

EMERGENCY APPEAL

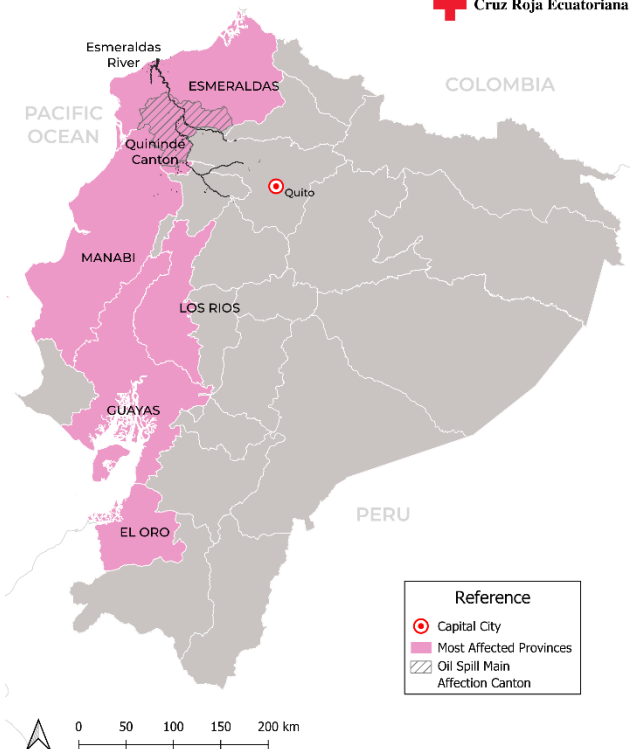
Ecuador | Floods and Environmental Contamination



Ecuadorian Red Cross volunteers monitored the extent of the oil spill in community areas near the affected rivers on 18 March 2025.

Appeal No: MDREC027	IFRC Secretariat Funding requirements: CHF 4,000,000 Federation-wide Funding requirements¹: CHF 4,500,000	
Glide No: AC-2025-000037-ECU FL-2025-000026-ECU	People [affected/at risk]: 500,000 people	People to be assisted: 176,200 People
DREF allocation: 1,000,000 CHF through 2 allocations	Appeal launched: 23/03/2025	Appeal ends: 31/03/2026

¹ The Federation-wide funding requirement encompasses all financial support to be directed to the Ecuadorian Red Cross in response to the emergency. It includes the Ecuadorian Red Cross' domestic fundraising requests and the fundraising appeals of supporting Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies (CHF 0.5 million), as well as the funding requirements of the IFRC secretariat (CHF 4 million). This comprehensive approach ensures that all available resources are mobilized to address the urgent humanitarian needs of the affected communities.



The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities. Sources: Cruz Roja Ecuatoriana, IFRC. Produced by IFRC Americas, HDCC, IM Team. February 2025.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Since January 2025, Ecuador has been experiencing an increasingly complex emergency situation resulting from the convergence of two large-scale crises: a prolonged rainy season with intense floods and landslides, and a major environmental emergency caused by an oil spill in the coastal province of Esmeraldas. According to the Secretariat for Risk Management (SitRep No. 70, 20 March 2025), a total of 1,897 adverse events had been recorded by mid-March, with widespread impacts across 23 provinces, 193 cantons, and 651 parishes.

The provinces of Manabí, Guayas, El Oro, Los Ríos, and Esmeraldas have been particularly affected. Manabí has registered over 62,950 people impacted and 226 separate events, followed by Guayas with 18,334 individuals affected, and Los Ríos with 16,289 affected. These impacts include destroyed homes, flooded communities, damaged roads and bridges, disrupted water systems, and affected livelihoods (SitRep No. 70, 20 March 2025). In

total, more than 111,000 people have been reported as affected, with 14,155 displaced and over 31,521 homes damaged or destroyed. These figures are expected to rise.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) reported the loss of over 13,700 hectares of crops and more than 96,000 animals affected or dead. Manabí, Guayas, El Oro, and Los Ríos – regions highly dependent on small-scale farming – have seen significant damage to plantations of cacao, bananas, passion fruit, and oil palm. These losses are affecting subsistence agriculture and local economies, further aggravating the vulnerability of already at-risk communities (SitRep SNGR, 20 March 2025).

