

**Strategy Reach:** WFP's goal in Ecuador is to be an innovative partner, support government policies and priorities, contribute to food sovereignty, food and nutrition security of vulnerable people, and gender equality. The Strategy for 2012-2016 outlines an approach with national and local governments, communities and all the sectors involved in food and nutrition security. Representatives of 15 government agencies participated in developing the Strategy, in line with the priorities of the Government's National Development Plan and the 2008 Constitution.



## Situation:

- Although Ecuador's 2008 Constitution recognizes human rights, the rights of nature, a philosophy of good living, and equitable wealth distribution, high levels of **inequality** exist throughout the country.
- Ecuador receives the highest number of **refugees** in the region, most fleeing violence in Colombia.
- Over 38 percent of Ecuadorian households (68 percent in the case of indigenous populations) live in poverty and are unable to meet minimum **nutritional requirements**.
- Vulnerable families, particularly those in the first two quintiles of poverty, face food and nutrition insecurity. Families caring for **persons with handicaps** deserve special attention.
- Women face **gender bias and lack of empowerment** and are generally not involved in decision making, especially in rural areas and indigenous communities.
- Small holders, many of whom are women, lack **access to markets** and face unstable livelihoods.
- **Ecuador is a country at risk of climate change** and climate variability. Longer term strategies to address the systemic threats of climate change are a priority of the government.
- Ecuador is highly exposed to natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, heavy rainfalls, flooding, earthquakes, and landslides. **Emergency preparedness** needs to be strengthened.

## Strategic Priorities and Objectives:

### 1. Position WFP Ecuador as a strategic partner, collaborating with the government to reduce poverty and improve the food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable

- Increase the awareness and understanding of WFP areas of work and impact in Ecuador.
- Expand the partner base by strengthening strategic alliances with the government and donors.

### 2. Contribute to food and nutrition security of vulnerable people in Ecuador with an integrated approach

- Address chronic malnutrition, anaemia and obesity.
- Strengthen local safety net programmes.
- Support local production of nutritious food; connect small-holders to markets and social programmes.
- Improve awareness and understanding of nutrition.
- Contribute to gender equity and women empowerment; focus on vulnerable groups including children, pregnant women and people with disabilities.

### 3. Build resilience and mitigate the risks associated with the adverse effects of climate change, natural disasters, and other shocks

- Enhance adaptive capacity and protect the food and nutrition security of vulnerable communities to risks related to climate change and variability.
- Contribute to enhanced capacity for emergency preparedness and response, including capacity in food logistics and storage.

### 4. Reduce tensions and support the integration of Colombian refugees in Ecuadorian communities

- Improve the food consumption of refugees and asylum seekers in need of international assistance and protection.
- Reduce tensions between Colombian refugees and host Ecuadorian populations.
- Support the food and nutrition security and livelihoods of refugees and host communities most affected by the conflict in Colombia.

## WFP'S COUNTRY STRATEGY IN ECUADOR 2012-2016



**WFP in Ecuador:** WFP has been working in Ecuador for nearly 50 years. It has supported direct food interventions, including school feeding, assistance for production systems, reforestation and nutrition programmes.

### Strategic focus:

An **integrated approach** supports the efforts of the government to address chronic malnutrition, anaemia and overweight, particularly in indigenous communities, through technical capacity building and concrete interventions at local level. WFP works with local communities and Governments at municipal and provincial level, in line with the objectives of the National Development Plan, linking small holder production, public and private consumption and market entry with education in food and nutrition security.

To strengthen national capacities in emergency preparedness and response, WFP offers vulnerability and food security assessment tools, as well as a food and nutrition security approach on social protection.

Among WFP priorities is the **empowerment of women**, with focus on inequalities, and supporting inclusion and opportunities for the most vulnerable people (with special attention to indigenous, afro-Ecuadorians, refugees, women and children below five years of age, persons with disabilities).

WFP supports the development of nutritious, **fortified** food products with focus on ensuring Government and/or private sector commitment to address micronutrient deficiencies by providing technical support to production.

**About WFP:** Active in Ecuador since 1964, WFP has proven expertise in supporting the livelihoods of the most vulnerable populations (indigenous people, afro-Ecuadorians, refugees, women and children), managing emergencies, empowering women, protecting the environment and developing national and local systems and capacities in food assistance programmes. From 2000 to 2008 WFP was the primary partner to the national school feeding programme, including the provision of resources and technical assistance.

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### WFP's Comparative Advantages as a Partner:

#### • Mutual Trust, Integrity and Accountability

The government trusts WFP as an independent and unbiased advisor, working in a transparent and accountable manner. This positions WFP strongly in the national policy advocacy arena. WFP's main donors have entrusted the Ecuador country office with the management of substantial funds in support of national safety nets.

#### • Technical Support and Catalyst Role

WFP is recognized as a catalyst for national action, able to transfer innovative technologies towards the promotion of national food and nutrition security responses. Several WFP initiatives in the areas of nutrition, food fortification, procurement, and food security have been adopted by the Government, for example, coordinating and bringing together partners in emergency responses and supplying evidence of intervention models to inform public policy. WFP has a long tradition of supporting environmental actions in Ecuador and has incorporated climate change and disaster risk reduction actions in its programmatic areas.

#### • Humanitarian Action

WFP has assisted refugees in Ecuador for more than ten years, and helped support the Colombian refugee population's smooth arrival and establishment in Ecuador. Assistance includes promoting integration among refugees and Ecuadorian host communities.

#### • Emergency Response

In the last seven years, WFP, together with the government, has assisted in 20 large-scale emergencies, including response to droughts, flooding and volcanic eruptions. WFP supports capacity building and gradual handover of emergency preparedness and response functions, as overarching goals.

