



Global Report 2024 - Situation overview

Adrianda Diaz Martinez (left) and Yulenis Mosquera (right) cross a mangrove canal in Turbo, Colombia, where the Guardianes del Mangle (“Guardians of the Mangrove”) work to prevent the coastal forest waters becoming clogged with waste, thereby safeguarding local fishing incomes and the local environment. The group includes individuals displaced by armed conflict and is supported by UNHCR’s Environment and Climate Action Innovation Fund.
© UNHCR/Marina Calderon

Colombia situation

UNHCR country operations: Argentina Multi-Country Office, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Panama Multi-Country Office, Peru, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

2024 year-end population figures



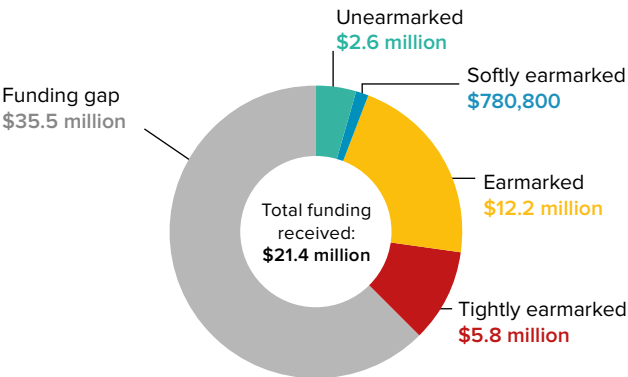
The data on Colombian refugees and asylum-seekers includes those in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela and the countries covered by Argentina Multi-Country Office and Panama Multi-Country Office.

* Source: Subjects of attention, Victims Registry, Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral a las Víctimas (UARIV).

2024 financial overview

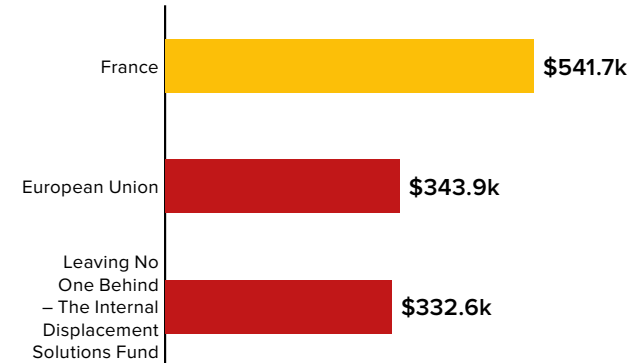
Funding received (USD)

In 2024, UNHCR required a total of **\$56.9 million** to address the emergency situation in Colombia and received only **38%** of the needed amount.



Top Contributions (USD)

Legend: Unearmarked (green), Softly earmarked (blue), Earmarked (yellow), Tightly earmarked (red)



The percentage funded (38%) and total funding amount (\$21,411,960) are indicative. This leaves an indicative funding gap of \$35,487,954 representing 62% of the financial requirements.

Colombia is at the centre of multiple overlapping displacement situations. In 2024, it hosted 2.8 million people in need of international protection, 7 million internally displaced Colombians, and a significant number of people crossed its territory.

Colombians were the fourth largest nationality worldwide lodging new asylum applications (149,000). By the end of 2024, there were 77,800 refugees and 397,900 asylum-seekers from Colombia worldwide. The vast majority – 75% of refugees and asylum-seekers – were hosted in the Americas.

Despite ongoing peace negotiations, armed conflict and violence continued, resulting in increased internal displacement and community confinement in Colombia.

