



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Ecuador Country Brief February 2025



Parent volunteers from the school feeding programme participate in a healthy recipe competition. Photo: Gonzalo Ruiz

Operational Context

Ecuador has shown resilience in its post-COVID economic recovery, although recent growth has plateaued. A recent surge in drug-related crime has overshadowed this progress, leading to Ecuador being recognized as the most violent country in the region in 2023.

As of December 2024, national poverty stands at 28.8%, with extreme poverty at 12.7%. The country is also grappling with a complex migration situation, marked by a continuing influx of migrants and increased emigration due to deteriorating security.

Additionally, Ecuador faces significant environmental challenges; prolonged droughts are depleting hydrological reserves and affecting electricity production. In response, the government has introduced austerity measures, such as eliminating gasoline subsidies and increasing VAT, to manage budgetary pressures, particularly those related to security.

The nation's vulnerability to environmental shifts, natural hazards, and ongoing environmental degradation threatens food systems and could exacerbate malnutrition and poverty across the country.



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

Population: **18.1 million**

2022 Human Development Index: **83 out of 193**

Income Level: **Upper middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **17.5% of children under 5 years old**

In Numbers

9.4 MT of food assistance distributed*

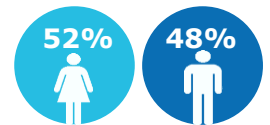
USD 1.1M cash-based transfers made*

USD 5.4 M six months (March 2025 – August 2025) net funding requirements, representing 36 percent of total

62,450 people assisted*

in FEBRUARY 2025

*Preliminary figures



Operational Updates

- In February, WFP provided value vouchers to 14,956 migrants, including 8,622 pregnant women, girls, and households with children up to 5, across 16 of the country's 24 provinces.
- WFP assisted 8,390 migrants, refugees, and people from host communities with hot meals at shelters and canteens and, 4,300 on-the-move migrants received a food kit or a one-time voucher to buy food at local supermarkets.
- As part of the school meals programme in February, 163 educational centres received fresh, nutritious hot meals, benefiting 33,869 students in the provinces of Bolívar, Cañar, Carchi, Chimborazo, Guayas, Imbabura, Manabí, Pichincha and Santa Elena, through collaboration with local governments, the national ministry of education and smallholder farmer associations.
- In February, four events marked the end of the school year and celebrated the school meals programme in the coastal region. A total of 2,988 people participated, and six schools took part in a healthy meal competition to promote nutrition and healthy eating habits.
- The school meals programme expanded to two new schools, benefiting 4,529 students. Additionally, an extension addendum was signed with the Municipal Government of Santa Elena to ensure the program's continuity.
- On 30 January, WFP began assisting forcibly returned Ecuadorian citizens in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). In February, 704 individuals have received support through a cash-based transfer of \$50 per person to help cover immediate food and transportation needs.

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Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
165.3m	94m	5.4m

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:

- 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.
- Strengthen the 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:

- 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 systems

Strategic Outcome 3: People have improved and sustainable livelihoods.

Focus area: *Resilience building*

Activities:

- 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 4: Capacity Strengthening

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

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activities:

- 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.

- On 11 February, WFP initiated its anticipatory actions process, providing support to 213 beneficiaries in Quevedo and Los Espinos, Guayas province, following a high-level alert for heavy rainfall. Each household received US\$ 185 in cash-based transfers to support immediate preparedness measures, helping families safeguard their food security ahead of the expected impact.

- WFP advanced climate resilience efforts with an agroclimatic workshop in Quito, uniting government and international organizations. WFP staff also attended training in Guatemala to strengthen market-focused agricultural planning and a microinsurance exchange to support rural communities facing climate risks.

Monitoring

- In February 2025, inflation remained stable compared to the previous month, while it increased by 0.25 percent compared to February 2024.
- In December 2024, the unemployment rate was 3.8 percent, while adequate employment represented 34 percent.
- The Basic Family Basket currently costs US\$ 797.07, while the Essential Family Basket costs US\$ 550.19.
- The Ministry of Labour set the Unified Basic Salary (SBU) for general workers in 2025 at US\$ 470 per month. The increase compared to 2024 is 2.2 percent, the new SBU is currently in effect.

Challenges

- On 9 February, Ecuador's presidential election saw Daniel Noboa leading with 44.2 percent and Luisa González with 43.9 percent, triggering an April 13 runoff.
- February floods and landslides hit 23 provinces, killing 14 and affecting 75,800. In Quito, flooding left 24 dead and 47 injured.
- January recorded 781 homicides, the highest on record. The President extended the state of emergency for 60 days, deploying security forces and enforcing curfews.

Donors

Japan, Government of Ecuador, United States of America and private donors.