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Contact Info

Adriana Bello, Monitoring and Reporting Officer
adriana.bello@wfp.org

Country Director
Deborah Hines

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Special Preparedness Activities - The Phenomenon of El Nino
Standard Project Report 2016

World Food Programme in Colombia, Republic of (CO)



World Food Programme

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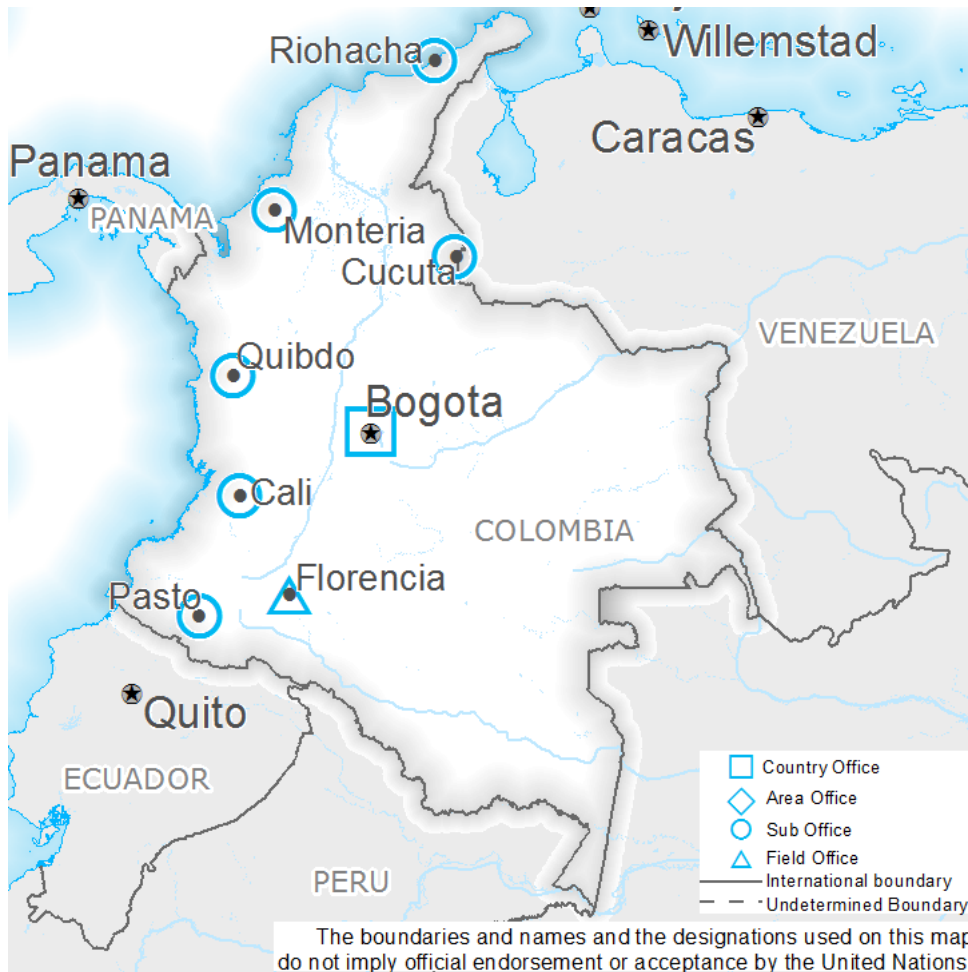
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Country Context and WFP Objectives



Country Context

Even though Colombia's economy has grown over the last decade while multidimensional poverty has decreased (World Bank, 2016), the gains are unequally distributed. The Multidimensional Poverty Rate is 2.3 times higher in rural than in urban areas (OCDE, 2014) and the proportion of the economically inactive is higher among women than men. According to the 2010 National Nutrition Survey and WFP's 2014 Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping Analysis, 43 percent of Colombians are food insecure and lack access to basic nutritious foods. Small farmers face harsh climatic conditions, unpredictable weather, and precarious access to markets. Only 3.9 percent of the smallholders own the minimum assets required for sufficient agricultural productivity. Women farmers are particularly marginalized.

Internally Displaced People (IDP) and marginalized ethnic communities in Colombia are more vulnerable to all forms of malnutrition (Baseline Survey of Food Security and Nutrition of IDPs in Colombia. WFP/PS/ICBF. 2013). Almost 90 percent of indigenous children under five suffer from stunting in the Pacific Coast areas, while in the South and North 60 percent are chronically malnourished. Acute malnutrition is also a serious public health problem in many departments, and the prevalence of anemia among children under five ranges from 53 to 78 percent in displaced communities as compared to the national average of 27.5 percent (National Nutrition Survey ENSIN, 2010). In dispersed indigenous communities, iron deficiency anemia affects 58 percent of the children under five. The prevalence of malnutrition in the indigenous communities in La Guajira department is among the highest in the country. As a matter of fact, local institutions in this area are very weak, health care services are limited, and acute malnutrition cases are underreported.

