WFP EVALUATION

Final Evaluation of the Binational Adaptation Project in Colombia and Ecuador (2016-2024)

Decentralized evaluation report

WFP Country Office Colombia

WFP Country Office Ecuador

Final report
December 2024

WFP
World Food Programme
SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

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Disclaimer

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1. Introduction

Context

The border area between Colombia (departments of Nariño and Putumayo) and Ecuador (provinces of Carchi, Esmeraldas, Imbabura, and Sucumbíos) comprises a variety of ecosystems including mangrove forests, dry forests, tropical rainforests, cloud forests and scrublands. These ecosystems are found in the binational watersheds of the Mira-Mataje and Guaitara-Carchi Rivers. The human population living in the two river basins belongs mainly to two populations: Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant (IAAD) people. Both populations suffer from the effects of climate variability and change (including high fluctuations in rainfall, exposure to prolonged droughts, forest fires and changes in tidal patterns) that negatively affect their livelihoods. As a result, they experience high levels of food insecurity, micronutrient deficiencies, chronic malnutrition, and unmet basic needs including limited supply of clean drinking water. Moreover, the area of intervention in Colombia continues to be characterized by the presence of non-state armed groups, and the security situation in Ecuador has deteriorated in recent years.

Subject of the evaluation

Against this backdrop, the binational project "*Building adaptive capacity to climate change through food security and nutrition actions in vulnerable Afro and indigenous communities in the Colombia-Ecuador border area*", funded by the Adaptation Fund (AF) and implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP), seeks to (i) reduce climate vulnerabilities of local IAAD communities and the ecosystems they depend on, promoting food security and nutrition (FSN) and gender equality, and contributing to the construction of peace; and (ii) strengthen adaptive capacities of IAAD communities in the cross-border region and strengthen regional institutions to address the threats posed by climate change. To achieve these objectives, the project implements activities under three components that focus on (i) awareness/knowledge of climate change risks and FSN, (ii) capacity strengthening of institutions and communities, (iii) innovative measures for adaptation to climate change (ACC) at community and beneficiary level.

Objective, scope, and primary users of the evaluation

The evaluation has the dual objective of accountability (assessing the performance of the project) and learning (on why results have or have not been achieved, and identifying lessons learned and good practices to facilitate replicability/scalability and inform future interventions in the region). The evaluation covers all activities of the project with focus on the implementation period from 3 May 2018 to 30 April 2024 (six months before its planned closure in early November 2024).

The main users of the evaluation include the donor (AF); the WFP Country Offices in Colombia, Ecuador and other countries of the region, the WFP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and various headquarter units of WFP; the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Ecuador; sub-national government institutions; as well as the executing entities (EE) of the IAAD communities.

Methodology

The evaluation responded to eight main evaluation questions (EQs) that covered all AF evaluation criteria except impact. It adopted a mixed methods approach based on a reconstructed Theory of Change (ToC). The ET combined conventional performance evaluation (through comprehensive review of available documents and quantitative M&E data, key informant interviews, and direct observation in the field) with appreciative inquiry workshops and indigenous storytelling in IAAD beneficiary communities. The field mission in Colombia and Ecuador took place from 1 to 25 April 2024.

2. Summary of key findings (to 30 April 2024)

The key findings on the eight main EQs are summarized as follows.

EQ 1 – COHERENCE: ***Is the project still aligned with the policies and priorities of each country, its binational mechanisms, the Adaptation Fund, relevant international agreements and other similar interventions on the ground?***

The project is congruent with international agreements and the legislative frameworks of Colombia and Ecuador concerning climate action, FSN, and ecosystem restoration. It complies with the majority of the latest priorities and principles of the AF and the WFP's Strategic Plan (2022-2025). However, its alignment with binational priorities and agreements has weakened since the project's inception, largely due to shifting political priorities, different mandates of WFP's Country Offices, and the lack of legal status for some key binational institutions like the Great Binational Awa Family to facilitate a truly binational approach to ACC.

EQ 2 – RELEVANCE: ***How has the design and implementation of the project responded to the context, needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and the governments of Colombia and Ecuador?***

The project remains highly relevant to the IAAD, whose livelihoods are highly vulnerable to the growing effects of climate variability and change and environmental degradation. Active and inclusive community participation in the training, planning and implementation of measures funded by the project to advance ACC FSN underscore this relevance. The project's responses to changes in government priorities have generally not been effective to avoid overstretching resources and implementation delays, in particular the ACC measures. The project's contribution to stimulating legislative dialogue and reforms at all levels of government on the up-take of its ACC measures and methodologies in relevant policies, strategies and plans has been limited so far, in part because many of the ACC measures were still being finalised in April 2024, while in Colombia the installation of the early warning system (EWS) and water supply schemes are planned to start in June 2024.

EQ3 – EFFECTIVENESS: ***What results (expected and unexpected) has the binational project achieved or contributed to achieving?***

The project has delivered on a lot of its planned outputs and is starting to deliver positive expected and unexpected results. A key strength behind the project's effectiveness has been the decision to implement the project through field level agreements with the EE of the IAAD. This strengthened their capacity to manage resources and fostered community ownership and cultural respect. The main weakness with this approach is that the IAAD developed a high level of dependency on project resources and insufficient coordination with local governments through which the history of low engagement with IAAD communities could be addressed. Main findings under each component are:

- **Component 1:** Planned outputs have been delivered in line or above targets. The ethno-botanical studies were conducted with a strong gender and intercultural focus by local universities in each country, resulting in the identification of 112 local species supportive of ACC and FSN. Two publications on their use, benefits and recipes have been produced, supported by bromatological research (Ecuador only) and two binational meetings on seeds. Training on climate risks, FSN and gender needs in ACC was provided to 3,714 participants (2,045 women) in total using WFP's Edufami platform, which is well over the target of 240 people. Potential commercialization of selected native species has been studied in both countries, but only in Colombia have income generating activities been funded, many of which were found to need marketing support.
- **Component 2:** Delivery of main outputs has been most evident in Ecuador, where significant progress has been made on developing a Climate Change Information and Monitoring System (SMICC). The SMICC is in the process of adding 26 new weather stations providing rainfall, temperature and atmospheric data to the national meteorological and hydrological agency (INAMHI), which will enable the four participating provincial governments to prepare daily weather bulletins for the IAAD and the general public to guide decision-making on agriculture and other sectors. In Colombia, the project has supported the design of a community-based EWS, which has experienced delays and will not start installation until June 2024. Training on Emergency Preparedness and Response has also exceeded expectations, providing training to 246 local community leaders and members compared to 120 planned.
- **Component 3:** The ACC measures planned in Ecuador and Colombia have been installed and are in the process of testing/finalisation and handover, except the installation of safe water systems

in Colombia which are planned to start in June 2024. Main achievements are: (i) elaboration of five adaption plans prepared for each of the IAAD's participating EE in Colombia and 66 community-based adaptation plans in Ecuador all of which have been adopted and implementation initiated; (ii) installation of 148 family/community based agrobiodiverse plots (HB) in Colombia, and 609 family-based resilient integrated plots (PIR) in Ecuador, which are saving on average USD 32-60 per family/month on food costs; (iii) 2,258 kitchen gardens in Colombia and 30 kitchen gardens in disused canoes (canoeras) in Ecuador, which have stimulated seed exchanges; (iv) restoration of 1,243 ha of mangroves and 2,242 ha of forests supported by 180 forest conservation orders awarded in Colombia, and 8,400 ha of forests and 3,307 ha of mangroves placed under conservation/Sustainable Use and Custody orders in Ecuador; (v) installation of 26 water systems in Ecuador benefitting some 2,189 households and managed by local water boards/committees currently under development.

EQ 4 – EFFICIENCY: ***How efficient and timely has the collaboration and coordination been between the two Country Offices, government entities and other partners, at different levels, been?***

The project has spent a total of USD 10.24 million (86.3 percent) of the AF budget allocated to components 1-3 to 31 March 2024. This leaves a substantial balance of USD 1.541 million to be spent in the seven months remaining. Delays, particularly in Colombia, have hindered timely delivery of some planned outputs. There is evidence the project is delivering value for money, especially its activities promoting nature-based solutions where, for example, the conservation/restoration of forests/mangroves cost on average USD 60.91/ha in Colombia, and USD 31.54/ha in Ecuador. In these and other ACC measures in-kind community contributions appear to be instrumental in delivering these results, but they are not monitored and reported by the project. The use of WFP's Edufami platform during the pandemic also proved to be an efficient strategy to train a larger number of stakeholders than planned at less cost. The majority of stakeholders interviewed stated the project's governance structure has too many layers and actors to enable swift and efficient decision-making and this has contributed to delays. Moreover, despite the engagement of a large number of government stakeholders in the project's six national and binational steering and technical committees, the project's abovementioned implementation approach through the EE has, together with high staff rotation, resulted in less active engagement than planned.

EQ 5 – ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: ***To what extent has the project adapted to the context and to the lessons and learning identified during its implementation?***

The project adapted well to local security challenges, capacity gaps in the EE and the pandemic thanks to its strong emphasis on training of community promoters/technicians (focal points) to oversee the implementation of the ACC measures and partnerships established with academia. The abovementioned switch to online training during the pandemic also helped retain contact with the EE and the focal points. The project's heavy governance structure made it difficult to apply effective strategic risk management, in particular measures to support binational dialogue on strengthening binational capacity (outcome indicator 3). The decision to apply a very heavy monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process, based on the tracking of 118 indicators in each country contributed to very heavy progress reporting and opportunities to develop learning and informed decision-making, especially on strengthening cross-border adaptation planning and measures.

EQ 6 – EQUITY: ***To what extent were the gender and intercultural perspective integrated in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project?***

The project achieved higher levels of participation among vulnerable women from participating IAAD communities in both countries than planned (71 percent compared to 51 percent). Political and social empowerment of women has been enhanced at the community level through the training of a large number of women as community focal points, engaging women to lead the implementation of ACC measures such as the HB/PIR, or participate in the water committees/boards for the safe water supply systems established in Ecuador. In addition, it has contributed to strengthening women's participation in decision-making roles within the EE representing Afro-descendant communities in both countries, but this was less evident in the EE representing Awa communities, especially in Ecuador. Economic empowerment of women has mainly materialized in the form of cost savings generated from producing food in the HB/PIR and reducing transport costs and water purchases following installation of the safe water supply systems in Ecuador. Meanwhile, women participating in income generating activities (only in Colombia) stated no tangible change in their

economic empowerment and in need of marketing capacity. Finally, on the project's intercultural cultural focus, the ET found the project is compliant with AF/WFP guidelines and safeguards and advanced their cultural heritage and traditional knowledge on agrobiodiversity and local practices.

EQ 7 – SUSTAINABILITY AND HUMAN AND ECOLOGICAL SECURITY: *To what extent has the project adopted mechanisms during its implementation to ensure the sustainability of the results?*

Sociopolitical risks, coordination gaps, and growing insecurity in both countries pose substantial threats to sustainability. To date, the project has not adequately addressed these risks, which have been exacerbated by a change of local government in Colombia at the start of 2024. This situation is not aided by the absence of a formal exit strategy outlining how the project intends carry out the handover of its main actions, many of which still need qualified technical support and oversight, as well as new external funding to support their consolidation and potential upscaling. The application of AF's environmental and social safeguards was found to be complex and difficult to apply due to a lack of criteria to determine the risk ratings of the safeguards, their outdated nature (from 2016) and need of a more dynamic reporting format. Despite training and improvements in the reporting format provided by WFP from 2023 onwards, there is consensus it requires further simplification to demonstrate its added value.

EQ 8 – SCALABILITY: *What is the potential of the project to scale adaptation to climate variability and change?*

The abovementioned risks affecting the project's sustainability indicate the potential for scaling up the project's main actions is limited. However, the ET identified the two ACC measures that align with current governmental priorities and have high potential for scaling up in both countries. First, forest/mangrove conservation/restoration orders in both countries because they are highly cost efficient and effective in advancing adaptation, resilience, and new economic and socio-cultural opportunities. Second, the upscaling of the SMICC in Ecuador where INAMHI is committed to expand the EWS network with the support of the new programme "EWS for all". A further seven areas associated with the recovery of local agrobiodiversity were found to have moderate potential for scaling up, especially where local communities can independently replicate the measures using their own resources. However, five measures associated primarily with rural infrastructure projects were found to have low, or very low, potential for scaling up due to the need for external resources and access to technical expertise, especially in highly insecure areas.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

In summary, while the project demonstrates relevance to IAAD communities and has made progress in implementing adaptive measures, challenges in governance, risk management, and binational alignment have hindered its full potential and impact as foreseen in the ToC. To ensure long-term sustainability and scalability, these areas need to be addressed, alongside stronger coordination with government stakeholders and clearer exit strategies concerning the handover of the SMICC/EWS, the adaptation plans and the ACC measures, as well as their potential upscaling.

The conclusions are linked to the EQs and also provide a performance rating of the evaluation criteria.

C1: coherence – satisfactory

C2: relevance – moderately satisfactory

C3: effectiveness – satisfactory / moderately satisfactory

C4: efficiency – satisfactory

C5: adaptive management – moderately satisfactory

C6: equity – satisfactory

C7: sustainability – moderately unsatisfactory

C8: scalability – moderately satisfactory

The list recommendations provided in this report are as follows.

R1 (coherence): High-level exploratory meetings should be conducted with other relevant projects operating in, or adjacent to the project's intervention area to exchange lessons learned and good practices and identify potential synergies.

R2 (relevance): All future binational projects funded by the AF should adopt a simpler governance structure involving one binational management committee and one binational advisory committee to build consensus and cooperation on issues of mutual interest.

R3 (effectiveness): It is recommended that when designing binational projects, project actions are grouped together and their outcome focus on the delivery of their holistic benefits as perceived by local communities, rather than development practitioners who tend to focus on the delivery of a sector-specific benefit.

R4 (adaptive management): It is strongly recommended that in the design and implementation of binational (and national) projects, their M&E and reporting adopt a results-based focus that supports learning, while all operational actions and output targets are tracked through the administration and finance plan.

R5 (equity): In line with stakeholder proposals in the field, it is recommended to support the development of the HB/PIR in the closure period under a dedicated route map/plan with participating academia, local government and the Ministries of Agriculture in Ecuador and Colombia.

1. Introduction

1.1. Evaluation features

1. This report corresponds to the **final evaluation of the project "*Building adaptive capacity to climate change through food security and nutrition actions in vulnerable Afro and indigenous communities in the Colombia-Ecuador border area***", henceforth **"the [binational] project"**. The project is implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP) in the two binational river basins of Mira-Mataje and Guaitara-Carchi. It seeks to reduce the climate vulnerability of Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant (IAAD) communities and their ecosystems (promoting food security and nutrition, gender equality, and peace building) and strengthen the capacities of the communities and regional institutions to adapt to climate change. The grant agreement with the donor of the project, the Adaptation Fund (AF), was signed in 2017 and foresees that a final evaluation would be delivered within nine months of project completion.[1]

2. This decentralized activity evaluation was commissioned by the WFP Country Offices (COs) in Colombia and Ecuador and was managed by the WFP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBP) and the Ecuador CO, in close collaboration with the Colombia CO. A summary of the Terms of Reference (ToR) is presented in Annex I. The evaluation has the **dual** and equally weighted **objective of accountability** (assessing the performance of the project in terms of contribution to adaption to climate change (ACC) and food security and nutrition security, use of resources, and relevance and alignment with national priorities) to increment transparency for WFP's partners, and **learning** on why results have or have not been achieved, as well as to identify lessons learned and good practices in order to generate evidence that can facilitate replicability/ scalability and inform future interventions and other strategic decisions in the region.

3. The **main users** of the evaluation deliverables include the donor (AF); the COs of Colombia and Ecuador (and other COs engaging in ACC projects and/or with the same donor) , RBP and various headquarter units of WFP; the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Minambiente) of Colombia, the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (MAATE) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) of Ecuador[2]; sub-national government institutions; as well as the implementing organizations of the IAAD communities.

4. The evaluation was carried out by an evaluation team (ET) of Particip, comprising the international team leader, an international senior evaluator and two national consultants, in the period December 2023 to October 2024. Annex II presents the detailed evaluation timeline. The field mission to Colombia and Ecuador took place from 1 to 25 April 2024 and was complemented through a small number of remote interviews.

5. The evaluation covers all activities of the binational project in Colombia and Ecuador from its design in 2016 to April 2024, with emphasis on the implementation period from May 2018. Its geographic scope encompasses the binational basins of the Mira-Mataje and Guaitara-Carchi Rivers in the departments of Nariño and Putumayo in Colombia, and the provinces of Carchi, Esmeraldas, Imbabura, and Sucumbíos in Ecuador, as well as support and coordination activities in Bogotá and Quito. The evaluation criteria go beyond those of the OECD Development Assistance Committee and include additional criteria set out in AF's evaluation policy (2022).[3] The ToR originally proposed only six of the nine evaluation criteria of AF, but this report considers two additional criteria (coherence and adaptive management) on request of WFP to ensure closer alignment with the AF Evaluation Policy. The impact criterion has not been added as it would have required a longer time scope and additional data and resources.

[1] WFP and AF (2017). Grant Agreement for the Binational Project.
[2] In particular the Undersecretariat of Agricultural Innovation Networks and the Directorate of Agricultural Risks and Insurance who form part of the National Steering Committee and National Technical Advisory Committee for Ecuador.
[3] AF (2022). Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund.

1.2. Context

6. The border area between Colombia (departments of Nariño and Putumayo) and Ecuador (provinces of Carchi, Esmeraldas, Imbabura, and Sucumbíos) comprises a variety of ecosystems including mangrove forests, dry forests, tropical rainforests, cloud forests and scrublands. These ecosystems are found in **the watersheds of the Mira-Mataje and Guaitara-Carchi Rivers** (see Figure 1 in Section 1.3). The climate in the border area is strongly influenced by the effects of the Intertropical Convergence Zone, the recurrent effects of *La Niña* and *El Niño,* climate change, and by the Chiles-Cerro / Negro-Cumbal volcano complex, which is also an important source of water for the two river basins mentioned above.

7. The human population living in the total area of 915,000 ha in the two river basins[4] belongs mainly to **two populations: Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant people**. Historically, both populations have developed a high level of local knowledge of biodiversity and natural resources to sustain their **livelihoods**. Both practice agroforestry systems, fishing, hunting, and gathering of wild products for food, medicinal, and ritual purposes, and household consumption. However, they suffer from the **effects of climate variability and change**. The border zone has high fluctuations in rainfall between 2,000 and 9,000 mm/year[5] and is exposed to prolonged droughts, forest fires, and changes in tidal patterns that affect fisheries, freshwater availability, and productive capacity. As a result, both populations experience high levels of food insecurity, micronutrient deficiencies, chronic malnutrition, and unmet basic needs including limited supply of clean drinking water. In the 2019 baseline for Colombia, for instance, 75 percent of Indigenous Awa and 67 percent of Afro-descendant households received water mainly from rivers, springs, ditches, or canals.[6] In Ecuador, the proportion of households receiving water from these sources reached 72 percent of Indigenous Awa population and 35 percent in Afro-descendant communities.[7]

8. The IAAD populations have been historically marginalized and affected by the prolonged **armed conflict** in Colombia despite the signing of the Peace Agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.[8] The area of intervention continues to be characterized by the presence of non-state armed ('irregular') groups. In Ecuador, the security situation has also become more complex in recent years, with an increase in intentional homicides and assassinations of local authorities. There have been several cases of explosions in different cities, along with incidents of kidnappings and fires in prisons. This situation causes social friction and deters key personnel from both states from entering these territories to provide basic services or promote the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Fluctuations in the security situation throughout the evaluation period affected project activities in a few target communities. WFP's work in both countries also had to adapt to the **Covid-19 pandemic**, which required WFP shift to virtual modalities and reconfigure the implementation strategy of the project (see EQ 2.2).

9. Since the 1990s, the **governments of Colombia and Ecuador** have addressed the increasing vulnerability of the IAAD populations in the border area through an ongoing dialogue in the Binational Neighborhood and Integration Commission and the Binational Border Commission.[9] One of the priorities of this dialogue is the reduction of food and nutrition insecurity, which has been a central objective in the Binational Border Integration Plan 2014-2022, together with the promotion of peace and territorial integration.

10. However, **food and nutrition insecurity** remains a shared problem to date. In Ecuador, rates of chronic malnutrition (stunting) in children under five fell from 32.4 percent in 2018 to 23.0 percent in 2022/23 in the province of Carchi, from 17.7 to 11.7 percent in Esmeraldas, from 24.7 to 18.5 percent in Imbabura, and from 23.7 to 17.1 percent in Sucumbíos.[10] In Colombia, the corresponding rate in the department of

[4] WFP and AF (2017). Project Document for the Binational Project (Prodoc).
[5] WFP and AF (2017). Project Document for the Binational Project (Prodoc).
[6] WFP (2019). Baseline Report of the Binational Project for Colombia.
[7] WFP (2019). Baseline Report of the Binational Project for Ecuador.
[8] WFP and AF (2017). Project Document for the Binational Project (Prodoc).
[9] WFP and AF (2017). Project Document for the Binational Project (Prodoc).
[10] INEC (2018). National Health and Nutrition Survey (ENSANUT) 2018: Tables on Chronic Malnutrition; and INEC (2023): National Survey on Child Malnutrition (ENDI) 2023: Presentation of Main Results.

Nariño slightly increased from 15.7 percent in 2019 to 16.4 percent in 2023.[11] Food and nutrition insecurity is higher in the indigenous population. For example, in 2015, chronic malnutrition in children under five across all departments of Colombia was 29.6 percent in the indigenous population but only 10.0 percent in the population without ethnic affiliation.[12] Additionally, the multidimensional **poverty** rate (2023) in the departments of Nariño and Putumayo reached 16.6 and 13.2 percent respectively, compared to 12.1 percent at the national level.[13]

11. A second priority in both countries is to reduce the increasing effects of climate variability and change, in particular on the food and nutrition security of communities that are highly vulnerable to events such as El Niño and La Niña. In Colombia, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Minambiente) is the governing body of the National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change 2016-2030 (one of its three main objectives is: Manage knowledge about climate change and its potential consequences on communities, biodiversity and its ecosystem services, and the country's economy),[14] as well as the Integrated Territorial Plans for the Management of Climate Change at subnational level. In Ecuador, the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition of Ecuador (**MAATE**) is the governing body of the National Climate Change Strategy 2012-2025, which has four specific objectives including: Promote awareness of Ecuadorians about the challenges of climate change, through knowledge management; and Develop and strengthen human and institutional capacities to address the challenges of climate change in Ecuador.[15] In both countries there are development plans at departmental/provincial and municipal levels, as well as specific plans on adaptation to climate change. For example, in the Department of Nariño, there is the Territorial Climate Adaptation Plan while in Ecuador, ACC is addressed in the Provincial/Cantonal Territorial Development and Planning Plan. Both countries are also committed to Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) 2 (Zero hunger) and 13 (Climate action) and document their progress towards the SDGs in the Voluntary National Reviews.[16]

12. In line with the Constitutions of both countries, as well as their commitment to the SDGs, another shared priority is to advance their policies on gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). Both countries have national policies on gender equality. In the binational Mira-Mataje and Guaitara-Carchi basins, the IAAD are characterized by **high gender inequalities** in their cultures and communities. These women have on average lower levels of education than men, less access to credit and less participation in decision-making mechanisms.[17] According to the Project Document (Prodoc), in both binational basins, women face higher levels of vulnerability to climate change and are more likely to die during and after disasters because they lack access to early warning systems (EWS) and have limited survival skills and freedom of movement.

13. The binational WFP project was designed between 2016 and 2017 in accordance with the Binational Border Commission and national government priorities to respond to the basic needs of IAAD communities in the two countries. It falls within the framework of the Country Strategic Plans (CSPs).[18] The project represents one of two binational projects operating in the same river basins mentioned above. The **other binational project**, "*Integrated Management of Water Resources of the Mira-Mataje and Carchi-Guaitara, Colombia–Ecuador Binational Basins*", is financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) with a total amount of USD 3.85 million for the period 2021 to 2025 and is implemented by the United Nations Development

[11] Departmental Institute of Health of Nariño (2023). Management Report 2023-2.
[12] Colombian Institute for Family Wellbeing (2015). National Nutritional Status Survey 2015. This survey is conducted every five years, but could not be conducted in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
[13] Colombian National Administrative Department of Statistics (2024). Multidimensional Poverty Statistics.
[14] National Planning Department of Colombia (2012). National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change 2016-2030.
[15] Ministry of Environment of Ecuador (2012). National Climate Change Strategy of Ecuador 2012-2025.
[16] Most recent reviews: National Planning Department of Colombia (2021). Voluntary National Review 2021; National Secretariat of Planning of Ecuador (2020). Voluntary National Review 2020.
[17] WFP and AF (2017). Project Document for the Binational Project (Prodoc).
[18] WFP (2022). Ecuador Country Strategic Plan 2023-2027. Strategic Outcome 3, Activity 4 – *Strengthen institutional capacities and provide technical and operational assistance, resources, assets, services and information that better support climate-vulnerable communities and family farmers.* WFP (2021). Colombia Country Strategic Plan 2021-2024. Strategic Outcome 1, Activity 1– *Provide technical support to national and local institutions, and food, technical and production assistance to […] vulnerable communities (including indigenous and Afro-descendant communities) […] equally between men and women, to strengthen resilience, economic integration, adaptation to climate change and analysis in respect of food analysis and nutrition […].*

Programme (**UNDP**). It aims to promote the integrated management of water resources in the same basins, strengthening institutional and management capacities at different levels. In addition, the Food and Agriculture Organization (**FAO**) implements in **Colombia** the project "*Contributing to the Integrated Management of Biodiversity of the Pacific Region of Colombia to Build Peace*", which seeks to mainstream the sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services in vulnerable landscapes of the Colombia's Pacific region.

1.3. Subject being evaluated

14. The binational project has **two objectives**:

i) Reduce climate vulnerabilities of local IAAD communities and the ecosystems they depend on, promoting food security and nutrition and gender equality, and contributing to the construction of peace.

ii) Strengthen adaptive capacities of IAAD communities in the cross-border region and strengthen regional institutions to address the threats posed by climate change.

15. To achieve its objectives, the project has **three main components**:

- *Component 1:* Increase community awareness and knowledge on climate change risks and food security and nutrition (FSN) in two border binational watersheds.
- *Component 2*: Increase binational, institutional and community capacities to sustainably address recurrent climate risks, particularly those that affect FSN.
- *Component 3:* Reduce recurrent climate vulnerabilities through innovative community and ecosystem-driven adaption measures that reduce food insecurity.

16. The project **has not undergone substantial adjustments** in its components but has increased the number of communities supported by the project from 120 originally foreseen in the Prodoc to 173. This was adopted by the Binational Management Committee following an official request of the Awa peoples to include Awa communities who have settled in Putumayo Department (Colombia) and Sucumbíos Province (Ecuador). Currently, the project is supporting 107 communities in Colombia (48 x Indigenous Awa and 59 x Afro-descendant) and 66 communities in Ecuador (28 x Indigenous Awa and 38 x Afro-descendant).

17. Table 1 breaks down the **targeted communities** by municipality, and Figure 1 shows a **map of the intervention area** with the targeted communities in both countries (without the 14 communities approved in February 2024).

Table 1: Number of targeted communities by location and population group

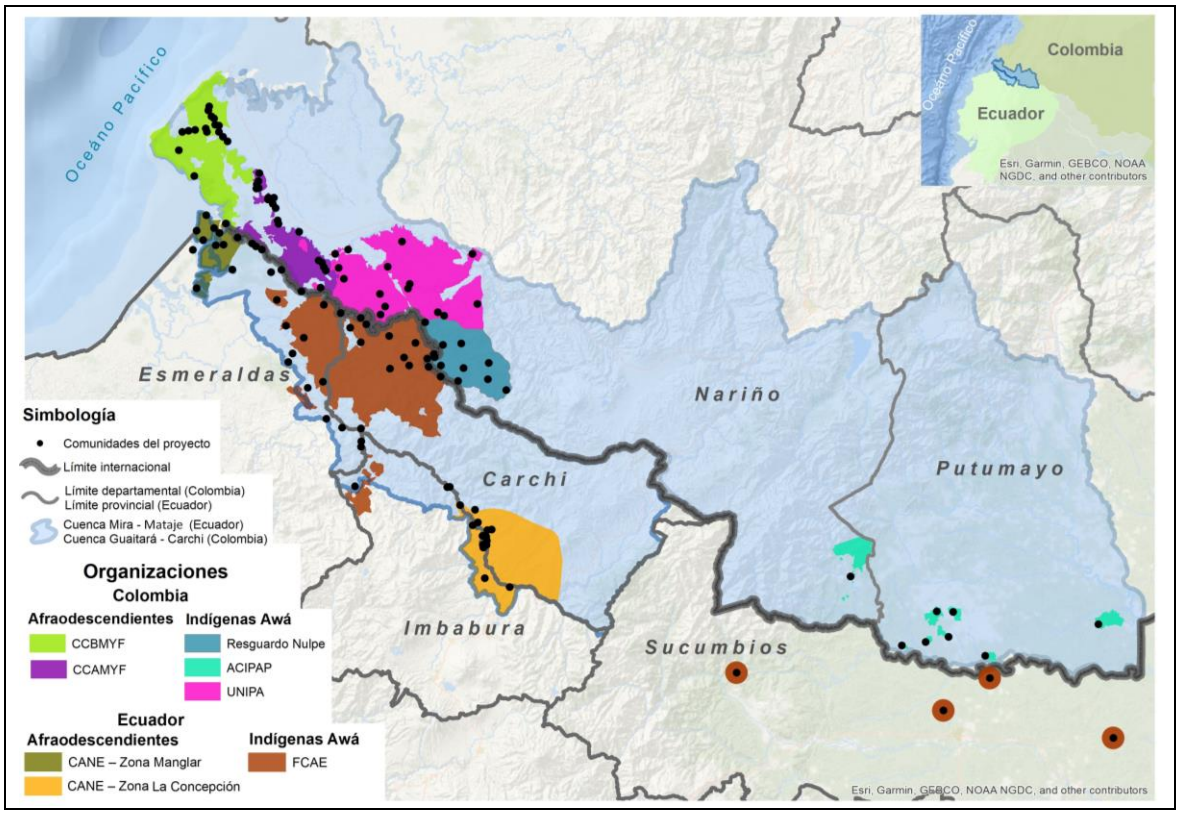
Country	Department or province	Municipality	Indigenous Awa	Afro-descendant
Colombia	Nariño	Barbecues	14	
		Ipiales	1	
		Ricuarte	12	
		Tumaco	14	59 *
	Putumayo	Port Ásis	1	
		Sa Miguel	4	
		Valle del Guamuez	2	
	Subtotal Colombia		**48**	**59**
Ecuador	Carchi	Mira		12
		Tulcán	14	
	Esmeraldas	Eloy Alfaro		1
		San Lorenzo	6	21
	Imbabura	Ibarra	2	4
		Urcuquí	1	

Country	Department or province	Municipality	Indigenous Awa	Afro-descendant
	Sucumbíos	Gonzalo Pizarro	1	
		Lago Agrio	3	
		Shushufindi	1	
	Subtotal Ecuador		**28**	**38**

* Includes 14 communities approved in February 2024.

