



SDC's Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic **HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE** in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador



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Context

On March 11 WHO declares COVID-19 a Global Pandemic. As COVID-19 cases increased, countries proceeded to declare a state of emergency with measures to control (internally and at borders) people, to contain its spread. Initially for several weeks, and then increasing for additional weeks, which in some cases lasting until June.

In the Andean Region, the health crisis highlighted the lack of biosecurity protocols, as well as deficiencies in health systems, which in certain regions collapsed. On the other hand, the COVID-19 eroded countries with fragile policies and economies; the restrictive containment measures implemented had a direct impact on their economies, especially on the informal sector, to which Venezuelan migrants are added, exacerbating the situation of vulnerability.

Despite the health, financial and social support actions focused on the most vulnerable populations and the gradual economic reactivation measures implemented by the governments of the region, unmet humanitarian needs have been identified in aspects of food security, water and sanitation, health prevention, shelter and protection.

Against this background, SDC's Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Rapid Response (RR) Hub in Lima, in consultation with its networks and partners in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador, mapped out the priority demands of these countries, in order to design a humanitarian assistance programme that would help save lives and alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable. This action is being carried out through four interventions in the areas of i) food security, ii) biosecurity in shelters, iii) hospital care, iv) water and sanitation, and capacity building in water and sanitation in municipal technical areas.

Swiss Government Support for the international response

In a spirit of solidarity, Switzerland responded quickly and effectively, making strategic adjustments to its ongoing programmes and taking measures - in several countries - to alleviate the economic and social effects of the pandemic.

To date, the SDC has contributed CHF 101.42 million to the fight against COVID-19 from the existing budgets of its Humanitarian Aid, Bilateral Development Cooperation and Global Cooperation programmes.

On 29 April, the Federal Council approved an additional CHF 400 million to support international action against the pandemic by distributing an interest-free loan of CHF 200 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross, CHF 25 million to a rapid credit line of the International Monetary Fund, and CHF 175 million for humanitarian aid, the development and production of diagnostics, therapies and vaccines, and for efforts to ensure equitable access to these medical solutions at the global level.

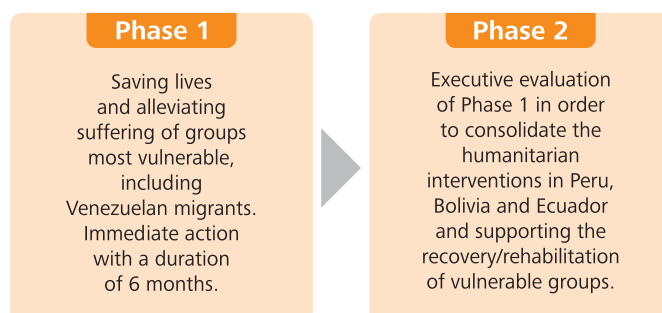


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SDC support in the Andean region

Switzerland focuses its support on three countries in the region, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia, with which it has been working for more than four decades. It makes financial contributions to leading organisations active in the humanitarian field, which have a contractual relationship with the SDC in Lima, strengthening institutional relations and expressing the commitment and solidarity of the Swiss Confederation. It is worth noting the strategic role that the Swiss Embassies in the region will play in supporting the Lima Hub for the implementation of the response actions, in particular in Ecuador and Bolivia.

The actions of the Lima Hub, within the framework of COVID-19, are articulated in two phases:



For Phase 1, the SDC contribution was CHF 180,000 (50,000 for Bolivia, 50,000 for Ecuador and 79,000 for Peru). The interventions responded to priority and urgent demands in these countries; and resource mobilization was carried out through reorientation and realignment of the project portfolio, and its approach was subsidiary to SDC's overall multilateral HA contribution in response to the pandemic.

For Phase 2, the situation will be assessed to explore future possibilities.

ECUADOR

Intervention axis

Delivery of humanitarian aid kits to ensure food security and purchase of health protection equipment for health personnel of provincial boards

The food security of 250 families in Porto Viejo and Manta (Manabí) and Cuenca (Azuay) will be provided for three months. 4 Provincial Boards will be able to ensure pre-hospital care service by delivering protective equipment to operational health personnel. The SDC contribution is 50,000 Swiss francs and will be implemented through the Ecuadorian Red Cross.



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Results chain for intervention in Ecuador, Ecuadorian Red Cross

Activities

Delivery of humanitarian aid kits for 250 vulnerable families in the provinces of Manabí and Azuay
Providing protective equipment to operational health personnel of the provincial boards to ensure pre-hospital care service

Results

Maximizing access to diversified food inputs
Healthcare workers work with confidence and patients feel safe

Purpose

Improving food security for beneficiaries
Biosecurity rules are respected

Goal

Contribute to reducing levels of food and nutrition insecurity
Quality pre-hospital care



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To fight this pandemic effectively, we must not abandon marginalized communities. This is the only way to stop the spread of COVID-19, a global pandemic. We will be safe from the virus if everyone is safe.
Manuel Bessler - Delegate for Humanitarian Aid and Head of the SHA (The Humanitarian, June 2020).

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