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## Providing Food Vouchers to Venezuelans in Ecuador

More than 4.8 million people have fled Venezuela due to the ongoing political and economic crisis in the country. As of March, nearly 367,000 Venezuelans were residing in Ecuador, many of whom are in need of humanitarian assistance, including critical emergency food assistance.

Since Fiscal Year 2018, USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) has supported the UN World Food Program (WFP) to provide emergency food assistance to vulnerable Venezuelans in Ecuador. This assistance includes vouchers that can be used to purchase nutritious food at a national supermarket chain with stores across the country.

Ana left Venezuela to seek a better life for her young son, settling in central Ecuador's Ambato city with several members of her extended family. While Ana has found part-time employment at a local restaurant, she struggles to afford enough healthy food to feed her son and her family. After being selected to participate in WFP's food assistance program, Ana received training on voucher use and how to identify nutritious and affordable local foods; she also learned how to take advantage of

supermarket discounts to maximize the vouchers' value.

Using her monthly vouchers, Ana has been able to purchase healthy foods and beverages—including lentils, rice, and milk—at the nearby supermarket. The voucher provides Ana the flexibility to buy what is best for her family's needs and allows her to utilize the money she earns working to purchase other critical goods.

In 2019, WFP assisted more than 300,000 people in Ecuador, the majority of whom were Venezuelans, with food assistance. In addition to food vouchers, USAID/FFP supports WFP to provide hot meals at community kitchens and shelters and food kits near migration checkpoints in Ecuador.

While Ana is unsure of her future plans, USAID/FFP-supported emergency food vouchers from WFP will help her meet her family's food needs in the coming months.



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