Operational Context

Ecuador exhibited gross domestic product growth in the years prior to the pandemic, resulting in declining poverty and increased investment in social policies, infrastructure, health, and education. However, the COVID-19 health crisis triggered a deep recession that led to a rebound in poverty (25 percent in June 2022; 10.7 percent extreme poverty). Ecuador is an upper-middle-income country with high income inequality (2019 Gini index = 0.48).

The conflict in Ukraine started at a time when Ecuador was already dealing with the economic damages caused by COVID-19, resulting in rising inflation, production deficits and strained Government capacity. Consumer price inflation in Ecuador is expected to accelerate to 4.6 percent by the end of 2022 and decelerate after, the fastest annual pace since 2012.

Compounding issues, Ecuador is vulnerable to climate change and prone to natural disasters, including droughts, floods, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes. These, combined with soil erosion and environmental degradation, threaten food systems, and may increase malnutrition and poverty rates.

WFP has been present in Ecuador since 1964, providing advisory, technical, and policy support to the Government of Ecuador and contributing to the food security and nutrition of vulnerable people.

In Numbers

USD 1.6 m cash-based transfers made*

USD 13.4 m six months (September 2022 to February 2023) net funding requirements, representing 44 percent of total funding requirements

58,464 people assisted* in August 2022

*Preliminary figures

Operational Updates

- In August 2022, WFP provided food vouchers to 50,166 migrants, refugees, and people from host communities across Ecuador. WFP also provided 8,101 pregnant and lactating women as well as children under 2 from the most vulnerable households in 16 provinces with an additional cash-based transfer (CBT) to improve their nutrition during the first 1,000-day window.
- 6,291 migrants, refugees, and people from host communities received hot meals at shelters and canteens in 16 out of the 24 provinces of the country.
- 3,537 migrants on the move received a one-time voucher to buy food at local supermarkets.
- Between 3 to 5 August 2022, WFP Executive Director, David Beasley, visited Ecuador and held meetings with the President of the Republic, Ministers, donors, and private sector partners, where he stressed WFP’s commitment to continue supporting Ecuador and the most vulnerable people in the country. The Executive Director also visited the San Juan de Dios shelter and had the opportunity to speak with beneficiaries’ families.
- WFP, the local government of Rumiñahui, and 40 key community actors began developing a preparedness, response, and resilience plan. These actions recognize that community involvement is key to building resilient societies.
- On 15 August 2022, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework was launched in an event organized by the Government and the United Nations. WFP Ecuador Country Director, Matteo Perrone, attended the event.
- In August 2022, WFP Ecuador received two visits from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), who visited project sites in Azuay, Sucumbios, and Pichincha. They had the opportunity to talk with beneficiaries and observe programming. USAID expressed their interest in continuing work with WFP.
WFP Country Strategy

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Requirement (in USD)</th>
<th>Allocated Contributions (in USD)</th>
<th>Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>197.4 m</td>
<td>173.5 m</td>
<td>13.4 m</td>
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</table>

**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 5:** 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.

**Strategic Result 8:** Enhance Global Partnership

**Strategic Outcome #5:** Humanitarian and development partners in Ecuador have access to reliable services throughout the crisis.

**Focus area:** Crisis Response

**Activities:**
- Provide technical assistance and services through the logistics sector to the National Disaster Management Offices and relevant partners to improve emergency logistics coordination and supply chain management.

**Monitoring**

- The results of WFP remote assessments in Ecuador have confirmed a deteriorating trend in the food security situation, where the number of severely food insecure people passed from 2.0 million (11 percent of the total population, August 2021) to 2.4 million (14 percent of the total population, March 2022). More than 400,000 Ecuadorians fell into severe food insecurity in a lapse of only six months.

- To ensure an effective use of the community feedback mechanism among the beneficiaries, WFP increased communication campaigns and keeps engaging the beneficiaries on a case-by-case basis in response to their concerns and requests.

- WFP continues to provide capacity trainings for cooperating partners on food safety and quality. WFP also works to ensure that all trainees provide the relevant guidance to the beneficiaries on managing healthy and nutritious foods.

**Challenges**

- The persistence of COVID-19 continues to challenge WFP’s activities. In August 2022, Ecuador’s Ministry of Health recorded 23,136 new COVID-19 cases. In the country, 14 million people (84 percent of the population) are vaccinated under the National Vaccination Programme, including 100,000 migrants and refugees.

- According to the National Institute of Statistics, the national unemployment rate decreased from 4 percent in June 2022 to 3.9 percent in July 2022. Unemployment for men decreased from 3.7 percent in June to 3.5 percent in July; unemployment among women decreased from 4.5 to 4.3 percent over the same period. Underemployment decreased from 23.6 percent in June to 22 in July 2022.

**Highlights**

- On 5 August 2022, WFP Executive Director, David Beasley, held a meeting with President of Ecuador, Guillermo Lasso, in which the Executive Director highlighted the importance of continuing to work to benefit the most vulnerable populations in Ecuador. Topics such as school feeding, and chronic malnutrition were addressed during the meeting.

**Donors**

Brazil, China, Canada, European Union, Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea, United States of America, Catalunya Local Government and private and multilateral donors.

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