During 2016, Colombia was severely affected by both El Niño and La Niña climate phenomena. El Niño led to water shortages, droughts and forest fires. Close to 11 million people had limited access to water during the drought. The El Niño phenomenon also negatively impacted agriculture throughout the country, particularly on the Atlantic coast. Later in the year, La Niña caused heavy rainfalls and flooding, particularly affecting the Pacific coast. It affected two million people in 17 departments of the country, severely impacting the food security and nutrition of already vulnerable people.

The Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia recently reached an agreement on a range of complex issues, including rural reform and land restitution. With the bilateral ceasefire of August 2016, violence related to the armed conflict with the FARC has significantly decreased. However, humanitarian needs persist in many areas of the country and violence by other illegal armed groups has continued. In 2016 alone, violence had 44,453 victims, almost all (97 per cent) were displaced. Violence will most probably continue to result in humanitarian needs and the implementation of any agreement will remain a challenge for a number of years.

Part of WFP's added value in Colombia derives from its ability to address these humanitarian needs by reaching the most vulnerable even in the remotest areas. WFP's resilience and capacity building activities are gender and nutrition sensitive. They had five key outcomes:

- Local governments and civil society have strengthened their capacities to implement programmes to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition.
- Victims of violence, marginalized communities and ethnic populations have got adequate access to nutritious and diversified diets, and can improve their livelihoods.
- Communities and families have strengthened their capacities to prevent malnutrition, leaving nobody behind in marginalized urban and remote rural areas.
- Smallholder farmers have sustainably enhanced their production and marketing capacities
- Ethnic rural communities in vulnerable areas have become better prepared to recover from shocks and adapt to climate change.

Response of the Government and Strategic Coordination

The Government of Colombia has made strong commitments to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a national policy to implement, monitor, and report on progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The eradication of hunger and all forms of malnutrition, the doubling of agricultural productivity, and the doubling of the incomes of small-scale producers by 2030 are all part of the Government commitment to SDG.

Aligned with SDG 2, the Government has set the goal of eliminating chronic malnutrition through the programme "De Cero a Siempre" (From Zero to Forever), the national strategy for comprehensive early childhood care for children under 5. In collaboration with traditional and private sector partners and the Government, WFP contributes to the achievement of this goal through nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific actions. For example, WFP complements the national school meals programme in remote conflict-affected areas and promotes the inclusion of local purchases from small farmers into the technical guidelines of the National School Meals Programme. Also, the school meals programme includes nutritional education to establish healthy eating habits among children.

The Government of Colombia initiated a review of the national Food Security and Nutrition Plan (2013 – 2019) that had set three priorities: i) ensuring adequate supply and access to nutritious foods; ii) improving social welfare and quality of life through nutrition education, the prevention and reduction of malnutrition; and iii) improving food production and water quality by comprehensive and coordinated actions. WFP supported a number of local governments in the development of their territorial plans, helping to ensure that food security and nutrition objectives were well integrated.

WFP's 2016 achievements were the result of a coordinated and capable network of partnerships, including capacity strengthening, studies, direct assistance to victims, and livelihood strengthening. National strategic partners included the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF), Social Prosperity (PS), the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation (APC) that also coordinates the National Management Committee of WFP's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO), the Unit for Attention and Reparation of Victims (UARIV) and the National Disaster Risk Management Unit (UNGRD). Partnerships with local government entities were critical for effective implementation. Other successful partnerships in this activity were with UN Agencies, including FAO, UNDP, UN WOMEN, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, and WHO.

WFP played an active role in the United Nations Country Team. FAO and WFP jointly lead the food security and nutrition cluster, effectively coordinating humanitarian assistance and securing complementarity with other UN clusters. WFP established a cash-based transfers working group including APC and the Colombian Red Cross. WFP also actively participated in the inter-agency gender group and the working group against gender-based

violence, which allowed WFP to work with a wide range of women's groups.

WFP added value to various government programmes in 2016 by:

1. generating evidence to support cost-effective food and nutrition programmes at territorial level. In alliance with government institutions and academic partners, WFP coordinated assessments of food security and nutrition gaps in indigenous communities.
2. reaching the most vulnerable people in diverse and often isolated areas through efficient supply chains. As co-leader of the United Nations Food Security and Nutrition cluster, WFP is recognized and respected for its extensive field presence, especially in the most affected areas of the country.
3. launching the first pilot project relying on multi-purpose cash-based transfers (CBT) in the region. Cash can be used to satisfy the food and other basic needs of the targeted women and children. The provision of cash transfers to victims of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) enabled women to provide for their children while rebuilding their livelihoods. Evidence suggests a correlation between food insecurity and the occurrence of IPV (Hidrobo, M, A Peterman, and L Heise. 2014). The effects of cash, vouchers and food transfers on intimate partner violence have been measured in a randomized experiment in Northern Ecuador. (Washington, D.C, IFPRI).