Source: WFP (2024). List of Targeted Communities of the Binational Project in Colombia and Ecuador.

Figure 1: Binational map of the intervention area



Source: WFP (2024b). Reference Map of the Binational Project for Colombia and Ecuador.

18. The project was designed from 2016, approved in July 2017, and the grant agreement with the donor was signed in November 2017. It initiated its operations in May 2018. Due to implementation delays related to the Covid-19 pandemic, the **duration** of the agreement was extended in July 2022 from initially five years to six and a half years, comprising six years of implementation on the ground (from 3 May 2018 to 3 May 2024) and six months of closure (until 3 November 2024). After the data collection and the first draft report for this evaluation had been finalized, WFP informed the ET that operations on the ground (albeit not the final date of project closure) had been extended by another few months. This extension is not covered in the evaluation report (see Section 1.4).

19. The project has been fully **financed by the Adaptation Fund (AF).**[19] The total budget is USD 14 million, of which 83.2 percent has been allocated to the three project components (USD 1,781,500 to Component 1; USD 1,681,800 to Component 2 and USD 8,320,500 to Component 3). In addition, the original budget included USD 1,119,400 (8 percent) for project management and USD 1,096,800 (7.8 percent) as a fee for WFP in its role as Multilateral Implementing Entity (MIE).[20] The revised budget reallocated USD 270,203 of

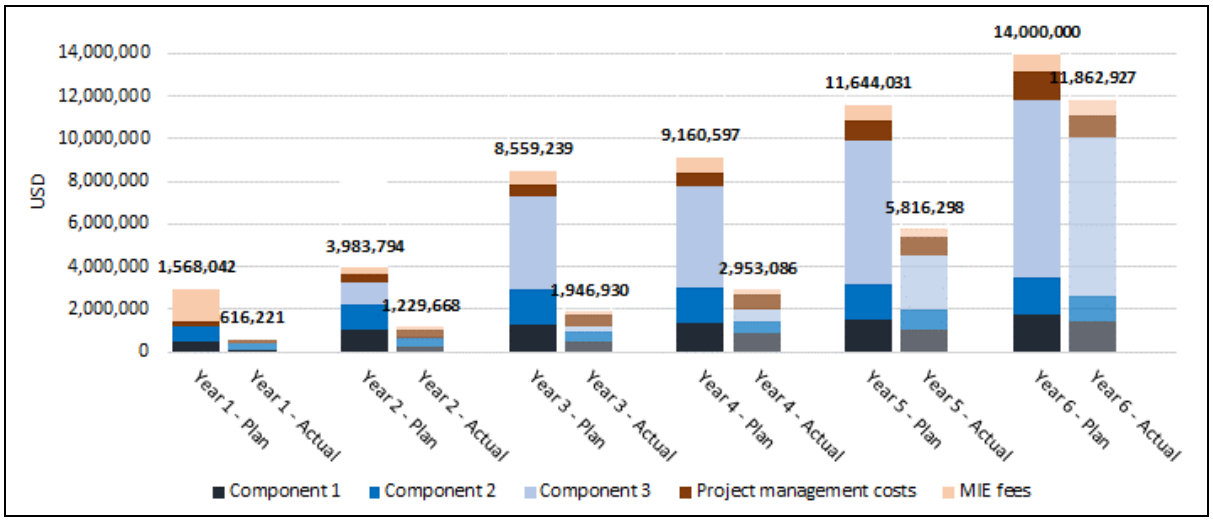
[19] WFP (2019-2023). Annual Project Performance Reports of the Binational Project, Years 1 to 5. In-kind contributions are discussed in EQ 4.

[20] WFP and AF (2017). Project Document for the Binational Project (Prodoc).

the MIE fees to project management costs.[21]

20. Figure 2 below shows the **cumulative budget ('plan') and expenditure ('actual') by project component and year** until 30 April 2024. The budget execution rate was low in the first years of the project due to delays in implementation – see Evaluation Question (EQ) 4 for details – and only accelerated from Year 5 (June 2022). By the end of Year 6 (30 April 2024), 84.7 percent of the budget has been executed.

Figure 2: Cumulative budget and expenditure until 30 April 2024 (by project component and year)



Source: WFP (2024). Budget and expenditure data for the binational project to 30 April 2024.

21. The Prodoc was signed in 2017 by WFP and the two Designated Government Institutions, Minambiente and MAATE. The **management of the project** is coordinated through the Binational Management Committee and the National Steering Committees in both countries, which include representatives from WFP, Minambiente, and MAATE. The responsibilities of these committees include the approval of annual operating plans and monitoring reports and ensuring that the project is aligned with the socio-environmental priorities and policies of the AF. Project coordination at the national level is the responsibility of the two WFP COs and the field offices in Pasto (Colombia) and Ibarra (Ecuador).

22. Project implementation in the IAAD communities is managed directly by their second-tier organizations, which act as **executing entities (EE)** under Field Level Agreements (FLAs) managed by the WFP field offices in Ibarra and Pasto:

Table 2: Executing entities in targeted communities

	Indigenous Awa	Afro-descendants
Colombia	• Indigenous Unity of the Awa People (UNIPA)* • Association of Indigenous Councils of the Awa People of Putumayo (ACIPAP)* • Resguardo Nulpe Medio Alto Río San Juan of the Cabildo Mayor Awa of Ricaurte* • Community Councils of Bajo/Alto Mira and Frontera (CCBMYF/CCAMYF)	• The Network of Southern Pacific Community Councils (RECOMPAS)
Ecuador	• Federation of Awa Centers of Ecuador (FCAE) *	• Afro-Ecuadorian Region of Northern Esmeraldas (CANE)

* Organizations that are members of the Great Binational Awa Family (GFAB).

23. The Prodoc does not contain the **Theory of Change** (ToC), but it was constructed in the mid-term review (MTR) through a consultative process with stakeholders.[22] In its review of the ToC reconstructed during

[21] WFP and AF (2022). Approved Request and Budget for Extension of the Binational Project.
[22] WFP (2023). Mid-term Review of the Binational Project – Reconstructed Theory of Change.

the MTR in 2023, the ET found that the ToC would require further adjustments to: (i) explicitly mention the barriers to advancing ACC, FSN and risk management at all levels; (ii) clarify the causal linkages between barriers, responses (outputs), immediate and final expected results and on the desired impact of the project, as well as clarify their estimated timeframe; (iii) explicitly show the assumptions, external risks and cross-cutting priorities of the project. The new version of the ToC was then subject to three main participatory reviews with WFP staff in Colombia and Ecuador, in order to produce the final version of the ToC in Annex III.

24. The **results framework** in the Prodoc formulates one objective for each of the three project components and includes two outcomes per objective, as well as a total of 17 outputs (see Annex IV). The quality of the project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system and plan are assessed under EQ 5.2.

25. According to the Prodoc, the project aims to reach 19,868 **direct beneficiaries** (10,144 women – 51.1 percent; split by project component not indicated).[23] According to data compiled by WFP until 31 December 2023,[24] 25,987 direct beneficiaries were reached (13,570 women – 52.2 percent), of which 9,958/489/15,540 in components 1/2/3 respectively.

26. The project has been designed and implemented emphasizing the importance of integrating **gender equality and intercultural approaches** in all workshops and trainings associated with the implementation of project activities. In these spaces, it makes visible, recognizes, and values the work of women in their households and aims to contribute to their empowerment. The project's GEWE approach draws on **various gender equality analyses**. First, a rapid assessment of gender equality in the IAAD was conducted to support the formulation of the Prodoc. Second, gender gap assessments were conducted in Ecuador through an agreement with UN Women in 2019, which included a survey of knowledge, attitudes and practices to identify gender equality gaps and analysis of common and differential aspects of the project's target groups. In Colombia a gender equality analysis was conducted, and its recommendations were incorporated into the FLAs signed with the EE.[25] Third, participatory meetings and appraisals were held to identify gender sensitive support strategies, promote diplomas on gender equality, and guide the development of a module on gender equality in WFP's Equifami training platform in 2020.

27. In terms of **previous evaluations and reviews**, the binational project was assessed through a **mid-term review (MTR)** completed in February 2023.[26] The MTR concluded that the project was highly relevant to the needs of the IAAD populations and contributed to GEWE and to strengthening the capacities of EE for the implementation of measures for adaptation to climate change (ACC). However, binational coordination and synergies were limited, the M&E framework was too complex, and implementation had been further delayed because some risks had not been adequately identified and addressed in the design phase, and because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, the MTR formulated six recommendations aimed to (i) ensure successful project completion (strengthen project governance and coordination at the binational and national level, accelerate the execution of the project, strengthen project visibility); (ii) improve M&E (strengthen the implementation of the M&E strategy, adjust the array of indicators); and (iii) enhance sustainability (prioritize sustainability actions of adaptation measures).

28. In addition to the MTR, the binational project was briefly considered in the evaluations of the CSPs for Ecuador (2017-2021)[27] and Colombia (2017-2021 and 2021-2024)[28]. In Ecuador, a final evaluation of the **intervention prior to the binational project**, the FORECCSA project ("*Strengthening the resilience of communities to the adverse effects of climate change with emphasis on food security and gender considerations in the Jubones river basin and the province of Pichincha*") was carried out. FORECCSA ended in 2018.[29]

[23] WFP and AF (2017). Project Document for the Binational Project (Prodoc).
[24] WFP (2024). Beneficiary and expenditure data by output until 31 December 2023. Since this specific source (unlike official reports of total beneficiaries) presents data separately for each output, the total of 25,987 beneficiaries obtained by summing data across all outputs does not necessarily represent *unique* beneficiaries.
[25] WFP (2023). Mid-term Review of the Binational Project.
[26] WFP (2023). Mid-term Review of the Binational Project.
[27] WFP (2022). Evaluati on of the Ecuador Country Strategic Plan 2017-2021.
[28] WFP (2023). Evaluation of the Colombia Country Strategic Plans 2017-2021 and 2021-2024.
[29] WFP (2018). FORECCSA Project: Final Evaluation.

1.4. Evaluation methodology, limitations, and ethical considerations

29. The evidence presented in Section 2 responds to eight evaluation questions and criteria:

Table 3: Overview of evaluation criteria and high-level EQs

AF evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
Coherence	**EQ 1**: Is the project still aligned with the policies and priorities of each country, its binational mechanisms, the Adaptation Fund, relevant international agreements, and other similar interventions on the ground?
Relevance	**EQ 2:** How has the design and implementation of the project responded to the context, needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and the governments of Colombia and Ecuador?
Effectiveness	**EQ 3:** What results (expected and unexpected) has the binational project achieved or contributed to achieving?
Efficiency	**EQ 4**: How efficient and timely has the collaboration and coordination been between the two country offices, government entities and other partners, at different levels, been?
Adaptive management	**EQ 5:** To what extent has the project adapted to the context and to the lessons and learning identified during its implementation?
Equity	**EQ 6:** To what extent were the gender and intercultural perspectives integrated in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project?
Sustainability and human and ecological security	**EQ 7**: To what extent has the project adopted mechanisms during its implementation to ensure the sustainability of the results?
Scalability	**EQ 8:** What is the potential of the project to scale adaptation to climate variability and change?

30. The **detailed evaluation matrix** in Annex V presents these eight EQs with their sub-questions, indicators, data sources, data collection and analysis methods, and triangulation strategies. The matrix constituted the main analytical framework for data collection and analysis and the presentation of findings in Section 2. In the inception phase, the ET regrouped and rephrased the sub-questions proposed in the ToR – without substantially changing the thematic scope – to sharpen the analytical focus of the evaluation and strengthen the storyline in the presentation of findings. The evaluability assessment conducted in the inception phase did not lead to important changes in the EQs and sub-questions.

31. This evaluation has adopted a **theory-based**, **mixed-methods approach** that combines 'conventional' performance evaluation with appreciative inquiry (AI). The reconstructed **Theory of Change** (ToC) in Annex III served as a theoretical basis for both the performance evaluation and AI.

32. The **performance evaluation** combined available quantitative M&E data on output and outcomes with stakeholder perceptions of the extent to which the expected results were achieved or not, and how the project contributed to results. This analysis of contribution was guided by the ToC, which describes the expected (causal) results chain towards transformational changes. Specifically, EQ 2 (relevance) can be linked to the 'Barriers (2017-2018)' displayed in the ToC, while the effectiveness analysis in EQ 3 largely corresponds to the levels 'Responses (2019-2024)', 'Immediate Results (2024)', and the initial phase of 'Final Results (2024-2026)'. The expected 'Impacts (2026-2030)' projected in the ToC provided guidance for the sustainability analysis in EQ 7.

33. While the conventional performance evaluation is well aligned to the results framework of the binational project, it does not fully consider how the cultures, cosmovision, and communities of IAAD people affected the generation, use, and perception of project results. Therefore, the ET decided to complement the assessment of results in IAAD beneficiary populations through **appreciative inquiry (AI)**. The AI approach sought to determine whether the changes expected in the ToC and identified in the performance evaluation (especially the plans for local adaptation to climate change) have been in line with the strengths, desires, and life plans of target communities and resulted in the empowerment of women and men of different ages, as

well as the preservation of their own cosmovision, way of life and rights. AI has primarily informed the findings on effectiveness (EQ 3), equity (EQ 6), and scalability (EQ 8). The AI approach comprises four phases:

i) Discovery – Identify the strengths of the community based on what has worked well in the past.
ii) Dream – Identify and envision opportunities.
iii) Design – Develop action plans and create a mission for achieving changes/fulfilling dreams.
iv) Destination – Commit the community to sustain the changes.

34. The ET tailored the generic AI approach to the IAAD communities and developed a standard format for 'rapid AI' community workshops (described further below in this section) that covered the four phases. The workshops not only generated evidence but were implemented in a highly **participatory format** with feedback in both directions. Participants were given the opportunity to express their dreams and life plans orally and through drawings while ET members guided the development of action plans based on the internal strengths and project results identified by the community members.

35. The overarching evaluation approaches described before were informed through a set of **mixed methods for data collection and analysis**. The ET combined qualitative methods of primary data collection with a review of qualitative and quantitative secondary data and documents. Table 4 summarizes the extent to which the different data collection methods inform each EQ. The evaluation matrix in Annex V includes the data sources and data collection methods at the sub-question level. The combination of different data collection methods and sources facilitated systematic triangulation.

Table 4: Overview of qualitative (QLI) and quantitative (QTI) methods of data collection by EQ

Method			EQ 1/2 Coherence Relevance	EQ 3 Effectiveness	EQ 4/5 Efficiency Adaptive management	EQ 6 Equity	EQ 7 Sustainability, human and ecological security	EQ 8 Scalability
QLI		Review of documents	■	■	■		■	
	Primary data	Semi-structured interviews	■	■	■		■	■
		Rapid AI workshops		■		■		■
		Indigenous storytelling				■		
		Direct observation		■				
QTI		Review of quantitative M&E data		■	■			
		■ *Primary method for given EQ*		*Secondary method for given EQ*				

A. Review of existing M&E documents and data

36. The ET compiled and reviewed key documents and data related to the project, which are included in the full bibliography listed in Annex X. The main secondary sources of **qualitative information** include the ProDoc, the mid-term review, documents on project governance, the narratives of the baselines, annual project performance reports (PPRs) and other M&E reports from WFP and the EE, as well as national policies. The main sources of **quantitative data** were baseline studies, annual monitoring/progress reports (PPRs), and financial data.

B. Primary data collection

37. The gaps identified in the available documents and data were reduced through primary data collection in Colombia, Ecuador, and at distance. The **field mission** in the two countries took place from 1 to 25 April 2024. In coordination with the two COs, the field mission was scheduled to finalize before the planned end of project operations on the ground (3 May 2024). After the mission (and submission of the draft evaluation report), the project decided to extend its operations by a few months. Annex VIII presents the mission schedule in compact format, including the urban and rural locations visited, and the types of key informants interviewed (in urban areas) and other data collection activities (in rural communities). The schedule shows that the geographic sample was diverse, and that a wide range of stakeholders were consulted. The methods of primary data collection listed in Table 4 are briefly described in the following.

38. During the inception and data collection missions, the ET conducted **semi-structured interviews**

with 91 key informants (41 women and 50 men) in Bogotá, Pasto, Quito, Ibarra, other urban locations, and virtually. Annex VI summarizes the number of interviewees by stakeholder group (replicated in the following list), organization, country, and sex:

- WFP (field offices, both COs, RBP, and global headquarters – 40 interviewees).
- Executing entities and their partners (21).
- Donor and a UN agency (2).
- National government institutions (12).
- Local government institutions (14).
- Universities (2).

39. The interview topics guides for WFP staff, EE, and the public sector (which comprises the other four stakeholder groups) are presented in Annex VII (Table 13).

40. Structured data collection from beneficiaries was primarily done through **'rapid' AI workshops** in half a dozen (mostly Indigenous Awa) communities. The decision to conduct one workshop per community was taken after it proved logistically too difficult and too costly in terms of time and human resources to organize inter-community workshops (except in one cluster of communities). After a first 'pilot' workshop with presence of all ET members, the subsequent workshops were facilitated by the national experts and usually lasted two hours. The facilitators used the worksheet presented in Annex VII (Table 12) to apply the four phases of AI. In the second AI phase ('Dream'), participants were invited in smaller groups to draw their visions for the community on paper and later present the results to the workshop audience (between 20 and 40 direct and indirect beneficiaries divided by sex). Workshop participants in Indigenous Awa communities used both Spanish and Awapit language.

41. Complementary to AI workshops, the national expert specialized in indigenous populations met with senior knowledge holders, traditional healers, and sages. Through **'indigenous storytelling'**, these individuals would share the constructed narrative, traditions, legends, and myths of their cultures (sometimes accompanied by interpreters of Awapit (Indigenous Awa) or by songs called *arrullos* (Afro-descendant storytellers). The storytelling thus adopted the cultures' oral traditions to gather information on IAAD people's cosmovision and values. This helped the ET to contextualize the data collected through other methods in a culturally appropriate way, especially regarding the recovery of ancestral knowledge and practices analyzed in EQ 6. The storytelling guide is presented in Annex VII.

42. Finally, the evaluation team **directly observed** some of the project components, such as biodiverse plots (PIR)/biodiverse gardens (HB), kitchen gardens/canoe gardens (known as canoeras), water supply systems, the Climate Change Information and Monitoring System (SMICC), tree nurseries, and mangrove restoration. Throughout their itineraries in the communities, the ET also carried out **shorter unstructured interviews** (individually or in small groups) with direct beneficiaries, other community members, or EE field staff at project sites or in beneficiary households. These interviews are not included in Annex VI.

43. While the ET interviewed key informants from all primary (and several secondary) stakeholder organizations, it was necessary to select **samples at the level of communities and beneficiaries.** Box 1 describes the two-stage sampling strategy.

Box 1: Selection of communities and participants in AI workshops

Stage 1 – selection of targeted communities

Communities were used as "primary sampling units" and purposively (i.e. non-randomly) selected according to the following criteria:

(i) Sufficiently safe for a visit considering the presence of irregular groups on both sides of the border

(ii) Located less than 30 minutes of walking distance from the nearest road

(iii) From the communities satisfying (i) and (ii), select a sample that would be balanced in the two population groups and sufficiently diverse in terms of project activities and ecosystems.

Based on these criteria, the WFP field offices in Ibarra and Pasto proposed a sample of communities in each country, which was discussed and adjusted in consultation with the ET. Communities that

participated in rapid AI workshops and indigenous storytelling were visited for at least half a day, while visits to other communities were shorter and focused on direct observation and informal interviews.

The ET did not visit the department of Putumayo in Colombia and the province of Sucumbíos in Ecuador because of time constraints and the relatively low number of target communities in these regions. However, the ET conducted virtual interviews with EE and local government from these regions.

Stage 2 – sampling of participants in AI workshops within communities

For practical reasons, workshop participants were not selected randomly but were mobilized by the project's focal points in the communities based on criteria established by the ET (balanced gender and age composition, coverage of different project activities). Each workshop was attended by about 20-30 participants from both sexes (before women and men were assigned to separate rooms) and typically included direct and indirect beneficiaries of all project outputs implemented within the communities.

44. In the data analysis, the ET used different strategies to **triangulate the data** in an internal workshop in Quito and throughout the subsequent reporting phase:

- Triangulation of *qualitative and quantitative* data on the same evaluation sub-questions.
- Triangulation of *primary and secondary* data on the same sub-questions.
- Triangulation of *different stakeholder* views on the same issues.
- Triangulation of evidence collected by *different members of the evaluation team* on the same evaluation sub-questions.

45. Findings and recommendations were discussed (i) with internal stakeholders in a virtual debriefing and preliminary findings session two weeks after the end of the mission, and (ii) with both internal and external stakeholders in a virtual workshop for learning and co-creation of recommendations.

46. **Inclusion and equity** were considered and mainstreamed in all stages of the evaluation, including the evaluation design, data collection, and findings – most visibly in EQ 6 (equity), which discusses **gender, age, intercultural perspectives, and right-based approaches**. The AI approach and workshops, and indigenous storytelling, were introduced and adapted to capture the cosmovision of IAAD communities, allowing participants to employ different forms of verbal and non-verbal communication (such as focus group style, drawings, sharing of oral traditions, use of Awapit language). Participation of women in data collection was particularly encouraged. WFP organized children's corners while mothers attended the AI workshops, and workshop participants were divided by gender into breakout rooms to ensure women (especially Indigenous Awa) felt comfortable in expressing their views. Transport and meals were provided to participants to foster equal participation in terms of economic status, gender, and age. Several body-disabled persons participated in the workshops as well. These considerations also addressed the principle of equitable and gender-sensitive inclusion enshrined in the AF Evaluation Policy[30].

47. **Ethical issues** were considered in line with WFP's requirement that decentralized evaluations must conform to WFP and United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) ethical standards and norms. The contractors undertaking the evaluations are responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent; protecting privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants; ensuring cultural sensitivity; respecting the autonomy of participants; ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups); and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities.

48. Specific ethical issues in this evaluation were related to:

- *Interculturality* (ensuring that voices of IAAD people would be sufficiently considered and understood). During the inception mission, interviews were conducted with a few EE, which represent IAAD communities, to consider their voices in the evaluation design (evaluation sub-questions, AI methodology, and data collection strategy). During the visits to communities, the ET was accompanied by representatives of the EE to ensure participants felt comfortable and were

[30] AF (2022). Evaluation Policy of the Adaptation Fund. The principle requires that evaluation methods and tools are designed and used to ensure that data collection is sex-disaggregated and culturally sensitive. It also requires the participation of the most vulnerable segments of communities and the incorporation of indigenous and local knowledge.

informed about the purpose of data collection. Participants in AI workshops were fairly and equally recruited from both population groups, with particular attention to providing safe spaces for indigenous women (as previously described).

- *Do no harm* (not posing at risk the security of participants during or after data collection). The ET relied on real-time security information from WFP field staff and IAAD focal points in the communities to discard data collection in unsafe locations and avoid that participants would be exposed to safety risks related to the presence of irregular groups. Moreover, participants were informed that their participation would be voluntary and anonymous, and they could withdraw from the data collection at any time without negative consequences. When filming the video, the statement of informed consent of people appearing in the video was recorded.

49. Finally, the ET faced several limitations in applying the evaluation methodology, which were only partially mitigated (see Table 5).

Table 5: Methodological limitations of the evaluation

Methodological limitations	Mitigation strategy
The intervention turned out to have been implemented essentially as two national projects (see EQ 5) with two distinct sets of stakeholders. This put a strain on the resources planned for the evaluation of one binational project.	The data collection strategy, synthesis, and presentation of findings was 'stratified' by country and the field mission slightly extended relative to the original plan.
Insecurity and long travel distances to remote and dispersed communities (not aided by the lack of a binational map during the planning of field visits) meant that only a limited number of communities could be visited, and that communities with difficult access were slightly underrepresented in the sample.	The ET and WFP worked together on selecting the sample of communities that could be visited in the field and secured its agreement to accompany the ET members in the field to enhance security, control all logistical needs, and ensure both women and men attended the interviews and workshops. Data on non-accessible communities was collected through the interviews with the EE, second level organizations and WFP project staff.
Provisional annual M&E data were provided to the ET prior to and during the field mission, but consolidated data for both countries was provided in May 2024. Analysis of the M&E data also proved complex due to the fact the project reports on 118 indicators.	The second version of the evaluation report replaced provisional/missing data drawn from the draft version of PPR-5 (to December 2023) and used the data provided in May 2024 instead to triangulate its findings, which in some cases had to be reworked following updates on expenditure rates, on women's participation (which was much higher in Ecuador than originally reported) and so forth. Qualitative data collected by the ET during the field mission was used to assess how far the project was delivering change in line with the ToC reworked in Annex III to complement the M&E data provided.
The last months of operations on the ground do not fall within the scope of this evaluation as the decision to extend the operations was only taken by WFP after the data collection mission and submission of the draft evaluation report.	Followed the initial scope defined in the ToR/agreed in the inception phase to avoid that the scope/subject of the evaluation would become a moving target. Therefore, the analytical findings in this report provide a snapshot shortly before operations on the ground ended.
As suggested in the reconstructed ToC in Annex III, the evaluation took place too early to observe the long-term effects of the intervention. The impact criterion was thus excluded from the evaluation scope.	Some long-term perspectives were captured through AI workshops and discussed in key informant interviews and in the assessment of sustainability (EQ 7) and scalability (EQ 8).

2. Evaluation findings

2.1. EQ 1 – COHERENCE: Is the project still aligned with the policies and priorities of each country, its binational mechanisms, the Adaptation Fund, relevant international agreements and other similar interventions on the ground?

The project maintains a highly satisfactory level of alignment with relevant international agreements and the current legislative framework of the national governments of Colombia and Ecuador associated with climate action, food security and nutrition, and restoration of degraded ecosystems and watersheds. Similarly, it remains compliant with the priorities and principles of the Adaptation Fund (AF) and WFP's latest Strategic Plan 2022-2025. In contrast, the project's alignment with binational priorities, agreements and initiatives established in the Prodoc has shifted since the project's inception workshop in part due to changes in political priorities of both countries, the design of the project's governance structure, the fact WFPs Country Offices in Colombia and Ecuador have different mandates, and some key binational institutions, such as the Great Binational Awa Family (GFAB), lack legal status. To mitigate this, the EE were invited to participate in the project's binational meetings in the period 2018-2020, which facilitated the signing of the FLAs. However, implementation delays (caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and other factors) have resulted in the intensification of project activities that justify the need for a strong national focus to the project's administration and implementation. As such, the project's coherence with binational agreements, including those in operation at the subnational level, or with similar interventions operating in the Mira-Mataje and Carchi-Guaitara River basins has been low in the post-pandemic period (2023-2024).

50. Coherence with international agreements, the priorities and guidelines of the Adaptation Fund (AF) and World Food Programme (WFP) and the latest legislative framework of the national governments of Colombia and Ecuador dedicated to upholding human rights, climate action and reducing environmental degradation was all found to be satisfactory. In particular, the final evaluation triangulated satisfactory levels of coherence with:

- **The Sustainable Development Goals** (SDG) for 2015-2030. The project directly contributes to achieving targets under SDG 2, SDG 5, SDG 13, SDG 15 and SDG 16.
- **The Paris Agreement** (2015) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), all Parties are required to reduce national emissions and adapt to climate change in accordance with nationally determined contributions. In addition, the Paris Agreement enables the governments of Colombia and Ecuador to engage in initiatives such the Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.[31]
- **The Convention on Biological Diversity** (CBD, 1993) which calls for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. The project also complies with CBD's Global Biodiversity Framework (2023-2050), most notably Targets 1, 2 and 3[32]
- **The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction** (2015-2030), which calls for an increase in the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments to people by 2030, and has precipitated the UN's Early warnings for all (EW4All) initiative of in 2022.[33]

[31] UNFCCC/REDD+ (2023). Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation – Colombia and Ecuador.
[32] CBD (2023). CBD Global Biodiversity Framework.
[33] UNDRR (2022). Early Warnings for All (EW4All).

- The revised version of **AF's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP, 2016)**[34], in particular its Environmental and Social Principles in Section B, where project upholds the principles of fair, equitable and inclusive access to the benefits derived from the project, GEWE, protection and conservation of natural habitats and biodiversity, and addressing the drivers of climate change, among others.
- **WFP's Strategic Plan (2022-2025).**[35] The project aligns with the expected outcomes in WFP's latest Strategic Plan, that promotes globally: (i) people are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs; (ii) specific emphasis is given to vulnerable groups, (iii) protecting, restoring, creating and enhancing key assets and basic infrastructure that support livelihoods, food security and nutrition of the most vulnerable; (iv) support preparedness and linking early warning to anticipatory and early action to reduce the impact of shocks on development gains.
- **The National Constitutions of Colombia (1991) and Ecuador (2008)**, which underpin the project's rights-based and GEWE approaches of the project and justify the project's three main components in relation to the following Articles in the Colombian Constitution: Articles 57, 79, 80 and 82. In the Ecuadorian Constitution they comply with: Articles 71, 72 and 74.
- **The latest National Development Plans of both countries**. In Colombia the National Development Plan (2023-2026)[36] contains five priority areas that include land use management around water and environmental justice, guaranteeing the right to food security, nutrition and food sovereignty and enhancing climate action. In Ecuador the National Plan for the Creation of Opportunities (2021-2025)[37] contains five main axes, which include a social axis in which one of the main objectives is to generate new opportunities and welfare in rural areas, especially peoples and nationalities of indigenous origin and Afro-Ecuadorians.
- **National plans dedicated to adaptation to climate change** (ACC). In line with the Paris Agreement of the UNFCCC, Colombia's National Climate Change Policy (2017)[38], and National Adaptation Plan[39], call for ACC to be fully incorporated into environmental, territorial and sectoral planning processes to reduce the vulnerability of populations, ecosystems and productive systems and increase social, economic and ecosystem capacity to respond to climatic events and disasters. All 23 regional governments must produce climate action plans, which in Nariño Department is called the Comprehensive Plan for Territorial Climate Change Management 2019-2035 (CPTCCM).[40] In Ecuador, ACC is guided by the National Strategy on Climate Change (2012-2025)[41], implemented through the National Plan on Adaptation to Climate Change 2023-2027. This plan requires ACC to be integrated in national, sectoral and local government Land use development plans (PDOT) to combat climate change on society, the economy and on the environment. Specific objectives include enhancing access and use of historical and future climate and ocean information, and integrating gender-sensitive adaptation measures in development planning at all levels.
- **Sector policies, strategies and plans associated with the restoration, conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems and disaster risk management**. In Colombia, the National Plan for Ecological Restoration, Rehabilitation and Recovery of Degraded Areas 2015-2025 fully recognizes the importance of restoration of degraded lands to support ACC as well as enhance mitigation through carbon sequestration.[42] Similarly, the updated National Plan for Disaster Risk Management

[34] AF (2016). Environmental and Social Policy.
[35] WFP (2021). WFP Strategic Plan 2022-2025.
[36] National Planning Department (2023) of Colombia. National Development Plan 2023-2026.
[37] National Planning Secretariat of Ecuador (2021). In March 2024, the "National Plan for a New Ecuador 2024-2025" was officially adopted.
[38] Minambiente (2017). National Climate Change Policy.
[39] National Planning Department of Colombia (2016). National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change – Lines of Priority Actions.
[40] Gobernación de Nariño (2019). Comprehensive Plan for Territorial Climate Change Management 2019-2035.
[41] Ministry of Environment of Ecuador (2012). National Climate Change Strategy of Ecuador 2012-2025.
[42] Minambiente (2015). National Plan for Ecological Restoration, Rehabilitation and Recovery of Degraded Areas 2015-2025.

