



care[®] MAGAZINE

Ecuador



***The time has come for debate
and action to confront inequity
and act for social justice.***

CARE

EDITORIAL TEAM

- Alexandra Moncada
CARE Ecuador Director
- Mónica Tobar
Program Quality and Resource Mobilization Manager
- Santiago Velasco
Program Coordinator
PREPARED SOCIETIES AGAINST RISKS AND DISASTERS
- Cecilia Tamayo
Program Coordinator
HEALTHY AND EMPOWERED SOCIETIES
- Andrés Córdova
Program Coordinator
ENTREPRENEURIAL AND GENDER VIOLENCE FREE SOCIETIES
- Paola Mera
Program Coordinator
INCLUSIVE AND INTERCULTURAL SOCIETIES
- Carla Celi
Senior Specialist in Organizational Development and Resource
Mobilization CARE Ecuador
- Jhoanna Abad
Communication Officer CARE Ecuador
- Tania Gómez
Communication Officer CARE Ecuador

THIS EDITION WAS PRODUCED WITH THE SUPPORT OF:

- Silvia Armas
Tejiendo Caminos (VSLA) Project Coordinator
- Carmelina Morán
Officer of Andean Women Project for the transformation
to Resilient and Violence-Free Territories
- Manuela Farina
Humanitarian Assistance Officer
- José Luis Astudillo
Officer of the "Alerta Veci" Risk Management Project
- David Sánchez
Monitoring and Assessment Assistant
- Roberto Fabara
Monitoring and Assessment Specialist

CREDITS

- **Text Writing:** Alexandra Moncada, Mónica Tobar - Jhoanna Abad -
Jessica Agila - Paola Mera.
- **Layout and Design:** Tania Gómez.
- **Text Review:** Mónica Tobar, Carla Celi, Jhoanna Abad.
- **Photography:** Jhoanna Abad, Tania Gómez, Héctor Alvarado y
Comunidad Valle del Sur.

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WELCOME LETTER

A COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVING ECONOMIC AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

“

Our interest is to promote hope, with the energy radiated by youth movements, women's leadership in the green economy and the use of technology as a mechanism for inclusion.

”

I am pleased to present the first issue of CARE Magazine, with which we want to share information, reflection, and analysis on our work in Ecuador. Each four-monthly issue will focus on topics related to our programs, achievements, and learning. We hope that, by reaching you, the magazine will be one of the ways to consolidate the CARE Community.

We dedicate this first effort to promoting economic justice and climate justice for women. We understand economic justice as the fulfillment of the right of every woman to access and have financial resources to attend to her needs and her development, and climate justice as the sustainable use of resources for this and future generations. We believe that searching for these justices is an unavoidable condition to achieve gender equality and sustainable development.

Together with various allies, women in the country have generated proposals to achieve these forms of justice. In this regard, we present the voices of four CARE allies, who share their experiences and learnings with us:

We include reflections made with Cecilia Velasque, leader and social activist, on the transcendence of the leadership of rural and indigenous women, nature

caregivers, and agents of change and transformation of family's and community's economic dynamics.

We present the story of Mama Nati, an example of the success of the Village Savings & Lending Associations, an effective mechanism to accompany millions of women to organize, save and achieve economic independence.

In addition, we offer the testimony of Alieris, who represents thousands of women who promote entrepreneurship based on their resilience and tenacity and we summarize the experience of the Yanapaquis in Quito, the young women and men who take care of natural streams as a commitment to climate justice.

Likewise, we are pleased to invite you to check the main section called “Investigations” in which we present information generated by CARE to promote decisions and actions for justice. In this issue we dedicate the section to Paid Domestic Work, in homage to the women who carry it out and as part of the National Day that commemorates their profession (March 30), and present systematized information from our latest study: Update on the Situation of the Human and Labor Rights of Paid Domestic Workers in Ecuador (2020).



Alexandra Moncada
CARE Ecuador Director



Alex greeting video



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PLATFORMS



WOMEN LEAD CLIMATE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

A conversation with Cecilia Velasque, indigenous woman and activist

Interview and writing: Mónica Tobar, Program Quality Manager CARE Ecuador

© 2016 / Cecilia Velasque



In this conversation with Cecilia, the challenges to achieve climate and economic justice in Ecuador were addressed. Cecilia is an indigenous woman, an activist for the rights of women, indigenous peoples, and nature. She has also been a social leader, former vice prefect of Cotopaxi, and former secretary of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of America. She is currently the national deputy coordinator of the political organization named Pachakutik.

