

# ART ECUADOR PROGRAMME

ART GOLD Ecuador is a framework programme that aims to support the government in coordinating the contributions of different international cooperation actors in their support of national decentralisation strategies and the achievement of the MDGs.

In particular, the programme aims to help strengthen the state's planning capacity, promote economic development, administrative decentralisation, human development and equality as fundamental elements of national policy. The programme gives support to the National Secretariat for Planning and Development (SENPLADES) in implementing the National Development Plan, using a territorial and participatory approach which articulates planning at national and local levels. The government of Ecuador has invited international cooperation to support these efforts, articulating the various strategies and initiatives at the central and territorial levels.



Different international cooperation actors (bilateral and United Nations agencies, including UNDP) have supported Ecuador in the process of territorialising the MDGs. These efforts led to the creation of the Millennium Social Research Centre (CISMIL) and the publication of various documents, conceptual tools and methodologies, including reports on millennium development goals at the provincial level. The ART GOLD Ecuador Programme bases its cooperation strategy on the government's human development policies and millennium goals, providing continuity for the territorial development processes supported by the abovementioned initiatives.

Programme intervention areas are the provinces of Carchi, Azuay, Los Rios and Bolivar. There are also plans to extend the programme to other geographical areas, based on national priorities, needs, potential, resources and Programme progress. In each province, the Programme will concentrate resources on priority cantons.

## Overview

<b>Duration</b>	The programme was formulated and officially launched in 2007. Preparatory Phase: June 2007 - December 2007 Implementation phase: 2008 - 2009
<b>Operation and coordination at the national level</b>	The <b>National Planning and Development Secretariat (SENPLADES)</b> is the national institution responsible for the ART Ecuador Programme, and is responsible for following up the programme and activities at the national level.  The <b>National Coordination Committee</b> is the body responsible for ensuring coordination between central, provincial and municipal institutions, and the coherence of territorial initiatives and policies with the National Development Plan. The NCC promotes and facilitates the dissemination of successful methods and experiences and the participation of new donors within the framework of the programme. The NCC is also responsible for approving operational plans drawn up at local, national and international levels.

	<p>The NCC includes the National Planning and Development Secretariat of Ecuador (SENPLADES), the International Cooperation Agency, the Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities (AME), the Consortium of Ecuadorian Provincial Councils (CONCOPE), Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency (AECI), the Generalitat Valenciana and UNDP. Other international bodies and partners showing particular interest in the Programme: UNHCR, UN-Habitat, DED, SNV, the Spanish NGO Coordinator in Ecuador.</p> <p>The <b>International Technical Coordinator</b> is responsible for institutional relations with the various national and international partners, as well as the current operational management and monitoring of the programme at the national level. It also provides technical assistance to provincial working groups in planning and implementing operational plans. In close collaboration with UNDP Ecuador, the coordinator ensures articulation with other cooperation initiatives.</p>
<b>Operation and coordination at the provincial and municipal levels.</b>	<p>The <b>Provincial Working Groups (PWGs)</b> are responsible for drafting operational plans to use international cooperation contributions in a way that complements resources allocated in public budgets. They promote the active participation of local actors in the planning and management of development action. They carry out activities planned in conjunction with all territorial actors. They also ensure that programme activities are articulated at local, provincial and municipal levels in the framework of their respective development plans. Local government representatives play a key role in the working groups.</p> <p>Cantonal and provincial actors are given operational management assistance by <b>Programme area offices</b>, which support ongoing activities in each intervention area, and provide technical assistance to working groups, under the supervision of the international coordinator.</p> <p>In every province, SENPLADES technical experts guarantee the process of articulating the programme's activities with the national development plan.</p>
<b>Cooperation Partners</b>	<p><b>Bilateral Cooperation:</b> Spanish International Development Cooperation Agency (AECID); Canadian Global Peace and Security Fund (FSPG) through the United Nations Programme for Development and Peace in the Northern Border.</p> <p><b>Decentralised Cooperation:</b> Valencian government, Basque government, Fondo Valenciano. There are ongoing activities to involve other decentralised cooperation networks interested in articulating interventions within the multilateral framework of ART Ecuador.</p> <p><b>UN Agencies:</b> UNDP, UNHCR, UNIFEM, UN-Habitat.</p>
<b>Funding</b>	<p>AECID: 1 447 200 USD, FSPG Canada: 301 659 USD, Generalitat Valenciana 400 000 euros.</p>

## Activities and results at provincial and cantonal levels

The main initial results of the Programme at the local level included the enhancement of relations with local governments and the launching of the process of creating the Programme's governance structures, the provincial and cantonal working groups, to begin a cycle of local programming. The programme's methodology was also adapted to the situation in the country and the decentralisation process underway to ensure it is acquired by local authorities.

## Province of Carchi (Northern Frontier)

The province is located on the country's border with Colombia. It is a high priority area nationally and internationally, due to the great social and economic vulnerability of the local communities, as a consequence of armed conflict in Colombia and the large number of evacuees.

