WHAT WFP DOES

• The UN World Food Programme (WFP) in Ecuador has implemented a voucher program through which vulnerable populations, especially Colombian refugees, can purchase nutritious food at local stores

• WFP also supports small farmer associations, especially those led by women

• There is also a focus on nutritional education for aid recipients

• Additionally, WFP works on emergency preparedness, an important goal given Ecuador’s vulnerability to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions
At the office, with another intern and my supervisor in the background.

At the World Refugee Day event, interacting with a farmer who receives assistance from WFP.
I interned in the area of Communications, in which there were a large variety of tasks, including:

- Translation from Spanish to English, or from English to Spanish if I felt up to it
- Reviewing of the English in documents
- Making summaries and designing of reports, and sharing these reports with the office staff in creative ways
- Writing articles and publishing them on the web
- Organization and selection of photos
- Helping out at a local event sponsored by WFP
- Organizing communications and visibility materials
- Coordinating preparation plans for WFP initiatives
View from the United Nations building

Getting lunch at a restaurant nearby with coworkers, as part of a goodbye to a colleague
THE EXPERIENCE

• Work was very rewarding, I felt like I contributed a lot to the functioning of the office, and all the staff were appreciative and very friendly.

• I got further practice with my Spanish, and generally got insight into the working of a major international organization, which was valuable. My coworkers took the time to explain every part of the agency to me.

• Living in Ecuador was also an valuable experience – the process of adapting to a foreign culture taught me much. And unlike my previous summers abroad, this time I was entirely independent, which led to me actually making local friends and integrating into the culture.
WFP’s Annual Reports, frequent references for me in writing publications of my own for Communications
MY IMPACT

• My knowledge as a native English speaker was invaluable, especially in the area of Communications, in which a native understanding of the language is vital to making documents sound professional. Other areas of the agency would also ask for my help in reviewing English or making summaries of reports.

• I also contributed in organizational ways, such as by preparing a new emergency telephone tree or cataloguing visibility materials.

• My supervisor said that Communications got much more done with interns around, and she was very appreciative of our help.
A document I helped prepare and design for Communications

How WFP Supported Dietary Diversification of Vulnerable Ecuadorians and Colombian Refugees

Overview:
WFP, the Government of Ecuador, and partners are implementing nutrition-sensitive programmes to increase the dietary diversity of vulnerable Ecuadorians and Colombian refugees. The programmes have local production of diverse, nutritious foods to beneficiaries. WFP leveraged its role in Ecuador as an important nutrition partner and, in close collaboration with national and local governments, and other partners, initiated Integrated Nutrition Programmes to increase dietary diversity, improve food and nutrient security, support stable markets for smallholder farmers, and increase supply of food security and nutrition for beneficiaries, partners, and small-holder farmers. WFP’s continued strategic leadership and technical assistance guiding and expanding these programmes. This case study presents lessons on how WFP delivered its role in a Middle Income Country to address persistent problems of nutritional deficiencies and food insecurity.

Key WFP Success Factors
- Leadership with innovation center for repositioning within a Middle Income Country
- Robust market commitment of WFP staff and partner staff
- Gender to validate an opportunity
- Ability to generate influential data
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- Ability to be programmatically flexible
- Commitment to support, train, and adapt
- Innovation in technology to improve programme efficiency

WFP and the Government of Ecuador have worked together for many years to address food and nutrition insecurity facing vulnerable Ecuadorians and Colombian refugees. Since 2011, the focus of the collaboration has been to improve access and consumption of healthy foods, especially locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables.

Improving lives
Ecuador is making important efforts to fight malnutrition and anaemia. Recognizing that education on nutrition enhances the effects of food assistance, WFP employed Foodlink Education Centres. Before receiving vouchers, project participants attend nutrition training where they learn about the importance of a healthy diet. WFP teaches families healthier recipes using traditional ingredients through dynamic workshops, which often involve taste tests, cooking demonstrations, or dramatic theatre.

In 2013, more than 40,000 participants and their families learned the best practices and how to use them to make nutritious meals.

In 2014, families receiving WFP assistance for at least 6 months consumed foods from 7 out of 8 food groups, compared with only 4 prior to the programme.

Engagement
- By including both Colombian refugees and vulnerable Ecuadorians in WFP’s programmes, transformation is achieved with the refugees and their host communities.
- WFP’s focus on women farmers and refugees leads to greater decision-making ability.
- WFP delivers time and resources to sensitizing local government leaders, their support gives the programme legitimacy within the community.
- Instead of helping refugees, beneficiaries are linked to local producers of fruits and vegetables in order to improve both dietary diversity and community integration.

Empowering women
- Women’s livelihoods account for more than 50 percent of WFP project participants.
- Women’s participation in the voucher programme increased gender-based violence by 38-48%.
- Of the 20% small farmers involved in WFP’s activities, 55% are women.
- Women in small farmers’ associations that receive extra income through WFP programmes have greater independence and ability to invest more in the lives of their children.

Innovations in technology
- In 2012, WFP made the switch. Instead of the original paper vouchers, each project participant now receives a card with a unique barcode. In this new form, the vouchers can be charged with varying values, depending on the number of family members.
- Most importantly, the vouchers are linked to the Better for Monitoring and Reallocating Transfers (BAMRT) system, which WFP develops in Ecuador. Allows WFP and partners to track purchases made by project participants.
- In this way, the programme’s impact can be directly visualized, data can be continuously evaluated and allow governments to have the greatest positive effect on the diet and dietary diversity.

Quick Facts
- Ecuador is a Middle Income Country of 15 million people.
- Anaemia is a public health problem with a prevalence of 20% in women, 50% in men, and 51% in children under one year of age (2011).
- 25% of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition.
- Ecuador has the largest influx of refugees in all of South America.

See Case Study at [https://www.wfp.org/content/how-wfp-helped-diverse-communities-pan-america](https://www.wfp.org/content/how-wfp-helped-diverse-communities-pan-america)

For further information please contact: Reinhard.Pal@wfp.org
Ecuador is an incredible place!

View of Historic Quito from the Basilica

Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve, in the Amazon region

Pailón del Diablo waterfall