(2015-2030) recognizes ACC measures must form an integral part of development and land use planning at all levels in Colombia.[43] In Ecuador, the National Forest Restoration Plan (2019-2030)[44] fully recognizes the importance of enhancing environmental conservation to protect the country's watersheds and their services, while the National Plan for Risk Reduction in Ecuador (2023-2030) is seen by the Government of Ecuador as a key planning instrument to enhance resilience to climate change and sustain the country's abovementioned National Plan for the Creation of Opportunities. However, one important caveat is the general lack of alignment of the project with the agriculture, livestock, and fisheries sector policies of both countries. This is despite the fact IAAD communities are highly dependent on these sectors and experience some of the highest levels of rural poverty and inequality nationally.[45]

51. The project's level of alignment with binational priorities, agreements and initiatives identified in the design phase and stipulated in the Prodoc, such as the Binational Plan for Border Integration 2014-2022 and the development of the Neighbor and Integration Commission (p.38), was found to be satisfactory at the time of endorsement by the AF in 2017. However, during the project's inception workshop in 2018, the project has taken up a stronger national approach to its planning, implementation and monitoring. Stakeholders agreed that the administration and implementation of the project was best suited to a national approach for the following reasons: (i) the project's governance structure which delegates important decision-making on the project's administration and implementation to National Steering and Technical Committees (see Figure 3); (ii) the change in national governments in Ecuador (2017) and Colombia (2018), who no longer saw binational cooperation as a priority; (iii) the lack of legal status of binational institutions, such as the Great Binational Awa Family (GFAB). In addition, the logistical challenges of operating in isolated and often insecure IAAD communities at the cross-border were considered too high to apply an effective binational approach. However, to help retain coherence at the binational level, the EE, (on their request) were invited to participate in the project's bi-national meetings. This decision appears to have been instrumental in facilitating the signing of FLAs with the EE, as well as enabling the the GFAB's permanent assembly to meet annually to discuss the planning and implementation of the project's main activities in their communities between 2018-2020.

52. However, this approach engaged the EE in both training and decision-making roles that, together with the Covid-19 pandemic between 2020-2022, contributed to implementation delays. In the interests of intensifying the project's implementation in an extension period of 18 months between 2023-2024, the project strengthened its national implementation approach. This development has resulted in lower levels of coherence with binational agreements operating at the subnational level, as well as with other donor-funded interventions operating in, or adjacent, to the project's intervention area and dedicated to ACC, landscape restoration and watershed management. For example, coherence with the project, *Integrated Management of Water Resources of the Mira-Mataje and Carchi-Guaitara, Colombia–Ecuador Binational Basins*, funded by GEF, executed by MAATE and Minambiente (with the support of the Colombian Institute for Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM), Corponariño, the Ecuadorian National Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (INAMHI), and Commonwealth of Northern Ecuador), and implemented by UNDP from 2021 was found to limited to three meetings on information exchanges, which concluded collaboration was not possible because each project had different approaches.[46] Meanwhile, evidence of synergies with other projects at the national level is evident in Colombia, in particular with the project *Contributing to the Integrated Management of Biodiversity of the Pacific Region of Colombia to Build Peace*, implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).[47] This has included FAO providing guidance on the application of the ethno-botanical studies conducted and an agreement to apply a coordinated approach to mangrove restoration in adjacent areas to the binational project's mangrove restoration actions in the Lower Mira River Basin. Moreover, the project's restoration efforts directly support the National Integrated Management District (DNMI) Cabo Mangroves that was created by the National Natural Parks of Colombia in 2018 to

[43] National System for Disaster Risk Management (2022). National Plan for Disaster Risk Management 2015-2030.
[44] MAATE (2019). National Forest Restoration Plan 2019-2030.
[45] This is demonstrated in Section II – Challenges in rural Colombia – of: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Colombia (2019). Agricultural and Rural Development Policy 2018-2022.
[46] GEF (2024). Project Database.
[47] GEF (2024). Project Database.

conserve 190,282 ha of mangroves in the border region of Nariño Department to establish a biological corridor with the Mangrove Ecological Reserve Cayapas Mataje (REMACAM) in Ecuador, and which have management plans.[48]

2.2. EQ 2 – RELEVANCE: How has the design and implementation of the project responded to the context, needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and the governments of Colombia and Ecuador?

Responding to the needs of the IAAD communities: The project remains highly relevant to the IAAD communities and their organizations in combatting the growing effects of climate change and environmental degradation that threaten their livelihoods and wellbeing. This is well demonstrated through their active engagement in Community-based Participatory Planning (CBPP), the elaboration of Plans for Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) (including PACC at Community Level – PACCC) and selection of one ACC measure per community.

Responding to context/needs and priorities of the governments of Colombia and Ecuador: the project's response to contextual changes at all government levels has been mixed and this contributed to over-stretching resources and delaying the implementation of the ACC measures. The contribution of the project to delivering legislative reforms at the national, sector and subnational levels relating to livelihoods and climate action and (outputs 6 y 7) has been limited, with little concrete evidence so far that the PACC and innovative approaches to developing ACC measures in vulnerable communities have been integrated into relevant country/local development plans and policies and advance adaptation efforts in Colombia and Ecuador.

EQ 2.1: To what extent does the binational project respond to the needs and priorities of the target population in the intervention area, especially the most vulnerable groups, in terms of climate change adaptation, food security and gender?

53. The evaluation team (ET) is satisfied that the project has been designed to respond to the specific needs and interests of the IAAD communities confront the growing effects of climate variability and change and environmental degradation that threatens their livelihoods. This is also evident in the Prodoc (p.51), which confirms WFP consulted extensively with leaders of the EE of the Great Binational Awa Family (GFAB), the Afro-Ecuadorian Region of Northern Esmeraldas (CANE), Ecuador, and the Network of Southern Pacific Community Councils (RECOMPAS), in Colombia. The Prodoc also confirms that IAAD leaders participated in the review of the pre-concept and concept notes of the project to ensure it responded to their priorities and capacities, as well as captured the views of different vulnerable groups such as elders, women and youths. A review of documents, maps, studies and interviews conducted in the field provide compelling evidence that the project's relevance among the IAAD communities was enhanced during the inception and implementation phase thanks to the following developments:

- **It prioritized support to the most vulnerable communities in both countries.** This was achieved by, first, conducting a participatory baseline study conducted between 2018-2019, which was further broken down to identify the most vulnerable groups in these communities. Second, thematic maps were produced to support the identification of the most vulnerable to climatic events. Third, inclusive community-based participatory planning (CBPP) exercises supported the identification of the ACC measures to be prioritized for the most vulnerable families (single-parent households, people with disabilities and independent elders who could manage the workload associated with ACC measures).
- **It placed heavy emphasis on strengthening the internal capacity of the EE to directly manage ACC plans and measures**. There is a high level of consensus that the project's approach to direct implementation through IAAD organizations fully meets their aspirations to retain control over their territories and defend their rights of self-determination. This was particularly evident in Ecuador, where FCAE and CANE have been strengthened to manage the provision of safe drinking in highly vulnerable communities. Furthermore, ongoing training to establish community-based local

[48] Minambiente/National Natural Parks of Colombia (2018); MAATE/National System of Protected Areas (2015).

governance committees, or water boards under FCAE and CANE respectively are seen by the EE as highly relevant in delivering attitudinal change, because the users participate in the setting of the water tariff, thus facilitating a shift in perception that access to safe water is a benefit, rather than a cost, given the cost of the water tariff is less than the time and money spent fetching clean water each day.

- **It demonstrated that nature-based solutions, such as restoration, conservation and protection of forest and water resources, are highly relevant measures to reducing vulnerability and adapting livelihoods to climate variability and change**. Overall, perception has grown among IAAD communities that these activities are not considered as tree planting exercises, but rather livelihood restoration exercises. The project's emphasis on recovering local knowledge (component 1) was found to be, therefore, highly relevant in developing local responses to ACC. For example, some Afro-descendant interviewees in Colombia confirmed that the success to restoring degraded mangroves is the "replanting" of local biodiversity (black clams, crabs, etc. taken from mangrove forests that are intact in the border area with Ecuador). Similarly, forest conservation sites in Ecuador have facilitated the establishment of ritual and conservation sites, agreement on hunting, fishing and gathering zones, areas apt for agroforestry and livestock, etc.
- **It facilitated learning on the role local knowledge on plants can play in enhancing food security and nutrition as part of the adaptation process**. The perception among the majority of IAAD communities interviewed is that the ethno-botanical studies are considered highly relevant in identifying forgotten local food sources to support and diversify their food security. However, the evidence collected in the field indicates that these studies are far more relevant in terms of: (i) rekindling local identity, practices and well-being; (ii) providing new opportunities to source local food, rather than having to buy it, which correlates to saving time and money; (iii) identifying ways to enhance the education of youths who have generally lost contact with their past and traditions and who are becoming increasingly dependent on a limited number of foodstuffs.

54. However, in the light of the findings under EQ1, in particular the adoption of a strong national-based approach to intensifying the project's implementation from 2023 to date, the project's relevance in terms of addressing the historical exclusion and lack of integration of the needs and priorities of the IAAD communities in statutory planning processes has been low. Indeed, the application of WFP's 'Three-pronged approach' (3-PA)[49] with the IAAD communities mainly focused on strengthening the internal capacity of the EE and its communities, but not on addressing these barriers, especially among the Afro-descendant communities who, unlike the Indigenous Awa communities, fall under the auspices of local government plans in both countries (CPTCCM and PDOT). In addition, the 3-PA approach was not tailored to supporting the identification of binational level solutions to ACC and FSN in the Mira-Mataje and Carchi-Guaitara watersheds, nor on supporting the integration of the project's actions on ACC and FSN in the Life Plans (LPs) of the EE of Indigenous Awa communities, and the Local Development Plans (LDPs) of Afro-descendant communities;[50] However, at the national/subnational level, the ET found project data and results is presented at annual meetings of the Food Sovereignty and Security Committee and the Climate Change Roundtable in the Regional Government of Nariño. In Ecuador, similar presentations have been made in the participating provincial governments and, since April 2024, dialogue has started on the benefits of integrating the PACCC and consolidation of selected ACC measures in the new PDOTs to be prepared by local government in 2024.

EQ 2.2: To what extent has the project been able to respond to changes in the context/new needs and priorities in both countries?

55. The project has and continues to face significant challenges and frequent changes in context that have contributed to slowing down its planning and interrupted its implementation and oversight. Areas where the project was found to have responded well to changes and/or needs are summarized as follows:

- **Constant fluctuations in insecurity levels within the project's intervention area in both**

[49] The three main elements of the 3-PA are (i) integrated context analysis, (ii) seasonal livelihood programming (SLP), and (iii) community-based participatory planning (CBPP).

[50] The evidence indicates that instead the project mainly focused on updating statutes and legalising IAAD associations in line with project activities, such as the conservation of 8,400 ha of forests in Gaulpi Bajo, Ecuador.

countries. The community boards and councils have developed successful survival mechanisms that adapt to changes in insecurity within their territories.[51] These mechanisms have been supported further by the training of local promoters (Ecuador) and local technicians (Colombia), to act as community focal points with the project's technical teams in each country and who are able to negotiate with irregular groups who operate in their territories. These responses have been instrumental in supporting the project continue its implementation in the vast majority of the local communities planned, as well as surpassing the number of beneficiary communities originally targeted, especially in Colombia. As a result, excluding some community settlements on the Colombian-Ecuadorian border, the project has experienced relatively low levels of community displacement and/or forced into postponing operations for long periods.

- **The Covid-19 pandemic**. The project responded in a timely manner to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 by shifting to virtual modalities, reconfiguring its implementation strategy, and providing local partners with food baskets in order to continue some important activities at the community level, such as mangrove and forest restoration initiatives. Moreover, implementation delays caused by the pandemic precipitated an agreement by main stakeholders to extend the project's duration and intensify efforts to implement the ACC measures from 2023 in order to achieve the project's expected outcomes and objectives by November 2024.

56. Areas where the project has not responded adequately to changing contexts and which the ET found have affected its relevance and effectiveness, are summarized as follows:

- **Changes in the project's geographical scope**. During the inception phase, the participating organizations of the GFAB voiced concerns that 56 Indigenous Awa communities in Putumayo Department in Colombia and six Awa communities in Sucumbíos Province, Ecuador, had been excluded from the project. An agreement was reached to incorporate these communities in the project's scope and budget (172 communities in total). The remoteness of these communities in the Amazon region was a major challenge. Moreover, the expansion was not matched with additional resources from AF and WFP to cover the new administrative, managerial and logistical challenges involved. As a result, the project struggled to maintain regular visits to these communities and was forced to restrict the ACC measures to one per community, thus precluding the application of more integrated approaches to ACC, FSN and risk management.
- **Changes in the political landscape at the local level**. The project's capacity to manage frequent changes in participating local government institutions in both countries has been mixed. On the one hand, focal points from regional/provincial government have participated in the Technical Committees established in Colombia and Ecuador (see Figure 3) in order to deliberate over annual planning decisions and progress on the ACC measures. Moreover, despite the election of new subnational governments in Ecuador and Colombia in 2023-2024, in Ecuador this has resulted in new leadership willing to enhance cooperation with the project, especially at the provincial level in Imbabura and Carchi provinces. On the other, the project has struggled to adapt to the recent political changes in Colombia which, unlike in Ecuador, has resulted in lower levels of collaboration. Similarly, the project's ability to adapt to changes in local government at the municipal/parish levels has been limited by the project's strong focus on planning and implementing the ACC measures through the EE. In general, this has limited the ability to establish robust alliances that require the active engagement of local government in the planning, operation, maintenance and monitoring of theses measures, based on a clearly defined exit strategy in each country. In Ecuador, there is evidence that this is being addressed in accordance with legal reforms that require municipal governments to oversee the operation and maintenance of all water supply and sanitation services in Afro-descendant communities. In response, the project has engaged in dialogue to formalize with municipal governments in San Lorenzo and Mira on taking over the water supply systems installed in Afro communities, and formal handover agreements are planned to be signed in the coming months.

[51] These mechanisms include maintaining communication channels with irregular forces, application of safe transit routes within their territories and coordinated paralysis of project operations in moments of high tension.

2.3. EQ 3 – EFFECTIVENESS: What results (expected and unexpected) has the binational project achieved or contributed to achieving?

Overall effectiveness to April 2024: Progress in establishing community-based responses to climate variability and change (high-level objective 1) has been satisfactory in Ecuador and moderately satisfactory in Colombia, where it remains unclear whether there is enough time to install and test the EWS and water systems planned before November 2024. Evidence that these responses have been conceived, planned and implemented to strengthen the adaptive capacities of Afro and Awa communities in the cross-border region (high-level objective 2) is evident at the EE level, but coordinated approaches and information exchange on ACC and FSN was not evident between the EE at the watershed, national or binational levels.

Component 1: The majority of planned outputs and outcomes have been delivered in both countries with a strong gender focus, resulting in the recovery of traditional knowledge and practices, the selection of 112 resilient native/local species to strengthen FSN, and 3,714 people trained on climate change threats, FSN, risk management and gender equality via WFP's Edufami platform. Unexpected results include a lack of formal commercialization of selected native species deemed to have commercial potential and pressures to expand cash crops such as lulo, cacao and palm where value chains have been established.

Component 2: Implementation of the community-based EWS in Colombia has been delayed due to contractual issues and redesign of the implementation methodology between IDEAM and the EE. In Ecuador significant progress in establishing the SMICC is evident that includes formal cooperation between the National Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (INAMHI) and the provincial governments of Carchi, Imbabura and Esmeraldas to establish daily digital and audio weather bulletins. A positive unexpected result is that internal bulletins are already being used by Public Works and Agriculture departments of two Prefectures to guide their operations. In addition, training on Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) covered double the number of community representatives than was planned.

Component 3: Implementation of planned ACC measures is evident in both countries since 2023, resulting in: (i) the adoption of 71 PACC; (ii) the provision of safe water to 2,189 households in Ecuador; (iii) the establishment of 757 PIR/HB, 2,258 kitchen gardens (in Colombia) and 30 *canoeras* (in Ecuador) incorporating local agrobiodiversity and trees; (iv) 8,400 ha of forests and 3,307 ha of mangroves that are under conservation and custody orders and a further 90 ha of mangroves that have been restored in Ecuador; (v) almost 1,500 ha of mangroves and 112 ha of riparian strips that have been restored in Colombia. Unexpected results include the stimulation of new community governance measures in Ecuador following the establishment of water boards and committees, and high percentage of medicinal plants that are produced in the PIR/HB, kitchen gardens and canoeras.

Strengths and weaknesses of implementing partners: The signing of FLAs with the EE has empowered them to manage resources directly and apply more effective territorial governance. However, this has resulted in the EE establishing a high level of dependency on project resources and WFP relying too heavily on the EE to implement the project, despite a history of high staff rotation and limited resources, capacity and communications difficulties and exclusion from decision-making of government institutions that have important mandates on planning, water supply services, family agriculture, forestry and risk management, among others.

57. The ET conducted a participatory validation of the ToC (Annex III) it prepared during the Inception phase with the project's binational and national coordinators. Both the ET and the project coordinators confirmed this exercise facilitated the review of the barriers to ACC that the Awa and Afro communities are facing, as well as fine tuning the causal pathways between these barriers, the projects actions, its intended immediate and final outcomes and desired impact. At the same time, it enabled the ET to conduct its analysis and triangulation on the project's effectiveness in line with the methodology proposed in the inception report.

58. The following sub-questions assess the progress and achievements under each of the project's three main components against the ToC, followed by an assessment of its main strengths and weaknesses to support learning on performance and the design of future projects. All assessments have been based on triangulated evidence collected from stakeholder interviews, narrations, AI and general observations in the field, plus comments on the draft versions of this report to August 2024. It is important to point out that these

assessments took place in April 2024 while the project was still finalizing: (i) the installation of the SMICC in Ecuador and redesigning the implementation methodology for the EWS in Colombia; (ii) the installation of two water systems and the governance structure for all 25 water systems installed in Ecuador and, in Colombia, just taken the decision to cancel the contract with the private contractor hired to install water systems in Colombia, on the grounds the EE opposed this method of installation, requesting that they be trained to manage the installation instead.[52]

EQ 3.1: To what extent and how has the project achieved its objective of component 1 (*Recover, with the full participation of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities, traditional knowledge and capacities to manage the risks of climate change and food and nutritional security in binational basins*)?

59. **Watershed-level studies (output 1.1.1)**. In line with the target in the Prodoc, a total of four studies (two per country) were conducted on recovering ancestral knowledge and traditional practices in the Mira-Mataje and Carchi-Guaitara River basins. Triangulated evidence indicates all four studies applied highly participatory processes, based on the application of free, prior and informed consent [53] and training of IAAD community members to conduct the studies at the community level with a climate and gender focus. During the pandemic this was applied through WFP's Edufami platform.[54] However, the ET also observed that these studies were not conducted as a binational exercise, but rather as two separate exercises (partially because requests from the IAAD organizations differed between the two countries). The main achievements identified from these studies are summarized as follows:

- The selection of 112 native species resilient to climate change in Colombia (38) and Ecuador (74).
- Establishment of formal synergies with academia to carry out bromatological research[55] on a total of 74 local species prioritized to enhance food security and ACC. In addition, the project supported the establishment of botanical gardens in two universities to conserve, replicate and distribute seeds from these plants to the IAAD communities.[56]
- The elaboration of two studies for each country containing information on a selection of the most important native/local species to support ACC and FSN.[57] The publication in Colombia includes native tree species that provide food, timber and non-timber products, while the publication in Ecuador included chapters on local recipes and a selection of stories, fables and myths that support environmental conservation and ACC, which the EQ also identified are applied by some Indigenous Awa community members in their PIR/HB (to ward off evil spirits), or were referred to during the narrations conducted in the field.

60. A positive unexpected outcome from the above-mentioned achievements, is that the emphasis given to including native/local tree species in Colombia has already stimulated cases of seed collection and propagation of native tree species (cedar, guayacan, copal, etc.) in and around some of the HB visited. The ET found this demonstrates that the recovery and conservation of native/local tree species to safeguard the supply of timber and non-timber forest products demonstrates a wider, more holistic, approach to ACC is required at the community level that goes beyond FSN.

61. **Marketing studies (output 1.1.2).** Three studies have been realized, in line with the target in the Prodoc. An important result from these studies is that a smaller number of species were considered to have commercial value than expected following assessments in local/national markets and value chains. These include contentious crops such as hybrid cacao, oil palm and lulo, all of which are susceptible to climate variability and change, and encourage deforestation. The main reasons for this finding relate to the following

[52] It should be noted that in mid April 2024, following initial feedback from the ET's preliminary findings, the finalization of pending ACC measures and the SMICC could continue beyond the planned cut-off date of 3 May 2024 in order to facilitate their smooth handover before closure in November 2024.
[53] This included an agreement to not collect data on medicinal plants and remedies and that all data collected and used by academia would remain confidential and not made available for public use without their consent.
[54] The Edufami platform included training on ACC and gender equality using the Climafami/Equifami modules.
[55] Carchi Polytechnic State University, Tulcán, Ecuador.
[56] Carchi Polytechnic State University and Pontifical Catholic University of Esmeraldas, Ecuador.
[57] WFP (2021). Study of native species resilient to climate change of the Awa and Afro-descendant communities in Colombia; and WFP (2021). Plant species, food recipes and legends related to food security and adaptation to climate change in Ecuador.

challenges:

- High levels of insecurity make it different to bring in inputs, establish sustainable economic practices and maintain regular distribution networks of products to markets and buyers.
- Entrepreneurial capacity among IAAD communities is low, especially in key areas such as financial management, calculation of the costs of production and gross/net profit, organizational management, and customer relations, among others.
- The project's staff do not include a long-term expert in market analysis and small business training and development to promote not only foodstuffs, but also non-timber forest products.

62. **Information-sharing workshops (output 1.1.3).** The project has conducted a total of 48 events involving 2,914 people compared to 10 workshops and 120 community leaders and members targeted in the Prodoc (PPR-5 draft). Feedback from a selection of participants in both countries confirms the large number of events and participants has been effective in stimulating knowledge exchange on key issues, such as agrobiodiversity loss and uses, and facilitated a high level of consensus on the decision to select the 112 species mentioned under output 1.1.1. This was supported by the holding of two binational events on cross-border data sharing on local agrobiodiversity but resulted in the production of two sets of publications, two scientific research approaches, and two approaches to agrobiodiversity conservation (PIR and HB).

63. **Training linked to climate change threats, food security, web-learning and risk management (Outputs 1.2.1 to 1.2.4).** A total of 3,714 people (2,045 women) have participated in the trainings under these outputs to date, which is well above the 240 people targeted in the Prodoc. Interviews and AI identified the following:

- Retention of learning is evident among male and female leaders, but some ordinary community members interviewed provided evidence that they needed refresher courses.
- Awareness on the growing threats of climate change and the importance of diversifying diets and livelihoods has increased, and in some cases was evident in the group drawings prepared in the AI exercises. This has been aided by in-depth landscape analysis of the Awa and Afro territories in 2022, which resulted in the production of thematic maps (on deforestation, restoration priorities, land use conflict, susceptibility to risks of natural and anthropic origin, etc.) to support the EE take informed decisions on where to priorities the project's forest conservation and mangrove restoration actions and guide the elaboration of the PACC.
- The updating and application of WFP's Edufami platform facilitated the training of local community promoters/technicians to act as focal points on the implementation of the ACC measures, but it is not considered an official training platform by either country.

64. Unexpected results identified by the ET are:

- The training exercises mainly focused on capacity building at the community and EE level, with little or no evidence of strengthening intra-institutional collaboration between the EE to reduce territorial tensions and stimulate cross-border solutions and collaboration on ACC.
- The trainings did not support the integration of climate-related ancestral knowledge and practices in the LPs and LDPs of the EE and their communities as foreseen in the Prodoc (outcome 1.2), or in country development plans (outcome 2.2).
- The proactive engagement of schools did not materialize as planned due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to intensify the implementation of the ACC measures in the post-pandemic period between 2023-2024.

EQ 3.2: To what extent and how has the project met the objective of component 2 (*Strengthen the generation of knowledge to effectively plan, design, and implement adaptation responses in communities with high food insecurity, considering emergency preparedness and response actions*)?

65. **Hydrometeorological studies (output 2.1.1).** Interviews with WFP stakeholders in both countries confirm a total of nine studies have been completed, compared to two binational studies foreseen in the Prodoc. These studies have facilitated: (i) an assessment on the effects climate change are likely to have on the current and projected water balance in all four watersheds; (ii) the identification of highly vulnerable areas

with the IAAD communities in order to select the number and location of hydrometeorological, or meteorological, stations to be installed in each country; (iii) a gap analysis concerning hydrometeorological data analysis and disaster risk management (DRM) within national and subnational institutions responsible for hydrometeorological monitoring and forecasting, in particular IDEAM and INAMHI.

66. **Binational EWS (output 2.2.1).** The hydrometeorological studies have directly contributed to the conception, evolution and development of the SMICC in Ecuador, which WFP staff stated is planned to be finalized by end of June 2024. However, in Colombia, the project was in the process of redesigning the implementation methodology for the EWS, which was originally planned under a contract with Corprogreso, but which will be implemented by the EE and IDEAM from May 2024.

67. Triangulated evidence from the interviews conducted with all four participating Prefectures in the SMICC, together with demonstrations on the application of the SMICC in Carchi and Imbabura Prefectures resulted in the following main findings:

- INAMHI confirms the SMICC will have an initial network of 26 weather stations in operation (13 in Carchi, 11 in Esmeraldas and 2 in Imbabura Province), which will be added to the current functional network of 40 weather stations in Ecuador (an expansion of 65 percent).
- INAMHI is already receiving data from 24 of the 26 weather stations from 26 "voluntary weather guardians" who have been trained by the project to provide daily recordings of precipitation, temperature and atmospheric data to INAMHI (using the AccuWeather platform).
- INAMHI is now generating daily weather and climatic maps following the completion of the training exercises in 2024 that are transmitted to the above-mentioned Prefectures.
- All three Prefectures have received operational manuals, operating servers, two monitors and other equipment to retrieve, analyze and develop weather bulletins based on the data and maps provided by INAMHI. This training is still ongoing, but key areas of institutional strengthening completed in the Prefectures so far, are:
    i) Development of internal bulletins to guide decision-making in the prefectures on DRM, public works operations, agricultural planting and harvesting and, specifically in Imbabura Province, on economic development planning that includes the "SmartFarm" initiative, (co-funded by the Italo-Ecuadorian Fund since 2023).[58,59]
    ii) The emission of digital and audio test bulletins to the public in Carchi and Imbabura.
    iii) The format of the digital and audio bulletins has been agreed in Carchi and Imbabura.
    iv) The Communication Departments of these two prefectures have identified the distribution network for the digital and audio bulletins to municipal governments who are responsible for risk management and water supply services since 2022.

68. The ET found the recruitment of a highly qualified hydrometeorological expert who has previous work experience with INAMHI has been a key factor in delivering these achievements. Similarly, both INAMHI and the participating prefectures have shown a strong commitment to support and co-fund (in-kind) the installation of the SMICC since early 2023, given they are responsible for DRM and the development of provincial-based climate services. One caveat identified is the lack of participation of MAG in the SMICC until April 2022, when the SMICC was officially presented to MAG and MAATE for its support and comments.[60]

69. **Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) training (output 2.2.2**). Finally, progress on has covered 246 people from 51 participating communities, which exceeds the target of 120 community leaders and members in the Prodoc. Moreover, a total of 146 women have received training in EPR to the end of 2023 (PPR-5 draft), compared to a total of 100 men (PPR-4), confirming almost 60 percent of participants have been

[58] A visit to the Prefecture confirmed the SMICC has been housed in its Economic Department to guide sustainable and resilient development decisions in several sectors, including agriculture. This sets it apart from the other three prefectures where the SMICC is managed by departments responsible for the Environment, or Risk Management, and whose main purpose will be to provide EWS services to government and non-state actors.
[59] Prefecture of Imbabura (2024). SmartFarm Platform.
[60] The project's intention until 2022, was to develop the Agroclimatic Community Monitoring and Warning System, but interviews confirm it was replaced by the SMICC in order to meet the needs of local government and the EE.

females against a target of 50 percent. Interviews with participants confirm the training was applied using WFP's methodology and focused on strengthening community-based DRM, through vulnerability mapping exercises and response to EWS alerts. In Colombia, the indication from interviewees is that the training on EPR has been coordinated with the risk management department of the Nariño government, to facilitate two important developments: (i) adoption of EPR skills to respond to both to climatic events, and anthropogenic disasters such as oil spills and fires, land mine incidents, etc.; (ii) an opportunity to distribute emergency kits and provide training on their use.

70. However, two shortcomings were identified with the EPR. First, the ET did not identify the inclusion of simulation exercises to show how clusters of communities should coordinate and respond to different climate emergency scenarios that could be alerted through the EWS, or the SMICC.[61] Second, the EPR and DRM training exercises were not adequately coordinated with the PACC exercises, or the agricultural calendars that have recently been prepared in Colombia and currently being finalized in Ecuador. For example, despite the project's support to recovering local seeds, and promotion of PIR, HB and mangrove restoration, the ET did not identify the promotion of community/family seed banks, nor evidence that this has been addressed with MAATE and MAG's focal points who sit in the Technical Committee for Ecuador.

