



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Ecuador Country Brief April 2020



## Operational Context

Ecuador is an upper-middle-income country; 63 percent of the population lives in urban areas. Income inequality is high, as evidenced by a Gini coefficient of 0.48 (National Institute of Statistics and Census – INEC 2019), and there is a significant rate of chronic malnutrition. Gender-Based Violence affects six out of ten women (2015). Despite the peace process in Colombia, new refugees are still arriving in the country, in addition to an increasing number of vulnerable Venezuelans.

The country is prone to natural hazards, including droughts, floods, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

WFP’s goal in Ecuador is to be an innovative partner, supporting government policies and priorities as well as contributing to food sovereignty, food security and nutrition of vulnerable people, and gender equality. WFP has been present in Ecuador since 1964.



The boundaries and names and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Population: 17.2 million

2018 Human Development Index: 86 out of 189

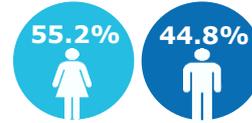
Income Level: Upper middle

Chronic malnutrition: 23.9% of children under five years old

## In Numbers

US\$ 2,301,339 cash-based transfers made

87,563 people assisted



## Operational Updates

- 86,214 people benefited from WFP’s food vouchers in April. The majority were Venezuelans (91.7 percent), followed by Colombians (7.9 percent) and a few beneficiaries of other nationalities.
- 1,349 people, of which 52.4 percent from Venezuela, were assisted at shelters and canteens managed by partner organizations.
- The one-time food assistance at the border provinces, Sucumbíos, Carchi, and El Oro remains suspended due to the border closure.
- A UN to UN Contribution Agreement was signed between WFP and UNICEF to complement WFP’s food assistance with sanitation and hygienic items during the COVID-19 pandemic. With this agreement, WFP’s beneficiaries will receive an additional monthly value of USD 5 per person, up to USD 20 per household, to purchase necessary hygiene products at the supermarket chain for three months.
- WFP has arranged several webinars for WFP staff and associates in shelters and canteens regarding precautions in preparing meals during the COVID-19 outbreak and other themes such as nutrition, gender, and protection.
- A total of 213 Ecuadorian returnees received WFP’s assistance during their quarantine in April. An additional 153 Ecuadorian returnees under quarantine will be supported through mid-May.
- In April, WFP Ecuador signed new FLAs with four shelters and canteen in the provinces of Imbabura, Guayas, and two in El Oro. The new cooperating partner in Imbabura has begun its assistance in mid-April. The other three cooperating partners in Guayas and El Oro are planned to start in May.
- WFP provided hygiene kits to shelters to contain the spread of novel COVID-19 among the beneficiaries.
- WFP donated 100 biosafety suits to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock for smallholder farmers to ensure proper protection in handling food.
- WFP donated hygiene supplies to the Afro-descendant and Awá communities to prevent COVID-19 transmission within the most vulnerable populations in the northern region.
- WFP actively participated in different protection and gender working groups, supporting the development and dissemination of messages on GBV and protection.

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**Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)**

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
<b>71.2m</b>	<b>73.1 m</b>	<b>23.6 m</b>

**Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food**

**Strategic Outcome #1:** Refugees, displaced persons and vulnerable people in Ecuador are enabled to meet their basic food and nutrition requirements all year long  
**Focus area:** *Crisis response*

- Activities:**
- Complement the Government's social protection strategy by providing Cash-Based Transfers to the most vulnerable populations and support in vulnerability analysis and knowledge management.

**Strategic Result 3: Smallholders have improved food security and nutrition**

**Strategic Outcome #2:** Smallholder farmers, especially women, in targeted areas, durably increase their incomes and improve their productivity by 2021.  
**Focus area:** *Root causes*

- Activities:**
- Support and increase the participation of smallholder farmer organizations in national and local commercial mechanisms and institutional markets.
  - Strengthen the capacity of farmer organizations.

**Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable**

**Strategic Outcome #3:** Food-insecure communities and individuals in areas that are highly vulnerable to climate change, and government institutions have strengthened capacity for adaptation to climate change by 2021.  
**Focus area:** *Resilience*

- Activities:**
- Strengthen or develop emergency preparedness, response, and early warning systems.
  - Strengthen the implementation of adaptation and resilience measures.

**Strategic Result 4: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs**

**Strategic Outcome #4:** National institutions and programmes in Ecuador, including social protection programmes, are supported to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition by 2021.  
**Focus area:** *Root causes*

- Activities:**
- Technical assistance, research and assessments, to improve the implementation of programs linked to food security and nutrition.
  - Knowledge management and sharing of best practices and studies, including through South-South cooperation.

**Donors**

Adaptation Fund, Canada, CERF, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea, United States of America, Private and Multilateral donors.

**Challenges**

- The state of health emergency and stringent mobility restrictions continued to be maintained nationwide in April. The number of confirmed cases reached almost 25,000 at the end of April, which has brought Ecuador as the third most affected country by COVID-19 in Latin America, after Brazil and Peru.
- The Ministry of Government announced its plan of passing from isolation to social distancing to resume the stalled economic activities. The traffic light system has been implemented, and the mayors of each city are responsible for gradually loosening the lockdown from May 4. Nevertheless, many citizens have expressed its concern over the possibility of a resurgence as the official number of confirmed cases and death have been rising.

**COVID-19 Response**

- WFP is working with the national government to provide financial support to vulnerable families comprised of pregnant/lactating women and families with children under five years through the existing social protection programs.
- On April 30, WFP and the Humanitarian Country Team presented Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 to the Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility and the international community. The plan was well-received, and the government asked for support from the humanitarian community, especially for the health and food security sectors.
- In cooperation with UNHCR, UNICEF, and the GTRM, WFP carried out a Rapid Joint Need Assessment (RJNA) regarding the impact of COVID-19. Around 1,648 households of Venezuelan and Colombian refugees and migrants as well as Ecuadorian host communities were reached. The key findings indicate that, due to the curtailed means of livelihoods, 63 percent of surveyed households have no source of income, and 90 percent need food. In detail, 31 percent reported that they have no access to sufficient food, and 11 percent have no access to food at all.
- Considering the above-mentioned context of widespread vulnerability, in April, WFP expanded the targeting criteria to include additional migrants that need immediate food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The amplified criteria allow incorporating households with children under 18 years of age and extending the assistance period for families whose assistance has come to an end.
- To effectively respond to the COVID-19 crisis wreaking havoc on many livelihoods of the vulnerable population residing in the country, WFP has successfully raised an emergency fund from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development of Canada and other. At the same time, WFP is currently working on raising further emergency fund contributions.