Summary of WFP Operational Objectives

WFP's strategy in Colombia complements peace-building efforts by the government and aims to strengthen local government capacity to improve the food security and nutrition of marginalized and conflict-affected populations, with particular attention to the diverse ethnic groups. Aligned with the national priority of developing efficient, sustainable and scalable food-assistance models, WFP relied on various approaches, including CBT, local purchases and capacity strengthening. Based on lessons learnt and in consultation with the Government, donors and other partners, WFP responded to humanitarian needs and carried out activities to promote recovery and reintegration, development, resilience-building, and capacity strengthening. Expected outcomes and operational objectives included:

- Stabilized or improved food consumption and dietary diversity of IDPs, returnees and vulnerable people affected by the conflict, in line with Strategic Objective 1 ("Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies");
- Rebuilt livelihoods of communities affected by conflict through the provision of trainings and asset-creation activities, including community and market infrastructure, with a focus on enhanced resilience and the empowerment of women and marginalized groups, and support to schoolchildren at risk of recruitment of armed groups, in line with Strategic Objective 2 ("Support or restore food security and nutrition and establish or rebuild livelihoods in fragile settings and following emergencies"); and
- Increased marketing opportunities for smallholder farmers leading to expanded activities and improved incomes, in line with Strategic Objective 3 ("Reduce risk and enable people, communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs").

Protracted Operation (PRRO) 200708 (2015-2018), with an approved budget of USD 62.9 million for the improvement of food consumption and dietary diversity and for rebuilding the livelihoods of IDPs, returnees and vulnerable people who have been affected by conflict.

Multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) 200781 (2015-2017), with an approved budget of USD 32 million for strengthening government capacity at local and national levels and to deliver social programmes in a more efficient and coordinated manner, improving the food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable populations. This trust fund complements assistance provided under the PRRO by providing fortified food to children under five and to students receiving school meals, and non-food items to assisted families.

Emergency preparedness activity 200916 for the phenomenon of El Niño (2016), with an approved budget of USD 211,000 to enhance government capacity to assess food security needs, create early warning systems and elaborate contingency plans.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

Resource mobilization efforts in 2016 focused on diversifying WFP Colombia's donor base and developing new ways of working with the private sector. These efforts proved successful, annual targets were nearly achieved, enabling WFP to meet its commitments. In 2016, WFP's main traditional donors were USAID, followed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Germany and Canada. Flexibility in funding priorities, as well as multi-year contributions from Germany helped the country office keep up its continuous operations. This is especially important when working with victims of violence. Contributions enabled WFP support activities that empowered women and provided long-term economic opportunities for female victims of violence. The broadened donor base allowed WFP to expand its capacity development activities.

Importantly, government entities contributed to the implementation of the PRRO, including the provision of Bienestarina, a fortified nutritional product for young children and pregnant and lactating women, as well as funds for trainings, the repackaging of commodities, and monitoring. This contribution highlights the strong partnership between WFP and the Colombian Government and the complementarity of their efforts. The in-kind food assistance based on local diets and communities' preferences helped mitigate the negative impact of the inflation-induced high food costs.

In addition, new partnerships and contributions supported capacity development activities and certain innovative actions. For example, with the support of the WFP Innovation Center, the country office developed NutriFami, a web-based multimedia tool for the purpose of scaling up nutrition education among vulnerable populations. This tool was awarded the "Special innovation award" of Innovation Accelerator supported projects by WFP's Executive Director. WFP hopes to adapt this application to other activities in Colombia and for use in other countries. Additionally, a joint proposal between WFP, FAO and OCHA was funded by the European Union to strengthen the local institutional capacities and resilience of El-Nino affected communities in la Guajira.

In 2016, WFP reinforced its partnerships with the private sector entities Yum! Brands, BASF Stiftung, Unilever, Fundación Éxito and Sodexo. These funds allowed WFP to support integrated school meal activities, include a healthy lifestyle focus in nutrition education, and generate evidence on women's empowerment. Also a strategic collaboration with the Exito foundation presented an opportunity for project beneficiaries to increase their income: a group of small farmers signed commercial agreements with a large supermarket chain.

A budget revision to the PRRO was approved in 2016 in response to the new country priorities related to capacity development, peace-building, gender-equity and protection.

Based on a cost-efficiency analysis on how to increase coverage of beneficiaries, WFP Colombia shifted to direct implementation of activities in some of the most remote and vulnerable areas. More than 10,000 people were reached through direct implementation, enabling WFP to reduce costs and increase geographic coverage. In September 2016, WFP started to provide nutritious meals to over 14,000 girls and boys and girls, complementing government assistance to boarding schools. These actions highlight the cost effectiveness of WFP Colombia's decentralized structure, with 7 suboffices covering 11 departments. This structure also enables greater coordination with local governments, enhances WFP's reputation with communities and allows for flexible response.