Climate justice represents a future where the most vulnerable communities achieve greater well-being and enjoy human rights, gender equality, and sustainable environments. This approach is complemented by economic justice, which is the fundamental human right of women to access and have control over financial resources. For Cecilia, working in these two areas requires affirmative action, political will, financing, and a pragmatic vision of complementarity.

Cecilia points out that, although the Ecuadorian Constitution of 2008 promotes wellbeing for all, the governments still prioritize "economic development" over environmental care, allowing extractivist transnationals to deepen the climate crisis and nature's destruction, and reducing the options for the following generations to enjoy a decent life. However, she believes it is possible to sustain a good living for the future by exercising solidarity and the original and ancestral peoples' knowledge.

For this reason, Velasque emphasizes "indigenous communities have comprehensive development as their objective, where women have played a leading role in leading efforts to face the effects of the climate crisis and those of COVID-19." Cecilia highlights some of the actions led by Andean rural women to mitigate the effects of these crises. For example, several communities have advanced toward agroecological production and promoted fair trade. During the COVID 19 pandemic, they resumed the Minga (joint community labor) and barter as an alternative to access products and services and sustain family and community economies. Economic justice has financial connotations as well as a sense of resource conservation and the promotion of responsible consumption that contributes to sustainable development.

Finally, Cecilia invites all the actors (State, private sector, academia, civil society, and international cooperation) to work ethically and collectively with Andean and rural women's organizations because, in her words, "... directing comprehensive development is responding to the interests of the communities, seek socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental reactivation respecting ancestral knowledge. Only then can social justice be achieved."



"Indigenous communities have comprehensive development as their objective, where women have played a leading role in leading efforts to face the effects of the climate crisis and those of COVID-19." Cecilia Velasque.

MAMA NATI

AGROECOLOGY AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FINANCIAL INCLUSION

.....

In the Pedro Moncayo canton, located in the province of Pichincha, Fridays are meeting days for elderly *mamas and taitas*¹. About 20 elderly adults arrange their agroecological products display from very early on. Milk, eggs, lupins, legumes, tomatoes, strawberries, a whole mixture of colors and flavors grown in their gardens, bring the place alive. The merchants are part of the Wellbeing Fair, which allows the community to bring healthy products to their homes.

Four years ago, the Mama Nati Village Saving and Lending Association emerged from this group. Its name comes from the religious patron saint of the community, the Nativity Virgin. The members of Mama Nati, like many other people in the country (currently 6.7 million globally), have organized to save and manage credits. Through this mechanism, the members invest in their homes, buy tools to work their plots, finance family members' studies, and obtain microcredits adapted to their needs.

Saving from agroecology

"... We created a Cantonal School of Agroecology as an alternative to support and adapt to climate change. Each of our farms is a school..." says Catalina Jiménez, Technician of the Municipality of Pedro Moncayo. With the surplus of their sales, the producers save up to 750 dollars per person in one cycle. "With that money, a fellow producer built a bridge to cross over to her land; one paid for her studies; another invested in her store; another in greenhouses; others, in their children's



education. We also allocate resources to have fun, as we do for the *San Pedro Rama*² dance”.

The Village Savings and Lending Associations are an opportunity for microcredit

Not all people can access a bank loan. The village savings and lending association can be the answer to empower women entrepreneurs and facilitate their access to financial services. The savings associations “are spaces of trust and planning where the members start a savings logic, manage solidarity loans among themselves, where each participant receives low-interest rates and the savings fund at the end of a cycle,” says Andrés Córdova, Coordinator of CARE Ecuador’s Entrepreneurial and Gender Violence Free Societies Program.

Each credit is approved in an assembly with all the members. “Our next step is to leave a balance of savings at the end of the cycle and have a fund to start with credits in the next one,” says Rosa Andrango, a member of Mama Nati.

In Pedro Moncayo there are currently two additional Village Savings and Lending Associations operating. In Ecuador, CARE supports another 35 Village Savings and Lending Associations in Imbabura, Pichincha, El Oro, and Manabí. With partners and allies, we will create 1,000 savings and credit banks in the next three years: “we seek to integrate the social fabric and form a network of savings associations...” says Andrés Córdova. These savings associations will join the more than 200,000 that CARE supports in 59 countries, promoting financial inclusion and social justice.

