



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Ecuador Country Brief January 2023



Operational Context

Ecuador exhibited gross domestic product (GDP) growth in the years prior to the COVID-19 health crisis, resulting in declining poverty and increased public investment. However, poverty rebounded during the pandemic and recession (25.2 percent in December 2022; 8.2 percent extreme poverty). Ecuador is an upper-middle-income country with high income inequality (2020 Gini index = 0.473).

The conflict in Ukraine exacerbated these issues and has resulted in rising inflation and production deficits amid strained Government capacity. Annual inflation reached 3.8 percent in 2022 but is expected to decrease to around 1.4 percent in 2023, the lowest regionally. Economic recovery is ongoing: GDP expanded by 2.7 percent in 2022, lower than expected due to inflation and social and political disruptions. Compounding issues, Ecuador is vulnerable to climate change, prone to natural disasters, and faces environmental degradation, threatening food systems and potentially increasing malnutrition and poverty rates across the country.

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.



Population: **17.7 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **86 out of 189**

Income Level: **Upper middle**

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

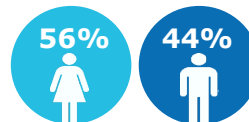
In Numbers

10 mt of food assistance distributed

USD 1.8 m cash-based transfers made

USD 4.9 m six months (February to July 2023) net funding requirements, representing 19 percent of total funding requirements

61,441 people assisted
in January 2023



Operational Updates

- In January 2023, WFP provided value vouchers to 47,062 migrants, refugees and people from host communities in Ecuador. To improve the nutrition of pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWG) and their children during the first 1,000-day window, WFP also provided additional cash-based transfers to 7,321 PLWG from the most vulnerable households in 16 provinces (out of the 24 provinces of the country).
- WFP assisted 7,822 migrants, refugees, and people from host communities with hot meals at shelters and canteens in 16 provinces. Additionally, 6,557 on-the-move migrants received a one-time voucher to buy food at local supermarkets.
- WFP, together with the National Service for Risk and Emergency Management, continues to provide assistance to local governments as part of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and preparedness to public officials. WFP provides support through the early warning systems for the Cotopaxi Volcano.
- On 31 January 2023, WFP presented the results of the 'Joint Programme for Taking Gender-Transformative Approaches' in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 – Zero Hunger, improving food security and nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. The project aimed to address the root causes of gender inequalities, primarily in rural areas, by incorporating gender transformative approaches into policy dialogues, programme design, implementation and monitoring.

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Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
144.3 m	35.3 m	4.9 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome #1: People are better able to meet their urgent food and nutrition needs

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

1. Deliver food assistance (CBT and in-kind) with equitable access to and control over, and access to services, strengthening food security and socioeconomic integration of population in human mobility, host population and other vulnerable Ecuadorian people affected by disasters, emergencies, and prolonged crises, considering the gender and protection approach.
2. Strengthen government's shock-responsive social protection programs with a gender and protection approach, through technical assistance, evidence and capacities to public institutions, decision makers and communities, strengthening national systems of anticipation, prevention, preparedness, mitigation and response to disasters and early recovery.

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

Strategic Outcome #2: People have better nutrition, health and education outcomes

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

3. Strengthen institutional capacities and provide an adequate and comprehensive package of interventions with a gender and protection approach to girls, boys, adolescents, and people in vulnerable situations, throughout the life cycle and with emphasis but not limited to on the first 1,000 days.

Strategic Result 3: Sustainable food system

Strategic Outcome #3: People have improved and sustainable livelihoods

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

4. Strengthen institutional capacities and provide technical and operational assistance, resources, assets, services, and information to better support climate vulnerable communities and family farmers.

Strategic Result 5: Capacity Strengthening

Strategic Outcome #4: Humanitarian and development actors are more efficient and effective.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

5. Provide supply chain and other services to Government and humanitarian partners, including supply chain diagnostics and identification and documentation of gaps, needs and opportunities for operational improvement.

Monitoring

- In January, the minimum food basket cost was USD 765 monthly. With a minimum monthly salary of USD 840, a household spends 91 percent of its salary to afford the monthly food basket.
- WFP received 527 calls from beneficiaries through its community feedback mechanism in January. To ensure the effective use of the mechanism among beneficiaries, WFP continues to conduct sensitization campaigns and engages with beneficiaries to address concerns and requests.

Challenges

- Ecuador continues to face significant challenges associated with the prolonged impact of COVID-19, inflation, socioeconomic tensions, and migration.
- According to the National Survey of Employment, Unemployment and Underemployment prepared by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), the poverty rate in December 2022 remains high at 41 percent (1.4 percent lower than in December 2021) and extreme poverty at 17.4 percent (2.9 percent lower than in December 2021).
- The Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan 2023-2024 forecasts that 643,600 people will be food insecure in 2023 and 648,800 in 2024.

Donors

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

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