EQ 3.3: To what extent and how has the project met the objective of component 3 *(Reduce the community's recurring climate vulnerabilities through innovative adaptation measures, driving the reduction of food insecurity*)?

71. The implementation of the ACC measures prioritized by the participating communities started in 2023, following a long CBPP process that was not aided by the Covid-19 pandemic and staff rotation among stakeholders and project staff between 2020 and 2021. An analysis of the impact of the pandemic confirmed component 3 would be the most affected and this was one of the principal reasons why the AF agreed to extend the project's implementation phase to May 2024 and closure of operations on 3 November 2024.[62] This situation set back the elaboration and adoption of the climate change action plans (PACC) to 2022 and their application, supported by an ACC measure funded by the project, to 2023. A review of progress and achievements of the ACC measures planned in the Prodoc under outputs 3.1.1 to 3.1.5 are summarized in the following paragraphs.

72. **Methodologies to integrate scientific and traditional knowledge (output 3.1.1).** The project has adopted and applied 10 methodologies in total (PPR-5 draft). These have included the application of already proven and tested methodologies applied by participating universities to conduct the ethnobotanical inventories in Colombia and Ecuador, the training of community parabiologists and leaders, and the bromatological studies conducted by the Carchi Polytechnic State University (UPEC). The Covid-19 pandemic contributed to slowing down the application of these methodologies, but the EE and universities interviewed confirmed that they have facilitated the establishment of botanical gardens and experimental plots that will enable scientific research and development of local crop varieties to continue beyond the project, in particular with Afro communities.

73. **PACC (output 3.1.2)**: a total of 71 PACC have been produced and adopted covering 135 communities (63 Indigenous Awa and 72 Afro-descendant communities) according to interviews with WFP. In Ecuador, a total of 66 PACCC were elaborated in 28 Awa and 38 Afro-descendant communities and approved by the National Steering Committee in 2022. In Colombia, five master PACC were prepared at the EE level to support ACIPAP, the Nulpes Reserve, UNIPA and the Upper and Lower Mira Councils covering 18 Awa and 16 Afro-descendant communities in total. The PACCC process appears to have produced two positive outcomes in 2022. First, it successfully responded to local needs and capacities that were summarized in a fiche format of up to 10 pages in length to facilitate their understanding, management and implementation. Second, the PACCC responded to MAATE's latest policies on ACC, in particular that ACC plans should be designed and implemented at the community level. However, despite the previous administration's interest to adopt and roll out the PACCC nationally, this has not materialized under the new administration that took office in 2023. Moreover, current government guidelines indicate that the PACCC should be funded, supervised and monitored through the PDOT to be updated by local government in 2024. In response to this, the project has

[61] The ET understands that a number of communities are able to access the internet from their school building.
[62] WFP and AF (2020). Covid-19 Impact Analysis on the Binational Project and Mitigation Measures.

started to broker interinstitutional agreements to address the funding and implementation of the PACC (as well as the ACC measures), although only one such agreement had been signed to 30 April 2024.[63] In Colombia the Ministry of Environment specifically requested that the PACC be elaborated and implemented at the EE level, in order to avoid the problems of insecurity in a large number of vulnerable communities.

74. **Safe water supply for the community or families (output 3.1.3)**. In Ecuador, WFP confirmed a total of 23 community and family water supply systems have been installed and two are in the testing phase. In total 2,189 households (1,496 Afro-descendant, 693 Indigenous Awa) have, or are in the process of, gaining access to safe drinking water for the first time. Most IAAD communities interviewed in Ecuador confirmed a high level of satisfaction with this measure, citing time-savings and costs savings in not having to buy water as main benefits. An important unexpected result of establishing community-based water boards/committees is that they encourage users to adopt democratic processes on other community governance issues, such as the application of environmental and health protection measures. Health benefits are still too early to calculate, but initial indications from the field visits and main stakeholders are that: (i) health benefits are highest in areas where interviewees have traditionally relied on contaminated rivers and water sources for their drinking water. However, access to safe drinking water appears to have a positive impact on mental health in general, given the worry and time associated with fetching and using unsafe water has been removed; (ii) female beneficiaries interviewed have a clear perception that local access to safe water is saving them time and money; (iii) the beneficiary communities are more likely to accept the support of an external partner when it is well known to them and has a good track record. For example, the EE and women interviewed in selected beneficiary communities in Ecuador were satisfied with the approach and services provided by the Ecuadorian Fund Populorum Progressio (FEPP in Spanish) who has been able to draw on its long and in-depth work experience in Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities in Ecuador.

75. Progress in realizing this measure in Colombia is less evident. The ET were only able to assess a sample of beneficiaries who have received one of the 1,100 water purification jerrycans (20 liters) distributed to highly vulnerable families in the IAAD communities. Interviews with a selection of recipients indicate the jerrycans are a suitable temporary measure, but their long-term impact is disputed, because they require regular filling, the purification and pouring processes are very slow and they create the misconception that they will be excluded from the water systems planned. This misconception has not been aided by slow progress on the installation of all the water systems designed by the contractor, Pais21. Approval on the installation of these measures by the EE (UNIPA, Nulpes and CCBMYF) under the technical supervision and training of Pais21 is foreseen in May 2024 and the start of works in June 2024.[64]

76. **Cost-benefit analysis (output 3.1.4) and PIR, and HB plots (output 3.1.5)**. The cost-benefit analysis of adaptive measures was in the process of being launched in April. Progress under output 3.1.5 has been far higher than planned in the Prodoc. WFP confirmed a total of 609 family-based PIRs have been installed in 30 communities in Ecuador, while in Colombia 146 family-based HB, two community-based HB, and 12 ha of subsistence crops have been installed involving all participating communities. The majority of these measures have targeted women as the main beneficiaries. Interviews with a selection of these women confirms the PIR/HB has increased their workload, but that this is a price worth paying for the following reasons:

- Family members become increasingly interested to participate in their development, as they see the crops bearing fruit.
- The fencing in of the PIR/HB close to their homesteads saves between one and three hours a day compared to garden plots that traditionally are located far away from the homestead to avoid the problems of grazing animals and pests.
- The harvesting of food next to the homestead saves time and money associated with the purchase of the same food. For example, research by Numma in early 2024 found around 60 percent of the

[63] The framework agreement for interinstitutional agreement (No. GADPC-028-2024) was signed by the Prefecture of Carchi, the Carchi Polytechnic State University (UPEC), UPEC's public enterprise Creativa (EP-UPEC Creativa), CANE and the Federation of Black Communities and Organisations of Imbabura and Carchi.

[64] The proposal is that UNIPA will install safe water systems that support micro-irrigation plots for 200 families, Nulpes will install safe water systems for 200 families and 11 schools, and CCBMYF will install safe water systems in 9 communities.

women interviewed were saving between one and two hours a day in travel time to purchase the crops they now grow in their plots.[65]

- They save money, which can be spent on alternative needs. According to the Numma study and data collected from the field, these savings amount to between USD 8.00 and USD 15.00 per week/household, which is significant when considering women who engage in black clam harvesting said they earn on average USD 8.00/day.
- Their feeding habits have improved. Several people interviewed stated they are beginning to reap the benefits of producing up to 40 native and traditional species in association; this is backed up by research by Numma, which concluded food security and nutrition had increased in its sample, compared to baseline data collected in early 2023.[66] Moreover, it found the main beneficiaries are women, especially from the Afro-descendant community in Ecuador.
- They enhance innovation and resilience to climate change. For example, participants stated they conduct learning by doing exercises to determine which crops are best suited to their plots. In addition, space is dedicated to medicinal plants and native tree planting using cedar, chanul and guayacan seeds from the local area, while domesticated animals are kept out by fences. Project data indicates that survival rates in the plots has been satisfactory (95% or above), but field interviews conducted by the ET found some participants have lost crops to pests, while others reported high losses of fish and chickens (in Ecuador). The main causes are attributed to a lack of adequate technical supervision and/or poor-quality inputs/breeds supplied. Another finding from the field analysis is that many interviewees considered the number of species received to establish the PIR was too low, to cater for other needs such as fodder for livestock, or income generation.

77. **Kitchen gardens (output 3.1.5).** WFP informed the ET that a total of 35 disused wooden canoes (known in Spanish as *canoeras*) have been converted into kitchen gardens of which 30 are currently in use. Meanwhile, a total of 2,258 kitchen gardens have been established in Colombia. Interviews with women participants indicate that the *canoeras* are popular among participants who have the time to develop them. In these cases, an unexpected result of the *canoeras* has been the change in the stocking ratio of food crops to medicinal and culinary plants, which is estimated to be around 60:40 percent compared to the planned ratio of 80:20 percent. As such, interviews confirm the *canoeras* have the dual function of producing food crops and stimulating the interchange of medicinal plants and seeds to meet local health needs. Meanwhile, participants who stated they did not have the time to develop canoeras/kitchen gardens, such as women engaged in black clam harvesting, indicates the level of demand for this measure varies according to occupation, time and family factors, among others. In Colombia, interviews with women recipients confirmed they are generally satisfied with the kitchen gardens established. The ET was unable to assess the planting ratio of food crops to medicinal plants but did find medicinal plants and ancestral remedies remain highly important in marginalized communities that are one or more hours away from public health care facilities. For example, interviewees stated access to local plants to treat snake bites, or attend to complicated pregnancies and births, is essential to save lives and expensive boat travel costs.[67].

78. **Restoration/conservation of forests and mangroves in vulnerable areas (outputs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2)**. This ACC measure was found to have been highly satisfactory in both countries, with most stakeholders and beneficiary communities recognizing and valuing the importance of this activity in terms of safeguarding their livelihoods and enhancing resilience. The main achievements of the project in Ecuador have been triangulated as follows following consultations with WFP staff, EE and local communities visited:

- 8,400 ha of forests have been placed under a formal conservation order in Lower Gualpi, which is around 560 percent more than the 1,500 ha planned in the Prodoc.
- 3,307 ha of mangroves have been placed under five conservation orders known as Sustainable Use and Custody of the Mangrove Ecosystem (AUSCM), which is over 330 percent more than the target

[65] Numma (2024). Study for the Binational Project on the Food Security and Adaptation to Climate Change of Rural Communities in Ecuador.
[66] Numma (2024). Study for the Binational Project on the Food Security and Adaptation to Climate Change of Rural Communities in Ecuador.
[67] The ET was informed of one lady in Alto Mira who has reportedly delivered over 300 complicated births based on her local knowledge and use of traditional medicines and remedies.

of 1,000 ha planned in the Prodoc, and reported to directly benefit over 2,300 Afro-descendants.

- 90 ha of mangroves were reforested in priority areas to reduce the growing threats of climate change such as flooding and storm surges, of which 74 ha have been prioritized for community maintenance.

79. The main findings from these activities in Ecuador are that the local communities have become aware over the last two years that restoration and conservation of forests and mangroves, offers investment opportunities as well as livelihood benefits. These opportunities have increased interest in the legalization of grassroots and second level organizations and the submission of new requests for AUSCM custody orders. In total, 11 organizations from Afro-descendant communities in Ecuador have been legalized, while the ET understands several new AUSCM custody orders have been filed according to various sources, as well as the filing of a request to MAATE to designate 800 ha of forest under the Forest Partnership Scheme (*Socio Bosque*). In Colombia, interviews with RECOMPAS and WFP confirm 1,243 ha of mangroves have been restored, compared to 1,000 ha targeted in the Prodoc and a total of 2,242 ha of forest restoration work has been completed in areas highly vulnerable to floods and landslides. In addition, 180 forest conservation orders have been signed with IAAD communities.

EQ 3.4: What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the implementing partners that have contributed to advancing, or restricted, the development of transboundary river basins to reduce the vulnerability of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities to climate change)?

80. The ET found the decision to implement the project through the EE (see Table 2) has been instrumental in strengthening the internal capacity of each EE to manage resources and deliver ACC measures to its most vulnerable families/communities. Moreover, this is considered a prerequisite to developing intra-EE collaboration at the national and binational levels. This approach has, nonetheless, removed the opportunity to stimulate interchanges on lessons learned and good practices between the EE, in the interest of stimulating binational dialogue and collaboration on ACC and FSN. Based on the findings from a wide cross-section of stakeholders and beneficiary communities interviewed, the ET identified the following strengths of working through the EE are:

- **Enhances project ownership at the grassroots level**. By providing training and capacity development of the EE in the project's planning and in the identification, adoption and implementation of ACC measures, the project has succeeded in forging a stronger sense of ownership of the project and its results with the local communities it has supported.
- **Amplifies cultural understanding and respect.** By working with EE, the project has gained unique access to the local knowledge, practices, and customs of their members, as well as leverage to advance their value, recognition and benefits in adaptation processes and the safeguarding of human and indigenous rights.
- **Strengthens alignment between international goals, government priorities and local needs relating to ACC.** By conducting participatory and inclusive community-driven planning processes with local partners to support the development of the PACC/PACCC, international and national policies, strategies and plans associated with climate action, environmental restoration and conservation, and gender equality, among others can be addressed according to local contexts.
- **Empowers the EE to take up more informed decision-making**. Direct engagement with the EE has facilitated the development of new leadership, planning, technical, and administrative skills that are crucial to taking informed decisions on development and resilience issues as well as demonstrate to government and the international community that they can manage external resources. Indeed, CANE confirmed it is in dialogue with an undisclosed donor on implementing a new mangrove conservation project in Esmeraldas.
- **Promoting more effective territorial governance and peace.** By engaging local partners to take a leading role in the project's planning and implementation, they are also encouraged to apply good governance regarding the O&M of ACC measures. In case of mangrove restoration in particular, key stakeholders stated this catalyzes interest in the legalization of grassroots and second level organizations in, for example, the submission of requests for new AUSCM custody orders, which the ET was informed already cover around 3,000 ha of new mangrove sites. According to several stakeholders interviewed, the AUSCM custody orders represent an important prerequisite to

stimulating dialogue on improving territorial governance, peace and security.

81. Conversely, the decision to implement project activities through the EE has revealed some important weaknesses that have affected the project's performance. Triangulated evidence from the review of documents and stakeholder interviews produced the following findings:

- **Coordination mechanisms in place between the EE and local government remain weak because they are highly susceptible to political changes and staff rotation**. Interviews with the EE and government stakeholders confirm communication and coordination mechanisms with local government are difficult to develop due to frequent staff rotation and changes in local government administrations. To mitigate this weakness, it was envisaged in PPR-4 (Risk Assessment 2) that the project would pay particular attention to strengthening the project's governance structures, (especially its Technical Committee), identify synergies with local and national government and strengthen communications and coordination with main stakeholders. However, stakeholder interviews confirm that these measures have been difficult to apply, because of the changes in local government administrations in Ecuador and Colombia in 2023 and 2024 and high staff rotation at both local government and EE levels. For example, in Ecuador, FCAE experienced a complete change of its executive in 2023.[68]
- **The EE remain highly dependent on project funding**. The strengthening of the EE has demonstrated to government and donors that they can manage external resources, but this has generated a high level of dependency among all the EE on project funding to cover transport, logistical and other operational costs. For example, EE will soon lose access to rental vehicles and boats that are currently paid for by the project. As such, the importance of also strengthening capacity to generate internal income and assets and capturing public funding opportunities was found to be limited.
- **Insufficient administrative capacity**. In Colombia, the project has experienced lower levels of expenditure than planned to April 2024, as well as staff recruitment delays. This has not been aided by the fact the EE have struggled to apply the rules and procedures written into their Field Level Agreements (FLA) signed with WFP. Interviews with stakeholders confirms this situation has forced the project to provide additional training and support that has contributed to implementation delays. For example, this situation was cited as a contributory factor in delaying the renewal of FLA in Colombia between late-2022 and mid-2023. In response the project stated it would establish more effective administrative and procurement processes (PPR-4). However, this has proved difficult to implement because of local government elections in October 2023. In Ecuador, this was not found to be the case, given the vast majority of the ACC measures planned have been implemented, or being finalized and handover agreements are in the process of being prepared, signed and completed by October 2024.
- **Communication challenges**. All EE represent many remote and vulnerable communities that have limited access to radio broadband and other communications, meaning they can only be reached by long treks on foot, or by boat. This situation has prevented many communities from participating in the project and indicates the project's design did not recognize the crucial role improved communications (especially IAAD radio stations) play in establishing effective EWS and ACC measures. Indeed, this was reiterated by several members of the EE, who stated their radio stations cover a small percentage of their Indigenous Awa centers or Afro-descendant communities who live in the mangrove belt.

[68] CANE is reported to be coordinating with the parish governments of Ricaute and Alto Tambo and with the municipality of Mira on taking over the implementation and sustainability of the water systems established in Afro-descendant communities.

2.4. EQ 4 – EFFICIENCY: How efficient and timely has the collaboration and coordination been between the two Country Offices, government entities and other partners, at different levels, been?

Internal efficiency of the project: The project has spent 86.3 percent of its funds to 31 March 2024, leaving a large balance of nearly USD 3.5 million with just seven months remaining. Overall, the project has struggled to deliver its planned outputs on time, especially under components 2 and 3 in Colombia, where installation of all safe water systems planned and the community-based EWS will not commence until June 2024. The project's decision to use WFP's Edufami platform to continue its training activities during the pandemic proved to be highly efficient. Implementation of ACC measures through the EE has generally delivered good value for money and proved nature-based solutions are an efficient approach to supporting communities that are highly vulnerable to climate variability and change. In-kind contributions from participating communities have contributed to this achievement but are not monitored and reported.

The project's governance structure: The design and application of the governance structure has not proved to be an efficient mechanism to take swift decisions, advance binational cooperation and cost-sharing, or respond to the wider aspirations and needs of the IAAD communities at the landscape level. Instead, a strong country-based approach has taken precedent to intensify implementation since the pandemic, based on a heavy monitoring and progress reporting system that consumes significant time and resources.

EQ 4.1: To what extent has the project been efficient in the use of project resources?

82. Table 6 confirms USD 10.24 million (86.3 percent) has been spent in Colombia and Ecuador under components 1-3 to 31 March 2024. This confirms a significant balance of USD 1.54 million (13.7 percent) remains to be spent in the seven months remaining before closure on 3 November 2024.

Table 6: Planned and actual expenditure by country and component (to 31 March 2024)

Component	Plan COL 2018-24	Plan ECU 2018-24	Total Plan 2018-24	Actual Col 31/03/2024	Actual ECU 31/03/2024	Actual total 31/03/2024	Balance COL	Balance ECU	Total balance
Component 1	890,750	890,750	**1,781,500**	754,616	738,072	**1,492,688**	136,134	152,678	**288,812**
Component 2	840,900	840,900	**1,681,800**	538,522	779,851	**1,318,373**	302,378	61,049	**363,427**
Component 3	4,160,250	4,160,250	**8,320,500**	3,795,610	3,635,848	**7,431,458**	364,640	524,402	**889,042**
Total C1-C3	**5,891,900**	**5,891,900**	**11,783,800**	**5,088,748**	**5,153,771**	**10,242,519**	**803,152**	**738,129**	**1,541,281**
WFP Admin.	694,802	694,801	**1,389,603**	525,450	518,409	**1,043,859**	169,352	176,392	**345,744**
MIE	413,298	413,299	**826,597**	410,273	383,044	**793,317**	3,025	30,255	**33,280**
TOTAL	**7,000,000**	**7,000,000**	**14,000,000**	**6,024,471**	**6,055,223**	**12,079,694**	**1,778,681**	**1,682,906**	**3,461,587**

Source: WFP (2024): Financial Data of the WFP Binational Project (Status 31 March 2024).

83. An analysis of the project's annual expenditure reported in the PPRs confirms a significant increase in annual expenditure took place in the post-Covid period from 2022 to date, especially in Ecuador, when compared to 2018-2021. Several factors have contributed to improving spending levels since 2022. They include the ability to intensify operations after the pandemic due to the completion of the 3-PA process and training of the promoters/local technicians as community-based focal points, and the employment of a new national project coordinator in Ecuador who has previous work experience on project implementation with WFP.

84. A comparison of total expenditure of USD 10.24 million under the project's three components to 31 March 2024, compared to the total number of direct participants under components 1-3 (40,244 people, of which 28,474 are women) reported in Table 7 (see EQ 6) confirms the project has spent on average USD 254.51/participant. This represents an efficient use of project funds when compared to USD 705/person planned in the Prodoc and considering the project involves significant logistical challenges and a deteriorating security situation in both countries since the pandemic. The ET also assessed the efficiency in the use of funds spent on a selection of ACC measures implemented to 30 April 2024 using data from PPR-5 (draft). The main findings are summarized as follows:

- **Output 3.1.2**: the CBPP process and elaboration of a total of 71 PACC (5 in Colombia at the EE level and 66 community-based plans in Ecuador) has cost a total of USD 3,798,356 (37.1 percent) of all expenditure under components 1-3. Considering the CBPP and PACC have covered a total of 172 communities, which is well over the 120 targeted in the Prodoc, it has cost on average USD 22,083/community to implement these actions. The ET considers this is satisfactory given the logistical and security costs involved, but cost efficiency would have been higher had the PACC been fully integrated in the LPs and LDPs.[69]
- **Output 3.1.3**: the installation/rehabilitation of 25 water systems in Ecuador benefitting 2,189 families at a total cost of USD 1,708,403 confirms that on average the project has spent USD 780/family. This represents very good value for money, especially when considering a selection of beneficiaries interviewed confirm they save on average USD 40/month (USD 520/year) by not having to travel and/or pay for their drinking water.
- **Output 3.1.5**: the installation of a total of 609 PIR and 35 canoe gardens (*canoeras*) in Ecuador involving 644 direct beneficiaries at a total cost of USD 382,655 confirms the project has spent on average USD 594/beneficiary. Initial feedback from beneficiaries is that the PIR cut food costs by between USD 32-60/week (USD 416-780/year). Meanwhile, in Colombia, a total of 146 biodiverse plots (PIR) and 2,258 biodiverse gardens (HB) have been installed involving 1,937 direct beneficiaries at a cost USD 576,939, which confirms an average cost of USD 298/beneficiary and also have cut their food costs. Consequently, the ET found the PIR/HB represent very good value for money.
- **Output 3.2.2**: the cost to restore/conserve a total area of 11,801 ha of mangroves/forests in Ecuador totals USD 372,248. This far supersedes the target of 2,500 ha in the Prodoc and confirms on average restoration and conservation cost the AF only USD 31.54/ha. Meanwhile, in Colombia a total of 3,261.9 ha of mangroves/forests have been restored/conserved at a cost of USD 198,682, or USD 60.91/ha. This is also considered as an efficient use of AF funds, given the higher cost is attributed to the fact all restoration work involved the production and planting of seedlings, which was not the case in Ecuador. Overall, these achievements represent very good value for the AF and partly explains why FAO adopted the same mangrove restoration methodology.

85. One of the main reasons the project has achieved high efficiency is the important in-kind contributions made by stakeholders and the beneficiary communities (unskilled labor, logistical support, provision of local materials, etc.). The ET considers the omission of these contributions in the Prodoc and subsequently in the co-finance calculations launched in PPR-4 has undervalued the important role local communities have played in the project's implementation.

EQ 4.2: How efficient has the governance model adopted (which involves cross-border work) been considering each country applies a different Country Strategic Plan?

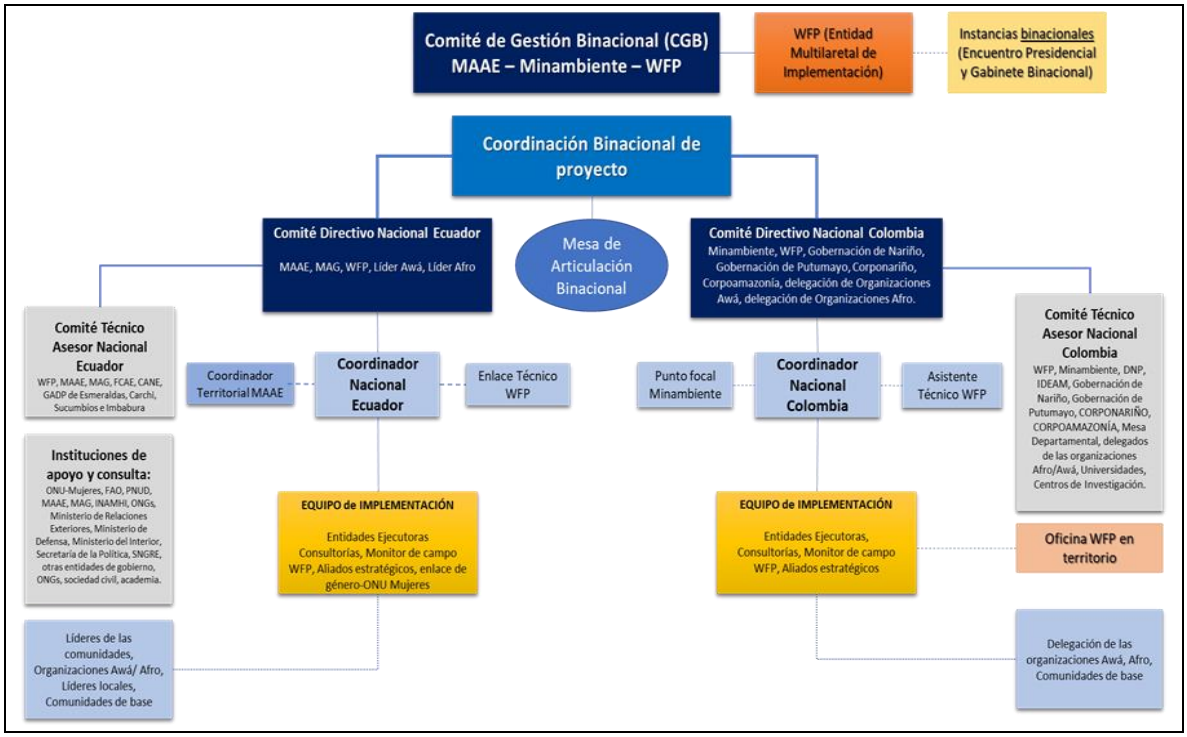
86. The ET's triangulated evidence indicates that the project's governance structure established in the Prodoc (pp. 63-67) and then updated in the project's Operations Manual (2020), has not performed well at the binational level. The Operational Manual, provides the roles and responsibilities of main stakeholders at three levels: (i) WFP as the Multilateral Implementing Entity (MIE) of the AF; (ii) the ministries of environment of both countries as designated government institutions, and whose responsibilities include ensuring the decisions taken by their National Steering Committee and National Technical Advisory Committee are coordinated and integrated into the decisions taken by the Binational Management Committee; (iii) the local EE of the IAAD communities in Ecuador (FCAE, CANE) and Colombia (ACIPAP, Nulpes, UNIPA, RECOMPAS).

87. Analysis of Figure 1 (in Spanish) taken form the project's Operations Manual (2020) confirms the establishment of two high-level steering committees at the national level have been established by two WFP CO teams, who operate separate CSPs and two project implementation teams. Meanwhile binational coordination consists of just one person (binational coordinator), with no resources to develop binational roundtables. In addition, the governments in Colombia and Ecuador operate highly decentralized governance structures, that have their own powers to establish bilateral cooperation agreements. For example, the Prefecture of Carchi Province and the Nariño Governorate have signed a Brotherhood Agreement (2015-

[69] The project confirmed that, after the end of the data collection for this evaluation, integration of the PACC in the LPs has commenced with the local authorities concerned.

2024) supporting cross-border cooperation. Moreover, as highlighted under EQ3, local government in Ecuador has assumed new decentralized powers since 2022 concerning water supply and risk management. However, although the project's governance structure provides a space for local government to participate in the Technical Committees in each country, in practice they have not played an active role in stimulating bilateral collaboration or received training to develop public services and participate in implementation and monitoring activities. Consequently, this has become a new barrier that has affected the project's ToC and, thus the wider interests of territorial rights and greater collaboration within the GFA and Afro-descendant communities between San Lorenzo and Tumaco.

Figure 3: The project's governance structure (in Spanish)



Source: WFP (2020), Operations Manual of the Binational Project.

88. The governance structure was, however, found to have contributed to the following inefficiencies:

- The establishment of a complex regulatory environment that increased bureaucratic hurdles and controls on the project's implementation. For example, the project is currently monitoring a total of 118 indicators (see also EQ 5.2), which are reported to be mandatory by the AF. The ET found that the vast majority (102) concern operational issues and the remainder concern outcome, gender and safeguard monitoring. Stakeholder interviews confirm tracking such a high number of indicators absorbs a lot of time and resources.
- The project has adopted very long and complex progress reporting formats to report on the abovementioned indicators. Several stakeholders and the ET itself found the PPRs are very difficult to analyze efficiently and stimulate micro-management approaches to data management that are very time consuming to update. As such the ET found the PPRs are not practical resource documents.
- The country approach has resulted in two sets of nuanced approaches to ACC in each country that include different approaches and ACC measures, such as local promoters and the PIR in Ecuador and local technicians and HB in Colombia. The ET found this complicates information sharing and the analysis of data for both project staff and the IAAD communities.
- The project's governance structure underestimated the importance of strengthening communication channels of the IAAD communities. Despite efforts to strengthen communications through the IAAD's social networks, the radio stations of the EE do not have sufficient transmitters to reach many of their marginal communities to facilitate rapid communications that are needed to support governance issues, the transmission of the bulletins produced by the SMICC in Ecuador, etc.

2.5. EQ 5 – ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: To what extent has the project adapted to the context and to the lessons and learning identified during its implementation?

Response to changing conditions and internal needs: The project has demonstrated it has been able to adapt well to changing security conditions at the local level, manage capacity gaps within the EE and manage training through the Covid-19 pandemic. Adaptive management capacity at the strategic level was less evident, especially in terms of addressing its complex governance structure and implementing appropriate risk mitigation measures following the risk assessments conducted in the Prodoc and PPRs.

Quality of the project's M&E: The tracking of 118 indicators in each country is time consuming and has made it difficult to develop informed decision-making on areas where the project can add most value, address barriers/gaps that continue to affect performance, or where upscaling would enhance results and impact as foreseen in the ToC. The tracking of outcome indicators has been limited by the delay in the implementation of the ACC measures, although studies conducted in Ecuador in 2024 suggest positive outcomes in terms of improved diets and cost savings, but it is too early to determine whether the PACC/PACCC are reducing vulnerability in high risk areas, or whether the ethno-botanical exercises have filtered into public policy and planning processes to deliver change as foreseen in the ToC.

EQ 5.1: To what extent has the project team responded to changing conditions and adapted internal needs within its capabilities?