Health conditions have also been deteriorating. As of mid-March, the Ministry of Health confirmed over 9,566 cases of dengue across the country, while damage to water systems, poor drainage, and the accumulation of stagnant water have contributed to the proliferation of disease vectors. In addition to physical health risks, there are growing concerns over mental health and psychosocial well-being, particularly among displaced and isolated populations (SitRep SNGR, 14 March 2025).

On 13 March 2025, a major oil spill occurred in Cube Parish, Quinindé Canton, Esmeraldas Province, due to a rupture in the Trans-Ecuadorian Oil Pipeline System (SOTE) caused by a landslide (SitRep SN Esmeraldas No. 1 to 4, March 2025). The spill reached the Caple, Viche, and Esmeraldas rivers – primary sources of drinking water and irrigation – contaminating ecosystems and leaving approximately 300,000 people at risk of unsafe water consumption (France 24, 15 March 2025; Phys.org, 18 March 2025). Official estimates indicate that approximately 300,000 people are at risk due to disrupted access to potable water caused by the contamination of primary river sources.

Government reports and international media confirm the severe impact of the oil spill on

community livelihoods. Over 8,700 people have been directly affected by the loss of water access, soil contamination, and the destruction of farming plots used for cacao and oil palm cultivation. Affected communities include Cube, El Vergel, El Roto, San Mateo, and Chinca, among others. In some sectors, households have been forced to rely on unsafe tanker water, with reports of cross-contamination with fuel.

The oil spill also caused serious ecological harm to the Esmeraldas River Estuary Mangrove Wildlife Refuge and surrounding natural reserves. Cleanup efforts have been delayed by

poor road access, continued rains, and the lack of technical capacity onsite. With 95 per cent of the potable water service affected in the immediate region, community tensions have increased, and response actors have highlighted growing protection risks (Mongabay, 20 March 2025).

Meanwhile, meteorological authorities (INAMHI) forecast 45 to 60 additional days of high-intensity rainfall as of mid-March, likely exacerbating the flood crisis and delaying recovery efforts (INAMHI Bulletin, 16 March 2025).

TARGETING

According to official reports from the Secretariat for Risk Management and other reliable sources, as of mid-March 2025, over 111,000 individuals have been officially documented as affected by the floods. However, internal assessments indicate that the actual number may surpass 200,000, underscoring the need for increased support for the Government of Ecuador's efforts to conduct damage analysis and needs assessments. Among the affected population, 14,155 have been heavily impacted, with 31,529 damaged homes, 143 houses destroyed, 95 people injured, and 20 confirmed fatalities. In addition, over 300,000 people are at risk due to the disruption of the potable water supply following the oil spill in Esmeraldas province.

This emergency operation aims to reach a total of 176,200 people affected by the combined impact of floods and the oil spill living in El Oro, Esmeraldas, Guayas, Manabí, Santa Elena, Los Ríos, Loja, Pichincha, Santo Domingo, Azuay, Chimborazo, Bolívar, Cotopaxi, and Imbabura. Of these, under the integrated assistance sector, 1,500 families will receive multi-purpose cash assistance, while 2,500 families will benefit from shelter support. In the health, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector, 48,000 people will have access to medical services and hygiene promotion, and 127,200 individuals will benefit from safe water distribution and water treatment activities. Additionally, 8,000 people will be supported through protection and prevention efforts, including activities under protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI) and community engagement and accountability (CEA), ensuring that the response is inclusive, safe, and participatory. Special attention will be given to displaced families living in temporary shelters, with a focus on households that have not yet received assistance, especially single-parent families with children under five, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. During the second phase of the response, efforts will prioritise rural and riverine communities affected by the oil spill, including indigenous populations facing environmental risks and disruptions to traditional livelihoods.