WFP also optimized available resources and complementarity with its established partners. The collaboration with Prosperidad Social and the Pan American Development Foundation in Choco department to support the resettlement of more than 40,000 conflict-affected Afro-Colombians is a good example of increased outreach to the most vulnerable communities through a government-sponsored social programme.

Achievements at Country Level

In 2016, WFP assisted nearly 260,000 people, mostly victims of violence. PRRO participants received in-kind food assistance or value vouchers, depending on the proximity of sales points, food availability, local food prices, food offered by small farmers, and beneficiaries' preferred modality. By the end of 2016, WFP had consolidated its retailer network to include 64 medium and large scale supermarkets. While larger stores used their own information system to track CBT redemption, 80 percent of retailers used WFP's information tracking system, ensuring strong accountability, detailed inventory and sales records, commodity prices, and purchase records of CBT beneficiaries. Linking CBT with local production by smallholders generated multiple benefits for thousands of rural people, ranging from better incomes for the poorest families, to stronger rural economies through promotion of healthy eating habits

and the purchase of nutritious foods.

Another important achievement was the training of 2,000 smallholder farmers in the development of business plans and marketing strategies. As a result, smallholder farmers entered into commercial agreements with private, medium, and large food retailers, and local economies were supported. WFP also helped link the produce of smallholder farmers' associations to institutional markets, including the National School Meals Programme.

WFP works in isolated areas and provides training in the most remote rural communities, adapted to the local contexts and the recovery needs of displaced, confined, and returnee populations. In some areas training supported local peace-building initiatives led by indigenous farmers organizations while in other regions training focused on the role of women in peace-building, citizen participation and human rights.

For the provision of food assistance, WFP put special emphasis on women and ethnic minorities. WFP strategically identified associations with a high proportion of women and helped raise women membership to 53 percent by the end of the year. WFP Colombia also analyzed agricultural value chains from a gender perspective, taking into account that women and men often produce different crops and are involved in different stages of the value chain for a particular product. This analysis helped strengthen the role of women and their influence at each stage of the value chain. Additionally, a baseline survey was initiated with Emory University and UN Women to evaluate how increased incomes for women affect family and community relations, looking specifically at Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

WFP Colombia consolidated its resilience strategy with a focus on reaching food insecure families and communities particularly affected by environmental degradation (desertification in Nariño), climate shocks (severe drought in La Guajira) and armed conflict (Cauca department). WFP's strategy combined humanitarian assistance with livelihood strengthening at community level. The integrated resilience package implemented with cooperating partners extended to the prevention of malnutrition; improved production systems based on traditional crops and agricultural practices; renewable energy to support traditional agriculture systems; and the provision of clean drinking water. Additionally, WFP built fodder and seed banks that are used now as "bio-stores" and serve as sales points for the community marketing of local products at fair prices.

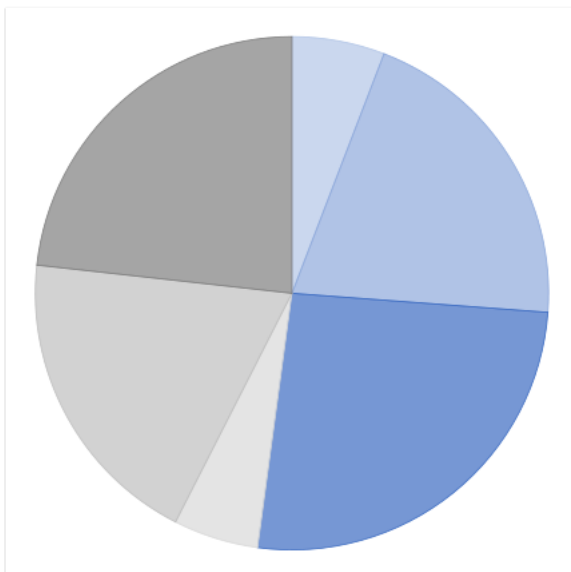


Annual Country Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	15,048	13,798	28,846
Children (5-18 years)	52,389	49,596	101,985
Adults (18 years plus)	66,847	59,881	126,728
Total number of beneficiaries in 2016	134,284	123,275	257,559

Country Beneficiaries by Gender and Age

- Children (under 5 years)
- Children (5-18 years)
- Adults (18 years plus)
- Children (under 5 years)
- Children (5-18 years)
- Adults (18 years plus)



Annual Food Distribution in Country (mt)

Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Single Country PRRO	2,970	509	1,000	-	-	4,479
Total Food Distributed in 2016	2,970	509	1,000	-	-	4,479



Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher Distribution (USD)

Project Type	Cash	Value Voucher	Commodity Voucher
Single Country PRRO	55,779	4,325,176	-
Total Distributed in 2016	55,779	4,325,176	-

Supply Chain

Although Colombia has made significant improvements in its logistics infrastructure, the country is still behind in global terms, ranked 108th of 144 countries (World Economic Forum Report, 2014-2015). Investment in the national road network has lagged and many rural areas have no road access, leading to frequent and significant delays in transport and travel. Only 8.5 percent of all roads are part of the primary network. WFP Colombia faced a number of logistic challenges in 2016, including prolonged transport strikes, impassable roads due to flooding and landslides, and long trips by river to areas in need.

