



The Inclusion of Food in Quito's Resilience Strategy

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In October 2017, the Metropolitan District of Quito (MDQ), together with the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities initiative, published the city's Resilience Strategy. The MDQ proposes to confront a range of vulnerability challenges and natural hazards – including seismic events, volcano disruptions, flooding and hail storms, forest fires, environmental degradation, and economic disruptions – with 5 key aspects:

1. Inclusive and empowered citizens to strengthen participatory capacities and ownership of non-governmental organisations and communities;
2. A robust and sustainable environment that protects the natural resource base and promotes better environmental management;
3. An integrated and compact city to control urban sprawl and promote efficient mobility systems;
4. A resourceful and solid economy that enhances youth employment and a food economy as a strategy for development; and
5. A reflective and safe territory that mitigates existing and future risks and vulnerabilities and prepares the city for possible future threats.

As part of the fourth aspect, and under coordination of the Secretariat of Production Development and Competitiveness, the MDQ proposes to develop a plan to strengthen Quito's food system.

Quito's food system is characterised by specific vulnerabilities, including a high (over 85%) dependence on food imports, weak food distribution systems and isolated vulnerable communities. Based on a vulnerability analysis, an action plan will be developed to enhance the availability and accessibility of diversified, safe and nutritious food for the entire population. The action plan will also seek to increase consumer capacity, education and awareness regarding healthy diet and nutrition.

Additional actions in the strategy include:

- Strengthening Quito's urban agriculture programme in

terms of enhancing the quality and quantity of local food production and by facilitating more diversified market mechanisms.

- Developing a programme on sustainable agricultural development in the periurban and rural areas. Sustainable and lower-emission production practices will be promoted, as well as more decent labour conditions.

In 2017, a disaster resilience assessment of Quito's food system was implemented with a focus on emergency food storage and the continuity of food distribution in emergency situations. The risk of disruptions – due to volcanic eruptions, seismic events or other natural events amplified by climate change – is high, given Quito's high dependence on food imports from other areas of the country or other countries, a limited food-supply road infrastructure, and a single, central Quito distribution market. As a large number of Quito's low income households live in vulnerable housing and areas, in the event of a disaster many of these settlements and substandard constructions would become uninhabitable, disrupting the dwellers' ability to access any home-stored foods, home gardens and cooking facilities. This would be aggravated in many isolated communities that lack proximity access to rural or urban food markets.

In 2018 the MDQ has set out to further improve its understanding of the emergency preparedness of households, businesses and the government. Based on such further assessment, the MDQ will define what steps to take to encourage or implement emergency food storage practices at the household, neighbourhood, food system business and municipal levels. In addition, MDQ will likely need to devise transportation strategies to ensure that, in the event of an emergency, food can be moved from local storage locations to households, especially those that may have limited ability to store emergency food of their own.

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