



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP ECUADOR



COUNTRY BRIEF

January 2026

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Ecuador faces a complex migration situation, with nearly 500,000 Venezuelan migrants, of whom more than 245,000 experience food insecurity, placing additional pressure on social protection systems and increasing the need for partners to support food access.
- The School Feeding Project is expanding and currently provides fresh, nutritious meals to students in rural schools, yet the system requires external support to sustain coverage.
- <https://www.wfp.org/countries/ecuador>

IN NUMBERS



77, 519 people assisted in January 2026



49%
Male



51%
Female



10.65 mt food distributed



USD 1.51 M cash transferred



USD 5.14 M six months (February – July 2026) net funding requirements, representing 40 percent of total

Photo Caption & Credit: Caption. SNGR/María José Vega

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Ecuador continues to face severe security, socioeconomic, and environmental challenges. Violence driven by drug-related crime has escalated sharply, making Ecuador one of the most insecure countries in the region. Poverty and extreme poverty remain high, with 21.4 percent and 8.3 percent. The country is experiencing a complex migration dynamic, marked by a continued influx of migrants and increased emigration due to deteriorating security conditions.

Environmental pressures, including prolonged droughts, declining hydrological reserves, and impacts on electricity generation—have further strained livelihoods. Government austerity measures (removal of fuel subsidies, VAT increases) aim to manage fiscal pressures but have triggered social tensions, including nationwide protests in 2025.

Food insecurity remains a significant concern. Updated IPC analysis (2025) projected 2.6 million people facing acute food insecurity, especially agricultural households with limited access to water and sanitation. Undernourishment is at 12.1%, and 17.7% of children under five are stunted, with disproportionate impacts on women, Indigenous communities, rural populations, and migrants.

WFP continues to support the response through assistance to migrants, expansion of Home-Grown School Feeding, and emergency support for climate-affected populations, while strengthening partnerships amid limited funding available to upper-middle-income countries like Ecuador.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Migrant crisis response

- In January, WFP provided food vouchers to 21,788 migrants, including 10,493 pregnant women, girls, and households with children up to 5, across 23 of the country's 24 provinces.
- WFP assisted 7,766 migrants, refugees, and people from host communities with hot meals at shelters and canteens and, 4,476 on-the-move migrants received a food kit or a one-time food voucher to buy food at local supermarkets.
- WFP assisted 972 returned migrants, who received a food and hygiene kit and USD 40. This is an assistance initiative that the Country Office has been implementing since February 2025 with support from the Government of Ecuador.

School-Based Assistance

- As part of the school meals programme in January, 183 educational centres received fresh, nutritious hot meals, benefiting 42,517 students in the provinces of Bolívar, Cañar, Carchi, Chimborazo, Guayas, Imbabura, Manabí, Pichincha, Santa Elena and Zamora Chinchipe, through collaboration with local governments, the Ministry of Education, private donors and smallholder farmers.
- WFP carried out 56 capacity-strengthening activities, including workshops, training sessions, and awareness-raising events focused on nutrition, hygiene, and food safety, as well as on the use of the “El Mercadito” application and the Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM). These activities were directed at suppliers, smallholder producer associations, teachers, and local actors. A total of 5,154 people participated.

Anticipatory Actions

- As part of a participatory action project, a meteorological station was installed in Quevedo, Guayas, providing climate data to help residents protect their livelihoods. Community members were trained as environmental monitors to strengthen local resilience.

Resilience and Livelihood Support

- WFP, in partnership with the Prefecture of Manabí and the Ministry of Agriculture, launched the

“AMUCOM – Hecho en Manabí” store and café to transform rural production into tangible market opportunities. The initiative highlights local products such as coffee, cacao, honey, and artisanal snacks, while strengthening producers’ capacities in market-oriented production. This space also advances rural women’s economic empowerment and contributes to inclusive, sustainable growth in Manabí.

- The first business roundtable between restaurant owners from Otavalo, Ibarra, and Cotacachi and local producers marked an important step in applying the SHEP methodology to build relationships and open new markets. This space aims to strengthen and sustain commercial linkages over time through the “Raíz Imbabura” seal, expanding sales opportunities for rural producers and promoting inclusive local economic growth.

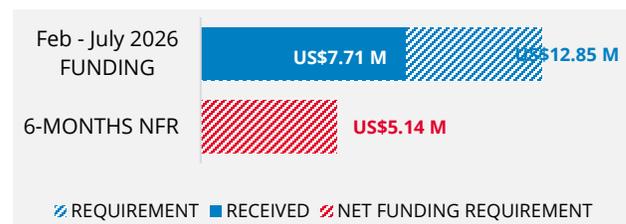
Challenges

- Rising insecurity in Ecuador is challenging project implementation, limiting access and increasing operational risks. WFP is adapting strategies to ensure staff safety and program continuity in coordination with local authorities and communities.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)

(Please hyperlink the CO's CSP page to the above title)



Donors:

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