WFP Colombia set up two warehouses for shipping and receiving food stocks and contracted storage services of a third party logistics operator with a comprehensive nation-wide storage network. Depending on emerging needs, WFP can use this storage network at any time for the receipt and shipping of food stocks.

Most of the commodities for the PRRO were received at ports in the northern part of the country and then moved to a bonded warehouse for customs clearance. The lead time required for customs clearance is generally between 8-15 calendar days, depending on the quantity and the type of cargo. The Government provided funds for the repackaging of commodities into 1 kg bags.

WFP Colombia set up an internal supply chain unit, with new functions including procurement processes for retailer contracting. In 2016, 20 new contracting processes were carried out and 26 contracts were extended. Field missions to contact potential suppliers ahead of shortlisting and tendering processes resulted in several offers received. Specific transport arrangements were designed and carried out to deliver food from retailers to isolated communities.

As part of the local purchase strategy, 52.1 mt of *kepeshuna* beans were procured from smallholder farmers in La Guajira department. The *kepeshuna* bean is an important part of the indigenous Wayuú diet, being a main source of calcium, iron and protein. Although agricultural production decreased drastically due to the prolonged drought, the installation of drip irrigation systems with the support of NGOs has facilitated cultivation of this local bean variety.

In 2016, losses accounted for 0.2 percent of the total distribution. A risk mitigation strategy was developed in order to further reduce losses. This strategy included specialized training for cooperating partners on good storage and transport practices; diagnosis of road conditions prior to food assistance delivery; and engagement of local communities and leaders for a better coordination of food deliveries. The use of smaller trucks reduced the risks related to bad road conditions.



Annual Food Purchases for the Country (mt)

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Beans	52	-	52
Total	52	-	52
Percentage	100.0%	-	

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

In a view of the new Country Strategic Plan (CSP) that outlines WFP's intervention in Colombia for the coming years, a strategic review as well as stakeholder consultations identified the following gaps in food security and nutrition:

- State revenue trends affect social programmes effectiveness. Total social expenditure, as a percentage of gross domestic product, is 15 percent below the OECD average. Lack of access to basic services threatens food security, especially for ethnic and displaced populations;
- Institutional fragmentation and lack of coordination in the implementation of food security and nutrition programmes impede achievement of targets. Only 11 percent of all actions are planned in an inter-sectoral manner and decentralized governments lack capacity for programme implementation (National Planning Department, 2015); and
- Gaps exist in coverage and targeting, quality of programmes, differential approaches, and programme oversight.

On the basis of these findings, in the framework of the CSP, WFP will work with United Nations agencies to achieve synergies and avoid duplication for greater collective impact. WFP will support government systems and social programmes and will continue to strengthen coordination and collaboration with a range of actors promoting synergies and programmatic complementarity. The aim is to help the Government reduce fragmentation and coordinate food security and nutrition interventions to achieve impact at scale.

Additionally, taking into account its strong capacity to reach ethnic communities in remote and isolated areas, WFP has strengthened its regional and ethnic (differential) approaches through a range of strategies including local purchases. For example, WFP included quinoa, an Andean protein-packed grain, in the food basket to improve diets in conflict-affected communities. An evaluation was carried out to determine the acceptability of quinoa among families. It was found that the grain was hard to prepare and because of the high price paid for exporting the quinoa, families rather sold than consumed the product. As a consequence, quinoa was removed from the in-kind food basket.

WFP provided technical assistance to small producers to sell their produce to the National School Feeding Program. The main lesson learned from the technical assistance provided is the need to strengthen producers' capacity throughout the value chain. This will guarantee a permanent supply of foods that meet quality requirements. It is also important to strengthen partnerships with specialized institutions to improve post-harvest handling and processing, quality management and storage practices.

The preliminary results of the study on gender-based violence, carried out in collaboration with Emory University and Universidad Nacional de Colombia, indicate that the intra-household economic, psychological and physical violence against women is perceived as normal and accepted practice. WFP will address this and other findings on gender roles and behaviors in its training activities. Increased awareness of all forms of violence will be part of WFP's strategy promoting zero tolerance of violence towards women.