¹ Quichua, meaning: mama: mother; and taita: father.

² Original tradition of the Pedro Moncayo canton’s Tocachi, rural parish, where the dance is the essential element. The people who practice it carry a thick rod -where a rooster and/or chicken are hung by their feet- while playing pingullos (a local type of wind instrument), guitars, flutes, bells, and other musical instruments. Anyone who, during the celebration, asks for a rooster in public agrees to deliver 12 roosters next year. This traditional celebration is also practiced with money.



YANAPAKI GUARDIANS OF THE CREEK

The *Alerta Veci!* project, executed by Plan International, CARE Ecuador, the National Risk Management Service, and the Municipality of the Metropolitan District of Quito, with funding from the European Union, strengthened the skills of people who live in risk areas to organize themselves and carry out the guardianship of the natural watershed located in their neighborhoods.

To the south of Quito is the Valle del Sur neighborhood, bounded by the Caupicho and Chozalongo ravines and the Simón Bolívar highway. The community faces various risks: it is surrounded by streams, and a section of the oil pipeline crosses under the settlement.

To manage the risks, the neighbors analyzed the history of their community. This exercise allowed them to collect evidence of the threats faced and to anticipate a response as, according to the vulnerability analysis carried out by the community of Valle del Sur. In 8 years, the population may have to evacuate since there is a high risk of collapse due to the overflow of the ravine.

Thus, the neighbors decided to act and created the Yanapaquis brigades, which led to the community mobilization plan for the management and care of the creek. This plan includes actions to reduce garbage production, avoid contamination, start reforestation with precursor species, clean natural outlet areas, etc. The Yanapaqui women received leadership and gender equity training to confront prejudices that limit their participation.



“When I was little and played by the creek, the water looked many colors. That made me happy. Yet they had told us not to go down because there were crocodiles in the watershed. The crocodiles were but stones and the colors pollution”.

- Francis, 20 years old, neighborhood brigade leader and member of Yanapaki)



- Yanapaki is the Quichua meaning for caregiver or protector. Quichua is the second most used language in Ecuador.



1983

First neighborhood's inhabitants.

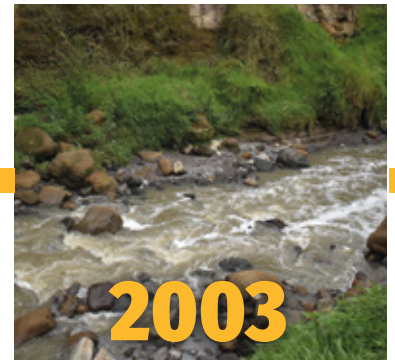
"The ravine was just a little creek, and the neighborhood was not so populated. We used to wash our clothes and food in the springs." Galo (Francis's grandfather.) "The spring next to the ravine was a source of drinking water. Currently, that is impossible". Luzmila, Member of the Yanapaki Creek Guardians.



1993

Installation of the drinking water network.

"Before, one would cross the ravine on foot; now it is almost a river of filthy water" Luzmila, Member of Yanapaki.



2003

The first bridge is built.

"This is the third pedestrian bridge destroyed by water overflowing the creek. Another disaster could happen at any moment..." Fernando, coordinator of the Valle del Sur Neighborhood Brigade.

The residents of Valle del Sur are committed to climate justice and know that caring for their neighborhood and the creek is everyone's task.



2013

Fall of the pedestrian bridge due to the rising of the river.



2021

The Alerta Veci project begins.

In the #AlertaVeci Project, the community generates an Analysis of its Vulnerabilities and Capacities that leads to an Emergency Plan. The neighborhood then organized Emergency Response Brigades, and further the Yanapaki Creek Guardians Network.



2020

The Caupicho ravine is declared an emergency.

"Now I can help my neighborhood, and we know what to do when an emergency happens." Emily, member of Yanapaqui (11 years old).



2017

The neighborhood begins to plant plants.

"About 12 years ago, a flood took away houses, people, animals... Today the landslides continue..." Francis, neighborhood brigade leader and member of Yanapaki.

The chronology results from the Analysis of Vulnerabilities and Capacities, AVC. Valle del Sur Community, 2021.

ALIERIS



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A HISTORY OF RESILIENCE AND SEARCH FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

.....