PLANNED OPERATIONS

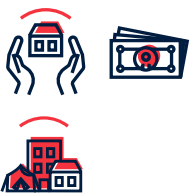
Through this Emergency Appeal, the Ecuadorian Red Cross aims to provide humanitarian assistance to 176,200 people affected by flooding and environmental contamination in the provinces of El Oro, Esmeraldas, Guayas, Manabí, Santa Elena, Los Ríos, Loja, Pichincha, Santo Domingo, Azuay, Chimborazo, Bolívar, Cotopaxi, and Imbabura. This will be achieved by implementing activities in the WASH and Shelter sectors, as well as Multi-purpose Cash Transfer programmes, with a strong focus on PGI and CEA to ensure a safe, inclusive and people-centred response.



On 20 March 2025, Ecuadorian Red Cross teams installed a N.5 kit to produce drinking water at the Esmeraldas thermoelectric plant.

Integrated assistance ***(Shelter, Livelihoods, and Multi-purpose Cash)***

The operation aims to restore minimum living conditions and uphold dignity for affected families by enabling them to meet their most urgent needs through timely and flexible support.



Multi-purpose Cash Transfers will be implemented in coordination with local authorities, based on rapid market assessments to ensure their appropriateness and efficiency. The cash modality allows families to prioritise their needs with dignity, particularly in contexts where goods and services are available, but access is limited by economic constraints. A total of 1,500 households are targeted for cash assistance.

In parallel, emergency shelter support will be provided to 2,500 households whose homes were severely damaged or destroyed, contributing to their safety, protection from the elements, and the re-establishment of household routines. This will include the distribution of shelter toolkits, tarpaulins, and essential household items, as well as technical guidance for safe and context-appropriate shelter solutions.



Health and Care, including Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)
(Mental Health and Psychosocial Support / Community Health)

To minimise the health impact of the floods and oil spill, the operation will deliver essential health and WASH interventions that prevent disease and promote physical and mental well-being. Medical brigades will be deployed to provide basic health services in affected communities, with an emphasis on respiratory symptoms, waterborne diseases, and vector-borne illnesses, such as dengue. Psychosocial support (PSS) will be integrated into health interventions for individuals experiencing stress, trauma, or anxiety. Health activities aim to reach 48,000 people.



In terms of WASH, the response will ensure that affected populations have access to safe water and hygiene supplies, which are crucial for preventing disease outbreaks in disrupted environments. This includes the production and distribution of sodium hypochlorite, water purification kits, and the identification of alternative water sources. Hygiene promotion activities will be carried out alongside the distribution of hygiene kits and information materials to reduce the risk of disease transmission. Based on the initial field assessment conducted by the WASH Coordinator from the IFRC Regional Office for the Americas (ARO), the deployment of a WASH Emergency Response Unit (ERU), is being coordinated to strengthen water treatment and distribution capacity in the most affected areas. WASH interventions are expected to reach up to 127,200 people.

Protection and Prevention

(Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI), Community Engagement and Accountability, Migration, Environmental Sustainability, Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery, Education)



To ensure that the response is inclusive, safe, and aligned with the diverse needs of those most at risk, PGI and CEA will be systematically integrated across all sectors. PGI activities will focus on identifying and addressing the specific needs of women, children, older people, people with disabilities, and other at-risk groups, helping to safeguard their rights and reduce exposure to harm. Safe and accessible spaces for consultation will be promoted, and referrals to specialised services will be facilitated where needed. PGI interventions aim to reach 8,000 people.

In parallel, CEA approaches will support meaningful community participation in the response, promoting transparency and accountability through the establishment of two-way communication channels, feedback mechanisms, and participatory decision-making processes. These efforts will help ensure that the response is culturally appropriate and responsive to community priorities and concerns.

PGI and CEA interventions aim to reach 8,000 people.