89. Interviews with stakeholders, the AI exercises and observations in the field all confirm the project continues to face frequent changes at the political, institutional, security, logistical and capacity levels, among others. The project's capacity to respond in an effective and efficient manner to these challenges was found to be mixed. Areas where adaptive management has been effective are summarized as follows:

- **Designation of EE focal points**: the appointment of focal points who have in-depth experience of their territories, on managing security issues and on mobilizing their local communities, has enabled the project to adapt rapidly to capacity needs, changes in insecurity and overcoming logistical challenges at the community level. This has been instrumental in completing the implementation of a large number of ACC measures in areas declared by WFP/UN Department for Safety and Security as "red zones".[70]
- **Training and employment of local promoters/technicians**: the decision to train and recruit local promoters/technicians from participating local communities, has enabled the project to maintain triangular cooperation between WFP, the EE and local community, which has helped maintain operations in the latter. Conversely, employment of external personnel, would have increased operational risks, given irregular groups consider outsiders as potential "informers".
- **Training and recruitment of financial and administration officers in the EE**: the training and supervision provided by the project to establish financial and administrative officers in the EE during the pandemic has proved to be a highly popular among all the EE interviewed. First, it addressed the problem experienced in 2018-2019 that they could not manage the funds effectively and efficiently, resulting in the return of AF funds back to WFP in 2020. Second, it has fulfilled one of their main aspirations, namely to demonstrate to donors and government that they can manage external funding and deliver results on time.
- **Adapting the PIR/HB according to the results of modern scientific research:** the synergies established with academia, has enabled the project to adapt its implementation in accordance with the advice and needs of both academia and participating communities, especially Afro-descendant communities. For example, interviews with academia in Ecuador confirm one of the botanical gardens has been specifically established next to Afro-descendant communities in Concepción to facilitate seed and knowledge transfer, as well as agricultural research on adaptive cropping

[70] The ET identified three security incidents that have directly involved project staff since 2018. Two were in Colombia and concern the kidnapping of a WFP staff member, and an armed threat during a routine boat trip. In Ecuador, WFP were forced to abandon support to an Afro-descendant community due to the entry of violent armed gangs.

methods. Similarly, scientific advice in Colombia has contributed to establishing a more integrated approach in some HB, where soil conservation and agroforestry techniques have shown the importance of including tree species in ACC. As such, these examples also demonstrate AF's innovation additionality and environmental additionality, which supports the delivery of global environmental benefits.

- **Switching to remote training and communications during the pandemic:** the application of the Edufami platform enabled the project to continue training local promoters/technicians, community leaders and others remotely during the Covid-19 pandemic when travel in the field was prohibited. This also enabled WFP to learn lesson on the remote training provided and adapt it to the needs and capacities of participants. For example, many interviewees from both IAAD communities found the training on valuing biodiversity in ACC aligned fully with their local strategies and practices to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in their communities using ancestral remedies.[71]

90. However, WFP's **adaptive management capacity at the strategic level** was far less evident. Interviews with stakeholders, for example, provide a clear indication that the project's bottom-up approach achieved at the local level has been largely isolated from policy dialogue at the national and subnational levels. Consequently, although stakeholders have stated an interest to adopt some of the project's approaches, there is very little concrete evidence to indicate policy reforms linked to ACC and FSN have taken place in either Colombia and Ecuador, nor is it evident in the PPRs if it has resulted in changes in WFP's Edufami platform, or will be taken into account when the AF reviews it social and environmental policy, adopted in 2016.

91. The ET identified two areas where WFP's adaptive management capacity has been constrained at the strategic level. First, stakeholder interviews confirm adaptive management decisions have been constrained by too many layers of decision-making that make it very difficult to reach consensus on the measures to be taken, especially at the binational level, but also concerning synergies with relevant national, sector and subnational programs promoting ACC through key sectors such as education and health sectors, or the agriculture sector in Colombia. Second, the project's ability to adapt to changing socio-political risks that have a bearing on its strategic relevance was found to be low in the following areas:

- Securing ownership of the 3-PA process by embedding it in either EE/GFAB and EE/CANE-RECOMPAS, or local government, training strategies, plans and programs; although this was not aided by the impact of the pandemic, it remains unclear how refresher training courses and scaling up of this training approach will continue, especially as new administrations have taken office in Ecuador and Colombia after the 3-PA process was completed at the end of 2021.
- Taking appropriate measures to avoid delays in the renewal of the FLA with the EE, which in Colombia took around five months to complete between July and December 2022 due to changes in their legal representation.
- Reestablishing robust communication channels with the EE, local government and the national executing agencies in response to changes in the political context in Ecuador in 2023 and in Colombia in 2024.
- Identifying and resolving important gaps in the project's governance structure, especially in the post-pandemic period, such as the lack of proactive engagement of the abovementioned sectors responsible for agriculture (in Colombia), and education and health, who have important mandates associated with FSN.
- Identifying mutually acceptable activities that could continue in the Indigenous Awa communities in Ecuador following the breach of clause 9 of the social safeguards, which led to the total suspension of all project actions in Ecuador for several months.

[71] The ET were informed on several occasions of the importance of using gliricidia (*Gliricidia sepium (gliricidia*)), known as "*mata ratón*", in their remedies and this plant was prioritised in the HB in Colombia.

EQ 5.2: To what extent has the project's monitoring and evaluation strategy been useful in informing management decisions on progress towards expected results (considering, for example, the implementation of MTR recommendations)?

92. The project's M&E system has been built on the M&E Strategy Results Framework and M&E planning formats, agreed with the AF in the project's inception phase. The main outcomes were the adoption of 138 indicators incorporating the indicators in the results matrix of the Prodoc and indicators required by the AF and the agreement to implement the M&E plan with a national rather than binational focus. However, stakeholder interviews confirm a specific budget was not allocated at that time for M&E in Colombia and Ecuador. To support the application of the M&E plan, a study was conducted in the inception period to identify/update existing baselines, but not the targets in the results matrix. To support community-based monitoring the project trained the local promoters/technicians to track operations and results. However, as previously mentioned, stakeholders found tracking the 138 indicators very time consuming, involved duplicated monitoring in several cases and were not fully standardized to facilitate binational reporting and learning. This approach reinforced the implementation of two national projects and implementation maps. Indeed, the ET found the project has not produced and used a bilateral map to guide planning and identify opportunities of coordinating, for example, the PACC/PACCC plans and ACC measures in cross-border areas.

93. It was not until the MTR was conducted between November and February 2023, that agreement was reached with the AF to downsize the number of indicators applied in the M&E plan from 138 to 118 indicators to remove 30 duplicating indicators. As a result, the project retained 16 outcome indicators, but also a very high number of indicators (102) on operational progress, the majority of which require the local promoters/technicians to track on WFP's behalf. Consequently, the changes did not address the high levels of micro-management required to implement the project's M&E system. For example, this includes the application of costly surveys by WFP staff, or through the contracting of third parties to cross-check that the beneficiary communities are satisfied with the activities realized. In addition, the ET found it complex and time consuming to assess reporting on indicators in the PPR, which are prepared as Excel documents that contain 20 sheets of data on all aspects of the project's implementation. These sheets include separate sheets on procurement, budgets, compliance, safeguards, risk assessments, lessons, indicators, and results, among others. All stakeholders interviewed, also confirmed that these reports are unwieldy and difficult to use as a resource document.

94. An assessment of the outcome 12 indicators confirms they are dedicated to monitoring the project's expected outcomes and impact in the Prodoc, but do not include learning from this tracking to support decision-making on the project's ToC. This was also echoed in the draft version of PPR-5. Moreover, because the majority of the project's ACC activities are still being finalized in many cases, learning associated with their progress has been limited so far. Moreover, the lack of a dedicated M&E officer to act as a linchpin between the binational coordinator and the two WFP M&E teams in the field offices in Ibarra and Pasto represents an important caveat in the M&E plan. A second caveat is that the project's assessment of its impact indicators in the PPRs has not covered key issues. For example, reference to PPR-5 (draft) confirms the following findings:

- **Impact indicator 1 (reduced vulnerability and increased capacity to confront climate variability):** there is no information on how far the communities are actively applying their PACC in an integrated manner and with financial support secured from both internal and external sources.
- **Impact indicator 2 (dietary diversity score):** dietary scores of 59 and 56 percent in Colombia and Ecuador are reported, but states, "low impact is expected at the end of the project". However, participants interviewed stated they are highly satisfied that they are producing a wider variety of crops, but also consider dietary diversification as only one benefit (cutting food costs and time, continual harvesting of different crops and the spiritual value of the PIR/HB, among others, were all found to be important benefits).
- **Impact indicator 3 (binational capacity strengthening):** there is no specific reporting on the binational initiatives foreseen in the Prodoc that support the establishment, consolidation or expansion of permanent binational mechanisms dedicated to coordinated ACC and FSN approaches. Moreover, the MTR report recommended the strengthening of project governance, coordination and communications at the binational level, as well as nationally (p. 8). However, the ET was unable to identify key elements of this recommendation, such as roadmap for binational communication products, has been implemented so far.

- **Impact indicator 4 (percentage of women with physical, political, and economic empowerment):** the report states economic empowerment has been substantial in Colombia and Ecuador (77 percent and 74 percent), while political empowerment has been low (33 percent and 50 percent). However, the ET did not find conclusive evidence that women have enhanced their economic empowerment so far, but it did identify cases of political empowerment in Afro-descendant organizations (CANE, CCBMYF) and in Awa communities in Colombia where women have had to take up leadership roles in communities where male leaders have been killed, or left in fear of their security.

2.6. EQ 6 – EQUITY: To what extent were the gender and intercultural perspective integrated in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project?

Participation of vulnerable groups: The project's GEWE approach has secured highly satisfactory levels of participation of vulnerable women (71 percent against a target of 51 percent) from both ethnic groups, although data shows Afro-descendant women have benefited more widely from participation in the implementation of the ACC measures than Awa women, especially in Ecuador. Women's leadership in implementing these measures was also found to stimulate the participation of other vulnerable members of the family/neighborhood (youths, elders, disabled).

Enhancing ancestral knowledge and its recognition: The project's intercultural approach has been instrumental in recovering, researching and publishing ancestral knowledge and traditional practices of Afro and Awa communities, and in the development of the PIR/HB, but this has not resulted in raising the profile of knowledge holders, or employing them to guide the establishment of the PIR/HB.

Empowerment of women and other vulnerable groups: Political and social empowerment has been enhanced through the training of women as community focal points, their active participation in the recovery of ancestral knowledge and practices and through improved access and management of natural resources under forest/mangrove conservation/restoration orders. Economic empowerment of women was difficult to substantiate because the ACC measures are still in the process of consolidation/installation. Initial indications are that income generating activities (Colombia only) have not raised women's income so far, but the HB/PIR and water systems in Ecuador are reducing food, travel and water purchasing costs that usually fall on women.

EQ 6.1: *Participation:* To what extent have partners in Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant communities and organizations, particularly the most vulnerable people (women, youth, elderly and disabled) actively participated in the different stages of the project?

95. The baseline studies conducted in the early stages of the project's implementation were considered by stakeholders to have been instrumental in identifying the most vulnerable women and their communities in both countries. During the selection process some of these communities had to be excluded due to problems of insecurity and/or complex logistical challenges. Reference to Table 7 confirms women's participation rates have been highly satisfactory at both component and country levels to 31 March 2024. Overall, women's participation has averaged 71 percent, which is highly satisfactory compared to the Prodoc (51 percent). In terms of the number of female participants, the project has also surpassed the targets of direct beneficiaries (19,867), and women's participation (10,144) by 202 and 281 percent respectively).

Table 7: Direct participation of men and women in the project by component (to 31 March 2024)

Component	Colombia female	Colombia male	% female	Ecuador female	Ecuador male	% female	Total female	Total male	% Female
Component 1	1,376	1,193	54%	3,989	3,400	54%	**5,365**	**4,593**	**54%**
Component 2	143	146	49%	97	103	49%	**240**	**249**	**49%**
Component 3	3,749	4,024	48%	19,120	2,904	87%	**22,869**	**6,928**	**77%**
TOTAL	**5,268**	**5,363**	**50%**	**23,206**	**6,407**	**78%**	**28,474**	**11,770**	**71%**

Source: WFP (2024). Number of Participants in the Binational Project by Component, Country, and Sex.

96. Interviews in the field indicate most women were satisfied with the gender-sensitive approach applied during the CBPP and welcomed the opportunity to be consulted, stating public programs normally bring premeditated "solutions" and handouts of kits, equipment, materials, etc. In terms of the effectiveness of the CBPP process, many women said it was too long and needed more learning by doing approaches. For this reason, many women struggled to recount what they had learned, and in Colombia several women felt the CBPP did not lead to tangible results. However, interviews with women who participated in the training modules provided through the Edufami platform, found it an effective way to train a large number of female promoters/technicians and felt the module on gender equality helped clarify their rights and their role as "agents of change", as foreseen in the Prodoc (p. 32). For example, this was evident in mangrove restoration and in some HB visited. In addition, gender training also helped ensure training workshops included women-specific needs, such as play corners for their children, providing promoter supervision, and use of culturally-responsive didactic materials (especially for Indigenous Awa women who only speak Awapit), separate meeting spaces for women (especially in Indigenous Awa communities) and payment for mangrove restoration, among others, has greatly facilitated the high levels of women's participation in planning and implementing these ACC measures.

97. Monitoring data and reporting on female participation by population group, or by age group, was found to be conducted in Ecuador and Colombia, but is not accumulated and reported annually in the PPRs. According to the data recorded in Ecuador from its events registration forms, 55.38 percent of all participants in trainings conducted in 2023 were women, and the project stated that 1.1 percent of participants in trainings to March 2024 were people with disabilities. Triangulated evidence from the AI exercises, stakeholder interviews, and site visits confirms the active participation of women in the project's ACC measures has been high and that this also stimulates dialogue and the participation of other vulnerable groups such as youths, elders and people with disabilities from the extended family or neighborhood. This was particularly evident in the drawings elaborated by Indigenous Awa women during the AI workshops where more emphasis is clearly given to community-based services, whereas among men it was much more focused on depicting infrastructure to accommodate their felt needs, such as bridges, roads, and buildings. It was also evident that women's leadership has played an important role in the development of the following ACC measures:

- **Output 2.2.1 (SMICC/Ecuador):** the network of meteorological stations has been installed in highly vulnerable communities where both literate women and men have been trained as climate guardians. However, it is too early to determine how far they are stimulating communal decision-making on planting and harvesting, disaster risk reduction, etc.
- **Output 3.1.2 (Safe water supply):** the on-going establishment of women in representative roles in the water supply management committees and boards in Ecuador appears to be facilitating the development of a new form of local governance in which women play a central role in decision-making and financial management. For example, women have played an important role in securing agreement on the installation of water meters, which was initially opposed by men who opposed controlling water use but have since demonstrated they facilitate the detection of leaks.
- **Output 3.1.5 (PIR/HB/nurseries):** women have generally been instrumental in stimulating the participation of their partners, youths (mainly their own children) and elders (parents/grandparents) in the development of the PIR/HB. For example, women were found to have encouraged the active participation of other women, elders and youths to support them in the development of the HB and nurseries visited. Moreover, the participation of male Indigenous Awa adolescents was found to be high when there are opportunities to sell surplus food, or products such as Anthurium flowers, where demand is high for weddings and funerals. Conversely, the opposite was identified in Afro-descendant communities.
- **Output 3.2.2 (Mangrove restoration):** women who are dependent on black clam harvesting were found to be proactive in encouraging female youths to support them in seed collection and restoration work. Moreover, participation of the whole family appears to be growing in both Colombia and Ecuador on the potential income generating opportunities that can be generated from the blue economy as previously mentioned under EQ3.

EQ 6.2: *Knowledge:* To what extent has the ancestral knowledge of Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant people, especially women and elders, been recognized and valued in plans for adaptation to current and future climate impacts?

98. The ethno-botanical studies conducted in both projects included the participation of senior knowledge holders and sages of both sexes. Triangulation of field interviews, group meetings and narrations conducted in the communities visited confirm this approach has proved highly popular in identifying and raising awareness on:

- The plants that IAAD women specifically use for food, non-food, and medicinal purposes to manage dietary deficiencies, treat menstruation pain, manage pregnancy, stimulate breast milk, develop local food recipes, produce arts and crafts, and so forth.
- The specific plants men use for, among others, muscular pain, rituals, tools, construction, fencing, feeding of livestock, managing pests, or generate an income (as an alternative to coca production).
- Local practices associated with mangrove restoration by Afro-descendant communities, including seed collection and propagation practices, local methods to reduce losses of mangrove seedlings, local management of tidal flows prior to and during replanting, manage sustainable harvesting of black clam, crab, fish and other products, techniques to control mangrove timber use, etc.
- Local practices associated with forest conservation methods in Indigenous Awa communities, including the application of local myths, spiritual rituals, designation and protection of sacred sites, local silvicultural practices, local sowing practices, including *canoeras*, protection and assisted natural regeneration of riverbanks, etc.
- The application of combined local and modern practices to conserve soils, seeds, water resources.

99. An important outcome from this awareness raising has been to recover the spiritual and physical value of traditional knowledge and practices and discover that they represent highly viable, low-cost nature-based solutions to enhance resilience, FSN and forest governance. A second outcome has been the production of publications on a selection of the 112 native/local species that most interest the IAAD communities. Third, by engaging academia the project has secured the establishment of botanical gardens that will be owned and managed by the academia, which is likely to retain the project's institutional memory far longer than local government. Fourth, the project officially recognized all knowledge holders who provided valuable information in the communal dialogues realized as part of the ethno-botanical studies, although this did not include the presentation of official certificates in recognition of their contributions which have enabled the PIR/HB to integrate 69 native/reintroduced plants to date (PPR-5 draft). Interviews with the EE confirmed a common view that the most prominent knowledge holders should have been officially recognized with a certificate and/or an award by the participating universities, or MAATE/Minambiente and engaged as focal points to support the uptake of local crops and practices in the development of the PIR/HB and their consolidation beyond the project. Indeed, site inspections in selected PIR/HB visited in both countries revealed they apply conventional row planting and seed conservation techniques, as opposed to local practices and methods such as local agroforestry practices, seed conservation/exchange, pest management techniques, communal food sharing rituals and so forth. Having said this, some participants were found to be in the process of integrating some local practices such as the integration of medicinal plants and plants to keep evil spirits away.

EQ 6.3: *Empowerment:* To what extent has the project stimulated transformational changes in gender equality and advance the rights of IAAD people?

100. The project's contribution to enhancing the political and social empowerment of IAAD women was difficult to determine while the project is still finalizing the implementation of many of its ACC measures. The evidence collected from interviews, narrations, AI and general observation, indicates that the training of women as community promoters/technicians, participation in the water committees/boards (Ecuador only) assuming leadership on the installation of the HB/PIR and greater access to natural resources placed under forest/mangrove conservation/restoration orders have all contributed to raising the voice and decision-making roles of IAAD women at the community level. These developments have also been supported by the provision of a gender training course in WFP's Edufami platform (see also EQ3).

101. Political empowerment of women within the EE was most evident in the EE representing Afro-

descendant communities in both Colombia and Ecuador, where female leaders are present/have been present in CANE, RECOMPAS and the CCBMYF. Interviews confirm the project's gender focus to training has directly contributed to CANE establishing itself as an agent for change. For example, CANE is committed to promoting the consumption of ancestral foods in local schools and is in negotiations to secure a role in a new mangrove restoration project funded by an undisclosed donor agency. Similarly, in Colombia, a newly elected member of RECOMPAS stated her intention to expand the project's gender focus in mangrove restoration initiatives. Political empowerment of Indigenous Awa women in FCAE was less evident, despite specific training provided on gender-based violence and prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation provided to FCAE's Governing Council following the abovementioned triggering of AF's social safeguards.

102. An assessment of women's economic empowerment proved difficult to determine, because the project's ACC measures are still being finalized. Initial indications are that economic empowerment of women in Colombia and Ecuador has mainly been assessed in terms of the economic savings generated from reducing costs following installation of the HB/PIR and the safe water systems in Ecuador (see also EQ3). This is also reflected in PPR-5 (draft) where the percentage of women surveyed who felt their economic empowerment had improved was 77 and 74 percent in Colombia and Ecuador respectively. The ET was unable to triangulate this but observed the surveys were not based on the same baselines produced in 2019 by UN Women.[72] Similarly, the studies conducted by Numma in 2024 (see also EQ3) did not apply these baselines, nor similar sample groups selected by UN Women. Stakeholders in Ecuador were also of the opinion that economic generating activities were beyond the scope of the project. Conversely, in Colombia, small business development was evident (see also EQ3), even though none of the women interviewed stated that their incomes had increased to April 2024. Nonetheless, a majority of women interviewed (especially Afro-descendant women) stated income generation was crucial to sustaining ACC.

103. An assessment of the IAAD communities' perception on the project's rights-based approach, provided the following main findings:

- Applied guidelines for free, prior and informed consent in line with their requests and obligations.
- Ensured all reports on ancestral knowledge are protected by non-disclosure agreements.
- Enhanced protection of natural resources and their services through Sustainable Use and Custody Orders (covering mangrove sites in Ecuador) that offer new opportunities for integration of mangrove restoration sites into the abovementioned DNMI that spans the Nariño coastline and connects with the REMACAM Reserve in Ecuador (see also end of EQ1).
- Advanced local governance and conflict management within their territories, which has helped advance peace in many participating communities.
- Had limited impact in terms of increasing the rights of Awa women in Ecuador, except in specific areas, such as participation in water supply committees established in 2024 (30 percent women).

2.7. EQ 7 – SUSTAINABILITY AND HUMAN AND ECOLOGICAL SECURITY: To what extent has the project adopted mechanisms during its implementation to ensure the sustainability of the results?

Capacity to manage risks likely to affect sustainability: The project not adequately mitigated a number of risks that are likely to affect the sustainability of the PACC, the SMICC and the ACC measures, nor is a formal exit strategy in place that addresses these risks. Sociopolitical and institutional risks linked to recent changes in regional and local government in Colombia, a general lack of coordination with GEF-funded projects operating in the project's intervention area and growing instability caused by gang violence in Ecuador are all considered substantial risks that threaten the continuation and upscaling of project activities. This is further exacerbated by the lack of clear commitments from central and local government to provide the funding needed to manage these risks and support the consolidation and upscaling of the ACC measures.

[72] UN Women (2019). Incorporation of the Gender Approach in the Vulnerability Study Process of the Binational Project. In this report a key finding was that 45.2 percent of family income is generated by women in Ecuador, but this varies by population group, reporting IAAD women generate on average 28.7 and 56.8 percent of household income respectively.

Capacity to apply AF's environmental and social safeguards: Despite improvements in the reporting format of the environmental and social safeguards since 2023, the ET found the risk ratings are open to subjectivity due to a lack of criteria to guide the risk rating selection process. The environmental and social safeguards have also not been updated by the AF since 2016 nor apply a user-friendly reporting format to clarify how, why and where the mitigation measures will be applied by local and national partners.

EQ 7.1: What are the risks (sociopolitical, institutional, financial, climate shocks/stress, etc.) that could hinder the sustainability of the results achieved, and to what extent has the project contributed to mitigating the risks (through actions, alliances, strategies, etc.)?

104. The project is currently in its closure phase to November 2024, but the ET did not identify a formal exit strategy has been adopted and applied to outline the handover procedures of the ACC measures in a smooth and coordinated manner.[73] This has not been aided by the fact many of the ACC measures were still in the process of installation, finalization and/or testing during the ET's field mission in April 2024. According to WFP, some of the ACC measures, such as the safe water supply systems, have an exit strategy incorporated in their design, but in Colombia it is unlikely there is sufficient time to apply an orderly transfer to the EE by November 2024. In the case of the PIR/HB and the canoeras/kitchen gardens it remains unclear who will provide extension services after the project's closure, while dialogue on incorporating the project's mangrove restoration and forest conservation activities the management plans for REMACAM and the DNMI Cabo Manglares has only recently commenced. This situation does not fare well for the long-term sustainability of the ACC measures, especially because some significant risks identified in the PPR-5 have not been adequately mitigated to April 2024. The following risks were identified as the most likely to affect the sustainability of the project's main activities in the immediate period following the project's planned closure on 3 November 2024.

105. **Sociopolitical risks - Colombia**: **substantial.** The ET identified two main reasons for this rating at the present time. First, the underestimation of the highly decentralized nature of government in the Prodoc, has resulted in weak political mechanisms in place to engage regional and municipal governments in the implementation of decisions taken by the national project steering committee and technical advisory committee. Moreover, the project lacks a suitable exit strategy to clarify how it envisages to:

- Sensitize the new regional administrations that have taken office in 2024 on the technical oversight that the EE will need to consolidate and upscale the ACC measures beyond the project.
- Conclude inter-institutional agreements supporting the continuation of the project's main initiatives, and which should include coordination with GEF-funded projects mentioned under EQ3 (implemented by UNDP and FAO).
- Establish the necessary water committees/boards needed to operate and maintain the water supply systems and community EWS, which are planned to start implementation from June 2024.
- Ensure appropriate strategies are in place to manage insecurity, unstable energy supplies, poor internet coverage and other risks that could affect the sustainability of the project's actions.

106. **Sociopolitical risks – Ecuador**: **substantial**. The ET justifies this risk rating for the following reasons. First, government at the national and subnational levels experiments frequent episodes of instability, which makes it difficult to build alliances that deliver political commitments. Second, interviews with government staff from ministries and prefectures all confirm that the unprecedented growth of insecurity in the country has made it very difficult to carry out project activities in many rural areas in the northern border area, especially post-Covid-19 pandemic in 2022. In many cases local communities interviewed interpret this as abandonment of the State in their territories. Third, the increase in decentralized powers, regarding DRM, of local government since 2021, has exposed the lack of adequate political coordination mechanisms in place between national and local government to adopt and upscale good practices associated with the ACC initiatives funded by the project, such as the PACC/PACCC. In Ecuador, an exit strategy is also absent to

[73] According to WFP, after the end of the evaluation period (April 2024), the project has increasingly adopted measures aimed to enhance sustainability, including in key areas such as: Articulation and impact of the activities related to national priorities at different levels and with different partners; Ownership and involvement of local organizations (EE, associations and communities); Asset management, operation and maintenance. The progress and prospects of success of these measures could not be triangulated during the field mission and are hence not assessed in this report.

provide guidance on:

- Enhancing the networking capacity between INAMHI, provincial governments and the EE in order to apply effective and coordinated O&M of the SMICC and respond to gaps.
- The establishment of agreements governing how the water supply committees/boards in IAAD communities will engage with local government and the EE the operation of the water supply systems before the project's closure.
- The conclusion of an inter-institutional framework agreements between participating provincial governments of Esmeraldas, Imbabura and Sucumbíos, based on the lessons learned from the framework agreement signed by the Provincial GAD for Carchi, the UPEC, CANE and the Federation of Black Communities and Organizations of Imbabura and Carchi in April 2024.

107. **Institutional risks – Colombia**: **moderate**. The internal technical and administrative capacity of RECOMPAS and participating government institutions at the subnational level continues to be compromised by high staff rotation, the general lack of financial resources and a clear exit strategy with the project that builds on a high level of support from the Ministry of Environment and Rural Development to sustain the ACC process initiated by the project in conformity with national policy and plan on combatting the effects of climate change. This includes stimulating policy dialogue on some key issues that they consider are crucial to the long-term sustainability of this process, in particular the issue of linking territorial rights with the expansion of protected area management. Similarly, the ET identified regional government institutions, especially in Nariño department, are willing to discuss the identification of roadmaps where they have capacity and funds to support the continuation of project activities. For example, despite CorpoNariño's limited participation in the project, it has a small budget for biodiversity conservation, which could potentially include technical oversight for the HB and mangrove restoration activities, as well as provide information and guidance on the development of the blue economy.

108. Finally, at the EE level, senior members of ACIPAP, Nulpes Reserve, UNIPA and RECOMPAS all demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the direct implementation of project activities, but also stated a one-year extension of the project was needed before continuing the ACC process by themselves. They also stated that the extension is feasible because EE such as RECOMPAS have senior staff who were previously engaged in the project through the CCBMYF. As such, there is a strong willingness in RECOMPAS to continue the project's activities through direct agreements with CCBMYF and CCAMYF. Moreover, the sustainability of mangrove restoration has been enhanced by the creation of a National Integrated Mangrove Management District, signed between the CCBMYF and the National Natural Parks authority, which will monitor the 1,087 ha of mangrove restoration completed with support from the project. This development has attracted a lot of interest to expand mangrove restoration and explore the development of the blue economy.

109. **Institutional risks – Ecuador**: **substantial**. First, participating ministries (MAATE and MAG), local government (Decentralized Autonomous Governments – GADs) and the EE lack adequate human and financial resources to provide longstanding extension and support services needed to oversee the sustainability of the ACC measures. This situation appears to have also contributed to the decision to exclude MAG-Carchi in the above-mentioned framework agreement signed at the end of April 2024, but may also result in the application and development of MAG's own initiative of establishing agroclimatic round tables in parallel to the SMICC.[74] Second, the increase in decentralized responsibilities for public services such as water supply and disaster risk management has not been matched with a corresponding increase in human and financial resources to fully take on these responsibilities. This situation, coupled with high staff rotation rates and difficulties in attracting talented technical and administrative individuals, confirms there are significant institutional challenges in securing the development of the water committees/boards as planned by the project.

110. Third, despite improvements in the capacity of FCAE and CANE to manage significant external funding from AF (over USD 2.2 million) and deliver outputs on time, there is a lack of a clear exit strategy on how these organizations will maintain the technical, administrative and logistical support currently funded by the project, but which will end in November 2024. This has direct implications on the degree to which the

[74] Interviews confirmed the project will not support the development of the agro-climatic round tables on the grounds they are designed more for the agriculture sector in general than the needs of the IAAD communities.

local communities will receive technical support to consolidate the ACC measures. For example, the ET identified problems of O&M concerning the water systems visited and one case where it was only serving seven of the 21 households planned. Fourth, the EE and government institutions continue to operate largely in isolation of each other that has prevented an integrated response to the ACC. This has not been aided by the project's evolution into essentially two separate national projects, that has overlooked the existing opportunities to stimulate binational dialogue through decentralized initiatives such as the Commonwealth Agreement of decentralized autonomous governments of Carchi, Esmeraldas, Imbabura, and Sucumbíos.[75]

111. **Economic/financial risks – Colombia and Ecuador**: **substantial**. Economic risks were found to be high for three main reasons. First, at the macroeconomic level rising inflation combined with devaluation of the Colombian Peso in 2023-2024 represents a substantial risk to eroding public finances and the value of any income generated at the community level. In Ecuador, the dollarization of the economy has had the opposite effect, increasing the risks of low competitiveness.

