

Poverty Slashed in Ecuador Under President Correa



Quito, April 14 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Ecuador has lifted 1.3 million people out of poverty in the past eight years, a new survey revealed on Monday. The results of the first "Survey of Living Conditions in Ecuador" showed that poverty has fallen by one third. It also revealed that 900,000 individuals have been lifted out of extreme poverty, whilst the *Gini* coefficient, which measures wealth gaps, has dropped 4.8 points since 2006.

"Extreme poverty has reduced by 7.1 percentage points ... which means that extreme poverty has been reduced by half the level which we had in 2006 nationally," said the Director of the National Institute of Census and Statistics Jose Rosero.

With the highest public investment in Latin America at 15 percent of GDP, the results of the Survey of Living Conditions demonstrate the success of policies by the Ecuadorean state focused on poverty reduction and increased access to public services. "I would say that in Ecuador access to basic services has improved in the past 10 years, since 2004, 2005. But there are still areas that need coverage, mostly in rural areas," said Rene Patricio Larenas, a lawyer from Quito in an interview with teleSUR English.

Michelle Cardenas, a student from the southern province of *Loja*, said that she has noticed improvements in quality of life in her region. She said, "Education is much better, and we have all our basic services. The quality of life is good, things are not like the way they were before."

In addition to poverty levels, the year-long survey, the first national survey released in Ecuador on poverty, access to public services and better quality of life since 2006, showed improvements in all measured areas such as access to health and education.

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