



WFP ECUADOR

COUNTRY BRIEF

October 2026



95,894 people assisted in September 2026
(51% female)



11,3 mt food distributed in September 2026



USD 1.86 M cash transferred in September 2026



USD 5.5 M required in the next six months
(October 2026-March 2027)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Government of Ecuador declared a nationwide Red Alert due to the anticipated impacts of El Niño, activating provincial and municipal emergency plans and triggering preparedness and response measures.
- The School Feeding Programme is expanding and currently provides fresh, nutritious meals to students in rural schools, yet the system requires external support to expand coverage and adequacy.

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.
- El Niño 2026-2027 raises concerns for Ecuador's energy and food security. Following the Government's red alert declaration, forecasts indicate a very strong event that could cause flooding in coastal areas and drought in the Amazon and southern highlands, potentially affecting agricultural production, livelihoods, water resources, and electricity generation. These risks highlight the need for early preparedness and anticipatory action.
- Food insecurity remains a significant concern. Updated IPC analysis (2026) 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 the National Home-Grown School Feeding programme, and emergency support for climate-affected populations, while strengthening partnerships amid limited funding availability to upper-middle-income countries like Ecuador.

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

General Food Assistance

- WFP enabled 24,437 food-insecure people to meet their immediate food needs through food vouchers, including 8,790 pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls and households with children under five. This support helped vulnerable families access nutritious foods, contributing to improved food security and nutritional well-being across 23 of Ecuador's 24 provinces.
- Through shelters and community kitchens, WFP provided 8,348 migrants, refugees and host community members with hot meals, ensuring access to safe and nutritious food during periods of heightened vulnerability. In addition, 4,478 people on the move received food kits or one-time food vouchers, helping them maintain their food consumption while continuing their journeys with greater dignity and protection.
- WFP supported 831 returned migrants with food and hygiene kits and a USD 40 cash transfer, helping them address their immediate basic needs upon return. Implemented in partnership with the Government of Ecuador since March 2025, this assistance contributed to a safer and more dignified reintegration process, reducing vulnerability during a critical transition period.

School-Based Assistance

- The school year 2026-2027 started in September in the Sierra region. WFP, in coordination with the Government, reached 153 schools and approximately 26,151 children with school feeding assistance. These students complement the 31,649 children currently benefiting from school meals in 50 schools across Ecuador's Coastal region. Additional schools in the Amazon and Sierra regions will be gradually incorporated throughout the academic year, expanding coverage and ensuring continued access to nutritious meals for students nationwide.
- Additionally, WFP procured approximately 246.2 mt of food from over 325 local producers to support school feeding across selected schools while strengthening local food systems and stimulating the local economy through market opportunities for smallholder farmers.

- During a visit to Simón Bolívar School, the Minister of Education Gilda Alcívar witnessed firsthand how WFP-supported school meals are improving children's nutrition, learning environments, and overall well-being. The visit included a tour of food storage facilities, a demonstration of WFP's digital procurement application "El Mercadito," and the improved kitchen facilities that enable schools to prepare nutritious meals safely and efficiently. The Minister also joined students for lunch, serving and sharing a locally inspired menu featuring lentil tortilla with peanut sauce, plantain, fresh salad with avocado and egg, and a pineapple and watermelon fruit mix. The visit highlighted how WFP's support is helping provide healthy, diverse meals that encourage attendance, promote healthy eating habits, and create a more positive learning experience for children.

Disaster Risk Reduction

- WFP and the Secretary of Risk Management signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen collaboration on disaster preparedness and emergency response. During the visit, the Secretary also toured WFP-supported projects to gain firsthand insight into ongoing humanitarian assistance efforts and explore opportunities for alignment and collaboration with the Government's planned emergency preparedness and response interventions.
- As part of the launch of the ECHO-funded project and in preparation for the upcoming winter season and its potential impacts, WFP, in coordination with the National Risk Management Secretariat (SNGR) and the municipal governments of Babahoyo and Esmeraldas, initiated a capacity-strengthening process for local emergency response teams through Temporary Shelter Management Workshops. The trainings focused on the basic principles and standards of temporary shelter management and were conducted in two locations in Los Ríos Province (with 29 participants in Quevedo and 27 in Babahoyo) and in Esmeraldas Canton (22 participants). The workshops brought together local authorities and response actors, strengthening preparedness, knowledge, and

tools for effective emergency response in flood-prone areas.

Resilience and Livelihood Support

- WFP trained smallholder producers and women entrepreneurs from Manabí Province participating in the She Can project through a series of capacity-strengthening workshops covering key topics for business development and well-being. The training focused on identifying the ideal customer, developing a value proposition, financial education, and the fundamentals of nutrition. The sessions reached an average of 134 participants, enhancing their entrepreneurial skills, financial management capacities, and knowledge of healthy nutrition practices to support sustainable livelihoods.

Partnerships

- WFP participated in the 5th International Cooperation Fair organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility. This year's Fair focused on international cooperation efforts related to emergency preparedness and response measures, particularly in anticipation of the El Niño phenomenon. WFP had the opportunity to deliver a master class highlighting its ongoing work to strengthen the capacities of the national disaster risk management system. In addition, WFP hosted an exhibition booth to showcase its work and activities to the public. The event brought together national and local authorities, professional associations, academia, NGOs, and the general public.
- WFP and UNDP held a joint workshop to explore areas of programmatic convergence and identify concrete opportunities for collaboration, particularly in the context of the development of WFP's new Country Strategic Plan (CSP). The workshop facilitated discussions on shared priorities, potential synergies, and avenues for strengthening joint programming to maximize impact and support national development objectives.

Climate Hazards

- Ecuador's winter season began in September, bringing the first impacts associated with the anticipated El Niño phenomenon. Heavy rainfall

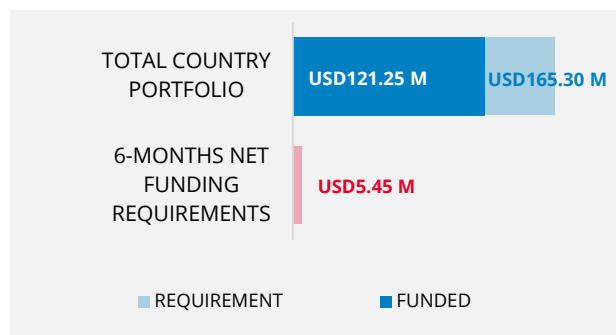
affected several areas of the country, causing localized flooding and river overflows, particularly in Guayas Province, where two rivers exceeded their banks. Significant rainfall was also reported in Quinindé (Esmeraldas Province), while lighter precipitation affected other cantons in Esmeraldas and Guayas. The evolving weather conditions highlight the need for continued preparedness and response efforts in areas vulnerable to flooding and related emergencies.

Local elections

- Ecuador is progressing toward a key milestone in the lead-up to the 29 November 2026 local elections, with the candidate registration period officially closing on 17 August. For WFP, it is important to closely monitor this electoral process, given the organization's strong collaboration with local governments in the implementation of its projects. Local authorities are key partners in defining geographic priorities, identifying community needs, coordinating capacity-strengthening activities, and supporting the delivery of interventions.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Country Strategic Plan (2023-2027)



Donors

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

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