

ECUADOR

Flooding

KEY FIGURES

24

PROVINCES
EXPERIENCING HEAVY
RAINFALL

136,573+

AFFECTED PEOPLE

26,581+

PERSONS DISPLACED
ACROSS THE
AFFECTED PROVINCES

34+

PERSONS WHO HAVE
LOST THEIR LIVES DUE
TO THE FLOOD

CRISIS IMPACT OVERVIEW

- Since January 2025, all 24 provinces of Ecuador have been experiencing heavy rainfall, landslides, floods, mudslides, and thunderstorms (ECHO accessed 10/04/2025; Infobae 24/03/2025; SNGR 10/04/2025).
- By 6 April, the impact had affected 136,573 people, including at least 34 killed and 26,581 displaced across the affected provinces. The majority of those affected were in Manabí province (82,676 people), followed by Los Ríos (27,070) and Guayas (26,096) (Primicias 06/04/2025 a; Primicias 06/04/2025 b). The hazards had also damaged 41,990 homes and destroyed 252 (El País 05/04/2025; Primicias 06/04/2025 b).
- By 10 April, the provinces most affected by rainfall were Chimborazo, Cotopax, El Oro, Esmeraldas, Guayas, Loja, Los Ríos, Manabí, Pichincha, Santa Elena and Bolívar (SNGR 10/04/2025).
- By 6 April, there were at least 12 destroyed and 33 damaged bridges. Around 527 schools had also experienced structural damage. Around 50,000 animals had died, over 18,000 hectares of crops were destroyed, and over 8,500 hectares had suffered minor damage (TVSUR 20/03/2025; El País 05/04/2025; Primicias 06/04/2025 a).
- On 25 February, the National Secretariat for Risk Management declared a regional state of emergency for 60 days in response to the severity and frequency of climatic events that have affected a large number of people and affected homes, essential services, and critical infrastructure (IFRC 01/03/2025).

ANTICIPATED SCOPE AND SCALE

The National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology had previously reported that atmospheric and oceanic conditions have directly affected rainfall patterns from February–March. On 31 March, the institute issued warnings for rain, thunderstorms, and strong winds across various regions of the country. These conditions were expected to persist until at least 15 April. Until 14 April, several provinces were experiencing rainfall (PL 31/03/2025; El Comercio 29/03/2025; INAMHI accessed 14/04/2025). Usually, March and April receive the highest amount of rainfall in the year (Andean Trails 11/03/2025). Further heavy rainfall will likely increase the scope and scale of flooding and hinder recovery efforts (IFRC 25/03/2025).

Until 5 April, the National Sanitary and Water Resources Authority maintained its alert status given the overflowing of 14 rivers – nine in Guayas, three in Manabí, and two in Los Ríos. The authorities are closely monitoring an additional 19 rivers in these same provinces given the high risk of rising water levels (Diario Libre 05/04/2025; Primicias 06/04/2025 a).

The affected provinces most likely to receive heavy rainfall, some of which are already inundated, will be in Litoral region (El Oro, Esmeraldas, Guayas, Los Ríos, Manabí, Santa Elena, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas), as well as the north (Carchi, Cotopaxi, Imbabura, Pichincha, Tungurahua) and south (Azuay, Bolívar, Cañar, Chimborazo, Loja) of the Inter-Andean Valley. Because of the intensity and frequency of the rains, there is a persistent risk of flooding, overflowing rivers and streams, and landslides (El Comercio 31/03/2025).

HUMANITARIAN CONSTRAINTS

In provinces such as Esmeraldas and Guayas, violence between armed groups for control over territories is hindering humanitarian operations. There is also interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities, mainly from armed groups that particularly restrict initiatives aimed at preventing recruitment, protection, and promoting a culture of peace. The cantons most affected by these constraints are Eloy Alfaro, Esmeraldas, and San Lorenzo (OCHA 04/02/2025).

