

Right to food: Progress made in selected FAO member countries

ECUADOR

I Background and Framework

A) Scope of international obligations

On 11 June 2010, Ecuador became the first country to have ratified the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This is an important step and contribution towards the implementation of a concrete body to ensure international justiciability of the right to food.

B) Constitutional and legislative framework

Ecuador adopted the right to food in its Constitution by referendum on 28 September 2008. It is recognized as a separate and stand-alone right in Article 13, which specifies the right to food as “the right to have unrestricted and permanent access to sufficient and nutritious food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, for a healthy and dignified life”. Moreover, the right to water and the right to food sovereignty were also added to the Constitution, respectively in Articles 12 and 13.

In addition, in 2009, a food sovereignty Framework Law, firmly rooted in right to food principles, was adopted. Several provisions on education to an adequate nutrition, the largest possible public participation, the role and importance of small-scale farmers, the protection of indigenous people, as well as timeframes and definite obligations for the government to realize the right to food are present in the law. In the midst of all the actions taken, Ecuador could become one of the main actors in the quest to achieve the realization of the right to adequate food for all.

V Capacity-building and technical assistance

Through capacity development, international expertise and legal advice during the process of developing the Constitution, FAO collaborated with the government of Ecuador in order to include the right to food in the Constitution.

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