

COUNTRY STRATEGY

WFP's goal in Ecuador is to be an innovative partner, supporting government policies and priorities as well as contributing to food sovereignty, food and nutrition security of vulnerable people, and gender equality. The 2012-2016 Country Strategy outlines partnerships with national and local governments, communities and other sectors involved in food and nutrition security. WFP's integrated approach supports the efforts of the Government to address chronic malnutrition, anaemia and overweight through technical capacity building and interventions at the local level. WFP works with communities and local government authorities, in line with the objectives of the National Development Plan, which links small-scale farmers, public and private consumption, and market access. WFP offers vulnerability and food security assessment tools and a food and nutrition security approach to social protection, strengthening capacities in emergency preparedness and response. WFP has been present in Ecuador since 1964.



Christina Aguilera and Jonathan Blum, Chief Public Affairs Officer of Yum! Brands, serve food to children through WFP's school feeding programme Photo © Robb Dipple

OPERATIONS

	Project Duration	Planned number of people	Total requirements (in USD)	Total received 2015 (in USD)	Total Funded 2015 (%)	6 Months Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*	Top 5 Donors
PRRO 200701 Integration of Refugees and Persons Affected by Conflict in Colombia	Jan 15 - Dec 17	184,000	19,136,940	5,105,363	27%	1,204,118	USAID, ECHO, Private donors, Spain, Multilateral
Trust Fund 200436: Strengthening Local Capacities for Food and Nutrition Security	Apr 12 - Dec 16	86,644	4,230,546	2,886,367	68%	n/a	WFP Friends in USA, YUM!, Pepsico
Trust Fund 200357: Enhancing Resilience to the Adverse Effects of Climate Change	Nov 11 - Nov 16	15,000 households	7,449,468	6,751,451	91%	n/a	Adaptation Fund

*October 2015 - March 2016

Summary of WFP assistance:

The Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) aims to improve the dietary diversity of vulnerable populations affected by the conflict in Colombia and to promote healthier, more balanced diets in six provinces with high concentrations of Colombian refugees. WFP supports refugee registration processes, the empowerment of women and the strengthening of protection networks for women. Colombian refugees and Ecuadorian communities are equally vulnerable and share similar poor food consumption patterns; this project has developed recovery activities with both communities to promote integration and reduce tensions.

Under the Trust Fund 200436, WFP implements an integrated approach to build government capacity in improving access to nutritious foods and providing income opportunities by linking production with social protection programmes and local markets. The objective of the programme is to support local government capacities to improve the food security and dietary diversity of children between six months and three years of age and their families. The evaluation of the project concluded with data analysis provided by the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences. The process included a baseline study (2013) and data gathered after the intervention (2014) in three provinces.

WFP initiated the Trust Fund 200357 (FORECCSA project) in 2011 upon the request of the Ministry of Environment. The project targets 15,000 families and seeks to decrease rates of food insecurity and reduce the vulnerability of Ecuadorian communities and their ecosystems to the adverse effects of climate change in the most vulnerable cantons of the province of Pichincha and Jubones River Basin. The project is implemented through partnerships with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Jubones River Basin Public Consortium and the Provincial Government of Pichincha.

WFP supports and builds the Government's capacity in Emergency Preparedness and Response.

OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

ACHIEVEMENTS	ISSUES/CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PRRO 200701 baseline indicates that 82 percent of newly arrived refugees are highly vulnerable. Sixty-four percent of refugees confirm having poor or limited food consumption with high levels of carbohydrates, fats and sugar. Food insecure households have a significant protein and micronutrient deficiency. • Within the FORECCSA project, the Ministry of Environment began implementing activities in seven parishes and signed cooperation agreements with local governments. • The McKnight Foundation will finance WFP operational research, “Linking small-scale farmers to food assistance programmes”, as part of a knowledge generation and capacity building strategy of the PRRO. • As part of the 50-50 initiative for PepsiCo’s 50th anniversary, WFP received a donation to provide tools and training to women smallholder farmers. • WFP held a workshop on the “72-hour Emergency Food Security Assessment” to strengthen capacities in emergency preparedness and response of the National Risk Management Secretariat (SGR). • A Food for Peace donor mission visited the Carchi and Sucumbios provinces in the Ecuador-Colombia border region to observe processes related to targeting, voucher distribution and use, and training sessions. • A YUM! Brands mission, including the Ambassador against Hunger Christina Aguilera, visited schools and refugees in northern Ecuador. The Ambassador interacted with WFP beneficiaries and the team shot video and photos in a refugee household and school feeding activities. An outcome of the mission will be YUM’s 2015 public service announcement for the World Hunger Relief Campaign. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecuador receives the highest number of refugees in Latin America; 98 percent are Colombians fleeing conflict, with the vast majority coming from poor, socially-fractured backgrounds with limited access to safety nets. • The Government of Ecuador faced challenges in September due to widespread protests led by local unions and indigenous groups opposed to changes in economic policies, the fall in oil prices, increased activity of volcanos in Ecuador’s Central Highlands and the potential impact of a strong El Niño phenomenon. • The Cotopaxi volcano presents a moderate level of internal and external activity, and as a result, the Government has declared a “state of exception”. • Based on scientific analysis and evidence, the International Research Centre on El Niño (CIIFEN) has predicted that rising sea temperatures, increased air temperature, a change in the pattern of rainfall and rising sea levels will result in a strong El Niño phenomenon in Ecuador in 2015-2016. Government authorities have solicited support from the Humanitarian Country Team in the preparation and response to potential emergencies. • WFP, the SGR and the Ministry of Social Inclusion (MIES) are coordinating actions to provide support to victims in possible emergency situations through the delivery of vouchers redeemable for food. • WFP began the consultation process for the elaboration of the 2017 – 2021 Ecuador Country Strategic Plan (CSP), which aims to achieve an optimum alignment with the national government’s priorities.

PARTNERSHIPS

WFP works with the Ecuadorian Government to support its priorities under the coordination of the Technical Secretariat for International Cooperation (SETECI). WFP is partnering with the Viceministry of Human Mobility within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Coordinating Ministry for Social Development, the Ministries of Health, Education, Agriculture and Environment and the Risk Management Secretariat. Furthermore, Autonomous Decentralized Governments (GADs) are operational partners and an important element in WFP’s implementation and capacity strengthening strategies, school-based activities, support for vulnerable groups, trainings in health and nutrition, and activities to protect watersheds and water sources. WFP also works with NGO partners, such as the Sucumbios Federation of Women and the Tarabita Foundation, and has signed an agreement with HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) for relief activities. HIAS helps integrate protection in humanitarian assistance with legal, psycho-social and employment support, and the prevention of gender-based violence. WFP works with UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO and the Ministry of Agriculture in the Human Security interagency project to strengthen local capacities for peace and development in Ecuador’s northern border area. A joint programme with FAO, PAHO, and UNICEF funded by the Sustainable Development Fund and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation seeks to strengthen local food systems, build local capacities, improve production systems and increase access to nutritious foods.

COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Ecuador is a middle income country with a population of around 14.5 million people, 63 percent of whom live in urban areas. A country of great social, cultural and geographical diversity, its populace includes people of Spanish descent, several indigenous groups and Afro-Ecuadorians. Increased immigration rates and refugee influxes, particularly from Colombia, have added to the demographic mix and have exacerbated social divisions and inequality. Although the 2014 UNDP Human Development Report ranked Ecuador 98th out of 187 countries, income inequality is high, as evidenced by a Gini coefficient of 0,4620 (National Institute of Statistics and Census, Sept/2014). Ecuador hosts the highest number of persons in search of international protection in Latin America, with 900 new asylum-seekers entering the country each month (Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials, 2014), mostly from Colombia. Ecuador is highly susceptible to the effects of climate change and climate variability. Longer term strategies to address the systemic threats of climate change are a government priority. Natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, heavy rainfalls, flooding, droughts, earthquakes and landslides are common. Both obesity and micronutrient deficiencies are pressing issues in Ecuador. Malnutrition is closely related to cultural habits, poor access to nutritious foods and inadequate sanitation. Approximately 62 percent of Ecuadorian children under one year of age are anaemic, and 25.3 percent of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition. This figure reaches 35 percent in Ecuador’s northern border provinces (ENSANUT, 2013). Over 29 percent of children between the ages of five and eleven are overweight.