The story of Alieris is the story of millions of women in Latin America displaying resilience and tenacity, that inspires us to continue seeking economic justice.

Alieris, 31, arrived in Ecuador two years ago with her two children, her husband, mother, and brother. She was a nurse in her native Venezuela.

Still, due to the situation in her country, she decided to migrate to Ecuador to the province of El Oro, where she currently resides with her family.

Due to the difficulties in regularizing her immigration status, Alieris could not practice her profession in Ecuador; however, she deployed another of her skills to undertake and generate

economic resources for her home. Before graduating as a nurse, Alieris did manicures from a very young age and excelled at it. With this precedent, years later, she decided to start a beauty services business, currently under the name of *Nail Polett*: nail art and more.

In 2021 Alieris participated in the project "HIV Prevention and Reactivation of Livelihoods for Refugees and Migrants in Vulnerable Conditions," financed by UNHCR and implemented by CARE Ecuador. Within the project, she received training on economic rights, financial education, and in developing financial business plans. Her proposal was one of the 69 ventures supported with seed capital: "I began to participate in finance courses and how to start ventures. That's where Nail Polett was born. Thanks to the financing, I bought equipment and supplies for my business," comments Alieris.

"You never finish studying," she says and recounts how she expanded her knowledge in makeup, hairstyles, haircuts, and more. "I work from my home, ... in my home, I remodeled an area to work with more privacy, and I do acrylic nails, manicures, pedicures, facials, waxing, makeup, eyebrows, pigmentation, and eyelash placement."

In addition, "I have special offers for my clients. For example, I have 2 for 1 discounts, or the second free

or half-price," explains Alieris. All her knowledge has been shared and provided to other people who, like her, want to undertake. Thus, later she began teaching her skills in the trade regularly. After some time, her teaching ability led her to offer virtual and face-to-face lessons with support from CARE's HIV Prevention and Livelihood Reactivation project.

"It was an amazing experience, wonderful and new; the contact with other people, their attention and sharing everything I know," she recalls happily. Alieris longs to expand her business and thus generate employment for more migrants and refugees who, like her, fight every day for a better future: "Among my goals is to regularize my migration status and continue in the country, start a business in my area, move to a larger location, grow with the business and create my own beauty products brand."

Today, Alieris continues to work for her dreams, and every day she has more clients. Like many Venezuelans, she pursues her desire to regularize her migration status in Ecuador to manage, improve, and expand her business. Alieris, like millions of migrants in our country, seeks economic justice, inclusion, and a life free of discrimination. Let's keep supporting her!



INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES DEVELOPED IN COORDINATION WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

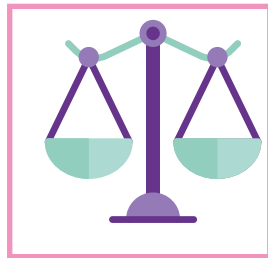
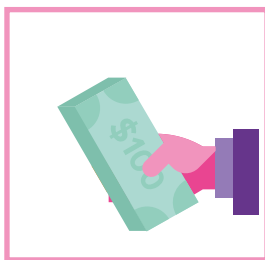
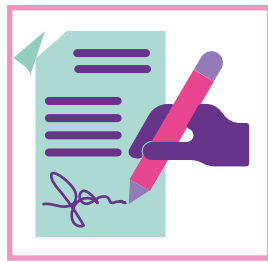
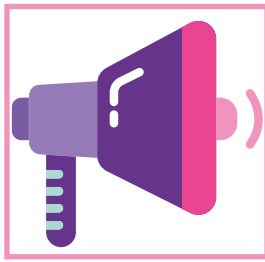


MOBILE APP

TRH Unidas (United Domestic Workers) App

In 2019, the Union of Paid Domestic Workers (UNTHA in Spanish) and CARE received a contribution from Thoughtworks Company, a leader in software development, to develop a mobile application aimed at all working women, especially those engaged in domestic work. This initiative aims to contribute to make visible and eradicate violence and injustice for women at work.

The App was approved by institutions that are part of the Roundtable to Support Domestic Workers (DW), such as the Ministry of Labor, the Gender Equality Council, unions, cooperation organizations and academia.



The United Domestic Workers App provides information on labor laws, contract templates approved by the Ministry of Labor, a test to find out if users are experiencing violence in the workplace (violence is so common that it is naturalized by many people). It also provides information on where to go and what to expect from the protection services available in the country.

