

Decades of effective joint work

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By María Josefina Arce

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During the COVID 19 pandemic, support for the response of the Greater Antilles to the virus was essential. The joint work of the authorities with the UN system led to remarkable and encouraging results.

One of those agencies that distinguished itself by accompanying the archipelago in confronting the disease caused by the new coronavirus was the UNDP, the UN Development Program, present in our country since the sixties of the last century.

The visit to Cuba of Luis Felipe López-Calva, UNDP's regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean, consolidates that old and positive interaction, which has allowed the implementation of

multiple projects.

The UN undersecretary general also met with representatives of the various ministries and expressed his satisfaction with the progress of joint collaboration programs, while reiterating the support of that agency to the National Plan for Economic and Social Development until 2030.

There have been decades of exchange and hundreds of initiatives that have paved the way for technology transfer and access to knowledge and successful development experiences.

Intense work has been carried out over all these years in sensitive areas such as climate change, given Cuba's high vulnerability due to its island status. Therefore, the prevention of and response to natural disasters has also been at the center of cooperation.

It has likewise covered the advancement of industry, health, empowerment and gender equity, as well as the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals in Cuba.

Ministries, institutions, research centers, universities, local governments and civil society organizations are involved in this exchange.

The participation of the different communities is important, since their development that contributes to the nation and the improvement of their living conditions is an essential objective of these projects implemented in all these years.

Among the initiatives implemented in conjunction with the UNDP we have the production of food in the central region of the Cuban territory. Since the second half of 2019, through the Local Self-Supply Project for Sustainable and Healthy Food, some 60 cooperatives in Villa Clara and Santi Spiritus have been benefiting.

"Mi Costa" stands out, which for eight years will seek to increase climate resilience in 24 municipalities on Cuba's southern coast. It is expected to contribute to the restoration of 11,000 hectares of mangroves, 3,000 hectares of forests and marshes, as well as 134 kilometers of coral reefs.

These are just two examples of the long list of initiatives that Cuba and the UNDP have jointly developed and are developing, a sign of the excellent relations that exist and of the interest in continuing to strengthen them to respond to current problems and contribute to improving the living conditions of the population.

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