In 2024, UNHCR supported **Colombia's** institutional response to displacement by fostering a network of protection actors, strengthening institutions and empowering communities, while prioritizing long-term solutions through the **legalization of informal settlements** with high concentrations of internally displaced people. UNHCR worked with a wide array of stakeholders (national and local institutions, as well as NGOs), and maintained 16 partnership agreements, delivering assistance to over 617,000 people. Furthermore, prioritizing 24 settlements across 9 departments, UNHCR's legal-advisory and technical support, in coordination with the Ministry of Housing and local authorities, benefited 12,306 households (49,224 individuals). Moreover, by year-end, 7,816 families had advanced in their lot -or land-titling processes, and 750 families received formal land titles. These efforts are key to ensuring long-term security of tenure and advancing durable solutions for communities with large concentrations of internally displaced people.

UNHCR also worked closely with communities at heightened risk of displacement in 2024, to strengthen their self-protection mechanisms, such as establishing and training 90 community-based networks in preventive strategies and supporting local authorities in both emergency preparedness and humanitarian response through coordinated protection monitoring visits in areas heavily affected by new displacement.

In total, UNHCR directly assisted over 432,100 people in Colombia—including refugees, internally displaced people, returnees, and those at risk of statelessness—providing access to specialized protection services (82% of beneficiaries), support to meet basic needs (8%), community empowerment activities (7%), and durable solutions initiatives (3%). Among these beneficiaries, more than 271,000 individuals were protected from discrimination and violence by receiving targeted information on accessing rights and services. This included technical support for government institutions to issue documentation in underserved areas, safe house services for women at risk of violence, and child-friendly spaces that offered psychosocial support and recreational activities to mitigate child recruitment risks.

UNHCR's network of 71 [information and orientation centres](#), plus seven mobile units that covered 66,000 km during the year, registered and assisted almost 138,000 people, including more than 105,000 people accessing the services for the first time. The services provided included advice on asylum, documentation and Temporary Protection Status; information about protections risks; and referrals for people with serious medical conditions.

UNHCR co-led the national [Protection Cluster](#) together with the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Danish Refugee Council. The Protection Cluster contributed to the implementation of the [Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (HRP), which in 2024 supported 1,336,742 people at risk or affected by conflict, 200,000 more people than in the previous year and with greater attention to mass displacement and confinement emergencies. The Protection Cluster's strategy, adopted by the Humanitarian Country Team, focused on prevention, emergency response, and solutions. It included training, technical advice, and protection analyses in crisis-affected areas in Colombia. The analyses were carried out in geographic areas affected by the overlapping of humanitarian crises and were made visible through documents published by the Global Protection Cluster. As part of its advocacy processes, it maintained a close relationship with the ICRC, UNHCR and the Attorney General's Office to highlight the impact of the armed conflict on the refugee and migrant population.

UNHCR coordinated the International Displacement Solutions Fund (IDSF) in Colombia, strengthening Government capacity for **durable solutions** to forced displacement through policy development, coordination, data tools, and budget planning, alongside UNDP, IOM and UN Habitat. In 2024, the IDSF made notable strides in strengthening institutional responses to internal displacement. First, it supported the Government in formulating the National Durable Solutions Strategy, reinforcing commitment from key national bodies such as the National Planning Department, the Victims' Unit, and the Department for Social Prosperity. This framework ensured that displacement is addressed within Colombia's larger development agenda and lays out measurable targets for the short, medium, and long term. Second, the Fund advanced territorial solutions by developing and validating an area-based focalization methodology, which allowed local governments to identify where displaced populations are located and design tailored interventions to improve living conditions. Through this methodology, seven local durable solutions plans were initiated, expanding coordinated assistance to around 39,000 vulnerable IDPs and host community.

The internal situation in Colombia had **spillover effects in neighbouring countries**. UNHCR's "[International protection considerations with regards to people fleeing Colombia](#)," updated in August 2023, served to guide countries receiving Colombian asylum-seekers.