On 31 March, images from several provinces showed flooded roads and submerged vehicles, which are likely to slow the response to the affected populations (El Comercio 31/03/2025 and 28/03/2025).

By 6 April, there were 33 damaged and 12 destroyed bridges, as well as 114.7km of roads damaged across the affected provinces (El Comercio 29/03/2025; Primicias 06/04/2025 a). The level of damage is likely to constrain humanitarian access to affected areas and prevent affected people from seeking essential services.

CRISIS IMPACTS

Shelter and displacement

By 6 April, the impact had affected around 136,573 people and displaced 26,581. The highest concentration of those affected was in Manabí province, where 82,676 people were affected (Primicias 06/04/2025 a; Primicias 06/04/2025 b). At least 41,990 homes were damaged, while 252 were destroyed (El País 05/04/2025; Primicias 06/04/2025 b). The affected people are staying in temporary shelters across the affected provinces (Primicias 07/04/2025). Prolonged exposure to the elements could increase the risk of further displacement and deteriorate living conditions in the temporary shelters, increasing the risk of diseases spreading and other negative health outcomes.

WASH and health

The floods have disrupted water systems, but the specific extent remains unknown. This puts people at risk of consuming unsafe water and contracting waterborne and vector-borne diseases (IFRC 25/03/2025).

The oil spill in Esmeraldas province has also contaminated large amounts of water, significantly affecting the region's water situation. Until 27 March, approximately 500,000 people had limited access to safe potable water, resulting in serious health consequences such as respiratory conditions and toxic gas exposure (OCHA 27/03/2025; IFRC 25/03/2025; Mongabay 19/03/2025).

By 25 March, at least 9,500 cases of dengue had been reported across the country. Flood-damaged water systems contaminating water sources, inadequate drainage, and the accumulation of stagnant water, which provides ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes, have accelerated the spread of vector-borne diseases (IFRC 25/03/2025). That said, by 14 April, there was no available data on waterborne diseases in the affected provinces.

There are growing concerns regarding mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, particularly among flood-affected populations, as the majority of the affected are living in temporary shelters and may not have adequate access to services because of overcrowding (IFRC 25/03/2025; Primicias 07/04/2025).

Food security and livelihoods

By 25 March, the impact had killed approximately 96,000 livestock and destroyed 18,000 hectares of crops (IFRC 25/03/2025; Primicias 06/04/2025 a). The period from January–April marks the primary sowing and planting season in Ecuador, a critical time for agricultural production. The widespread flooding that has persisted since January has likely disrupted these activities, damaging crops, farmland, and agricultural infrastructure (FAO 25/09/2024). As a result, the country may face reduced yields and significant setbacks in food production, which could lead to increased food insecurity in the coming months, particularly for rural and farming communities that rely heavily on seasonal harvests for both consumption and income.

El Oro, Guayas, Los Ríos, and Manabí, which are heavily reliant on small-scale agriculture, have experienced considerable destruction to their cacao, banana, passion fruit, and oil palm plantations. These losses are affecting subsistence agriculture and local economies, heightening the vulnerability of already at-risk communities, and increasing food prices, affecting purchasing power across the country (IFRC 25/03/2025).

Education

By 6 April, at least 527 schools across the country had sustained varying degrees of damage, though the full extent remains unknown. With end-of-term exams scheduled for May, the disruption to the education system is likely to have significant consequences. Many students may be forced to sit their exams under challenging conditions or repeat the school year, particularly those who have been displaced or lost essential school supplies in the damage. This disruption not only affects academic performance but also risks widening existing educational inequalities, especially among the affected communities (Primicias 06/04/2025 a; US DOS accessed 08/04/2025).

DRIVERS OF THE CRISIS

Rainy season

Since January 2025, Ecuador has been experiencing an extended rainy season characterised by severe flooding and landslides across the country (IFRC 25/03/2025). Between 1 January and 10 April 2025, the country recorded 2,628 adverse events caused by rainfall, affecting all 24 provinces, 205 cantons, and 753 parishes. The most common adverse events were landslides (40.68%), floods (38.32%), structural collapses (6.20%), ground collapses (5.18%), gales (4%), and avalanches (3.23%) (SNGR 10/04/2025).

