

ECUADOR

Operational highlights

- UNHCR supported the Government of Ecuador in carrying out the Enhanced Registration (ER) project for Colombians in need of international protection. Some 21,000 people were recognized as refugees during the first nine months of the year, doubling the number of people recognized as refugees in the country.
- Six revolving funds were set up with micro-finance institutions to supply credit to refugees and the local population, in order to target those in need more effectively.
- 900 people were presented to third countries for resettlement in 2009, and some 600 individuals departed for their new homes during the year.
- More than 60 UNHCR community projects benefited a total of 62,000 people, both refugees and members of host communities.

Working environment

After a military incursion into Ecuadorian territory in 2008, which led to the severance of diplomatic ties between the Colombian and Ecuadorian Governments, full diplomatic relations had not been re-established at the end of 2009. Both Governments signed an eleven-point plan that included provisions for the reinstatement of the tripartite cooperation mechanism between Colombia, Ecuador and UNHCR.

The ER programme, begun in March 2009, will be completed in March 2010. Mobile registration and documentation teams have been dispatched to the remote

provinces in the northern border region to provide identity documents to thousands of people in need of international protection.



Persons of concern

Type of population	Origin	Total	Of whom assisted by UNHCR	Per cent female	Per cent under 18
Refugees	Colombia	44,400	33,400	48	28
	Various	800	800	34	9
People in a refugee-like situation	Colombia	71,400	10,900	-	-
Asylum-seekers	Colombia	42,500	42,500	44	22
	Peru	5,200	5,200	23	6
	Cuba	1,500	1,500	29	-
	Haiti	370	370	25	4
	Various	1,200	1,200	23	8
Total		167,370	95,870		



A Colombian refugee in northern Ecuador shows his new refugee visa obtained by mobile government registration teams.

UNHCR / S. AGUILAR

The Government is also taking steps to enhance the asylum regime and promote durable solutions. The adoption of a new Constitution in 2008 has been followed by an intensive process of legislative reform, including consideration of asylum issues. UNHCR is advising the Government on the Human Mobility Law and amendments to the Refugee Decree 3301.

| Achievements and impact |

The ER programme reached people in need who were previously unknown and unregistered, providing information about their origins, characteristics and specific needs. UNHCR's community projects in the sectors of health, education, shelter and income generation benefited local people and refugees, and helped with local integration of the latter.

● Main objectives

- Promote international protection for all refugees and asylum-seekers.
- Seek durable solutions for refugees, particularly through local integration and resettlement.
- Ensure that other Colombians in need of international protection enjoy basic rights.

● Protection and solutions

UNHCR's main focus in 2009 was on the enhanced registration project. This addressed the needs of thousands of Colombians in a refugee-like situation in Ecuador's northern border regions who had been deprived of legal protection and were exposed to *refoulement* and exploitation. UNHCR provided technical support for the project, including the drafting of an operational handbook.

With the situation in Colombia's southern provinces deteriorating as well, UNHCR expects more asylum-seekers to arrive in Ecuador. As voluntary repatriation is currently not feasible, UNHCR will continue to promote local integration for this caseload. Resettlement will be an option for a limited number of individuals.

● Activities and assistance

Crop production: Six communities now have trained personnel who provide basic advice and support to farmers. Five community vegetable gardens and 50 family plots were developed and are now operational.

Domestic needs: The demand for non-food items was far greater than expected; the number of persons requiring this kind of support doubled from the previous year. By the end

of 2009, UNHCR had dispensed over 5,600 household packages, 4,200 kitchen sets and 10,800 hygiene kits.

Education: UNHCR reduced its support for primary education as the Government agreed to waive registration fees at public schools. Some families were helped by UNHCR implementing partners to provide their children with uniforms (130 children) and school supplies (700 children).

Food: Some 93,000 food rations were distributed as part of WFP's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation. The free rations allowed families to use their funds for other pressing needs such as health care, shelter and education.

Health and nutrition: UNHCR helped over 1,500 people to obtain medicines, undergo laboratory examinations or receive hospital care. The number of cases referred to public services has increased, but refugees continue to find it difficult to reach hospitals and health centres. Eleven UNHCR health projects have tried to bridge the health-care gap for both refugees and locals.

Income generation: Six revolving funds with assets totalling USD 356,400 are providing microcredits to small entrepreneurs. In 2009 over 600 loans were provided to refugees and others of concern to UNHCR and 66 per cent of the recipients were women.

Legal assistance: UNHCR supported the Government's ER programme in Esmeraldas, Sucumbios and Orellana provinces. In 2010, the project will move to Carchi and Imbabura provinces. UNHCR presented over 900 people for resettlement in 2009. Some 600 individuals (including some submissions pending from 2008) departed for their new destinations in the course of the year.

Shelter: Some 2,600 people in various areas of the country received shelter assistance. In cases where shelters were unavailable or there were specific security concerns, UNHCR provided rent support instead, covering some 2,300 families.

Water and sanitation: Two community projects in the border provinces of Esmeraldas and Sucumbios addressed some pressing host-community needs in a cost-effective manner.

