



Servants in Faith and Technology /
Southern Institute for Appropriate Technology
2944 County Road 113, Lineville, Alabama 36266
Phone: (256) 396-2015 Fax: (256) 396-2501 www.sifat.org

Thank You for Supporting SIFAT Ecuador!

By Roberto and Mónica Contreras

SIFAT Ecuador Directors

"Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!' "

Matthew 25:37-40



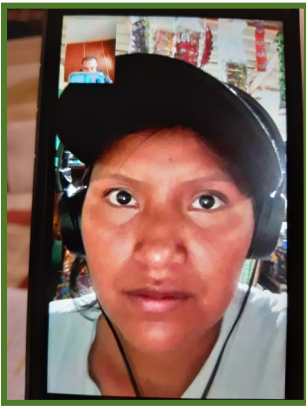
Isaiah was born on May 5, 2020, in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. He was completely malnourished at birth because his mother did not have the resources for a good diet during her pregnancy. His first cry would not be his only cry. He continually was crying from his birth until August, because he was hungry.

In Ecuador, 1 of 4 children less than 5 years old is chronically malnourished. Isaiah was that child. Malnutrition limits a child's full development and leaves traces for a lifetime. Children with malnutrition are more likely to become adults with low stature, fewer educational achievements and lower financial incomes during adulthood. This not only impacts the individual, but also affects the social and economic development of communities and our country.

Because of donations given for *SIFAT Doctor in your House*, we have been able to provide nutritional reinforcement since August when Dr. Roberto learned about Isaiah's situation. He will not become a sad statistic.

Like Isaiah, 500 children, adults and the elderly who live in extreme poverty were suffering from diabetes, hypertension, psychological diseases, gynecological diseases, epilepsy, etc. They have benefited through our program with virtual medical visits and needed medications for 30 days. Another 500 children were checked and given parasite treatments and vitamins for one month, as well as medical certificates for school. SIFAT provided 200 expecting mothers checkups and prenatal vitamins. Additionally, 500 adults and elderly people received vitamins for one month. These people are all part of the marginal urban communities of our 11 SIFAT Ecuador projects: Guamaní, Cutuglahua, Machachi, Villaflores, Puengasí, Llano Grande, Calderón, Aida León, Puyo-Amazonia, Atucucho and El Beaterio.

In Aida León, we met Estefania. She is 23 years old, married and has two young children, ages 1 and 5. After her mother died from breast cancer, Estefania adopted her three younger siblings, ages 8, 12 and 13. Estefania is a maid and her husband is a bricklayer. They are out of work and are struggling to keep their family alive. Their family often cannot eat three meals per day.



*Estefania on a virtual call
with Dr. Roberto*

Estefania and her husband, like so many Ecuadorians, are being impacted by COVID-19 in Ecuador. The statistics reveal that around 200,000 have been infected and more than 15,000 people died in the pandemic so far. Already, it has left 1 million people unemployed, while another 5.3 million workers are in precarious working conditions. The decline in production that Ecuador's economy faced during the beginning of the pandemic is ongoing and has resulted in a significant drop in the labor market, leaving 83 percent of the workforce unemployed or precarious. According to official statistics, only 17 percent of the economically active population has a job that meets the minimum legal requirements.

But, there is hope for Estefania's family because our *Golden Bread* program could provide monthly gifts of rice, a staple in Ecuadorian homes. Now, the seven members of this family have something to eat for their daily lunch. Like Estefania, another 17,000 of the most vulnerable, who are part of our SIFAT projects, have been able to receive rice donations

during the past eight months of pandemic. Because of your financial support, we have been able to also include dozens of Venezuelan immigrants in search of a better future for their families.

With tears in their eyes, Mary, 70, and Francisco, 71, said, "Thank you SIFAT brothers and sisters! We now have a hot breakfast every day. Before, we wanted to die because we had no hope, but now we see that God exists and that He loves us."

By the end of 2020, Ecuador will have a population of approximately 1.3 million people over the age of 65; 57.4 percent of this older adult population is in poverty or extreme poverty. This means that 6 out of 10 older adults in Ecuador reach retirement without a fixed source of income that allows them to survive. Lack of income is one of the main problems of the elderly people. Older adults in need do not have access to a decent employment, which causes them to look for jobs in cleaning or construction services, but in extreme cases, they are forced to resort to begging. Begging is the harsh reality of the majority of the elderly in the slum of Atucucho. Because of your donations, SIFAT has provided 12,800 hot breakfasts. So, Maria, Francisco and 78 other elderly living here ate a hot breakfast daily for the past eight months.



*Receiving a guagua de pan and
colada morada in Atucucho.*

In Ecuador, we eat *guaguas de pan* (a special pastry) and drink *colada morada* (a purple sweet soup) on November 2 each year. The elderly in Atucucho could not imagine participating in this tradition, but SIFAT provided this treat for them. On that Monday, we were *Sharing God's Love in Practical Ways* to each one of these 80 elders.

We are taught to be "Doers of God's Word, not only Hearers." All of you, our brothers and sisters in Christ, who have supported SIFAT's ministry in Ecuador have been *doers of God's Word*! Matthew 25:37-40 has been a reality for Ecuadorians in extreme poverty aggravated by the pandemic. Thank you for your prayers and financial support! There is much still to be done for those in need. We are counting on each one of you, our SIFAT family, to help us continue this program in 2021. May God bless each of you and reward all your generosity!

A Note from Peggy Walker, our international team coordinator:

Dr. Roberto and Mónica sent updated news from Quito recently. On Feb. 7, presidential elections were held, and a new president will take office in late May, which means new regulations and plans may be put into place. So far, Ecuador has only received enough vaccines for 4,000 people, and there are at least 200,000 medical workers on the front lines. It is reported that doses for 39,000 more people will arrive after April. There has not been a vaccination schedule released for the general public. We know the needs of the people living in the communities where our projects are located are going to continue to increase as the economy has been shattered and people struggle to survive. We will be sharing our plans for completing the construction project in Aida Leon in the next SIFAT Journal. We hope you will continue to be "Doers of God's Word" and support our programs in Ecuador.