112. Second, at the community level, the project's design and implementation has only partially addressed the high economic vulnerability experienced in participating communities. For example, as mentioned under EQ4, studies conducted by the project in 2024 have shown the water systems and PIR/HB generate cost savings and that this has contributed to improving purchasing power of IAAD women. Nevertheless, there is insufficient monitoring on how far these cost savings are reinvested in ACC. In addition, cost savings generated from using medicinal plants has not been assessed, even though the use of local remedies generate significant economic savings and saves lives in isolated communities. In addition, a large number of interviewees stated that the production of coca leaves remains an important source of income in Colombia. This situation has not been addressed by supporting alternative income generating opportunities. Moreover, the PIR/HB have not been designed to include income generation. A number of respondents voiced their concerns that income generation is necessary to sustain resilience and well-being. This was also observed in the AI drawings where a central part of their dream is to produce fish, fruits, medicinal plants, cocoa, wood, etc. and to establish processing facilities, among others.

113. Third, the general lack of formal synergies with other projects mentioned under EQ4, has restricted the EE from identifying opportunities to capture the funding they need to consolidate and expand the ACC process into communities that have not been supported by the project. For example, an interview with members of the Nulpes Reserve indicated the decision to support only 11 of its 28 communities has caused resentment as well as calls for financial support to fund the expansion of the HB, construction of school lavatories, and development of local products.

114. **Climatic risks – Colombia and Ecuador: moderate**. Despite the project's support in advancing ACC, the ET triangulated significant evidence to indicate the risks associated with climate variability and change remain a threat for the following reasons:

- The EWS in Colombia will be established in the final months of the project's closure period leaving insufficient time for testing, while in Ecuador, the SMICC has been conceived more as a climate monitoring system than an EWS.
- Some of the water systems installed in coastal areas may be subject to damage from storm surges, droughts and water quality issues.
- Forest restoration and conservation in highly vulnerable areas may be subject to flood damage before it is consolidated. Indeed, many respondents confirmed an intensification of climate variability that has provoked prolonged drought, an increase in the number of forest fires and more widespread flooding and landslides. In addition, evidence that government, the EE and local communities will commit more resources to intensify ACC was not evident, especially in Ecuador.

EQ 7.2: To what extent have environmental considerations in accordance with Adaptation Fund and WFP standards been reviewed during project implementation?

115. The ET have been unable to establish conclusive findings on the degree to which the project has

[75] In addition, two other initiatives were identified as follows: (i) the Ministry of Education has an agreement with the provincial governments and WFP to provide school meals; (ii) the Ministry of Health has launched a strategy to combat malnutrition in Esmeraldas province as well as other provinces where chronic malnutrition is prevalent.

complied with the AF's ESP. On the one hand, some stakeholders mentioned the project has struggled to report correctly on the environmental and social safeguards in this policy until 2023 for the following reasons:

- The project did not include a budget to fund the screening process required by AF.
- AF did not provide clear guidance and criteria on the environmental and social screening and ratings to be applied for its "undefined sub projects" when elaborating and implementing FLAs and contracting procedures until WFP established a dedicated weblink to Environmental and Social Risk Screening in September 2022[76] and provided a monitoring matrix for its 15 safeguards which was to be integrated into PPR-4 from 2023.
- AF continues to apply its 15 safeguards according to an ESP that has not been updated since 2016.

116. On the other hand, several stakeholders stated that they have not experienced major difficulties in applying the ESP safeguards, or on their reporting in the PPRs. For example, in Ecuador, the triggering of an environmental safeguard facilitated the approval of funding for gabions construction to protect a water source for one of the safe water systems installed in an afro community. Yet, an independent assessment of the ESP reporting in the PPRs conducted by the ET indicates the PPR reporting format is very difficult to apply and report on the ESP for the following reasons. First it contains 10 columns of questions to be addressed for all 15 environmental safeguards, followed by a further five sections of reporting on: (i) monitoring for unanticipated impacts; (ii) categorization; (iii) implementation arrangements; (iv) projects/programs with unidentified sub-projects; (v) grievances. This makes it very complex and time consuming to complete each time an ACC measure is to be implemented. Second, the questions for the environmental safeguards do not include reporting of outcomes derived from the mitigation measures applied. Consequently, reporting concentrates on providing narratives on the safeguard measures but not on their effectiveness.

117. However, the screening tool contains a total of 96 questions. This means to apply the screening tool correctly in relation to the 10 questions assigned to the 15 environmental safeguards, the project is required to address a total of 246 questions (excluding the questions associated with the five abovementioned sections). In response WFP introduced new simplified reporting formats in 2023. Also significant is that each ACC measure approved should have a dedicated social and environmental management plan. Similarly, WFP country teams stated they have limited capacity to identify and apply suitable mitigation measures for ACC measures that face the following risks:

- Oil pipeline spills in Colombia, which various interviewees reported have affected project activities in the form of forced evacuations, health problems and water and soil contamination.
- Expansion of monoculture farming, especially associated with oil palm that is grown extensively in the coastal areas bordering participating communities.
- Illegal logging and mining which threaten in particular the water sources used by the project for the safe water systems installed in Ecuador and the forest/mangrove conservation/restoration actions.
- Solid waste management, which is a growing problem in communities located close to urban centers and roadsides and a major cause of dengue fever.

2.8. EQ 8 – SCALABILITY: What is the potential of the project to scale adaptation to climate variability and change?

The ET identified two areas where the potential to scale-up the project's main activities is high. In both cases they are cost efficient and effective, align with government priorities and demonstrate the importance of working closely with and having the support a government, or donor-funded institution that has decision-making powers and/or resources. A further six areas were found to have moderate potential for scaling-up. In most cases they refer to ACC measures that local communities have the internal capacity and resources to replicate because they support the recovery of their ancestral knowledge, application of the PACC/PACCC, but need technical oversight and new funding to be identified and agreed. Finally, five areas were deemed to have low, or very low potential for scaling up because they have not been implemented, lack national ownership, or whose main purpose is to support the project's implementation.

[76] WFP (2021). WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework.

118. Among the huge amount of content provided in the project's annual progress reports is a section on scalability. In PPR-5 (draft), it states, that, "all the measures identified so far are scalable". However, the ET did not find sufficient evidence to confirm this is the case. To support its analysis, and in conformity with WFP's request in the debriefing conducted on 14 May 2024, the ET have analyzed this question in Table 8 below, in which it has provided a scalability rating of "very low, low, moderate, high and very high" and a summary of the justification for the rating applied. It is pointed out that scalability was assessed from two main perspectives: (i) internal capacity at the community level to scale up the ACC measure with their own know-how and resources and (ii) external capacity to scale up the ACC measure with public, private and/or international donor resources.

Table 8: Scalability assessment of project measures supporting adaptation to climate change

Project action/ measure	Rating	Explanation for the rating applied
Component 1		
Recovery of ancestral knowledge and traditional practices (Colombia)	**Moderate**	There is growing recognition of the value of recovering ancestral knowledge and traditional practices among stakeholders and IAAD communities in Colombia. Government stakeholders stated that the scaling up of research on this is likely to be integrated into the National Ecological Restoration Plan and engage institutions such as AgroSavia to support this. However, agreements to scale up this action at the regional level still need to be discussed.
Recovery of ancestral knowledge and traditional practices (Ecuador)	**Moderate**	There is no concrete evidence of scaling-up this action at the national level due to the government's main priority of improving security and safety of its citizens. However, at the provincial level there is evidence that scaling-up of this action is likely in Carchi where UPEC is developing a botanical garden with Afro-descendant communities and signed an inter-institutional framework agreement with the Prefecture, CANE that is likely to lead to a specific agreement on scaling up research and development of local agrobiodiversity. In Esmeraldas, the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador in Esmeraldas (PUCESE) has not signed such an agreement, nor does its botanical garden directly support seed conservation at the family/community levels due to insecurity concerns.
Willingness of non-state actors to continue R&D on agrobiodiversity and its sustainable use	**Moderate**	Participating universities in Colombia and Ecuador have showed positive signs they wish to upscale research and development of their curricula on local agrobiodiversity recovery, conservation, and sustainable use. This is most advanced in UPEC who have signed the interinstitutional agreement mentioned above, although it does not include direct engagement of FCAE.
Online training on ACC through Edufami (Colombia and Ecuador)	**Low**	Although the Edufami platform has demonstrated it is a viable online training portal and has the potential to also strengthen institutions such as the National Decentralized Risk Management System (SNDGR) in Ecuador and the Secretariat for Risk Management in Colombia, it has not been officially institutionalized, or adopted as an accepted online training program to apply ACC in either Colombia or Ecuador.
Component 2		
EWS (Colombia)	**Low**	Progress in starting the implementation of the community-based EWS has been delayed. Installation is planned to start in June 2024 by the EE, under the technical supervision of Corprogreso. It remains unclear whether it can be scaled up until it has demonstrated its added value at the community level.
SMICC (Ecuador)	**High**	INAMHI is committed to integrating the SMICC into its latest action plan for 2024-2027, expanding the climate guardian network, establishing

Project action/ measure	Rating	Explanation for the rating applied
		agreements with local government to apply the SMICC to support not only IAAD communities but also key development sectors at the provincial and municipal levels (Public Works, Agriculture and Risk Management). The project is also committed to ensuring these agreements are signed before closure. INAMHI states funding to scale up the SMICC is possible through UNDP's new program "EWS for all". However, coordination with the GEF-funded project implemented by UNDP on its EWS in the Mira-Mataje/Carchi-Guaitara River basins is not evident and an incentives package to ensure the voluntary network of climate guardians is sustained and scaled up has not been identified.
Component 3		
Safe water supply systems (Ecuador)	**Moderate**	The EE do not have the financial or human resources to sustain and scale-up these measures without external funding and technical services provided by local government. Municipal governments of Mira and San Lorenzo are in the process of signing agreements with the water boards established in Afro-descendant communities to oversee their management and O&M. In these cases, the scaling up of safe water supply systems with the EE may be possible where local communities demonstrate organization and water sources available fall within their territories. Scaling up is unlikely in areas where the land is susceptible to changes in ownership, or landscape degradation caused by unsustainable farming.
Safe water supply systems (Colombia)	**Very low**	The delays in installing these systems through Pais21 forced the ending of the contract in April 2024. The on-going attempt to train the EE to take over the installation of the water systems is planned to start in June 2024. However, it remains unlikely the water systems can be fully installed, tested and water committees established prior to the project's closure in November 2024. As such, any decision on scaling-up this measure, will not be possible until after the installation of the water systems have been reviewed.
PIR and *canoeras* (Ecuador)	**Moderate**	The scaling-up of these measures at the community level by follow-on families from IAAD communities is dependent on their performance and the benefits they generate (low-cost solutions to FSN, opportunity to exchange seeds, know-how, bio-indicators, local practices, etc.). Among the latter, scaling-up is also dependent on the perception it strengthens their cosmovision and meets cultural needs and rituals. Scaling-up the PIR through local government is likely in Carchi and Imbabura, where interinstitutional agreements have been signed in April 2024 and commitments to integrate the PIR in their PDOTs for 2024-2027 is evident. In Esmeraldas and Sucumbíos scaling-up is difficult due to growing insecurity. Coordination with MAG to provide technical oversight remains a challenge, especially where security issues exist.
PIR and HB (Colombia)	**Moderate**	The EE of IAAD communities like and are committed to scaling-up the HB. The Ministry of Environment is committed to integrating the HB into policy, but to implement any policy on scaling-up the HB there is a need for inter-institutional agreements to be in place at the regional and local government levels to oversee and fund the scaling-up process through government funds, or through GEF-funded projects such as the new BioSur project whose design is currently being finalized and where UNDP have expressed a strong interest to explore supporting the HB.

Project action/ measure	Rating	Explanation for the rating applied
Mangrove/forest landscape restoration and conservation	**High**	This measure is a popular nature-based solution that enable Afro-descendant communities to diversify their livelihoods into blue economy opportunities and Indigenous Awa communities to conserve their biodiversity and territories. Although, linkages between the EE, local government and GEF-funded projects to guide the up-scaling process and link it with payment for environmental services schemes are still weak, there is significant national support for the scaling up restoration efforts, especially in Colombia.
Economic empowerment, through family and micro enterprise	**Low**	The scaling-up of the business development initiatives initiated by the project (mainly in Colombia) is highly unlikely, because all are struggling to generate an income and enhance economic empowerment among the beneficiaries. The EE also lack internal expertise on business development and value chains, nor have formal synergies been established with relevant public and donor-funded interventions supporting business development to guide them on a marketing and sales strategy where IAAD communities have a competitive advantage.
Replication of the PACC (Colombia)	**Moderate**	In Colombia, the opportunities to scale-up the PACC are likely where they have been shared with other actors (especially among indigenous peoples) who are keen to address climate action, in particular the application of ACC measures such as the HB and the adoption of agricultural calendars that can be integrated into their LPs. There is also scope for interchanges with other indigenous institutions that apply ACC such as the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca.
Replication of the PACC (Ecuador)	**Moderate**	The community-based PACC that have recently been converted into compact summarized documents up to 10 pages in length appear to be popular at the community and replicable by FCAE and CANE. However, neither FCAE, nor CANE, have received support to establish an expert in their staff who can oversee this task and their integration into their Life/Local Development Plans. There is also a lack of adequate coordination between MAATE and MAG on their wider adoption and upscaling at the national level.
Willingness of GEF-funded projects to support upscaling of ACC measures	**High**	Interviews with UNDP and FAO confirm a high level of willingness to support upscaling of the SMICC, mangrove/forest restoration and conservation and exchange information on each other's approach to data collection and monitoring.

3. Conclusions, lessons, and recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

119. The overall conclusion from the final evaluation on the project's performance in the intervention area is that the **strengthening of the EE and community focal points with a strong focus on women's empowerment to manage AF funds directly is an effective and efficient way to raise awareness, deliver locally led adaptation measures in communities that are highly vulnerable to climate variability and change and enhance local governance. This has also contributed to conflict resolution in the intervention zone**. Also significant is that this approach confirms women can act as important agents of change in their communities when given access to training, information and resources.

120. The overall conclusion on the project's strategic relevance is that **several factors have and/or are still at play that have contributed to limiting the project's scope, especially on strengthening the binational framework and plans as foreseen in the Prodoc (p. 55)**. As a result, despite demonstrating the EE can manage external funds (over USD 2.2 million), the EE have not secured any new funding to April 2024 to support the consolidation and scaling up of ACC in the intervention area. This situation has not been aided by low levels of complementarity, coherence and synergies with other actors supporting and funding ACC as foreseen in the Prodoc (p.65), although there is evidence that inter-institutional agreements are planned, and one had just been signed at the end of April concerning stakeholders in Carchi Province, Ecuador.

121. A summary of the conclusions from the analysis and findings under Section 2 is provided as follows:

C1: coherence – satisfactory

122. The project has maintained coherence with the latest policies and priorities of the governments of Colombia and Ecuador on eliminating food insecurity and malnutrition, combating climate change, and reversing biodiversity loss, all of which articulate international commitments to the SDGs, the Paris Agreement, and the CBD. Coherence with AF's latest global Medium-Term Strategy 2023-2027 is strong in areas such as promotion of locally-led ACC and empowerment of highly marginalized people and communities to combat their vulnerability to climate variability and change, but less evident in terms of strengthening complementarity and formal synergies with other relevant projects at the binational and national level as foreseen in the Prodoc (p. 55), and which was recommended in the MTE report in 2023 (p. 8). Consequently, this issue still needs to be addressed by the Binational Management Committee, in line with the provisions in the Prodoc (p. 61).

C2: relevance – moderately satisfactory

123. The project design was strong on capturing the territorial identity of the IAAD communities and their aspirations to establish more effective territorial governance within the GFAB and within and between RECOMPAS and CANE. However, a change in political priorities in both countries between 2017-2018, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic between 2020-2022, a rise in violence and insecurity, and changes in local government in Ecuador in 2023 and Colombia in early 2024 have required the project to apply a stronger national approach to strengthening the EE of the GFAB, CANE and RECOMPAS. The ET concludes this approach has enabled the project to establish a high level of relevance at the EE and community levels in each country, which is considered a pre-requisite to asserting the project's strategic relevance at the binational level. As such, the project's strategic relevance in terms of strengthening cross-border coordination in areas such as territorial mapping, planning and coordinated approaches to ACC that can be scaled-up beyond the project (Prodoc, pp. 25, 33, 55) has remained low.

C3: effectiveness – satisfactory / moderately satisfactory

124. The project has made a significant contribution to achieving its first high-level objective to reducing

the vulnerability of the IAAD communities to climatic events. It has clearly surpassed its targets on forest/mangrove conservation/restoration in Colombia and Ecuador and on supporting communities to access HB/kitchen gardens, or PIR/canoeras in Colombia and Ecuador respectively. In both cases, the project has demonstrated that ACC measures supporting nature-based solutions are highly effective and efficient approaches to reducing vulnerability. The ET concludes that key factors in delivering these results are:

- Forest/mangrove conservation/custody orders not only empower communities to protect highly vulnerable areas to climatic events, but also open up new opportunities to strengthen their livelihoods through the designation of hunting, gathering, ritual and other sites (in indigenous Awa communities), or the development of payments for environmental services (in Afro-descendant communities), which has unexpectedly resulted in a significant rise in demand for mangrove custody orders in 2024.
- The establishment of alliances between academia and the IAAD are crucial to the recovery process of resilient local crops and practices that support FSN.
- The PIR can save families in Ecuador between USD 32-60/month in food costs, thus revealing there is both a social and economic incentive behind the adoption of agrobiodiverse practices.
- The canoeras and kitchen gardens perform three functions in the form of enhancing FSN, stimulating the production of medicinal plants, and facilitating seed exchanges, especially of the latter, which indicates they also provide social and economic benefits.

125. Finally, conclusions on the effectiveness of the safe water supply systems planned are difficult to establish, in part because their installation in Colombia has been delayed to June 2024. However, in Ecuador where 25 community and family water systems have started to serve 2,189 households (1,496 Afro-descendant, 693 Awa) with clean water, the ET concludes they enhance local governance, provide health benefits (including removal of mental stress associated with using unsafe water), and save money and time associated with fetching and/or buying water.

126. Progress on achieving the project's second high-level objective to strengthen adaptive capacities in the cross-border region and strengthen regional institutions address climate threats has been mixed. On the one hand, it has surpassed the EPR training target by 205 percent, produced five PACC at the EE level in Colombia and 66 PACCC covering all 66 participating communities in Ecuador and established the SMICC in Ecuador, which is on track to expand the current functional network of 40 weather stations managed nationally by INAMHI by 65 percent. A community-EWS is also planned to be installed in Colombia from June 2024. On the other, none of these actions have been designed to strengthen a binational territorial approach to ACC as foreseen in the Prodoc (p. 22). As such, the project's strategic relevance in terms of establishing the binational EWS foreseen in the Prodoc (p. 26) through which coordinated EPR and adaptation planning would develop throughout the cross-border region has been low and indicates the project's Binational Management Committee underestimated the additionality that could be gained from advancing transborder cooperation and planning on ACC using AF funding.

C4: efficiency – satisfactory

127. The ET concludes the decision to implement a number of the ACC measures through the EE has been instrumental in the project converting its resources into results, especially in Ecuador, as well as demonstrate it can deliver high value for money in isolated communities that face logistical and security challenges. This is justified by the fact the project has:

- Spent 86.9 percent of the AF's funds allocated under components 1-3 to 31 March 2024.
- Spent on average USD 254.51 on each direct participant under components 1-3 to 31 March 2024.
- ACC measures such as forest/mangrove conservation/restoration have cost on average USD 60.91/ha in Colombia, and less than USD 32/ha in Ecuador.
- Surpassed targets concerning most of its ACC measures without the need for additional funds.

128. Nevertheless, to achieve these achievements the project required an 18-month no-cost extension to 3 November 2024 to make up for significant delays experienced in completing the CBPP and PACC processes to 2022. This was primarily due to impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, although the project's heavy governance structure and application of a highly time-consuming monitoring and progress reporting system have

contributed to preventing swift decision-making on the project's implementation and learning at the binational level.

C5: adaptive management – moderately satisfactory

129. The project has applied effective adaptive management in three key areas:

- First, focusing its CBPP on the training and development of the EE and community focal points to offset the changes in political priorities in both countries between 2017-2018.
- Second, minimalizing the effects of the pandemic by switching to remote training methods, supported by the updating of its training modules between 2020-2022.
- Third, using the alliances established with the EE to constantly adapt project's activities in accordance with changes in the levels of security in the project's intervention area.

130. However, the project's capacity to mitigate the risks associated with high staff rotation and political changes in the EE and local government has been mixed. In Ecuador, the project has actually benefited from changes in local government to build up alliances with all four participating provinces on the development of the SMICC. In Colombia, this has proved more challenging due to recent changes of regional and local government administrations (including CCMBYF and CCAMYF), who have little knowledge of the project's actions and objectives. Finally, the project's capacity to build on lessons learned and good practices established through subnational bilateral agreements, in particular between the Nariño and Carchi regional/provincial governments, has been low.

C6: equity – satisfactory

131. The ET concludes the project's strong gender focus in its planning and implementation has produced three important outcomes:

- Secured a high level of participation of women in the project's main activities in Colombia (50 percent) and Ecuador (78 percent).
- Facilitated a high level of political empowerment of women, in particular supporting them to take up decision-making roles through which they can act as agents of change at the community level, especially in Afro-descendant communities.
- Demonstrated that women play a crucial role in accepting and encouraging other marginalized social groups such as youths, elders and the disabled, to engage in the implementation of ACC measures, especially those linked to nature-based solutions.

132. Concrete data to quantify these conclusions were not unavailable in April 2024. Similarly, data on women's economic empowerment was only available in relation to the above-mentioned cost savings generated from producing food in the PIR, or from preliminary data on the water systems installed in Ecuador. In Colombia, where concerted efforts have been made to support women develop small enterprises, the ET was unable to determine their impact because they were still under development but did identify the lack of marketing strategies.

133. The ET's conclusion on the project's intercultural approach is that the highly participatory and inclusive ethno-botanical studies have been instrumental in raising the cultural identity of both ethnic groups, but by conducting separate studies in Colombia and Ecuador and only two bi-national meetings, some key information and lessons were not adequately shared in areas such as bromatological research (Ecuador), or research on indigenous trees and mangrove restoration methods (Colombia). In addition, there were calls in Colombia for greater recognition of the contribution of knowledge holders on the development of the HB.

C7: sustainability – moderately unsatisfactory

134. The project has not established a formal exit strategy that clarifies the mechanisms and actions to be applied to secure the long-term sustainability of the SMICC, the community-EWS and the ACC measures implemented. The ET identified seven outstanding issues that still need to be addressed before the project's closure on 3 November 2024, concerning the official handover procedure to be established between:

i) Local government and the EE in Colombia – on the **community**-EWS given the project only has a four-month window to install and handover the system, and the need to establish effective

coordination with the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management of the Nariño Government.

ii) INAMHI, the four participating provincial governments and the EE – on the operation and maintenance of the SMICC, including establishment of a helpdesk in INAMHI and a route map on how the SMICC will be funded and manage risks such as the unexpected change of voluntary weather guardians.

iii) The handover procedure for the water systems installed/to be installed in both countries, based on a financial, technical and risk management route maps on their operation and maintenance in accordance with environmental and social safeguards; this is particularly pressing in Colombia given the four-month window to install and handover these systems.

iv) Local government and the EE – on establishing a coordination agreement on the implementation of the PACC/PACCC covering Indigenous Awa communities in Colombia and Ecuador, and agreement on the integration of the PACC/PACCC covering Afro-descendant communities in the CPTCCM and PDOT that are currently in the process of being updated by local government in both countries.

v) Local government, academia, the EE, the ministries responsible for agriculture and environment and the private sector – on establishing interinstitutional agreements to support and fund the consolidation and upscaling of research and development of the HB/kitchen gardens and the PIR/canoeras.

vi) MAATE, Minambiente, WFP and GEF-funded project stakeholders – on potential synergies that can be established to support the continuation of the project's ACC measures, PACC/PACCC, EWS/SMICC in its closure and post-closure period.

C8: scalability – moderately satisfactory

135. The EE do not have a strategy in place to scale-up the ACC measures that deliver high value for money and impact positively on livelihoods. The project faces significant challenges to scaling up its ACC measures due to a combination of socio-political, financial, logistical, environmental and insecurity challenges, among others. Under these circumstances, the ET concludes that the scaling-up of ACC measures that deliver value for money and support the holistic needs of the Awa and Afro communities are the most viable for upscaling. In summary they are:

- The SMICC in Ecuador, given it already engages inter-institutional partnerships and enjoys the full support of INAMHI.
- ACC measures that support the scaling up of nature-based solutions such as the conservation/ restoration of forests/mangroves, and HB/PIR that are supported by academia, in particular UPEC.

3.2. Lessons learned

L1: project governance

136. The design of a binational project that does not clarify its purpose at that level, nor build on decentralized binational agreements that operate in the intervention zone indicates more time and resources, plus qualified expertise on bilateral cooperation is needed to steer the design and implementation phases on the right path.

L2: baseline survey

137. The decision to conduct a participatory and inclusive baseline survey in the inception phase is good practice when it is:

i) Applied using a suitable binational map to guide the survey and its recommendations.

ii) Provided with a mandate to propose adjustments to the indicators and targets that strengthen its strategic value, based on a clustered approach with a territorial focus.

iii) Subject to binational annual reviews that focus on both progress/achievements and gaps/barriers.

L3: local partnerships

138. Establishing strong alliances with grassroots, second and third level organizations of the IAAD peoples is essential to:

i) Build trust and strengthen conflict management.
ii) Identify traditional knowledge and practices that are essential to developing sustainable and culturally appropriate adaptation plans and measures.
iii) Raise awareness on their cultural heritage.
iv) Strengthen internal capacity to take ownership of the ACC process in support of their rights.
v) Preserve and learn from their cultural heritage by integrating it into their own statutory plans (Life Plans/Local Development Plans).

L4: promoters/technicians and their local communities

139. The training of local teams of promoters/technicians is good practice in marginalized communities that are vulnerable to climatic events and have to manage irregular groups, because it:

i) Facilitates the decentralization of project implementation.
ii) Strengthens local governance.
iii) Mobilizes counterpart funding (in-kind) at the community level to implement the ACC agenda.

L5: speed of implementation

140. Working with highly vulnerable communities in conflict zones requires longer implementation times supported by adequate phasing – inception, implementation, and post-installation testing and handover phases – for these alliances to take shape and have the capacity to apply participatory and inclusive approaches that deliver change.

L6: communication channels

141. The promotion of EWS requires adequate communication channels to be identified in the project design phase to ensure vulnerable communities have access to them in the implementation and post-implementation phases. The project design overlooked the fact that a large number of vulnerable communities have unreliable, or no, access to radio and other communications and rely exclusively on social networks that can take time to deliver messages.

L7: gender equality

142. Projects that adopt a strong gender equality and intercultural focus in their design, but do not allocate adequate resources to employ long-term experts on these themes in the project implementation teams, risks compromising the oversight and guidance needed to apply this focus effectively and stimulate learning on key issues, such as the important role women play in mobilizing youths, elders, disabled and other vulnerable groups in the ACC process.

L8: monitoring

143. The adoption of large numbers of indicators (over 20) diverts too much time and resources on tracking operations and encourages micro-management and heavy progress reporting to the detriment of learning. This steers attention away from asking key questions on the ToC, in particular: Why is change needed? Who is the project for? And how will change be delivered?

3.3. Recommendations

R1 on coherence (for WFP, Binational Management Committee, and EE)

High-level exploratory meetings should be conducted with other relevant projects operating in, or adjacent to the project's intervention area to exchange lessons learned and good practices and identify potential synergies.

Suggestions to implement the recommendation

144. The ET considers support in consolidating and the following good practices are of particular interest:

i) Risk maps prepared.
ii) Application of the PACC/PACCC methodology.
iii) Conservation/restoration methodologies.
iv) Access to inventories and data on HB/PIR, canoeras/kitchen gardens.
v) Income generating activities in Colombia, all of which need technical oversight, marketing support and funding.

145. In particular these meetings should take place with the following GEF-funded projects:

i) *Gestión Integrada de los Recursos Hídricos de las Cuencas Binacionales Mira-Mataje y Carchi-Guaitara, Colombia-Ecuador* (implemented by UNDP).
ii) *Contribuir a la Gestión Integrada de la Biodiversidad de la Región Pacífico de Colombia para Construir la Paz* (implemented by FAO Colombia).
iii) *Corredor de conectividad ecológica y cultural Pacífico-Andino-Amazonía (Biosur*) (implemented by UNDP).

R2 on relevance (for the AF)

All future binational projects funded by the AF should adopt a simpler governance structure involving one binational management committee and one binational advisory committee to build consensus and cooperation on issues of mutual interest.

Suggestions to implement the recommendation

146. The rationale behind binational projects should be strengthened to demonstrate the benefits of:

i) One binational management committee, to avoid the risk of stimulating competition between two national steering/management committees, or political agendas in each country complicating/ derailing binational planning, implementation, monitoring, strategic thinking and so forth.
ii) One binational technical advisory committee, to demonstrate the importance of bringing technical stakeholders together to develop and apply similar methodologies, terminologies, actions and agendas that support border communities come together and apply coordinated responses to ACC, FSN and economic development.
iii) Incorporating more sectors under one roof to develop a multi-sector (or holistic) approach to ACC. For example, apart from environment and agriculture sectors, the binational approach to ACC and FSN calls for the participation of the following sectors: a) public health (on nutrition), b) education (on research, communications and awareness raising), c) industry (production and small enterprise development), d) civil Protection (hydro-meteorological data management, disaster prevention, preparedness and response) and e) foreign Affairs (binational agreements).
iv) Clarifying the specific role and purposes of local government in the project's planning, implementation and monitoring identifies, considering their level of decentralization and any bilateral cooperation agreements operating at subnational level promoting cross-border cooperation.
v) The application of one binational project management unit, based in a border town close to the border, and supported by field offices in government buildings in each country to enhance sustainability of ACC measures implemented.
vi) Clarifying the percentage of project staff who should be women and of indigenous/Afro-descendant origin to also support sustainability.
vii) Holding regular binational round table meetings at least every six months.

R3 on effectiveness (for the AF)

It is recommended that when designing binational projects, project actions are grouped together and their outcome focus on the delivery of their holistic benefits as perceived by local communities, rather than development practitioners who tend to focus on the delivery of a sector-specific benefit.