In order to share and validate good practices, lessons learned and tools for building resilience, WFP Colombia participated in a regional WFP-FAO workshop on resilience and nutrition security that gathered experts of national governments and partners in Latin American countries. The Colombia team presented the joint intervention with FAO and UNICEF, which aims to improve food security and the rehabilitate agrarian livelihoods of indigenous communities affected by a prolonged drought. The following main lessons were learned in this workshop:

- "Resilience" is a broad concept that covers many dimensions, as indicated by the multi-agency Food Security Information Network (Resilience Measurement Principles, FAO, IFPRI, WFP joint publication, 2013). Therefore, indicators need to be tailored to the specific objectives of the programme.
- A wide range of indicators is necessary to measure main risks and stressors (absorption, adaptation or transformation) over time (short, medium or long term). Existing indicators are insufficient to measure the effects of resilience strengthening activities.
- There is a need to include short-term process indicators measuring capacity building.

In collaboration with WFP Office of Evaluation and the Panama Regional Bureau, WFP Colombia is planning to carry out a decentralized evaluation of the PRRO 200708 in early 2017. The evaluation will identify good practices and lessons learned to enable informed decisions on the implementation of cost-effective and efficient activities, contributing to capacity development, enhanced livelihoods and resilience in families and communities. Recommendation will inform the implementation of the 2017-2021 Country Strategic Plan. Specifically, the evaluation will analyze: cooperating partners; beneficiary targeting; decentralized processes; local purchases related to voucher redemption; and nutrition education activities.

Capacity strengthening

WFP Capacity-strengthening strategy, mainly focused at local level, has three main components:

1. Strengthening municipalities' ability to develop efficient food security programs.

A multi-donor trust fund (MDTF, 2015–2017) between WFP and the Government of Colombia was designed to strengthen the government capacity to improve the food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable populations. In line with government priorities, the trust fund had a specific focus on Afro-Colombians, indigenous, and remote rural populations. The MDTF complements WFP's protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO 2016-2018) and supports the new Colombian National Development Plan and the National Food Security and Nutrition Policy.

Within this MDTF, agreements were signed with Prosperidad Social (PS) and the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF). During 2016, this agreement led to the strengthening of institutional capacities to integrate food and nutrition security strategies in government programmes for displaced populations. Thirteen training sessions were provided to government and cooperating partners' staff (over 85 entities in all) on food security, healthy lifestyles, project monitoring, accountability to affected populations, and the use of technological beneficiary data collection tools, among other topics. Government institutions that work with WFP increased their capacities by integrating food security and nutrition aspects into their programs and activities, and needs assessments.

In order to complement the WFP food basket distributed through the PRRO, the Government delivered Bienestarina, a locally-produced fortified blended food to all households with children under 5 and to students receiving school meals. Bienestarina provided essential micronutrients for children. WFP used funds provided by PS to purchase emergency kits for about 650 internally displaced families in the Nariño department. In addition, over 1,700 returnee families received farming tools to support their early recovery.

WFP coordinated a study on food security and nutrition in indigenous communities in collaboration with the ICBF, the National Department of Statistics, and the National Institute of Health. The study evaluated the food security and nutrition situation of indigenous people using a territorial and intercultural perspective. Information was gathered from eight indigenous groups in Arauca, Meta and Guaviare departments. Socio-demographic, health and nutrition data (including on breastfeeding, complementary feeding and food consumption practices) was collected at the household level, interviewing about 8,300 people. The analysis of the geographical, social and cultural context facilitated the identification of key factors for food insecurity. Anthropometric information was collected from about 4,500 children and blood samples were taken from women and children to analyze for anemia, zinc and vitamin A deficiencies. The analysis of data collected will inform the design and implementation of national assistance programs to reach poor and food insecure indigenous communities.

2. Strengthening capacities of local producers

In partnership with specialized agencies, such as the Interamerican Institute of Cooperation for Agriculture (IICA), WFP provided technical support to approximately 2,000 smallfarmers in 62 farmers' associations on production, management and marketing skills. Assessments were conducted to prepare capacity-building plans which included storage facility infrastructure, retailers, as well as the procurement of post-harvest equipment. Training sessions were carried out on post-harvest handling and processing, quality management and storage practices. Training material was distributed to participants. In addition, members from small farmer associations benefited from technical visits to exchange and learn from successful experiences of other associations, particularly on production and marketing.

In order to promote smallholder organizations' access to markets, WFP supported associations in the preparation of business and marketing plans, in order to establish commercial agreements with several private medium and large food markets.

In 2016, approximately 35 percent of small farmers' organizations met the quality standards and requirements for food production and processing, an improvement over the 20 percent found at the start of 2016. One of the most important results in 2016 was the strengthened linkage between producers and private and institutional markets. The percentage of organizations that sold their produce to the private sector and institutional markets rose from 15 to 50 percent and from 5 to 25 percent respectively. About 9,000 PRRO participants redeemed their food vouchers directly with small producers.