Enabling approaches

The sectors outlined above will be supported and enhanced by the following enabling approaches:

Coordination and Partnerships

The IFRC Secretariat will coordinate inputs and support information sharing, analysis and coordination with Participating National Societies (PNSs), partners, and donors to support the actions of this Emergency Appeal. Streamlined communication with donors will enable a more holistic approach to partnering, programming, reporting, risk management, and information management.

The IFRC Secretariat will strengthen external partnerships, together with the Ecuadorian Red Cross, and promote transparency and accountability in all actions to be taken under the Emergency Appeal. In line with its coordination mandate, the IFRC will ensure that effective emergency coordination mechanisms are in place, supporting alignment and complementarity among Movement components, including the ICRC and other National Societies. Efforts will also be made to establish strong coordination with the membership, ensuring that actions are coherent, context-specific, and based on identified needs and priorities. Moreover, the Secretariat will enhance collaboration with external actors – such as UN agencies, government entities, and humanitarian organisations – to maximise the collective impact of the response and avoid duplication of efforts.



In Ecuador, coordination will be led by the National Society, with the support and participation of the IFRC Secretariat. This approach will ensure that the response is grounded in local knowledge and capacities, while also benefiting from regional and global support mechanisms provided by the IFRC.

IFRC Secretariat services

The IFRC Secretariat, will provide tailored technical and coordination support to the Ecuadorian Red Cross to ensure the effective planning, implementation, and monitoring of the operation. This includes facilitating the deployment of rapid response personnel and the potential mobilisation of a WASH ERU, with the aim of alleviating operational pressure on the National Society. Support will focus on programme management, budgeting, accountability, and adherence to IFRC financial procedures and donor requirements. The



Secretariat will work collaboratively with the National Society to adapt the operational setup as needed, provide technical assistance in key areas such as cash and voucher assistance, and contribute to staff and volunteer safety. Efforts will also be made to support resource mobilisation and ensure that the operation is aligned with the long-term vision and sustainability of the National Society.

National Society Strengthening



This response will serve as an opportunity to reinforce the institutional and operational capacities of the Ecuadorian Red Cross at both the national and provincial levels. Key actions will include training for volunteers in areas such as emergency assessments, PGI, CEA, WASH, and cash-based interventions, as well as logistical support and equipment for field operations. The operation will also invest in the strengthening of telecommunications and information management systems to improve coordination, data collection, and decision-making throughout the response.

The planned response reflects the current situation and is based on the information available at the time of this Emergency Appeal launch. Details of the operation will be updated through the Operational Strategy, to be released in the coming days, which will also provide further details on the Federation-wide approach, including the response activities of all contributing Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and the Federation-wide funding requirement.

After the Emergency Appeal ends, response activities to this disaster will continue under the [IFRC Network Ecuador Country Plan](#). The IFRC Network Country Plans show an integrated view of ongoing emergency responses and longer-term programming tailored to the needs in the country, as well as a Federation-wide view of the country's action. This aims to streamline activities under one plan, while still ensuring that the needs of those affected by the disaster are met in an accountable and transparent way. Information will be shared in due time, should there be a need for an extension of the crisis-specific response beyond the above-mentioned timeframe.

RED CROSS RED CRESCENT FOOTPRINT IN COUNTRY

Ecuadorian Red Cross



**Cruz Roja
Ecuatoriana**

Core areas of operation

The Ecuadorian Red Cross operates through four key programmatic areas:

1. Disaster Risk Management
2. Health and Community Development

3. Promotion of the Fundamental Principles and Values of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
4. Youth Programmes

Number of staff:	829
Number of volunteers:	7,721
Number of branches	24

The Ecuadorian Red Cross, which was established by Congress in 1910 and joined the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1923, operates under the founding law, international agreements, and treaties ratified by Ecuador, and its own statutes.

As part of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Ecuadorian Red Cross is committed to alleviating and preventing human suffering while promoting resilient communities. Its mission is deeply rooted in the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and

Red Crescent Movement, ensuring neutral, impartial, and independent humanitarian action to support those in need.

