

Ecuador Presents Initial Results of Strategy to Reduce Chronic Child Malnutrition

QUITO, PICHINCHA, ECUADOR, September 11, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Government of Ecuador has released the initial results of the National Strategy "Ecuador Grows Without Child Malnutrition" and its flagship program "Childhood with a Future."

Following a coordinated effort by the National Government led by President Guillermo Lasso, the results show a reduction in chronic malnutrition in infants, a condition that can thwart their development. By 2023, Ecuador has succeeded in ensuring that 20,000 children under 2 years old and 60,000 children under 5 years old are protected from this issue, which can impair their cognitive abilities, make them susceptible to metabolic diseases in adulthood, and jeopardize their future.

These figures were determined based on the [results of the National Survey of Child Malnutrition \(ENDI\)](#), conducted by the Ecuadorian Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), with the technical support and input of international experts from the United Nations, including UNICEF, PAHO/WHO, FAO, and ECLAC, as well as the World Bank, CAF, and IDB.

On Tuesday, September 5th, President Guillermo Lasso Mendoza presented the results of the ENDI a specialized survey conducted in the country for the first time, which experts describe as having high statistical quality and aligning with international best practices. The consulting team stated: "the documentation of the processes involved in the sampling design is comprehensive, meticulous, and transparent," as indicated in one of the reports presented by UNICEF, ECLAC, and the World Bank.

The ENDI reveals that in Ecuador the prevalence of chronic child malnutrition is 20.1% in children under 2 years old and 17.5% in children under 5 years old. This study enables the Government of Ecuador to strengthen and focus its efforts on addressing one of the most serious social problems that affect early childhood development and shape the country's future.

Among other things, the data also shows that in rural highland areas, the index is 27.7%, making it the region with the highest prevalence in the country. It also highlights that the three provinces with the highest prevalence are Chimborazo (35.1%), Bolívar (30.3%), and Santa Elena (29.8%), while the three with the lowest rates are El Oro (9.8%), Sucumbíos (13.3%), and Los Ríos (14.4%).

These results also mean that Ecuador is no longer the second-to-last country in Latin America

with the worst indicators of Chronic Child Malnutrition, as it has moved up two positions in the regional ranking.

Background

By executive decree, Ecuador's President, Guillermo Lasso Mendoza, created the Technical Secretariat Ecuador "Grows Without Child Malnutrition" (STECSDI) to implement an intersectoral policy that prioritizes the protection of girls and boys and ensures their rights to a proper start and development in life, achieved through the delivery of healthcare and social services.

Furthermore, STECSDI developed the Unified Nominal Monitoring System (SUUSEN in Spanish), which allows the National Government to monitor in real-time the delivery of healthcare and social services, ensuring that every pregnant woman, girl, and child receives timely care and services necessary to prevent chronic malnutrition in infants.

Through SUUSEN, it is evident that as of August 2023, 60,357 beneficiaries are eligible for the "Childhood with a Future" Bonus, an economic incentive for pregnant women, girls, and children under 2 years of age in vulnerable conditions. Moreover, the system shows that in Ecuador, among the population in a vulnerable state, over 86,000 pregnant mothers are up to date with their prenatal check-ups; nearly 263,000 infants under two years of age have completed all their wellness check-ups; approximately 322,000 girls and boys have been registered at the department of vital records; and around 95,000 children under 24 months and pregnant women have access to comprehensive child development services.

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