



## FAO'S ROLE IN THE RESPONSE PLAN FOR COLOMBIAN FLOODS 2011

### Background

The current emergency affecting Colombia is at present the most severe registered emergency of the past 60 years. The increase in rainfall owing to La Niña has caused unprecedented floods that, according to data by the Government of Colombia, claimed 315 lives and affected 2 325 479 people in the period between April and January 2011.

The loss of livestock and damage to productive infrastructure as well as transport routes are all contributing factors that exacerbate the coping mechanisms of vulnerable families. For hundreds of thousands of people across the country, (with greater severity in the Costa Norte region, the Pacific region, the Andean region and the interandean valleys) continuous and secure access to food has been difficult. Marginalized communities, inhabited by families living in poverty or extreme poverty, in addition to displaced persons who have fled from violence due to internal conflict, are the most adversely affected areas within the country.

The Government of Colombia has requested the international and national humanitarian community to implement provisions that complement the state's response. The **Response Plan to the floods of 2011** is framed under a joint effort of coordination with the Government of Colombia. The Humanitarian Country Team is seeking **USD 49 368 717** to address the immediate humanitarian needs of approximately 550 000 people directly impacted by the floods.

### Challenges facing food security and agriculture

Heavy rains and continual flooding of the most important rivers in the country have caused incalculable losses of crops, inundated land dedicated to agricultural activity while also severely damaging livestock production. There is a growing concern for the continuity and sustainability of the livelihoods of vulnerable populations in the affected areas of which 45 percent live in rural and suburban areas and base their food security needs on farming and agricultural activities.

According to official figures losses in agricultural production are unprecedented in the country's recent history. At least 1 324 000 hectares devoted to agriculture and livestock production have been partially or completely affected. Staple crops essential to the Colombian diet such as rice, mais, bananas and yuca as well as industrial crops used for commercial purposes (coffee, cotton, among others) have had their planting and harvesting cycles disrupted.



### FAO's response

The La Niña phenomenon will continue to negatively impact the climate of the country to at least mid-2011. Above-average rains will particularly affect agriculture and livestock and eventually put a strain on food availability resulting in problems of food security.

Lands remain inundated in areas affected by prolonged floods and are not expected to dry before the first winter season, beginning in March-April.



The Food and Agriculture Organizations of the United Nations (FAO), co-leader of the Food Security and Nutrition cluster, under the Response Plan seeks **USD 4 136 000** to restore the livelihoods of those affected, with a special emphasis on women-headed households, the youth, indigenous groups and groups of African descent.

FAO's actions will focus on rapidly restoring agricultural production, small-

scale livestock farming and the protection and restoration of assets, services and productive resources. FAO's proposed activities include:

- Develop technical analysis of land-use and response models at the community level;
- Implement activities concerning animal health, shelter and food;
- Distribute seeds, tools and other materials that will enable families to immediately resume agricultural activities and technical assistance to better prepare for future emergencies;
- Rebuild productive infrastructure in communities that do not have access to credit or subsidy mechanisms;
- Strengthen institutional capacities of local government agencies, as well as community-based organizations.



# FAO's COMPONENT OF THE RESPONSE PLAN FOR COLOMBIAN FLOODS 2011

**FUNDING REQUIREMENTS: USD 4 136 000**

<b>Project title</b>	<b>Emergency assistance for food security aimed at populations most highly affected by the floods and landslides.</b>
<b>Cluster</b>	Food security and nutrition (Agriculture and Food Security)
<b>Objectives</b>	1. Focusing on the technical framework and emergency delivery of tools, seeds and logistical assistance to vulnerable families affected by the flooding and current emergency and to the departments of Atlántico, Antioquia, Chocó, Nariño, Cauca, Córdoba, Sucre and Bolívar, aiming for a rapid recovery of food production and restoration to agricultural livelihoods. Funds required: USD 3 000 000
	2. Recovering livelihoods related to agricultural and livestock production of vulnerable families and groups most affected by the flooding through technical and operational assistance for the recovery of assets (crops, soils, livestock) in order to sustainably restore the families' food security and nutrition. Funds required: USD 600 000
	3. Technical support to national and regional agencies for emergency relief. Funds required: USD 500 000
	4. Coordination and operational support for the food security and nutrition Cluster operations during its emergency and early recovery phase, in order to prevent repeating field operations and optimize resources in use. Funds required: USD 36 000
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	<b>TOTAL: 90 000 people</b> Children: 30% Women: 55% Other groups: Special emphasis indigenous groups and groups of African descent.
<b>Implementing Partners</b>	OXFAM-Great Britain, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, CARITAS and Secretarias de Agricultura Local
<b>Implementation</b>	January - December 2011
<b>Target areas</b>	Departments of Atlántico, Antioquia, Chocó, Nariño, Cauca, Córdoba, Sucre and Bolívar
<b>Priority</b>	High



**For more information please contact:**

**Dennis Latimer**  
Sub regional coordinator for South America Emergencies  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
Tel.: + 57 1 346 5101 ext 201  
Email: [Dennis.Latimer@fao.org](mailto:Dennis.Latimer@fao.org)

**Cristina Amaral**  
Chief  
Emergency Operations Service  
Tel.: + 39 06 570 53290  
Email: [Cristina.Amaral@fao.org](mailto:Cristina.Amaral@fao.org)  
Website: <http://www.fao.org/emergencies>