The headquarters of the Ecuadorian Red Cross is located in the capital, Quito, with coverage throughout the country, supported by its 24 provincial branches. The National Society also has local “cantonal” boards and community volunteers working through parish and neighbourhood brigades. Additionally, it supplies 75 per cent of the blood components required for transfusion therapies in the country.

IFRC Membership coordination

The IFRC’s Andean Country Cluster Delegation (CCD), based in Lima, strategically supports Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru through close coordination with their respective National Societies. This framework ensures continuous communication with various levels of the Ecuadorian Red Cross, providing comprehensive support for planning, implementation, reporting, and other essential activities.

Currently, the Ecuadorian Red Cross collaborates with four Participating National Societies. Three of them (the Norwegian Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross, and German Red Cross) have in-country delegations that boost the National Society’s capacity in areas such as health in emergencies, WASH, shelter, livelihoods, and disaster preparedness. Additionally, the Italian Red Cross maintains close coordination from its regional office, supporting livelihoods and disaster preparedness initiatives, among other strategic areas.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross has significantly enhanced its emergency response capacity through the strategic prepositioning of humanitarian aid supplies in key provinces, including Imbabura, Pichincha, Tungurahua, and Azuay. These stocks, acquired through the Programmatic Partnership with DG ECHO (PP) and supported by the IFRC, Spanish Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, and German Red Cross, enable a rapid and effective response to emergencies. This strategic approach ensures that critical relief items are readily available to address gaps in provinces such as Guayas and Manabí, as well as other areas where humanitarian needs may escalate due to increasing impacts and funding constraints. Additionally, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has extensive experience having managed multiple operations. In recent years, the National Society has successfully implemented a majority of operations with support from the IFRC and other partners, and this Appeal builds on or leverages funds and projects already in place that have strengthened existing capacity. At the moment the Ecuadorian Red Cross is implementing an emergency operation, funded by the DREF², providing relief to 20,000 individuals in Shelter, WASH, Cash and Voucher Assistance, and PGI.

Red Cross Red Crescent Movement coordination

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a key partner in emergency response within the framework of the National Preparedness and Response Plan of the Ecuadorian Red Cross, activated when the Red Cross Movement’s coordination mechanism is engaged. Continuous

² [IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund](#).

communication is maintained with the ICRC technical team for the exchange of information and advice under the Cooperation Agreement 2025, which aims to strengthen the institution, enhance care during emergencies and crises, and consolidate the operational partnership.

The agreement also promotes protection actions, ensures respect for health care, facilitates safer access, and encourages the application of international humanitarian law. For this emergency, strong coordination with the ICRC will be maintained, considering current security restrictions and communities doubly impacted by armed violence and floods. Additionally, regular advice and close coordination will be maintained with the Restoring Family Links focal point at the ICRC delegation.

External coordination

The Ecuadorian Red Cross is supporting the response to the humanitarian consequences of the Trans-Ecuadorian pipeline rupture in Esmeraldas. At the request of the Vice Ministry of Water, it deployed water purification plants and technical assessment teams.

The Decentralised National Risk Management System activated Emergency Operations Committees (COEs) at the affected territorial levels. These committees coordinate the actions of public and private institutions, ensuring efficient care. The Ecuadorian Red Cross participates in a range of committees at the cantonal, provincial, and national levels, including international cooperation.

This coordination system prevents duplication of information and assistance, while facilitating analysis and decision-making. The Emergency Operations Committee Manual outlines the structure for coordinating care during emergencies. Ecuador's Organic Law for Integral Disaster Risk Management supports the Ecuadorian Red Cross's auxiliary role in humanitarian interventions.

The Humanitarian Country Team, including non-governmental and United Nations organisations, monitors the situation and develops support plans. In collaboration with international and local organisations as a key partner of the WASH Working Group, the Ecuadorian Red Cross mobilises resources, while the Catholic Church and Evangelical Church have established temporary shelters in El Oro, Los Ríos, and Manabí to assist the affected population.

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