Suggestions to implement the recommendation

147. Every effort should be made to consider ACC from the local community's perspective, namely that strengthening their livelihoods means strengthening their human, socio-cultural, physical, environmental, and economic capital, rather than each one in an isolated manner. Thus, multi-sector approaches are required to cluster the following actions:

i) Risk mapping, PACC/PACCC, EWS, EPR training and nature-based solutions (to reduce vulnerability and apply more sustainable and resilient livelihoods, and also noting that nature-based solutions not only enhance adaptation, but also mitigation opportunities developed through payment for environmental services).

ii) The HB/PIR (which support health, education, scientific and economic needs, not just nutritional needs).

iii) Policies, strategies and plans to develop clear and coordinated binational territorial approaches to ACC (that support a shift to multi-stakeholder governance approaches).[77]

R4 on adaptive management (for the AF)

It is strongly recommended that in the design and implementation of binational (and national) projects, their M&E and reporting adopt a results-based focus that supports learning, while all operational actions and output targets are tracked through the administration and finance plan.

Suggestions to implement the recommendation

148. The rationale behind this recommendation is to recognise the importance of applying M&E processes that:

i) Avoid time consuming micro-management of large numbers of indicators.

ii) Produce progress reports in Word/PDF formats rather than Excel, to ensure reports do not become too large and wieldy to elaborate and use as reference documents.

iii) Apply a results focus that is aligned as far as possible with relevant international/national/ subnational targets and priorities, and supports learning on transformational changes happening at the community, organizational and/or government levels in the form of changes in knowledge, attitudes, policies and practices (to support analysis of the ToC).

iv) Limit the number of results/outcome indicators to no more than 15 in number to support efficiency and annual reviews on the strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats of the project.

v) Relocate monitoring of operational activities and outputs to the administrative annual plan where they can be linked directly to project budgeting and expenditure, number of beneficiaries, etc.

vi) Allow results indicators to be subject to annual review and fine tuning and/or changes in the inception and mid-term points when needed and justified.

R5 on equity (for WFP, Binational Management Committee, EE, and participating universities)

In line with stakeholder proposals in the field, it is recommended to support the development of the HB/PIR in the closure period under a dedicated route map/plan with participating academia, local government and the Ministries of Agriculture in Ecuador and Colombia.

[77] More on this can be found at: GIZ (2021). Territorial Approaches for Sustainable Development Stocktaking on Territorial Approaches – Experiences and Lessons.

Suggestions to implement the recommendation

149. It is recommended the project's advisory committees consider:

i) Issuing official certificates and/or a medal from Minambiente/MAATE to women and men who have made important contributions to the development of the inventories created during the ethnobotanical studies, which are stored and protected by participating universities for internal research purposes only.

ii) Identifying and launching a competition, implemented by the participating universities, to identify the three most innovative HB and three most innovative PIR based on criteria such as:

- Richness of agrobiodiversity (number and type).
- Level of resilience to biotic and abiotic stresses.
- Sustainability of soils, water management, and enhances cultural identity.

As an incentive to make the competition a success, the Binational Management Committee should agree on the establishment of a prize fund that is held by the universities, until WFP's country offices have reviewed the report on all entries and scoring of the three winners in Colombia and Ecuador. The amount of the prize fund should be determined by the Binational Management Committee and all cash prizes conditional that they are used for educational purposes, house improvements and reinvestment in the HB/PIR.

Annex I Summary Terms of Reference

Context and purpose of the evaluation

The project "*Capacity building for adaptation to climate change through food and nutrition security actions in vulnerable Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities located in the Colombian-Ecuadorian border area*" [Binational Adaptation Project] is implemented in two large river basins of the Mira-Mataje and Guaitara-Carchi rivers in the border area between Colombia and Ecuador. This area is home to a variety of ecosystems including mangrove forests, dry forests, tropical rainforests, cloud forests and scrublands.

The target population in the two river basins belongs to the Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa. Both practice agroforestry systems, fishing, hunting, and gathering of wild products. However, they suffer from high marginalization from basic public services, environmental degradation and the effects of climate variability and change, which produce prolonged droughts, floods, and changes in tidal patterns. As a result, both populations experience high levels of food insecurity, nutritional deficiencies, and unmet basic needs. Women in both villages tend to have lower levels of education than men, less access to credit, more limited participation in decision-making, and higher levels of vulnerability to climate change.

Within this context, WFP and its implementing partners – Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa organizations – implement the Binational Adaptation Project with two general objectives: (i) Reduce the climate vulnerabilities of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities and their ecosystems, promoting food security and nutrition, gender equality, and contributing to peace building; (ii) Strengthen the capacities of communities and regional institutions to adapt to climate change. The project is financed by the Adaptation Fund (USD 14 million) and its implementation is coordinated by a binational management committee. It has three components focused on promoting:

1. Awareness/knowledge of climate change risks and food and nutrition security.
2. Institutional and community capacities.
3. Innovative adaptation measures at community and beneficiary level.

Objectives, scope, and stakeholders of the evaluation

The evaluation has the dual objective of accountability (assessing the performance of the project) and learning (on the reasons why certain results have been achieved or not, as well as identifying lessons learned and good practices). It will cover the period from May 2016 (start of the design phase) to May 2024 (project closure), with a focus on results achieved from May 2018 (start of implementation). It will apply six evaluation criteria of the Adaptation Fund: relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; equity; sustainability and human and ecological security; scalability.

The evaluation has been commissioned by the WFP Country Office (CO) in Ecuador and the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBP, in close collaboration with the CO in Colombia. The main stakeholders and users of the final evaluation include, among others the donor; the WFP COs in Ecuador and Colombia; the WFP RBP and Headquarters; government institutions at national and sub-national levels; as well as the organizations and direct beneficiaries of the Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities, who are interested in knowing what the contribution of WFP has been in their lives.

Key evaluation questions

EQ1 – Relevance: How has the design and implementation of the project responded to the context, needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and the governments of Colombia and Ecuador?

EQ2 – Effectiveness: What results (expected and unexpected) has the Binational Project achieved or contributed to?

EQ3 – Efficiency: How efficient and timely has been the collaboration and coordination between the two Country Offices, government entities and other partners at different levels?

EQ4 – Equity: To what extent were the gender and intercultural perspectives integrated into project design, planning, implementation, and monitoring?

EQ5 – Sustainability; human and ecological security; scalability: To what extent has the

project adopted mechanisms during implementation to ensure sustainability and scalability of results?

Methodology

The evaluation should make use of mixed methods (quantitative, qualitative, participatory, etc.) to ensure a systematic triangulation between different sources and methods to validate findings. The use of innovative methods is highly encouraged.

Primary data collection should ensure a participatory approach. Interviews, focus groups with beneficiaries, community organizations, implementing partners and stakeholders are expected to be conducted to capture the views of various groups, including men and women of various ages.

The dimensions of gender, interculturality, equity and inclusion should be integrated into all evaluation criteria, findings, conclusions, and recommendations as appropriate. For the analysis of these dimensions, an appreciative inquiry approach is proposed.

The findings and conclusions should lead to a practical set of strategic and operational recommendations that are designed in a participatory manner in consultation with key stakeholders.

The evaluation will be governed by the criteria of WFP's Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS), which defines the quality standards expected in its evaluations and establishes the processes for quality assurance. In addition, the evaluation must respect the ethical guidelines for evaluations of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

Roles and responsibilities

The evaluation team is expected to consist of four members, including the team leader (who may be international) and a combination of national or regional senior evaluators. The team will be multidisciplinary, gender balanced and include a Young Emerging Evaluator. The team will bring expertise in the following thematic areas:

- Resilience and adaptation to climate change and environmental safeguards.
- Gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Indigenous people and interculturality.
- Community and ecosystem approaches.
- Country context in Colombia and Ecuador.

WFP has appointed a manager (in the RBP) and a manager (in the CO Ecuador) for the evaluation. An Evaluation Committee has also been formed, chaired by two deputy directors from the COs in Ecuador and Colombia, which will help guarantee the independence and impartiality of the evaluation and ensure that the evaluation process is transparent and delivers quality and credible results. Throughout the evaluation process, a Reference Group will be consulted, which will review and provide comments on the draft evaluation products (and act as key informants) in order to contribute to the relevance, impartiality and credibility of the evaluation.

Key stages of the evaluation

Start:	December 2023 - February 2024
Data collection:	March - April 2024
Reporting:	May - August 2024
Dissemination:	August - October 2024

Annex II Evaluation timeline

Table 9: Evaluation timeline

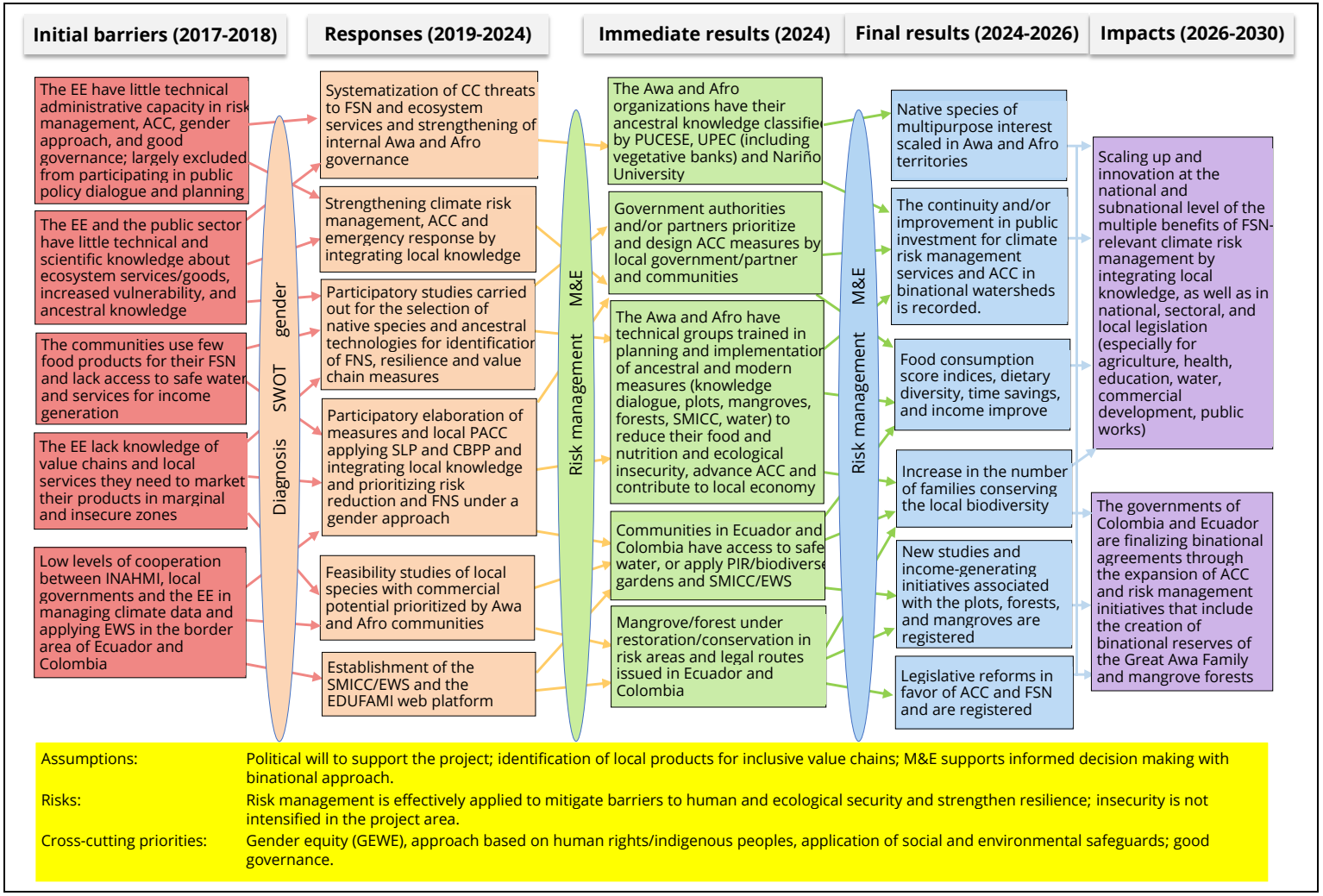
Key dates	Activities	Responsible persons
21 Dec 2023	Kick-off meeting	EMs, ET
22-26 Jan 2024	Inception mission in Colombia and Ecuador	COs, EMs, ET, FOs
29 Jan – 14 Feb 2024	Drafting and submission of the inception report – draft 1	ET
14-21 Feb 2024	Review of the inception report – draft 1	DE QS, EMs
22-27 Feb 2024	Revision and submission of the inception report – draft 2	ET
27 Feb – 13 Mar 2024	Review of the inception report – draft 2	EMs, RG
14-**19 Mar 2024**	Revision and **submission of the final inception report**	ET
19-28 Mar 2024	Final review and approval of the inception report	EC, EMs
19-28 Mar 2024	Preparation of the field mission	COs, EMs, ET, FOs
1-24 Apr 2024 *1-2 and 19-22 Apr 2024* *3 and 23-25 Apr 2024* *4-11 Apr 2024* *12-19 Apr 2024* *26 Apr – 6 May 2024*	Data collection mission: *Bogotá* *Quito* *Other locations in Ecuador* *Other locations in Colombia* *Remote interviews*	COs, EMs, ET, FOs
14 May 2024	**Debriefing field mission** (virtual)	COs, EMs, ET, FOs
26 Apr – 3 Jun 2024	Drafting and submission of the evaluation report – draft 1	ET
4-14 Jun 2024	Review of the evaluation report – draft 1	EMs
17-25 Jun 2024	Revision and submission of the evaluation report – draft 2	ET
26 Jun – 5 Jul 2024	Review of the evaluation report – draft 2	DE QS, EMs
8-18 Jul 2024	Revision and submission of the evaluation report – draft 3	ET
19 Jul – 2 Aug 2024	Review of the evaluation report – draft 3	EMs, RG
23 and 24 July 2024	**Learning and recommendations workshops**	COs, EMs, ET, FOs, RG
5-27 Aug 2024	Revision and submission of the evaluation report – draft 4	ET
28 Aug – 13 Sep 2024	Review of the evaluation report – draft 4	EMs
14-20 Sep 2024	Revision and submission of the evaluation report – preliminary final version	ET
23 Sep – 19 Oct 2024	Review and pre-approval of the evaluation report – preliminary final version	EC, EMs
21 Oct - 3 Dec 2024	Review of the evaluation report – preliminary final version	AF
3-4 **Dec 2024**	Revision and **submission of the final evaluation report (with executive summary) and two-pager**	ET
28 Nov – **17 Dec 2024**	Postproduction of **the video – final version**	ET
5-20 Dec 2024	Final review and approval of the report, video, and two-pager	EC, EMs

In color: deliverables as per ToR

AF: Adaptation Fund **COs**: Country Offices **DE QS:** Outsourced Quality Support Service for Decentralized Evaluations **EC:** Evaluation Committee **EMs:** WFP Evaluation Managers **ET:** Evaluation Team **FOs:** Field Offices **RG:** Reference Group

Annex III Theory of Change

Figure 4: Reconstructed Theory of Change



Source: Evaluation team.

Annex IV Results framework

Table 10: Objectives, outcomes, and outputs in the results framework

Level/number	Description
Objective 1 (under Component 1)	**Integrate, with full participation of Afro and Awa communities, traditional knowledge and capacities to manage climate change risks and food security and nutrition in targeted binational watersheds,**
Outcome 1.1	*Traditional and local knowledge recovered to support sustainable adaptation measures, food security and nutrition, and resilient livelihoods*
Output 1.1.1	One study per watershed produced on traditional and local practices, promoting resilience to climate change and variability in the targeted binational watersheds, with community participation, a gender sensitive approach and particular attention to ancestral and native plant and tree species that can improve dietary diversity and are resilient to climate change
Output 1.1.2	Feasibility study conducted with communities to assess the potential for marketing native species for medicinal, artisanal, food and fodder related uses at regional and departmental levels
Output 1.1.3	Workshops, dialogues, and cultural events (including fairs) organized to disseminate study results to 120 Afro and Awa communities, leaders and decision makers, in local languages. Equitable participation of men and women will be promoted
Outcome 1.2	*Traditional knowledge related to climate change threats and adaptation measures integrated in community dialogues and decision-making processes*
Output 1.2.1	In 120 communities, leaders, community members and women groups trained on climate change threats with culturally and gender sensitive methods. Equitable participation of men and women will be promoted
Output 1.2.2	Dialogues, fairs, and exchanges involving 120 communities, leaders and community members on food security, nutrition and healthy living habits, considering climate threats, with special focus on diversifying diets and increasing incomes from the production and sale of native species and products. Equitable participation and opportunities of men and women will be promoted
Output 1.2.3	One binational web-based adaptation learning platform in use
Output 1.2.4	Compilations and sharing of best practices on risk reduction and risk management actions at binational watershed level, considering ecosystem type and emphasizing traditional and local knowledge

Level/number	Description
Objective 2 (under Component 2)	**Strengthen knowledge generation to effectively plan, design and implement adaptation responses in highly food insecure communities, considering emergency preparation and response actions**
Outcome 2.1	*Increase scientific knowledge to manage climate change and risk, affecting food security and nutrition*
Output 2.1.1	Studies at the binational watershed level produced on: 1) water provision considering climate threats; 2) ecosystem vulnerability in the face of climate change and variability and extreme events; and 3) food security and nutrition in vulnerable communities and 4) a gender assessment
Outcome 2.2	*Risk reduction capacity of binational institutions and communities strengthened, including leveraging climate services*
Output 2.2.1	Binational Early Warning Systems introduced, specifically tailored to inform the Afro and Awa communities about extreme events. Additionally, climate services will be introduced to include agro-meteorological data; vulnerability mapping, with a focus on crop yields and cycles; and climate risks in mangrove and high- mountain ecosystems
Output 2.2.2	Approximately 120 leaders and community members trained in Emergency Preparedness and Response and understanding and planning for climate threats with a focus on gender
Objective 3 (under Component 3)	**Strengthen adaptive capacity of highly food insecure communities to reduce climate risks and food insecurity and improve community resilience in targeted populations through concrete adaptation measures**
Outcome 3.1	*Improved access to livelihood assets, enhanced resilience and reduced risks from climate shocks in food-insecure communities and households*
Output 3.1.1	Participatory approaches developed, interfacing scientific and traditional knowledge
Output 3.1.2	Effective adaptation measures designed and implemented incorporating participatory approaches, traditional and local knowledge, and tested techniques, and promoting equal opportunities for access to resources for women and men to recover of degraded ecosystems in 120 communities
Output 3.1.3	Community water harvesting, storage and management measures introduced
Output 3.1.4	Cost-benefit analysis of proposed adaptation measures at micro-watershed level
Output 3.1.5	Native species reintroduced to diversify production and consumption and for commercialization, including introduction of organic and agro-ecological crop production practices and ocean species
Outcome 3.2	*Increased adaptive capacity and ecosystem resilience to respond to climate threats and food insecurity*
Output 3.2.1	Soil management activities implemented, including agro-forestry and native nitrogen-fixing species
Output 3.2.2	Conservation and recovery of 3,000 ha of forest ecosystems and 2,000 ha of mangroves threatened by climate change through tree planting and forest management actions, at the micro-watershed level, with species that are native and resistant to climate variability, in line with national plans

Source: WFP and AF (2017). Project Document for the Binational Project (Prodoc) [adapted by the ET].

Annex V Evaluation matrix

Table 1: Detailed evaluation matrix

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
COHERENCE – EQ 1: Is the project still aligned with the policies and priorities of each country, its binational mechanisms, the Adaptation Fund, relevant international agreements and other similar interventions on the ground?			
(without sub-questions)	• Level at which a comparison of the Prodoc with relevant policies and plans, and the views of stakeholders, reveal good alignment in particular with regard to the: · National climate change adaptation plan · National development plans · Biodiversity conservation & ecosystem services plan · Neighborhood and Integration Commission Plan · Policies aimed at gender equality, indigenous people and Afro-descendants	*Document review:* • Prodoc • MTR • WFP and AF strategic documents • National policies and plans *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs • National and subnational authorities • UN agencies	*Evaluation approaches:* • Strategy/policy analysis *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview notes *Triangulation:* • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
RELEVANCE – EQ 2: How has the design and implementation of the project responded to the context, needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and the governments of Colombia and Ecuador?			
2.1 To what extent does the binational project respond to the needs and priorities of the target population in the intervention area, especially the most vulnerable groups, in terms of climate change adaptation, food security and gender?	• Quality of the initial context analysis and baselines, and extent to which the results of these studies were considered in the project design. • Evidence of a differentiated analysis of the needs of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa women and men, young and old, in order to define activities aimed at improving their adaptation to climate change and FSN. • Evidence of the use of risk maps to locate and target the most vulnerable communities. • Perception of beneficiaries on the appropriateness of activities to their needs in terms of natural resource management, climate resilience, FSN, etc. • Degree of relevance of training perceived by participants.	*Document review:* • Prodoc, MTR • Monitoring reports of EE • WFP strategic documents • Environmental & Social Management Plans • Hydrometeorological studies *Review of quantitative data:* • Baseline surveys *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • (Sub-)national authorities, UN agencies • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries (including *indigenous storytelling*) *Direct observation* of products/activities	*Evaluation approaches:* • Appreciative inquiry *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
2.2 To what extent has the project been able to respond to changes in the context/new needs and priorities in both countries?	• Extent to which the design and strategic orientation of the project has remained relevant when authorities and/or policies have changed at binational, national, or sub-national level. • Evidence of adjustments in the programming of activities to respond to the changing needs of the target population during the Covid-19 pandemic. • Capacity of the project to continue providing support to the beneficiary population in the presence of irregular groups.	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Strategic documents of governments • Project governance documents *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries (including *indigenous storytelling*)	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation • Appreciative inquiry *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes *Triangulation:* • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
EFFECTIVENESS – EQ 3: What results (expected and unexpected) has the binational project achieved or contributed to achieving?			
3.1 To what extent and how has the project achieved its objective of component 1 (*Recover, with the full participation of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities, traditional knowledge and capacities to manage the risks of climate change and food and nutritional security in binational basins*)?	• Number, type and users' perceptions of the usefulness of inventories (of tree and plant species, ancestral food crops, crops with potential for transformation). • Number, achievement rate and perceived quality of training provided in the regeneration of seeds of ancestral crops and food plants, etc. • Views of IAAD people and other stakeholders on the quality, accessibility, and usefulness of the Edufami web platform. • Evidence that identified ancestral products with processing potential are viable for commercialization. • Evidence that previous outputs have stimulated the use/incorporation of ancestral knowledge into agro-silvicultural and food practices and territorial planning processes; and extent to which external factors that have supported/obstructed it. • Anecdotal evidence of unintended positive/negative effects created by component 1 (e.g., intergenerational cohesion in communities).	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Logical framework *Review of quantitative data:* • M&E / results framework data *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government • Scientific/technical institutes • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries *Direct observation* of products/activities	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation • Appreciative inquiry • Use of ToC *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
3.2 To what extent and how has the project met the objective of component 2 (*Strengthen the generation of knowledge to effectively plan, design, and implement adaptation responses in communities with high food insecurity, considering emergency preparedness and response actions*)?	• Level of usefulness and quality of the compiled scientific information on hazards and risks associated with the effects of climate variability and change (especially on the vulnerability of communities to the provision of ecosystem services such as water, soils, native crops). • Reported level and perceived quality of institutional strengthening in providing climate services, especially the level of outreach and access to early warning systems for purposes of climate change adaptation. • Number and quality of radio bulletins on climate for Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa people, and evidence of application of the knowledge transmitted. • Quality and usefulness of training courses of emergency preparedness and response, and their gender and intercultural approach. • Anecdotal evidence of unintended positive/negative effects created by component 2 (e.g., development of post-disaster community rehabilitation strategies as a result of emergency preparedness and response trainings).	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Logical framework *Review of quantitative data:* • M&E / results framework data *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government • Scientific/technical institutes • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries *Direct observation* of products/activities	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation • Appreciative inquiry • Use of ToC *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
3.3 To what extent and how has the project met the objective of component 3 (*Reduce the community's recurring climate vulnerabilities through innovative adaptation measures, driving the reduction of food insecurity*)*?*	• Number of communities (against targets) with improved access to water for drinking and agricultural purposes. • Observed and reported changes in water collection, storage and management in communities according to the risk maps produced. • Number of communities (against targets) that have reintroduced climate-resilient species. • Observed types and extent of cultivation of current and ancestral products (such as cocoa, banana, chiro, chili, beans, maize, *yuyo*, *chiangua* and *papacún*, medicinal and traditional plants, etc.).	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Logical framework *Review of quantitative data:* • M&E / results framework data *Semi-structured interviews with:*	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation • Appreciative inquiry • Use of ToC *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes • Statistical analysis

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
	• Level of quality of the methodology developed to integrate scientific and ancestral knowledge in the above activities. • Percentage of households and communities with improved access to livelihood assets. • Evidence that beneficiaries know how to determine and report increases in net income from ancestral products (fresh and processed). • Reported dietary diversity score, and beneficiaries' perceptions of the extent to which FSN has been consolidated due to agroforestry, agroecological and marine harvest management practices. • Anecdotal evidence of unintended positive/negative effects created by component 3.	• WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government • Scientific/technical institutes • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries *Direct observation* of products/activities	*Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
3.4 What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the implementing partners that have contributed to advancing, or restricted, the development of transboundary river basins to reduce the vulnerability of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities to climate change)?	*Implementing partners (CANE, UNIPA, etc.):* • Financial capacity of EE. • Level of efficiency and inclusiveness of organizational structures for governance. • Level of coordination with WFP in the design and implementation of Annual Operating Plans. • Views on the quality and intensity of communication channels with WFP and communities. • Geographical outreach of the organizations. • Ability to coordinate and train technical teams in communities. *Communities:* • Level of access to public and climate services (including communications). • Capacity of technical groups to plan, identify, implement, and seek funding for climate change adaptation projects.	*Document review:* • Prodoc • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Project governance documents *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government • UN agencies	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation • Use of ToC *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview notes *Triangulation:* • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
EFFICIENCY – EQ 4: How efficient and timely has the collaboration and coordination been between the two Country Offices, government entities and other partners, at different levels, been?			
4.1 To what extent has the project been efficient in the use of project resources?	• Physical progress compared to financial progress (by component and in total). • Funds spent compared to the investment plans in the Annual Operating Plans. • Funds spent compared to the number of (i) direct beneficiaries (per capita expenditure of the project), (ii) hectares under restoration and conservation compared (expenditure per hectare). • Level of leverage of AF funds compared to co-financing. • Strategies adapted by WFP to ensure better price/ quality ratio in the purchase of materials and services. • Type of internal control and monitoring mechanisms for the use of project funds.	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Project governance documents *Review of quantitative data:* • M&E data / results framework data • Financial data *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government	*Evaluation approaches:* • Cost efficiency analysis *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
4.2 How efficient has the governance model adopted (which involves cross-border work) been considering each country applies a different Country Strategic Plan?	• Extent to which dialogue and coordinated decision-making has been stimulated at national level (between MAATE and Minambiente) and sub-national level (between local authorities) and between IAAD communities. • Examples of what the project has contributed to climate change public policies. • Evidence of binational synergies to reduce duplication of: (i) training courses and exchanges at national level and (ii) actions of other projects operating at the border (UNDP/GEF project). • Extent to which the operational manual of the project has facilitated/slowed down bi-national implementation. • Extent to which the bi-national governance model has strengthened/hindered the fit of the project in the strategic planning (CSP) of the WFP in the two countries.	*Document review:* • Prodoc • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Strategic documents WFP • Strategic documents of governments • Project governance documents *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview notes *Triangulation:* • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT– EQ 5: To what extent has the project adapted to the context and to the lessons and learning identified during its implementation?			
5.1 To what extent has the project team responded to changing conditions and adapted internal needs within its capabilities?	*(This sub-question links to question 1.3)* • Level of adjustments to the results matrix and Annual Operating Plans to mitigate high/substantial/low risk. • Level of adjustments in the recruitment of WFP staff to respond to relevant weaknesses and threats in the implementation of the project. • Perceptions of the level of adoption and effectiveness of external risk management mechanisms by WFP. • Level of influence of the WFP on risk management EE and other partners. • Degree of implementation of the MTR recommendations on time.	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Project governance documents • Annual Operating Plans • Environmental & Social Management Plans *Review of quantitative data:* • M&E data / results framework data • Financial data *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
5.2 To what extent has the project's monitoring and evaluation strategy been useful in informing management decisions on progress towards expected results (considering, for example, the implementation of MTR recommendations)?	• Type, number and usefulness of indicators applied to measure results under the three components. • Level of disaggregation of M&E data to reflect gender, age and ethnicity diversity. • Level of clarity and coherence of baselines for indicators • Annual cost of monitoring project indicators. • Good practices applied to improve the operation of the internal monitoring system. • Evidence of what/examples how the M&E system has stimulated informed decision-making on: project planning and implementation at the bi-national level.	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Project governance documents • M&E strategy and logical framework *Review of quantitative data:* • Baseline surveys • M&E / results framework data • Financial data *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
EQUITY– EQ 6: To what extent were the gender and intercultural perspectives integrated in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project?			
6.1 *Participation:* To what extent have partners in Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant communities and organizations, particularly the most vulnerable people (women, youth, elderly and disabled) actively participated in the different stages of the project?	*(This sub-question links to question 1.2.)* • Percentage of women and other vulnerable groups in the project's technical groups and in governance positions in EE. • Extent to which vulnerable groups express satisfaction that they have a say in project planning, implementation, and monitoring. • Number of people from vulnerable groups who say they have been (and can explain how they have been) empowered as decision makers. • Examples of vulnerable people who can demonstrate that their participation has improved the effectiveness and/or efficiency of the project (link to good practice).	*Document review:* • Prodoc • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE *Review of quantitative data:* • Baseline surveys • M&E / results framework data *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries *Direct observation* of products/activities	*Evaluation approaches:* • Appreciative inquiry *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
6.2 *Knowledge:* To what extent has the ancestral knowledge of Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant people, especially women and elders, been recognized and valued in plans for adaptation to current and future climate impacts?	*(This sub-question links to question 2.1)* • Perceptions of beneficiaries on the level and way the project has strengthened the inclusion of ancestral knowledge in ACC strategies and plans. • Percentage of women who have engaged in dialogue and advocacy processes (results framework). • Number/proportion of women holders of ancestral knowledge who have been involved in more specific key activities (inventory, risk mapping and adaptation plans, and component 3). • Types of mechanisms in place to ensure the active and equitable participation of women and elders in the rescue of ancestral knowledge.	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Environmental & Social Management Plans *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • Scientific/technical institutes • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries (including *indigenous storytelling*)	*Evaluation approaches:* • Appreciative Inquiry *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes *Triangulation:* • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
6.3 *Empowerment:* To what extent has the project stimulated transformational changes in gender equality	*(This sub-question links with questions 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3)* • Number, type and quality of communications that have implemented a dedicated strategy to support women in making informed decisions.	*Document review:* • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Environmental & Social Management Plans	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation • Appreciative Inquiry • Use of ToC