○ *Constraints*

The conflict in Colombia has progressively expanded into Ecuadorian territory, bringing with it weapons smuggling, drugs and human trafficking, money laundering, kidnapping—and even summary executions which occur with impunity. Most of the groups involved are the same as those in Colombia, and include paramilitary groups, guerrillas and drugs traffickers. The security situation in communities near the northern border continues to be a major concern for UNHCR as it affects staff security and project implementation.

| Financial information |

The budget for UNHCR's operation in Ecuador increased to USD 10.5 million as a result of the pilot global needs assessment (GNA). With a total budget of USD 3.7 million, the GNA allowed for the implementation of the ER project and also served to strengthen local integration activities targeting both refugees and host communities. These projects covered access to basic services, training and awareness campaigns, as well as income generation activities.

| Organization and implementation |

In Ecuador, UNHCR covered the nine provinces with the most refugees through offices in Quito, Ibarra, Lago Agrio and Esmeraldas, and through field outposts in Cuenca and Santo Domingo. Given the large urban population in need of protection, UNHCR opened a field unit in Quito to provide more effective follow-up on integration issues. This unit also covers Cuenca and Guayaquil. UNHCR has 40 staff in Ecuador: (31 national and nine international), 35 UN volunteers (26 national and nine international) and two JPOs.

| Working with others |

UNHCR consolidated a strong partnership with the General Directorate for Refugees, key ministries and 19 implementing partners. Six micro-finance institutions managed the revolving funds to aid refugees and the local population. Implementing partners carried out specialized projects in demographic research, prevention of gender-based violence, shelter improvement and border monitoring. In coordination with UNHCR offices in Colombia, cross-border projects were implemented to benefit refugees and IDPs on both sides.

| Overall assessment |

Strong support from the Government of Ecuador helped UNHCR to manage the largest refugee operation in Latin America. Refugee protection improved with the implementation of the Enhanced Registration programme. In addition to the registration and documentation of people in a refugee-like situation, this programme also contributed to strengthening the regular registration and recognition mechanisms of the General Directorate for Refugees. However, security conditions in the northern border provinces remained difficult due to the presence there of irregular armed forces.

The operation in Ecuador has benefitted from close coordination with municipalities and local governments. This has helped UNHCR to implement local-integration projects that benefit both Ecuadorian and Colombian populations in host communities. These projects also serve as an effective mechanism to provide protection by presence.

Partners

Implementing partners

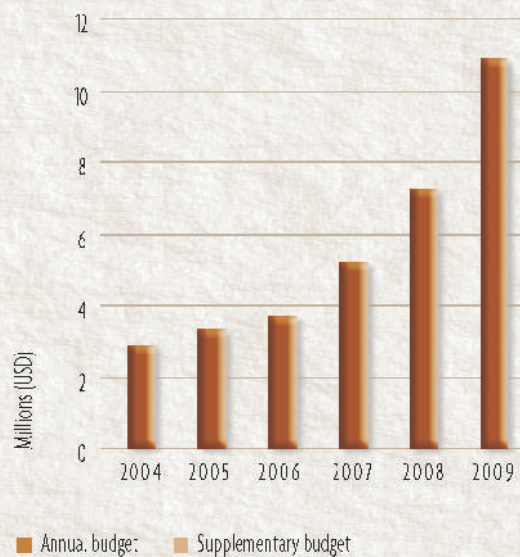
NGOs: Catholic Relief Services, Codesarrollo, Consejo Gubernativo de Bienes Diocesanos de la Diócesis de Tulcán, Cooperativa de Ahorro y Crédito Afroecuatorianos de las Pequeñas Empresas, Cooperazione Internazionale, Ecuadorian Red Cross, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, FEDARPOM, Federación de Mujeres de Esmeraldas, Fondo de Desarrollo Microempresaria, Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio, Fundación Ambiente y Sociedad, Fundación Esperanza, Fundación Solidaridad Humana, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, ISAMIS, Jesuit Refugee Service, Maquita Cushunchic, Unión Católica de Apoyo al Desarrollo Comunitario

Others: United Nations Volunteers

Operational partners

Government: General Directorate for Refugees - Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Others: IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WFP

Expenditure in Ecuador
2005 - 2009

Budget, income and expenditure in Ecuador (USD)

	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available	Total expenditure
Annual budget	11,095,740	6,914,639	4,893,817	11,808,456	10,938,740

Note: Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level and do not include seven per cent support costs for NAM contributions. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

Financial report for UNHCR's operations in Ecuador (USD)

Expenditure Breakdown	Current years' project			Previous years' project
	Annual budget	Supplementary budgets	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	1,694,218	0	1,694,218	0
Community services	739,574	0	739,574	87,749
Crop production	74,664	0	74,664	0
Domestic needs and household support	706,048	0	706,048	0
Education	225,599	0	225,599	21,906
Food	96,922	0	96,922	6,086
Health and nutrition	282,717	0	282,717	76,720
Income generation	458,234	0	458,234	74,693
Legal assistance	1,986,860	0	1,986,860	23,546
Operational support (to agencies)	1,017,611	0	1,017,611	52,799
Sanitation	25,000	0	25,000	0
Shelter and infrastructure	282,221	0	282,221	33,332
Transport and logistics	35,791	0	35,791	2,606
Water	114,321	0	114,321	5,255
Instalments to implementing partners	1,641,921	0	1,641,921	(384,691)
Subtotal operational activities	9,381,702	0	9,381,702	0

Expenditure Breakdown	Current years' project			Previous years' project
	Annual budget	Supplementary budgets	Total	Annual and supplementary budgets
Programme support	1,557,038	0	1,557,038	0
Total expenditure	10,938,740	0	10,938,740	0

Cancellation on previous years' expenditure	(131,942)
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Instalments with implementing partners				
Payments made	5,317,351	0	5,317,351	
Reporting received	(3,675,430)	0	(3,675,430)	
Balance	1,641,921	0	1,641,921	

Previous year's report				
Instalments with implementing partners:				
Outstanding 1st January				411,706
Reporting Received				(384,691)
Refunded to UNHCR				(27,016)
Currency Adjustment				4,402
Outstanding 31st December				4,401