In **Ecuador**, 5,000 new asylum claims were submitted by Colombians in 2024, an increase of 27% from 2023, and the highest number since 2019. UNHCR's comprehensive area-based approach in Ecuador sought to mitigate the risks and vulnerabilities faced by forcibly displaced people, regardless of their nationality, and to promote their stability, safety, and well-being in the short term to establish the grounds for their integration and solutions in the long run. 11,774 Colombians were among the 48,500 forcibly displaced people registered by UNHCR and partners in Ecuador in 2024, giving them a pivotal first entry point to identify specific needs and deliver services, assistance and access to protection.

UNHCR worked with Ecuador's International Protection Directorate (DPIN) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility to build the Government's capacity to ensure fair and efficient assessment of asylum claims. UNHCR supported over 886 Colombian families in Ecuador with direct support to cover basic needs and help the most vulnerable to become more self-reliant. UNHCR and its partners directly supported 29 emergency shelters in 7 cities to ensure temporary accommodation for refugees. This access to safe shelter in the community, preventing homelessness, benefited over 11,300 people, 33% of whom were Colombians.

Legal stay arrangements, documentation, access to services, and livelihoods helped ensure that displaced Colombians and others in need of protection could **thrive in host communities**. UNHCR and partners recognized **102 companies in Ecuador** with the Inclusive Company Seal, an award that, for the third consecutive year, highlighted the efforts of the private sector to integrate refugees. Under this initiative, UNHCR supported 421 Colombian refugees to access the labour market in their host communities by providing them with technical skills certifications and links to decent employment opportunities, among other livelihoods initiatives in 2024.

UNHCR closely coordinated with the National Office for the Attention of Refugees (ONPAR) to strengthen **Panama's** asylum system, particularly in the Darien province and in the Emberá-Wounaan indigenous territories, which have historically received and protected Colombian refugees. UNHCR's community-based protection initiatives in these areas, including the [Delegadas Comunitarias](#) project, supported over 1,000 people by leveraging the local communities' knowledge. This approach improved environmental mitigation measures, enabling the mapping of places, services, and socioecological risks and the design of a strategy for solid waste management. UNHCR extended its refugee-led livelihood initiative, [Hecho por Refugiados](#), to refugees and asylum-seekers living in Emberá-Wounaan's indigenous communities, enabling them to generate additional income through handmade crafts and support their families. UNHCR also trained 712 officials in Panama on international protection and

stateless prevention and conducted three joint documentation missions to ensure that Colombian refugees residing in Emberá-Wounaan indigenous territories had access to proper documentation and their basic rights recognized.

In the **Southern Cone (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay)**, there were more than 2,200 Colombian refugees and more than 3,800 asylum-seekers. UNHCR provided protection services to over 1,700 Colombians, assisting them with legal advice for securing rights such as education, social protection, and health. They also received support in obtaining documentation, such as civil status, legal status and identity documents. Furthermore, more than 600 Colombian refugees and asylum-seekers received support from UNHCR to cover their basic needs in 2024, for shelter, food or other essentials.

Funding gaps severely hindered the ability to provide comprehensive support to displaced communities. The lack of sufficient funds meant that many critical programmes, such as peaceful coexistence and sports-for-protection projects aimed at preventing child recruitment by armed groups, could not be fully implemented. This shortfall in funding significantly limited the reach of initiatives to safeguard children and youth by providing safe spaces and activities in conflict-affected areas, exposing over 24,000 children and adolescents to heightened protection risks and undermining critical efforts to curb forced displacement and child recruitment. The lack of funding not only exacerbated the vulnerabilities of IDPs in Colombia, but also Colombians displaced in neighboring countries, leaving them without adequate protection and support.

María Valencia Eneida, 59, has spent almost all her adult life in displacement, having fled from her hometown of Riosucio, in Colombia's Chocó department, during violent clashes involving armed groups in February 1997. More than 25 years on, she lives in Turbo, on Colombia's coast, and is a member of the Guardianes del Mangle ("Guardians of the Mangrove"), a mangrove conservation initiative supported by UNHCR's [Environment and Climate Action Innovation Fund](#). © UNHCR/Marina Calderon