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
and advanced the rights of Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant people?	• Anecdotal evidence of how the women interviewed have increased their role as decision-makers in the communities thanks to the project. • Percentage of households where women make decisions on the use of income alone or jointly with men (results framework). • Reported changes or examples regarding the participation of IAAD people in climate change adaptation territorial planning at the sub-national level.	*Review of quantitative data:* • M&E / results framework data *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government • UN Agencies • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries (including *indigenous storytelling*) *Direct observation* of products/activities	*Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators
SUSTAINABILITY AND HUMAN AND ECOLOGICAL SECURITY – EQ 7: To what extent has the project adopted mechanisms during its implementation to ensure the sustainability of the results?			
7.1 What are the risks (sociopolitical, institutional, financial, climate shocks/stress, etc.) that could hinder the sustainability of the results achieved, and to what extent has the project contributed to mitigating the risks (through actions, alliances, strategies, etc.)?	Level of quality of project planning and exit strategy to address and mitigate the following risks: • Political (elections, changes of politicians, changes in government priorities and public investment). • Institutional (capacity of public/grassroots/second tier entities to fund the human resources needed to sustain results). • Financial (extent to which the necessary resources have been identified and allocated in the multiannual investment plan of both countries). • Associated with the effects of climate variability and change (includes sustainability of EWS and other services associated with risk management). • Social (territorial and/or cultural conflicts, organizational and inter-community coordination capacity, etc.) • Security (authorities have identified and implement control and surveillance measures to prevent infiltration of irregular groups within the project area).	*Document review:* • Prodoc • MTR • Monitoring reports of WFP (PPRs, etc.) & EE • Project governance documents • Environmental & Social Management Plans *Review of quantitative data:* • Baseline surveys • Financial data *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government • UN agencies • Scientific/technical institutes • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation • Appreciative inquiry *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes • Statistical analysis *Triangulation:* • Qualitative/quantitative • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators

Sub-questions	Indicators (examples)	Sources and methods of data collection	Methods of analysis and data triangulation
7.2 To what extent have environmental considerations in accordance with Adaptation Fund and WFP standards been reviewed during project implementation?	• Number and type of environmental and social safeguards reviews carried out since the beginning of the project (including mitigation proposals in case new safeguards have been triggered). • Evidence that the project annually reviews risk ratings that could have a negative impact on environmental safeguards. • Stakeholder views on the need for continuation/ modification of implemented mitigation measures to support sustainability.	*Document review:* • Prodoc • Strategic/technical documents WFP and AF • Environmental & Social Management Plans *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices	*Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview notes *Triangulation:* • Secondary/primary • Different evaluators
SCALABILITY– EQ 8: What is the potential of the project to scale adaptation to climate variability and change?			
(no sub-questions)	• Number and type of activities that stakeholders are able and willing to scale up with respect to: · Safe water · Bio-diverse plots · Restored areas · Expansion of protected areas · Public services (EWS, hydro-meteorological, municipal, financial/business, etc.) • Level and type of resources that binational, national and sub-national authorities would commit to provide. • Evidence of improvements in local leadership and empowerment that would facilitate the scaling up of activities. • Good practices and entry points suggested by stakeholders. • Extent to which the project promotes peace and a living border between Ecuador and Colombia.	*Document review:* • Strategic documents of governments • Project governance documents *Semi-structured interviews with:* • WFP COs, Pasto and Ibarra offices • National, regional, municipal government • Community leaders *AI workshops* with beneficiaries (including *indigenous storytelling*)	*Evaluation approaches:* • Performance evaluation • Appreciative inquiry • Use of ToC *Information/data analysis:* • Manual analysis of documents and interview/workshop notes *Triangulation:* • Secondary/primary • Different stakeholders • Different evaluators

Annex VI Key informants' overview

Table 11: Number of key informants interviewed in the inception and data collection phases

Stakeholder group	Country	Organization	Women	Men
WFP	Colombia	WFP Bogotá (CO)	6	4
		WFP Pasto	2	4
	Ecuador	WFP Ibarra	3	4
		WFP Quito (CO)	5	4
	Italy	WFP Headquarters	1	0
	Panama	WFP RBP	6	1
Subtotal WFP			**23**	**17**
Executing entity or partner	Colombia	ACIPAP	0	3
		CCAMYF	1	2
		CCBMYF	1	2
		Resguardo Nulpe	0	4
		UNIPA	1	1
	Ecuador	CANE	2	1
		FCAE	0	2
		FEPP	0	1
Subtotal executing entity or partner			**5**	**16**
Donor or UN agency	Ecuador	UNDP	0	1
	United States	Adaptation Fund	1	0
Subtotal donor or UN agency			**1**	**1**
Government (national)	Colombia	IDEAM	1	1
		Minambiente	1	3
	Ecuador	INAMHI	0	1
		MAATE	0	3
		MAG	1	1
Subtotal government (national)			**3**	**9**
Government (local)	Colombia	Corpoamazonía	1	0
		Corponariño	1	3
		Gobernación Mocoa	0	1
		Gobernación Pasto	1	1
		Climate Change Desk Nariño	1	0
	Ecuador	GAD Esmeraldas	1	0
		GAD Ibarra	1	0
		GAD Sucumbíos	1	0
		Prefectura Tulcán	1	0
		SNDGR Ibarra	0	1
Subtotal government (local)			**8**	**6**
University	Ecuador	PUCESE	1	0
		UPEC	0	1
Subnational university			**1**	**1**
Total key informants interviewed			**41**	**50**
Subnational Colombia			**17**	**29**
Subnational Ecuador			**16**	**20**
Subnational other countries			**8**	**1**

Annex VII Data collection tools

Table 12: Worksheet for appreciative inquiry workshops in communities

DISCOVER (STRENGTHS) (25 mins) Objective: to identify what works best	DREAM (OPPORTUNITIES) (30 mins) Objective: to create a vision	DESIGN (ACTION PLAN) (15 mins) Objective: how to make the dream a reality	DESTINATION (CHANGE) (15 mins) Objective: to commit to creating a new shared path
Q1: To the group (max 12 people): ***What is the most important achievement you remember?***	**Q4:** ***What do you want to achieve as a community?*** Draw what you would like to achieve as a community (distribute drawing materials and ask them to fill half of the paper).	**Q7:** ***How would you make your dreams come true?*** Objective: consensus building becomes part of actions/strategies (inclusiveness and empowerment).	**Q8:** ***What would you do to contribute to achieving your dreams?*** Objective: to continue the dialogue and respect of listening to each person.
Q2: Before recording responses: ***How did you feel about this question?*** Objective: to check positive direction in progress.	Once they have drawn their dreams, ask if they are familiar with the project and what they have accomplished. If most are familiar with the project, ask them to draw on the other half of the paper: **Q5:** ***What have they accomplished with the project?***		**Q9:** ***Are we going to focus on making the dream come true together?*** Objective: to continue the dialogue and the respect of listening to each person.
Q3: ***What things helped you achieve your accomplishment?*** Objective: to identify positive results (strengths).	**Q6:** ***Do any of the project's achievements resemble the achievements you hope for as a community?*** Objective: to identify what is expected in the dream at the community, organizational, and community level and how the project has contributed to achieving those dreams (opportunity).		**Q10:** ***What have we learned from this activity?*** Objective: to recognize that none of us is as smart as all of us.

151. The following table presents interview questions for each sub-question of the evaluation matrix. The key stakeholders were divided into three categories: WFP staff, public sector, and executing entities). The last columns of the table indicate (approximately) which sub-questions were applied to which stakeholder categories. Since the interviews were semi-structured, this guide did not prevent the ET from asking additional questions and/or varying the questions according to the specific position of an interviewee.

Table 13: Guide for key informant interviews (by sub-question and stakeholder category)

	Sub-question (from evaluation matrix)	Interview guide	WFP staff	Public sector	EE
1	**COHERENCE: Is the project still aligned with the policies and priorities of each country, its binational mechanisms, the Adaptation Fund, relevant international agreements and other similar interventions on the ground?**				
	(without sub-questions)	To what extent and why has the project been aligned to the most relevant international and national policies, strategies and plans related to: *1) Binational agreements.* *2) Adaptation to climate change.* *3) Risk management.* *4) Food and nutritional security.* *5) Gender equality.* *6) Indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants.*			
2	**RELEVANCE: How has the design and implementation of the project responded to the context, needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and the governments of Colombia and Ecuador?**				
2.1	To what extent does the binational project respond to the needs and priorities of the target population in the intervention area, especially the most vulnerable groups, in terms of climate change adaptation, food security, and gender?	Please name the activities carried out in the design and/or implementation that demonstrate the project is relevant to IAAD communities and explain why there were relevant.			
2.2	To what extent has the project been able to respond to changes in the context/new needs and priorities in both countries?	How has the project responded to: *1) Changes in authorities and/or policies at the binational, national and subnational government levels.* *2) Turnover of key personnel who make decisions on the project.* *3) Covid-19 pandemic between 2020-2022.* *4) Problems related to irregular groups.* 5) *Other external events.*			

	Sub-question (from evaluation matrix)	Interview guide	WFP staff	Public sector	EE
3	**EFFECTIVENESS: What results (expected and unexpected) has the binational project achieved or contributed to achieving?**				
3.1	To what extent and how has the project achieved its objective of component 1 (*Recover, with the full participation of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities, traditional knowledge, and capacities to manage the risks of climate change and food and nutritional security in binational basins*)?	Rate the performance of the project in generating changes in the IAAD communities and within relevant local authorities, due to the activities carried out under component 1. Consider how the following activities have generated change and whether it is a positive or negative change: *1) Who are the primary beneficiaries of the inventory developed (consider research centers, private sector, communities, or other groups)?* *2) Please rate the quality of the training provided in the rescue of seeds of ancestral food crops and plants in terms of the trainings conducted, whether it was complete and sufficient in time, etc. (Identify the parts of the training that have been the most useful which parts need to be improved in the future).* *3) How was the level of coordination carried out with the State in seed rescue (consider the Ministry of Agriculture and the local governments to determine to what extent the project has stimulated the integration of local knowledge in their policies and training, for example, with respect to the establishment of family, community and state seed banks, the promotion of field schools to control the quality of rescue, conservation and sustainable use of ancestral crops, etc.).* *4) Was the identification of ancestral products with transformation potential was accompanied by a study of the local and national market to qualify the most viable products for commercialization?* *5) What was the quality of lessons learned and good practices identified to promote risk management with a combination of ancestral (including indigenous technologies) and scientific knowledge to mitigate the effects of climate variability and change=* *6) What was the quality of the Edufami web platform?* *7) Please assess the level of access of the IAAD communities to the platform and their capacity to apply the information provided in this way (by computer).* *8) Have the results of component 1 generated unintended positive/negative effects?*			
3.2	To what extent and how has the project met the objective of component 2 (*Strengthen the generation of knowledge to effectively plan, design and*	Rate the project's performance in generating change (knowledge, policies, strategies, etc.) at the institutional (subnational, national, and binational) and community levels under component 2. Consider how the following activities have generated change and whether it is a positive or negative change: *1) The watershed studies conducted (in particular focusing on the quality and usefulness of the*			

	Sub-question (from evaluation matrix)	Interview guide	WFP staff	Public sector	EE
	implement adaptation responses in communities with high food insecurity, considering emergency preparedness and response actions)?	*risk maps identified with respect to water supply, food and nutrition insecurity, ecosystem vulnerability to climate variability and change).* *2) The early warning system and binational climate services installed (in particular focusing on their communal/territorial scope to determine the level of access to these services for security and adaptation purposes).* *3) Training leaders and community members on climate hazards and how to plan, prepare and respond to these hazards. In particular determine if they have identified (i) safe areas to gather in an extreme weather event; (ii) safe areas to protect their seeds in airtight, marked plastic containers as part of the post-disaster rehabilitation strategy.* *4) Component 2 results have generated unintended positive/negative effects. For example, did the disaster preparedness and response training result in the inclusion of a post-disaster community rehabilitation strategy (in particular the recovery of the agricultural calendar and more resilient local practices)?*			
3.3	To what extent and how has the project met the objective of component 3 (*Reduce the community's recurring climate vulnerabilities through innovative adaptation measures, driving the reduction of food insecurity*)?	Rate the performance of the project in generating changes (knowledge, attitudes, practices, etc.) at the community level under component 3. Consider how the following activities have generated changes in human and ecological security in IAAD communities to advance their resilience to the effects of climate variability and change: *1) Water collection, storage and management in each participating community according to the risk maps produced (determine the quality of training of the technical groups interviewed to identify their strengths and where they need more training to ensure access to safe water in their community).* *2) The associated cultivation of current and ancestral products (such as cocoa, banana, chiro, chili, beans, corn, yuyo, chiangua and papacún, traditional medicinal plants, etc.).* *3) The ancestral products (fresh and processed) that are generating the increase in the net income of the family and/or its community if the commercialization is collective (determine if the indicated persons know how to calculate the cost of production, their gross and net income).* *4) The installation of sustainable land/coastal zone management practices integrating local and scientific practices (determine the amount of restoration done compared to targets, as well as the quality of restoration done and its level of compliance with the targets identified through the completion of risk maps).* *5) Have the results of component 3 generated unintended positive/negative effects?*			

	Sub-question (from evaluation matrix)	Interview guide	WFP staff	Public sector	EE
3.4	What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the implementing partners that have contributed to advancing, or restricted, the development of transboundary river basins to reduce the vulnerability of Afro-descendant and Indigenous Awa communities to climate change)?	Check during the implementation of the application of the appreciative inquiry in a selection of communities to what level the project has succeeded in boosting community empowerment in terms of implementing their life plan: *1) The strengths of the IAAD communities (their human, socio-cultural, environmental, physical and economic capital).* *2) The opportunities they could take advantage of to realize their dream of life IAAD (in accordance with their right to self-determination)* *3) Identify and integrate climate change adaptation into their life plan so that it becomes a resilient and inclusive life plan.* *4) The ability to execute their adapted and resilient life plan under learning systems that capitalize on good practices and respond to lessons learned to strengthen human and ecological security to climate hazards.* *5) Conclude in a participatory way of women and men what has been learned from the project that can be scaled up and what should be avoided in the future in order to live well?*			
4	**EFFICIENCY: How efficient and timely has the collaboration and coordination been between the two Country Offices, government entities and other partners, at different levels, been?**				
4.1	To what extent has the project been efficient in the use of project resources?	Consider the efficiency of the project in converting resources into results with respect to: *1) Physical progress compared to financial progress by component and in total* *2) Funds spent compared to (i) number of direct partners (average cost per direct partner) (ii) number of hectares under (average cost per hectare restored).* *3) Estimate the level of leverage of Adaptation Fund funds compared to co-financing obtained (leverage ratio for each dollar of Adaptation Fund spent).* *4) The planned cost-benefit studies show the project has satisfactory levels of value for money.*			
4.2	How efficient has the governance model adopted (which involves cross-border work) been considering each country applies a different Country Strategic Plan?	Consider whether: *1) The implementation mechanism proposed in the Prodoc was the most appropriate to stimulate dialogue and coordinated decision making at the national (between MAATE and Minambiente) and subnational (between local government authorities) levels and between IAAD communities in both countries.* *2) The project's internal management mechanism was the most appropriate to stimulate binational synergies to reduce duplication of: (i) training courses, capacity building and exchanges at the national level actions of other projects operating on the border (especially the UNDP/GEF project since 2021).* *3) The project's operational manual facilitated or slowed down binational implementation.*			

	Sub-question (from evaluation matrix)	Interview guide	WFP staff	Public sector	EE
5	**ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: To what extent has the project adapted to the context and to the lessons and learning identified during its implementation?**				
5.1	To what extent has the project team responded to changing conditions and adapted internal needs within its capabilities?	Consider the extent to which the WFP team has fulfilled its role as implementing agency in an efficient and effective manner. Consider the efficiency of WFP in responding to: *1) Delays in the implementation of activities - has the project readjusted the planning accordingly?* *2) Lack of adequate resources (human and financial) to implement the activities according to the established goals - did the project allocate more resources, or were the goals reduced?* *3) Risks that threatened project implementation - was risk management implemented efficiently and effectively with timely mitigation measures?* *4) The recommendations of the MTR and its internal progress reports (PPRs)*			
5.2	To what extent has the project's monitoring and evaluation strategy been useful in informing management decisions on progress towards expected results (considering, for example, the implementation of MTR recommendations)?	Consider the extent to which the project's M&E plan is effective in monitoring results achieved socially, environmentally, economically and with respect to progress on gender equality and women's empowerment. Take into consideration: *1) The type and number of indicators identified to measure results and transformational changes.* *2) Whether the baselines for each indicator have been identified in a clear and consistent manner.* *3) If the planned goals are realistic and achievable in a five-year project.* Then consider analyzing the efficiency of the implementation of the M&E plan with respect to: *4) The annual cost of implementing the M&E plan according to the indicators applied.* *5) To what extent the M&E system has stimulated informed decision making on: (i) project planning and implementation at binational, national and subnational levels; policy reform related to, for example, adaptation, risk management, agricultural development, and environmental management among others.*			

	Sub-question (from evaluation matrix)	Interview guide	WFP staff	Public sector	EE
6	**EQUITY: To what extent were the gender and intercultural perspectives integrated in the design, planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project?**				
6.1	*Participation:* To what extent have partners in Awa and Afro-descendant communities and organizations, particularly the most vulnerable people (women, youth, elderly and disabled) actively participated in the different stages of the project?	Determine whether the GEWE approach applied by the project has included specific actions dedicated to achieving equitable and inclusive participation. Taking into consideration the answers under question 1.2 above, consider the following questions: *1) Did the project succeed in mapping the most vulnerable groups and identify their specific needs with respect to the planned training and education?* *2) Did the risk maps identify the geographic location of the most vulnerable communities to facilitate the selection of participating communities?* *3) Are vulnerable groups satisfied that the training and education provided by the project has been in line with their needs, capacities, and priorities and that it could be improved in the future?* *4) Does the monitoring of participation in project activities include a breakdown of the different vulnerable groups involved (women, 15-25 year olds, elderly and disabled)?*			
6.2	*Knowledge: To* what extent has the ancestral knowledge of Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant people, especially women and elders, been recognized and valued in plans for adaptation to current and future climate impacts?	Determine the extent to which the project succeeded in involving women holders of ancestral knowledge in key project activities, in particular: *1) The preparation of the inventory* *2) The elaboration of risk maps* *3) The development of adaptation plans* *4) Adaptation activities implemented under component 3*.			
6.3	*Empowerment:* To what extent has the project stimulated transformational changes in gender equality and advanced the rights of Indigenous Awa and Afro-descendant people?	Consider determining the level of empowerment as follows: *1) The percentage of women interviewed who confirm that their empowerment has translated into decision makers in their communities.* *2) Determine whether project communications implemented a dedicated strategy to support women in making informed decisions regarding the planning and implementation of project activities in their communities.* *3) Determine which barriers still continue to contribute to the marginalization of women.*			

	Sub-question (from evaluation matrix)	Interview guide	WFP staff	Public sector	EE
7	**SUSTAINABILITY AND HUMAN AND ECOLOGICAL SECURITY: To what extent has the project adopted mechanisms during its implementation to ensure the sustainability of the results?**				
7.1	What are the risks (sociopolitical, institutional, financial, climate shocks/stress, etc.) that could hinder the sustainability of the results achieved, and to what extent has the project contributed to mitigating the risks (through actions, alliances, strategies, etc.)?	Consider an analysis of the following risks that could affect the sustainability of the activities and results achieved by the project: *1) Political (elections, changes in politicians, changes in government priorities and public investment in the short and medium term.* *2) Social: territorial and/or cultural conflicts, organizational capacity and intercommunity coordination, the effect of youth migration in maintaining the application of local knowledge;* *3) Institutional: the internal capacity of public entities and grassroots organizations strengthened in overseeing the operation and maintenance of activities and results achieved in the post-project period;* *4) Financial: the resources necessary to operate, maintain and replicate the positive results of the project have been identified and allocated in the multi-year investment plan of both countries.* *5) Fiduciary: checks and balances have been identified and adopted to avoid misappropriation of post-project funds;* *6) Natural events: measures are in place to mitigate the effects of climate variability and change (includes the sustainability of EWS and other services associated with the implementation of risk management).* *7) Public safety: the authorities have identified and implemented control and surveillance measures to prevent the infiltration of irregular groups within the project's intervention zone.*			
7.2	To what extent have environmental considerations in accordance with Adaptation Fund and WFP standards been reviewed during project implementation?	According to the answers under sub-question 1.2 determine: *1) Whether the project annually reviews risk ratings (including identification of new risks) that are, or could have, a negative impact on the project's environmental safeguards* *2) Whether the mitigation measures implemented should be continued/modified in the post-closure phase to support the sustainability of the results achieved.*			
8	**SCALABILITY: What is the potential of the project to scale adaptation to climate variability and change?**				
	(without sub-questions)	Identify activities and best practices where binational, national or local authorities have committed resources for expansion and scaling up in or around the intervention zones.			

Questions for indigenous storytelling:

i) Could you tell me what it means to be an Indigenous Awa/Afro-descendant? What does the Indigenous Awa/Afro-descendant cosmovision consist of?
ii) What does the Gran Binational Family Awa consist of?
iii) Could you share a story that reflects your people's connection to the territory they inhabit?
iv) What places in your territory have some special significance for the culture and life of the Indigenous Awa/Afro-descendant people?
v) Could you share a traditional practice or belief that reflects your people's relationship with nature, living things and resources in your territory?
vi) Could you share a traditional belief that reflects a special role of women in your village?
vii) What are the traditional practices that your people use to care for and preserve the territory, water, trees, medicinal plants, etc.? Are there rituals associated with these practices?
viii) What are the ancestral practices that your community uses for the cultivation of traditional foods? Are there rituals associated with these practices?
ix) Have they experienced changes in their way of life due to environmental change/climate change factors?
x) How have they dealt with these changes and preserved their cultural identity?

Annex VIII Fieldwork agenda

152. The following table presents the agenda of the data collection mission in reduced form. For each day, the vertical panel comprising the third and fourth columns summarizes the data collection activities in urban areas (key informant interviews with different stakeholders). The vertical panel including the last three columns provides an overview of the data collection in rural areas (communities visited, methods used, and types of assets/activities observed).

Table 14: Simplified agenda of the data collection mission

Date	Country	Data collection in urban areas								Data collection in rural areas								
		Urban centers visited	Key informant interviews in urban centers (by stakeholder group)							Rural communities visited		Methods of data collection in communities			Direct observation of assets/activities			
			WFP reg./ global	WFP COs	WFP FOs	EE	Govt. (ntl.)	Govt. (sub-ntl.)	Donor, UN	Univ.	Afro-descendant	Indigenous Awa	Group inter-views	AI work-shop	Indigen. story-telling	PIR/HB/ *canoeras*	Water	SMICC	Mangrove/ forest
1 April 2024	COL	Bogotá		x															
2 April 2024	COL	Bogotá		x															
3 April 2024	ECU	Quito		x			x												
4 April 2024	ECU	Ibarra			x	x			x										
5 April 2024	ECU	Ibarra, Mira			x	x		x	x		Tulquizán Santiaguillo		x			x	x	x	
6 April 2024	ECU											Palmira	x	x	x	x		x	
7 April 2024	ECU										Punta de Miguel Changuaral		x			x	x		
8 April 2024	ECU	San Lorenzo				x			x		Las Delicias	Guadalito	x	x	x		x		
9 April 2024	ECU	Virtual (from Ibarra)				x		x	x	x		El Baboso Río Verde Medio		x	x	x	x		
10 April 2024	ECU	Tulcán						x		x	Alto Tambo		x				x		
11 April 2024	COL	Pasto			x														

Date	Country	Data collection in urban areas								Data collection in rural areas								
		Urban centers visited	Key informant interviews in urban centers (by stakeholder group)							Rural communities visited		Methods of data collection in communities			Direct observation of assets/activities			
			WFP reg./ global	WFP COs	WFP FOs	EE	Govt. (ntl.)	Govt. (sub-ntl.)	Donor, UN	Univ.	Afro-descendant	Indigenous Awa	Group inter-views	AI work-shop	Indigen. story-telling	PIR/HB/ *canoeras*	Water	SMICC	Mangrove/ forest
12 April 2024	COL	Pasto			x														
13 April 2024	COL																		
14 April 2024	COL																		
15 April 2024	COL											Las Palmas, Arenal, Asogripmaíz	x	x	x	x			
16 April 2024	COL	Tumaco Ricaurte				x						Descolgadero Imbili	x	x	x	x			X
17 April 2024	COL	Pasto				x		x				Bajito Baquería Colombia Grande Boca Grande	x						X
18 April 2024	COL	Virtual (from Pasto)			x	x		x				Llorente	x				x		
19 April 2024	COL																		
20 April 2024	COL																		
21 April 2024	COL																		
22 April 2024	COL	Bogotá		x			x												
23 April 2024	ECU	Quito					x		x										
24 April 2024	ECU	Quito		x															
Post-mission		Remote	x		x				x										

Annex IX Mapping of findings, conclusions and recommendations

Table 15: Mapping of findings, conclusions and recommendations

Recommendation	Conclusions	Findings (EQs)
R1: High-level exploratory meetings should be conducted with other relevant projects operating in, or adjacent to the project's intervention area to exchange lessons learned and good practices and identify potential synergies.	**C1**: coherence	**EQ 1**
R2: All future binational projects funded by the AF should adopt a simpler governance structure involving one binational management committee and one binational advisory committee to build consensus and cooperation on issues of mutual interest.	**C2:** relevance	**EQ 2**
R3: It is recommended that when designing binational projects, project actions are grouped together and their outcome focus on the delivery of their holistic benefits as perceived by local communities, rather than development practitioners who tend to focus on the delivery of a sector-specific benefit.	**C3:** effectiveness	**EQ 3**
R4: It is strongly recommended that in the design and implementation of binational (and national) projects, their M&E and reporting adopt a results-based focus that supports learning, while all operational actions and output targets are tracked through the administration and finance plan.	**C5:** adaptive management	**EQ 5**
R5: In line with stakeholder proposals in the field, it is recommended to support the development of the HB/PIR in the closure period under a dedicated route map/plan with participating academia, local government and the Ministries of Agriculture in Ecuador and Colombia.	**C6:** equity	**EQ 6**

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Annex XI Acronyms and abbreviations

Table 16: List of acronyms and abbreviations

3-PA	Three-Pronged Approach
ACC	Adaptation to climate change
ACIPAP	Association of Indigenous Councils of the Awa People of Putumayo (*Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Pueblo Awá de Putumayo*)
AF	Adaptation Fund
AI	Appreciative Inquiry
AUSCM	Sustainable Use and Custody of the Mangrove Ecosystem (*Acuerdos de Uso Sustentable y Custodia del Manglar*)
CANE	Afro-Ecuadorian Region of Northern Esmeraldas (*Comarca Afroecuatoriana del Norte de Esmeraldas*)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBPP	Community-Based Participatory Planning
CCAMF	Community Councils of Alto Mira and Frontera (*Consejo Comunitario Alto Mira y Frontera*)
CCBMYF	Community Councils of Bajo Mira and Frontera (*Consejo Comunitario Bajo Mira y Frontera*)
CDNE	National Steering Committee Ecuador *(Comité Directivo Nacional Ecuador)*
CO	Country Office
COL	Colombia
CPTCCM	Comprehensive Plan for Territorial Climate Change Management
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
CTANE	Directorate of Agricultural Risks and Insurance *(Comité Técnico Asesor Nacional de Ecuador)*
DE QS	Outsourced Quality Support Service for Decentralized Evaluations
DEQAS	Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System
DNMI	National Integrated Management District (*Distrito Nacional de Manejo Integrado*)
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EC	Evaluation Committee
ECU	Ecuador
EE	Executing Entity
EM	Evaluation Manager
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response
EQ	Evaluation Question
ESP	Environmental and Social Policy

ET	Evaluation Team
EWS	Early Warning System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCAE	Federation of Awa Centers of Ecuador (*Federación de Centros Awá del Ecuador*)
FEPP	Ecuadorian Fund Populorum Progressio (*Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio*)
FLA	Field Level Agreement
FORECCSA	Strengthening the Resilience of Communities to the Adverse Effects of Climate change with Emphasis on Food Security and Gender Considerations in the Jubones River Basin and the Province of Pichincha (*Fortalecimiento de la Resiliencia de las comunidades ante los Efectos Edversos del Cambio Climático con Énfasis en Seguridad alimentaria y Consideraciones de Género en la cuenca del Río Jubones y la Provincia de Pichincha*)
FO	Field Office
FSN	Food Security and Nutrition
GAD	Decentralized Autonomous Government (*Gobiernos Autónomos Descentralizados*)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GFAB	Great Binational Awa Family (*Gran Familia Awá Binacional*)
HB	Biodiverse Garden (*Huerto Biodiverso*)
IAAD	Indigenous Awa and Afro-Descendant
IDEAM	Institute for Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (*Instituto de Hidrología, Meteorología y Estudios Ambientales*)
INEC	National Institute of Statistics And Census (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos*)
INAMHI	National Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (*Instituto Nacional de Meteorología e Hidrología*)
LDP	Local Development Plan
LP	Life Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAATE	Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition (*Ministerio de Ambiente, Agua y Transición Ecológica*)
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (*Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería*)
MIE	Multilateral Implementing Entity
Minambiente	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (*Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible*)
MTR	Mid-Term Review

O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PACC	Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change
PACCC	Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change at Community Level
PDOT	Land Use Development Plan (*Plan de Desarrollo y Ordenamiento Territoria*l)
PIR	Biodiverse Plot (*Parcela Integral Resiliente*)
PPR	Project Performance Report
Prodoc	Project Document
PUCESE	Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador in Esmeraldas (*Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador Sede Esmeraldas*)
QLI	Qualitative
QTI	Quantitative
RBP	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
RECOMPAS	Corporation Network of Community Councils of the South Pacific (*Corporacion Red de Consejos Comunitarios del Pacifico Sur*)
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
REMACAM	Mangrove Ecological Reserve Cayapas Mataje (*Reserva Ecológica Manglares Cayapas Mataje*)
RG	Reference Group
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMICC	Climate Change Information and Monitoring System *(Sistema de Monitoreo e Información de Cambio Climático*)
SNDGR	National Decentralized Risk Management System (*Secretaría Nacional de Gestión de Riesgos*)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNIPA	Indigenous Unity of the Awa People (*Unidad Indígena del Pueblo Awá*)
UPEC	Carchi Polytechnic State University (*Universidad Politécnica Estatal del Carchi*)
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme

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