

First coronavirus case detected in Ecuador Amazon tribe

May 18 2020

The first case of the novel coronavirus has been detected in one of Ecuador's indigenous Amazon tribes, the health ministry said Sunday.

Waorani organizations—speaking through the GO Alliance for Human Rights in Ecuador (DDHH)—warned COVID-19's spread could be "catastrophic and highly lethal" for their community, which is vulnerable to diseases.

The first case reported in the Waorani tribe is a "[pregnant woman](#), 17 years old, who began to show symptoms on May 4," the ministry said in a statement.

She was taken to a hospital in the capital Quito and placed in isolation, the statement said, without giving further details.

The [federal government](#)—in coordination with indigenous leaders—checked on 40 people that the woman had come into contact within the Miwaguno community, which has 140 inhabitants.

"Seventeen citizens with a history of respiratory systems were found. To date, six of them have symptoms, so 20 rapid tests and a total of seven nasopharyngeal swabs were performed," the [health ministry](#) said, without releasing the test results.

Ecuador, one of the hardest-hit countries in Latin America, is now in its second month of lockdown to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

It has reported some 33,000 cases and more than 2,700 deaths.

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