In addition, the App has a function to calculate the wage and benefits that employees should receive or employers should provide; it also has the contacts of UNTHA and ASOCLIM, for those who want to join these organizations. More than 50,000 women have used the APP, and we expect many more to use it and benefit from its services.



Download the APP

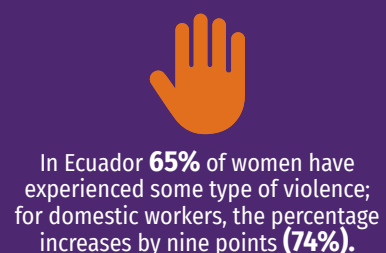
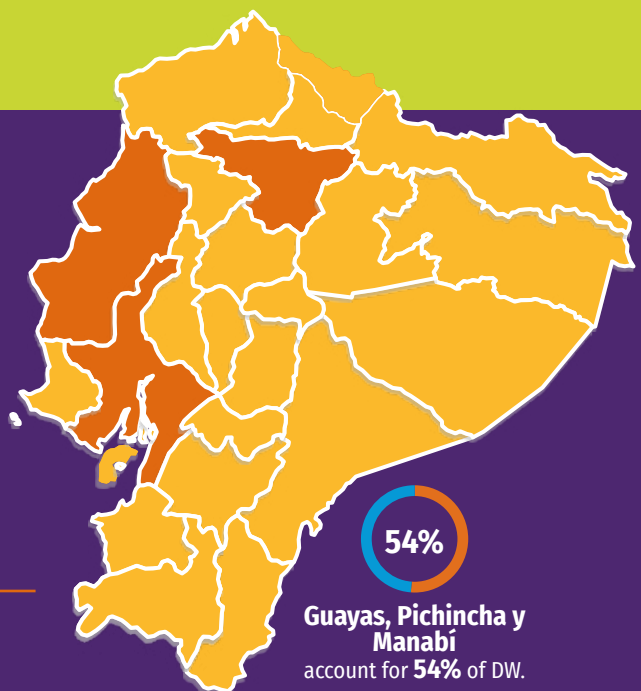
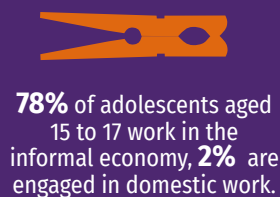
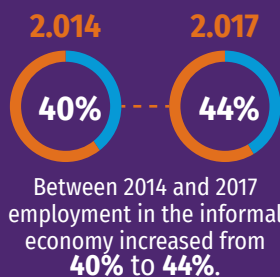
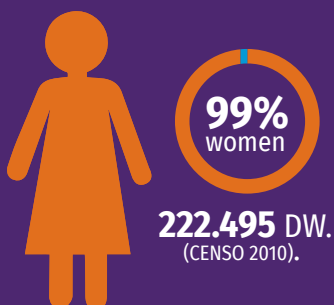
AN INVISIBLE REALITY

The Valuation of Domestic Labor

Paid and unpaid domestic work is essential for the "sustainability of human life" and the functioning of households, the economy and society as a whole.

Domestic work was one of the sectors of the economy most affected by the consequences of the health crisis. Before the pandemic, this sector was already characterized by informality, inequity, discrimination, and violent relationships against female workers. In 2021, CARE Ecuador, in association with the National Union of Domestic Workers (Unión Nacional de Trabajadoras Remuneradas del Hogar y Afines), carried out a study to learn about the attitudes and practices that account for the social valuation of domestic work.

The data below evidences that despite people having more knowledge of their rights and the legal framework of labor relations, violent and discriminatory attitudes and practices persist. As part of March 30, which commemorates the national day of domestic workers (DW) in Ecuador since 2021, it is important to discuss the following facts:





67% percent of DWs finished primary education, **29%** completed high school, while **4%** have university or technological education.



Regarding the health of DWs, **31,7%** have respiratory illnesses, while **3,6%** have cardiovascular diseases. The average of overweight and obese women is **67,7%**, while for DWs this percentage reaches **76,1%**.

KNOWLEDGE OF LAWS AND PRACTICES



47% of DWs are aware of labor laws in force.



85% of employers are aware of labor laws in force, but only **50%** complied with labor settlement regulations during the pandemic.