Ecuador's rainy season varies by region, but the coastal and Amazon regions typically experience rain from December–May, while the highlands experience it from October–May (WB accessed 31/03/2025). March and April are the wettest months, so showers are more likely than usual in all regions of the country (Andean Trails 11/03/2025).

COMPOUNDING/AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Oil spill

On 13 March, a rupture in the Trans Ecuadorian Oil Pipeline System caused by a landslide led to a significant oil spill exceeding 25,000 barrels in Cube parish, Quinindé canton, Esmeraldas province, extending 86km (OCHA 27/03/2025; IFRC 25/03/2025).

The oil spill has seeped into several rivers, ultimately reaching the ocean, contaminating water sources and significantly harming the environment through soil and water contamination. It has affected livelihoods by destroying agricultural land used for cacao and oil palm cultivation, tourism, and artisanal fishing (IFRC 25/03/2025; OCHA 27/03/2025; UNICEF 08/04/2025). By 7 April, the resulting loss of livelihoods and income had affected approximately 113,000 people (UNICEF 08/04/2025).

Insecurity and political crisis

Ecuador has been facing increased insecurity, mostly caused by armed groups that dispute control over narco traffic routes and trade. The country has experienced a significant rise in homicides. Since the beginning of 2025, one person has died every hour in Ecuador. From 1–26 January 2025, 658 violent deaths were recorded across the country, in contrast to the 438 deaths reported during the same period in 2024, indicating a 56% increase (InSight Crime 04/01/2024; Primicias 28/01/2025; IRC 19/03/2024).

Disputes between armed groups have always been extremely violent inside prisons in Ecuador, but there was a turning point in 2022 with the murder of the political candidate Fernando Villavicencio, which signified that organised crime had left the prisons and reached civilians and affected the country's political leadership (France 24 24/09/2023).

During the first round of voting for the presidential elections in early February 2025, President Daniel Noboa and Luisa González, the leftist candidate in the opposition, collectively received 90% of the votes. The other 14 candidates received less than 10%, and at least 12 did not even get 1%. Such results caused a period of violent threats and actions against politicians, no matter what party they supported (CFR 07/04/2025; AJ 08/02/2025).

Poverty

Ecuador is a middle-income country, with the national poverty rate estimated at 25% of the population in 2023, while the extreme poverty rate stands at 10.7%, which is higher than the global average of 8.5%. The highest incidence of extreme poverty in the country is in rural areas. More than one-third of the population lives in rural areas with high unemployment and underemployment, low wages, and limited access to markets and productive assets, such as land and credit (IFRC 14/08/2023; WB 15/10/2024; IFAD accessed 01/04/2025). This indicates that people lack the capacity to recover from economic disasters that can affect their livelihoods, health, access to education, and other services.

RESPONSE CAPACITY

On 26 March, in response to the devastation caused by floods during Ecuador's rainy season, WFP launched an emergency response to provide cash transfers to nearly 43,000 flood-affected people (13,000 families) (WFP 26/03/2025).

The Humanitarian Country Team, which includes NGOs and UN agencies, monitors and creates support plans. As a key affiliate of the WASH Working Group, the Ecuadorian Red Cross mobilises resources, while the Catholic and evangelical churches have established temporary shelters in El Oro, Los Ríos, and Manabí to assist the affected population (IFRC 25/03/2025).

On 20 February, the National Government, via the National Emergency Operations Committee, activated its technical panels and working groups to coordinate responses to the emergency resulting from the rainy season (SNGR 20/02/2025 and 31/03/2025).

Map 1. Hydrometeorological situation in Ecuador By 10 April



Source: IFRC (08/04/2025)