



WFP ECUADOR

COUNTRY BRIEF

March 2026



78,941 people assisted in February 2026
(50% female)



10.7 mt food distributed in February 2026



USD 1.4 M cash transferred in February 2026



USD 13.6 M required in the next six months
(March - August 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.

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 percent, and 17.7 percent 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 February, WFP provided food vouchers to 22,142 migrants, including 10,756 pregnant women, girls, and households with children up to 5, across 23 of the country's 24 provinces.
- WFP assisted 7,487 migrants, refugees, and people from host communities with hot meals at shelters and canteens and, 4,525 on-the-move migrants received a food kit or a one-time food voucher to buy food at local supermarkets.
- WFP assisted 1,063 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 February, 185 educational centres received fresh, nutritious hot meals, benefiting 42,993 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 held events in educational institutions in Manta and Santa Elena to mark the end of the school year. The activities included live-cooking demonstrations with partner chefs and healthy-dish competitions in which students participated. These events were attended by authorities from the Ministry of Education and the donor.

Anticipatory Actions

- In February, we implemented its second anticipatory action activation for floods, providing USD 185 to 215 to at-risk households and reaching 731 people. This rapid support enabled families to purchase essential items ahead of the expected flood peak. By acting before the emergency, households were able to reduce potential losses, safeguard vital assets, and preserve their dignity during a challenging period.

Resilience and Livelihood Support

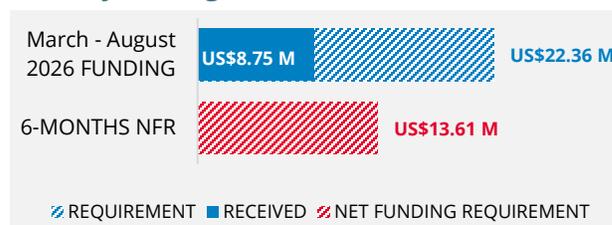
- The Minister of Agriculture and the Ambassador of Japan to Ecuador visited the Home-Grown School Meals project in Manabí, where they observed firsthand the revitalization of the local economy through the involvement of smallholder producers as suppliers of fresh and nutritious foods. WFP has implemented the SHEP methodology with smallholder farmer associations in Manabí, enabling them to increase their incomes through market research, joint planning, and empowerment, thereby improving sustainability and market access.
- The Ecuashep team, led by JICA in Chimborazo, conducted a technical visit to the province of Imbabura to review progress in the implementation of the SHEP methodology and to exchange experiences with WFP, which is supporting the rollout of the model in the province. The mission observed that the methodology has enabled participating producers to improve cost efficiency and strengthen crop planning, resulting in their ability to establish new commercial agreements with local buyers.

Challenges

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

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)



Donors:

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