3. Reinforcing vulnerable communities' capacities to enhance gender equality and peace-building in view of a post-conflict scenario

Training activities conducted by WFP contributed to peace-building and the promotion of gender equality in communities severely affected by violence. Participants attended training sessions and workshops that addressed issues such as peaceful conflict resolution, leadership and political participation, peace process, and the role of

communities in the peace process. Other sessions focused on empowerment of women, rights of women and girls, and gender roles. Upon completion of the training, about half of female participants reported that they felt informed on various negotiation issues within the peace agreement, as compared to 23 percent prior to the training. Moreover, 94 percent considered that as leaders of their communities they could now play an active role in promoting peace by encouraging reconciliation, trust and confidence. In addition, the project stimulated participation in peace-building activities through a series of workshops and information sessions; by the end of the project, half of the participants had been involved in peace-building activities versus 20 percent at the outset.

"By sharing experiences with other women who have suffered from violence and have gone through similar situations, we have all been empowered. We now know the laws that exist to defend women's rights." (A workshop participant in the course "Women as peace-builders at the local level" in Chocó department).

WFP activities led to a reduced tolerance to violence against women. The perception of gender roles positively changed, and there was an increase in the percentage of women and men who considered that both should contribute to household incomes and be responsible for raising children.

Globally, WFP is one of the few organizations exploring the potential of fortified rice as an effective and sustainable strategy to improve the intake of micronutrients. Fortified rice will also improve families of health and economy. In 2016, WFP Colombia presented its rice fortification efforts as part of the regional initiative to promote fortified rice in families' diets. The study was presented to the National Committee for the Prevention and Control of Micronutrient Deficiencies (Ministry of Health and Social Protection). The analysis recommended:

- To recognize the vital importance of rice in the diet of the Colombian population, especially in low-income groups and in rural areas, and the need for the Government to protect the rice supply and access to food.
- To motivate the Colombian government to launch a rice fortification program in the country, due to the critical level of micronutrient deficiencies in the population.
- To establish a process of consultation with all stakeholders of the rice supply chain, to determine the list of micronutrients and their quantities, the technology used, and the capacity of mills to fortify rice.

Project Objectives and Results

Project Objectives

During the course of 2016, Colombia was severely affected by the El Niño climate phenomenon. In addition to the armed conflict, El Niño created additional humanitarian needs as a result of water shortages, droughts and forest fires. This was of particular concern in rural communities where difficult to access and high poverty rates increase community vulnerability to food insecurity. Over 130 municipalities experienced water rationing, and close to 11 million people had limited access to water during the drought. Compared to average precipitation, there was a 70 percent decline during the last months of 2015, and a 40 percent deficit in the first quarter of 2016. Low water levels in major rivers severely affected livelihoods, commerce and transportation. Dry weather conditions and high temperatures led to forest fires affecting more than 110,000 hectares in over 700 municipalities in 28 departments. El Niño-driven drought and desertification continued for a fourth consecutive year in the department of La Guajira.

The El Niño phenomenon has negatively impacted agriculture throughout the country, particularly on the Atlantic coast. Nationally, drought and forest fires claimed nearly 38,000 heads of livestock and left about 600,000 people displaced. According to the National Disaster Risk Management Unit (UNGRD), the drought led to a decrease in productivity in over 475,000 hectares of agricultural land and more than 156,000 hectares were directly impacted by forest fires. Decreased food availability and rising prices throughout the country heightened food insecurity, especially in La Guajira department, which has also been impacted by the border crisis with Venezuela. According to the National Institute of Health, 50 children under five died from malnutrition between 2015 and 2016.

In response to the increased food insecurity related to El Niño, WFP completed a three-month Special Preparedness Activity relying on WFP's Immediate Response Account. According to WFP's Strategic Plan (2014-2017), the project was in line with Strategic Objective 1, "Save Lives and Protect Livelihoods in Emergencies", goal 3 "Strengthen the capacity of governments and regional organizations and enable the international community to prepare for, assess and respond to shocks". The main objectives were to enhance government capacity to conduct emergency food security needs assessments (EFSA), to support institutions in the creation of Early Warning Systems (EWS), and to build local government capacities to develop and update their contingency plans incorporating a food and nutrition security perspective.



Approved Budget for Project Duration (USD)

Cost Category	
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	157,700
Direct Support Costs	39,600
Indirect Support Costs	13,811
Total	211,111

Project Activities

Objective 1: Enhance government capacity to assess food security needs in emergency contexts

Activity 1. In order to strengthen local capacities to carry out Emergency Food Security Assessments (EFSA) in areas severely affected by the drought, WFP conducted trainings in La Guajira, Norte de Santander, Valle del Cauca and Nariño departments. Community leaders and regional and local level disaster management authorities attended these trainings.

As part of the training, WFP and local partners carried out emergency food security assessments at the community level. The results of the assessments informed WFP food assistance and government response in 2016 and

enhanced local capacities in data collection and analysis to better prepare for and respond to emergencies. WFP also shared methodologies to conduct food security and market assessments.

