



WFP Ecuador Country Brief May 2020

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



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. Currently, Ecuador is one of the most affected countries by the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America and the Caribbean, having reached around 39,000 confirmed cases at the end of May.

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



Population: **17.2 million**

2018 Human Development Index: **86 out of 189**

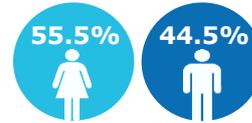
Income Level: **Upper middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **23.9% of children under five years old**

In Numbers

US\$ 2,599,741 cash-based transfers made

113,699 people assisted



Operational Updates

- 112,212 people benefited from WFP's food vouchers in May. The majority were Venezuelans (91.4 percent), followed by Colombians (8.3 percent) and a few beneficiaries of other nationalities.
- 1,330 people, of which 50.2 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. However, WFP coordinated with the cooperating partner to deliver the remaining 157 kits to Venezuelans.
- In May, around 500 Ecuadorian returnees were assisted by WFP during their mandatory quarantine in canteens in Tambillo and Sangolquí in the province of Pichincha.
- WFP Ecuador has amplified its region of intervention in May by adding the province of Loja and Orellana. This now sums up to a total of 16 out of 24 provinces in WFP's monthly operation. WFP signed three new Field Level Agreements, adding the provinces of El Oro and Santo Domingo into the operation.
- Two Seasonal Livelihood Consultations with the Afro-descendant people and the Awá nationality got completed telematically in May. This has allowed to pre-design the adaptation measures with an ecosystem approach that will be implemented at the community level.
- In line with the national response to COVID-19 crisis, the Country Office submitted for approval the Budget Revision #5, corresponding to crises response focus area, aiming to: a) expand Strategic Outcome 1 to safeguard the access to food of affected populations; and b) add the Strategic Outcome 5 to provide logistics coordination and assistance in support of the emergency response. These changes also imply an increment in the total CSP budget of USD 77 million.
- WFP received a kind contribution of USD 15,000 from UNAIDS, which will be allocated for the Strategic Outcome 4, Activity 7.

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Further information: <https://opweb.wfp.org/country/mng/?UNC=218>

WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)		
Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
71.2m	73.2 m	5.3 m

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.

Challenges

- The national health emergency and stringent mobility restrictions continued to be maintained in most provinces in May. The number of confirmed cases reached almost 39,100 by the end of the month, having Ecuador as one of the most affected countries in the region.
- Guayaquil, the most affected city by COVID-19 in the country, has begun to reactivate on May 20. The city has passed from

applying red to yellow light restriction, allowing the resuming the economic activities of reopening of shops and public transportation, and others with some preventive measures. The capital city, Quito, will start slowly lifting the lockdown at the beginning of June. Nevertheless, as the official number of confirmed cases steadily rises, relaxing from lockdown remains worrisome.

- According to the media, many vulnerable Venezuelans who are severely impacted by the economic downturn caused by COVID-19 are walking toward the northern border to return to their country. As the border remains closed, they are likely to have no access to food nor temporary accommodation.

COVID-19 Response

- As the health emergency persists, WFP continues to select and assist beneficiaries by phone.
- Approximately 15,000 beneficiaries whose assistance has come to an end but situated vulnerable during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis received an additional month of assistance in May.
- WFP arranged webinars on nutrition, gender, and protection for staff at partner organizations. A few more webinars on similar topics are scheduled in June. Two specific training sessions were held on "gender, protection, and communication during COVID-19 emergency" in coordination with UN Women.
- As a strategic response to the spread of novel COVID-19, WFP has expanded its operations in the country based on four fundamental axes:
 - Adjustment to regular programs with greater coverage to the population in human mobility,
 - Distribution of biosafety equipment to smallholder farmers, shelters and canteens, and Afro and Awá communities,
 - Technical assistance to reinforce social protection and emergency programs implemented by local governments, and
 - Multipurpose monetary transfers for vulnerable Ecuadorians in food insecurity, aligned with the Humanitarian Response Plan.
- A number of proposals are in preparation for food assistance to further support the vulnerable population economically struck by COVID-19 and survivors of GBV and lead the logistical support for the Humanitarian Country Team in Ecuador.

Donors

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