increased public debt and income inequality, emphasizing the need to build socioeconomic and environmental resilience in the long run.

In 2012, the Dominican Republic established the 2030 National Development Strategy, which is aimed at defining long-term development goals for the country. The NDS consists of four strategic

lines of action aligned with 19 objectives. Additionally, the NDS established six cross-cutting policies, including (1) Human Rights Approach, (2) Gender Approach, (3) Environmental Sustainability and Comprehensive Risk Management, (4) Territorial Cohesion, (5) Social Participation, and (6) Information and Communication Technologies.

To carry out the long-term development plan, each administration of the DR National Planning System defines the Multi-annual National Plan for the Public Sector (PNPSP) as the medium-term planning instrument and sets medium-term policy priorities. For the 2021-2024 PNPSP, 33 policies were prioritized, with each assigned to a leading institution. The large number of policy priorities and the fragmented nature of the administration make it challenging to navigate budgetary and personnel resources that align with the long-term vision. The Ministry for Economy, Planning and Development (MEPyD) of the Dominican Republic thus requests technical support for identifying policy priorities for the 2025-2028 PNPSP.



3. Objectives

The overall objective of the remote workshop is to promote a more coherent, participatory, and evidence-based governance approach in support of the planning and policy prioritization of Dominican Republic's PNPSP. The 5-step bottom up iterative and participatory approach is based on strategic foresight and systems thinking methodologies which will help progress towards a holistic planning that is technically desirable and politically feasible.

This capacity building approach will be concretized by providing support to:

- Build human and institutional capacities on systems thinking for policy coherence and long- term planning among government officials and help them apply it directly into the national planning process.
- Build human and institutional capacities in strategic foresight to help the government officials make strategic choices and manage risks to shape the future under conditions of uncertainty.

Learning objectives include

1. Explain how systems thinking, and strategic foresight can be applied to improve priority setting in planning, inter-ministerial collaboration and align it with the budgeting cycle.
2. Use the causal loop diagram to identify policy interlinkages, and the implication for collaborations between ministries and with other stakeholders to inform mid-term planning.
3. Learn how to analyze trends, forecast key achievements, and develop a vision towards the future to make strategic choices and manage risks to shape the future under conditions of uncertainty.

Agenda

| Agenda Training of Trainers Day One – 10 July 2024 09:00-12:00 | |
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| Time | Session |
| 08:45-09:00 | Arrival of participants |
| 09:00-09:15 | Opening remarks from the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, Dominican Republic |
| 09:15 – 09:30 | Introductions of 13 government officials, UN DESA and UNITAR |
| 09:30 – 09:45 | ToT workshop objectives and structure (UN) Presentation of the Dominican Republic’s steps to be taken in the national development planning process (by DR government official) |
| 09:45 – 10:15 | Presentation of the 5-steps approach using strategic foresight and systems thinking and how it can be amended based on the specific objectives. |
| 10:15 – 11:00 | Joint development of a causal loop diagram Introduction of a group exercise: interactions around the issue of employment (shared purpose vs. everyone pursuing its own objective) |
| 11:00-11:15 | Coffee break |
| 11:15 – 12:00 | Group exercise to identify interactions around an issue to be identified/ agreed upon Feedback in plenary of the group exercise |
| 12:00-12 :15 | Wrap up, questions and way forward |
| Agenda Training of Trainers Day Two – 11 July 2024 09:00-12:45 | |
| | Session |
| 9:00-9:15 | Recap of day 1 Objectives of day 2 |

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| 9:15-10:15 | Joint exercise in plenary: Identification of the drivers of change and policy options for the CLD developed during day 1 based on the application of a strategic foresight approach “Three horizons” Q&A |
| 10:15-11:00 | Exercise in group: Identify in the CLD whether policy options are mutually exclusive or supportive |
| 11:00-11:15 | Coffee break |
| 11:15-12:45 | Activity in plenary: Development of coherent and most impactful policy pathways mindful of limited resources? Discussion |
| Agenda Training of Trainers Day Three – 12 July 2024 09:00-11:45 | |
| Time | Session |
| 09:00 – 9:45 | Recap development of policy pathways Application of foresight approach in plenary: wind tunneling for analyzing upcoming risks, stress-testing policy pathways and defining mitigation measures |
| 9:45 –11 :00 | Visioning and back casting: activity in group to link CLDs with NDS and Vision 2030 How do you want to see the Dominican Republic in 2035? How familiar are you with the DR Vision 2030? What needs to be monitored and measured? |
| 11 :00-11 :15 | Coffee break |
| 11 :15-12 :45 | Wrap up and discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is this approach linked to the work of the FINS and how will both approaches support an integrated and forward-looking national development plan and financing strategy? • How can proposed methods help with ensuring continuity and space for course corrections in the planning and programming cycle against the backdrop of election cycles and the programs of relevant parties? • What have you learned? • How would you apply the 5 steps into the review of the NDS and the development of the PNSP: way forward. |