In northern areas near Venezuela, WFP developed training activities for the two departments most affected by the border crisis and the massive influx of refugees and deported Colombians that settled in peri-urban areas. WFP trained its cooperating partners in food security needs assessments.

Objective 2: Support institutions in the creation of Early Warning Systems

Activity 1. WFP analyzed hydro-climatic vulnerabilities and their impacts on food insecurity in the drought-affected zones of Valle del Cauca, Nariño and Guajira departments, with a focus on El Niño and La Niña phenomena. In addition, a catalogue of climate change adaptation measures with a food security focus was prepared.

Activity 2. WFP conducted a gap analysis of current regional Early Warning Systems on natural hazards, especially desertification, droughts and floods. WFP assessed risks of desertification and drought in selected areas, gathered climate information needs of community members and compared this to information provided by current systems. Assessments were carried out together with the community members (women, men and children), and informed recommendations to stakeholders involved in the emergency response. In conjunction with the Departmental Autonomous Environmental Authority of La Guajira (*CorpoGuajira*), WFP developed an Atlas on "Desertification, Drought, Climate Change and its Impact on Food Security and Water Availability for Indigenous Wayúu Communities".

Activity 3. WFP developed guidance manuals on how to prepare weekly and monthly climate early warning bulletins, with a focus on food security and nutrition, crop conditions, production and water availability. The manuals outlined how to validate forecasts with communities and how to make information available to rural communities.

Activity 4. Weekly and monthly early warning climate bulletins with a focus on food security were developed for Nariño department, with available climate information adapted to the information needs of the target audience identified in Activity 2. Trainings on how to prepare weekly and monthly climate early warning bulletins with a focus on food security and nutrition have been held for the departmental environmental authority (*CorpoNariño*) and communities.

Objective 3: Build local government capacities to develop and update local contingency plans from a food and nutrition security perspective

Activity 1. Training sessions were held for municipal officials, with a focus on how technical aspects of food security and nutrition are to be incorporated into contingency plans. Participants analyzed contingency plans where food security strategies, livelihoods recovery, and market reactivation had been integrated.

Activity 2. WFP developed guidelines and a methodology to incorporate food security perspectives into contingency planning. This methodology is based on international technical standards on how to elaborate contingency plans and create risk scenarios related to food security, livelihoods and markets analysis, and outlines the response to food security needs in emergencies.

Activity 3. WFP provided technical assistance to local government staff to update or develop municipal contingency plans. More than 18 municipal contingency plans were revised and updated. Plans took into account food accessibility, availability and utilization.

Results/Outcomes

Approximately 140 people participated in the training and technical assistance sessions, including representatives from national, departmental and municipal disaster risk management institutions (UNGRD), the Colombian Red Cross, departmental and municipal governments, environmental authorities, the National Civil Defense Institute, local NGOs, international organizations and WFP staff. As most risk management institutions have more male than female staff, WFP encouraged women attendance and involvement in training sessions and field activities. Around 25 percent of participants were women.

One of the main results of this operation was the development of a "toolbox", which was shared at the end of the project with the UNGRD and local authorities. The toolbox was designed to strengthen capacities to conduct food security and nutrition assessments and create Early Warning Systems at community and institutional level. The toolbox contains templates and actual emergency food security assessment reports, early warning bulletins, guidelines for incorporating food security and nutrition aspects into municipal and departmental contingency plans, and data-gathering tools.

As a result of the trainings, regional and local authorities recognized the importance of including food security analysis in emergency assessments, and this will allow targeting future emergency response to the neediest. According to training evaluation reports, previous emergency assessments and risk management plans had not incorporated food security aspects. The training activities strengthened participants' knowledge on the links between climate change, natural disasters, food availability, access, consumption and nutrition.

As part of the training, disaster risk management committees at regional and local levels were provided with an opportunity to put their new skills into practice by incorporating food security aspects into community level planning processes. Food security risk mapping exercises were conducted in order to elaborate community risk management plans. The tools provided were also used by risk management institutions (such as the National Disaster Risk Management Unit at the national, regional and local levels and the Colombian Red Cross) to prepare for La Niña phenomenon. In Nariño, during the last quarter of 2016, a food security and nutrition focus was introduced into the departmental risk management plan. Additionally, in several municipalities of the department, schools were supported by risk management institutions in strengthening their risk management plans and developing preparedness activities for disasters that may affect the schools' infrastructure or environment.

The project strengthened municipalities' capacities to formulate risk management plans including food security and nutrition, in order to deal with future emergency situations. Unfortunately, the number of local government staff dedicated to risk management is still limited. WFP and its strategic partner (UNGRD) will continue strengthening staff capacities.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Wayuu indigenous community planting drought resistant species to cope with El Niño. La Guajira, Colombia.

WFP/Olga Parra