THE VALUATION OF DOMESTIC LABOR



50% of DWs reported improved treatment towards them (**6%** decrease vs. 2018 survey)



45% of employers acknowledged that DWs should be treated equally. **21%** fewer employers considered Domestic Work to be indispensable compared to the 2018 survey.



100% of employers stated that care work is a responsibility of both men and women, and that minors should not be hired.



19% of women engaged in Domestic Work reported the need to not silence and to make visible violence in the workplace.

AND BY ANALYZING THE PRACTICES...



The study shows that only **42%** of DWs are paid the minimum wage defined by law.



86% of DWs received a notice not to return to work after the pandemic; of this percentage, only **6%** received severance pay in accordance with the law.



DOWNLOAD THE
COMPLETE DOCUMENT

The results of the study show that practices of discrimination, exploitation and mistreatment persist. Awareness raising campaigns and trainings are fundamental to promote long-term changes.

The COVID-19 health emergency exacerbated precariousness and exploitation. There was a setback regarding enjoyment of human and labor rights of DWs who did not stop working during the pandemic.

We learned that, although some sectors of the economy may stop during a pandemic, care work continues to operate to sustain life and allow production to continue. Care work was often carried out under conditions of risk and exploitation. This challenges us to discuss, recognize, reappraise, and redistribute care work at the individual, family, company, and society-wide levels because it sustains us all throughout our lives.

ASOCLIM

AN EXAMPLE OF A SOCIAL BUSINESS THAT GENERATES DECENT EMPLOYMENT

The **ASOCLIM** Company offers professional home care and cleaning services. It was born thanks to the dreams of the members of the National Union of Domestic Workers and Allied (UNTHA in Spanish), a trade union organization committed to the welfare and empowerment of self-employed women.

This initiative has two purposes, to generate a source of income for domestic workers and to provide professional home care and cleaning services, as well as quality home textiles and beauty treatments.

ASOCLIM is managed and operated by its 24 members as a social enterprise. Its customer portfolio currently includes 103 companies and organizations, and 1,109 individual clients in the cities of Quito and Guayaquil, as well as in the provinces of Imbabura, Esmeraldas, Cañar, El Oro, and Carchi.

ASOCLIM's members are constantly training and updating their knowledge. They have certificates issued by the Ecuadorian Professional Training Service (SECAP) and the Salesian Polytechnic University (Universidad Politécnica Salesiana).

ASOCLIM'S SERVICE GUARANTEES:



Quality, professional and empathetic service.



Ensuring protection of labor and social rights through signing of contracts and decent treatment (in compliance with the articles of Conventions 189 and 190 of the International Labor Organization - ILO).



Constant evaluation of the level of satisfaction to ensure the quality of services.

Look for us!
We have services
tailored to your needs



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ASOCLIM

ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND CLIMATE JUSTICE MATTER TO US BECAUSE...

- The pandemic set equality back a generation: It will take **135 years** to close the global gender gap (WEF, 2021).
- The unemployment rate for women in Latin America has remained at **12.4%** since 2020, which exacerbates the effects of the crisis on gender parity in the workplace (ILO, 2022).
- Without gender equality, we will not be able to face the climate crisis. Climate disasters between 1999 and 2019 took the lives of six women for every four men. In addition, women farmers produce more than **45%** of the food in developing countries, so droughts, floods and other natural disasters affect women more than men (UN Women, 2022).

Faced with this scenario, we take action!



2.089
People

To contribute to a society with economic and climate justice, we implemented the following projects: Rural Women and Andean Women facing climate change; Alerta Veci; Women, Dignity and Work; Weaving Paths; Strengthening livelihoods through seed capital.

From January 2021 to March 2022 in the provinces of Bolivar, Cotopaxi, Chimborazo, Imbabura, Pichincha, Manabí and El Oro.



660
Participants of the Andean and Rural Women project.
(Data from January 01 to March 22, 2022).



450
Participants reached with the Alerta Veci project
(Data from January 01 to March 22, 2022).

234 **216**



303
Female domestic workers reached.
(Data from January 01 to December 2021).



35
Village Savings and Loan Associations. By 2020, 35 Village Savings and Loan Associations were implemented in Ecuador with the participation of 500 people. We expect to establish 1,000 VSLAs by 2024.
(Data from 2017 to March 22, 2022).



179
People were provided with seed capital and financial literacy
(Data from January to December 2021).



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