The priority given to this province is part of the strategic policies in Ecuador's National Plan, which aims to consolidate security and peace, maintain a policy of international relations of equity and solidarity, and a defence policy based on the protection of the population, natural resources and effective control of the territory. Internationally, the area is the focus of the initiative Development and Peace on the Northern Border (PDP-FN) and a priority for UNDAF, whose overall strategy is to reduce vulnerability to the internal conflict in Colombia through development, awareness of the conflict, the application of the MDGs, and the strengthening of the gender approach and multiculturalism.

The Programme promotes an integrated approach to development, interagency coordination and articulation of international cooperation with territorial and national development plans and priorities. One of the main aims in the area is to identify and support initiatives for international binational cooperation between Ecuador and Colombia. These efforts rely on the Programme's Territorial Strategy for Development and Peace (PDP-FN), the activities of the ART REDES Colombia Programme, which operates in the Department of Nariño (on the border with Colombia) and the activities of the UNHCR to create a system of effective protection for flows of displaced populations in the region. Collaboration is underway with UNHCR to articulate projects for the local integration of refugees within the framework of the ART GOLD Ecuador Programme through local planning.

In coordination with the provincial government and taking into account the priorities set by the National Plan, cantons in the province of Carchi have been identified for the Programme's first operational phase. A workshop was organised to present the ART Initiative to local actors; the process was launched for the formulation and implementation of the first impact projects.

## Province of Azuay

In the Province of Azuay the Programme has begun to work closely with provincial and cantonal authorities. The Programme has identified three strategic areas at the provincial level: territorial planning, articulation of territorial development plans with the national development plan, and the strengthening of existing environmental management processes. On the basis of technical criteria shared by local actors, 8 cantons were identified for Programme activities: Cuenca, Nabón, Giron, Oña, Ponce Enriquez, Santa Isabel, Pucara and San Fernando.

Strategic workshops were programmed with key provincial actors involved in the abovementioned three strategic areas. Activities are underway in the cantons to define criteria and formulate impact projects and to start cantonal planning cycles. Programme activities are carried out in this province with the support of the Valencian Solidarity Fund. The Generalitat Valenciana supports the activities underway in the area of Jubones. A diploma course in local economic development has been activated, in collaboration with the Local Integration Agency of Cuenca, the University of Cuenca and the National Competitiveness Council.

## Province of Los Ríos

In the province of Los Rios, initial contacts were established with key local actors. Using a participatory process, the first three cantons for Programme activities were identified: Babahoyo, Baba and Palenque. In collaboration with the local cantonal authorities, the first Programme activities were launched. Taking into account the devastation caused by heavy winter rains, local actors agreed to focus on recovery work and the management of risks caused by floods

The activities were carried out in collaboration with other UNDP initiatives in the area (Project for strengthening local capacities to achieve the MDGs, Agenda Recovery, development plan to strengthen conditions for governance, and adjustment to climate change through effective water management in Ecuador).

## Province of Bolívar

In the Province of Bolivar, the main local actors made a strong commitment to implementing the Programme. The first two cantons for Programme activities were jointly identified: Guaranda and Echandía. Through local workshops the following priorities were identified: health, education and the environment. In the province, the Programme works with other UNDP initiatives in the area (Project for strengthening local capacities to achieve the MDGs) and with the activities of the NGO Peace and Development of Andalusia (Spain).

## Results at the national level

The main results of the Programme at the national level are as follows:

- The establishment and activation of the Programme's National Coordinating Committee is the main result at the national level. In particular, the NCC has approved the Plan of Operations for 2008.
- The Programme supported the 1<sup>st</sup> National Local Development Conference (Quito - October 2007) organised by CONCOPE, SENPLADES, the National Committee for the Reactivation of Production and Competitiveness (CNPC), the Provincial Government of Pichincha. The conference was organised with the support of Governance Area and the UNDP ART Programme. The conference made it possible to establish collaboration between the different actors involved in the process of local economic development, to continue work in developing guidelines, public policies and promotion instruments.
- The preparation and official presentation of the Higher Diploma in Local Economic Development, sponsored by the University of Cuenca, the Cuenca Regional Integration Agency and the National Competitiveness Council.
- A technical workshop was held on decentralised cooperation, in collaboration with the Ecuadorian government, which saw contributions from many participants, with a view to the formulation of government policies and strategies to manage this type of cooperation.

## Results at the international level

The Programme's main results at the international level are as follows:

- An important Ecuadorian delegation participated in the Second National Meeting of Local Economic Development Agencies in Colombia, to implement mutual cooperation agreements between the ART REDES Colombia network and ART Ecuador and to establish strategic alliances between the two countries and between the LEDAs of the two countries, to be implemented during 2008. A collaboration agreement for mutual exchange was signed.
- Ecuadorian operators took part in a course for multilateral cooperation experts in Huelva (Spain).
- Representatives of the City of Cuenca took part in the sixth Global Forum of Alliance of Cities Against Poverty, held in Athens.