

Ecuador

Operational Update

N.5 | May 2025

"Now we can share this knowledge in our communities to prevent accidents or fires caused by faulty connections."
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Figures at a glance

Population figures

80,005

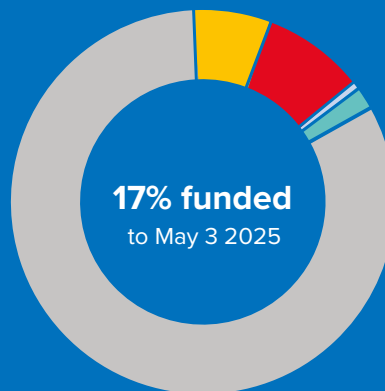
Historical figure of refugees recognized by Ecuador¹

94%

from neighbouring Colombia

68,079

refugees with active cases registered on UNHCR's database



73.3M
required in 2025

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

For more information on funding, please visit reporting.unhcr.org/ecuador

Our 2025 response in figures

24,398*

refugees and other displaced people supported and registered in proGres as of the end of May 2025



14,495

people received orientation and assistance to access asylum services



4,285

people supported with collective emergency shelter



431

people supported with child protection services



1,773

people supported with community - based protection services



1,947

women and girls survivors of violence supported



3,962

people assisted to cover their basic needs and protection²



5,101

people supported with mental health and psychosocial support



2,585

people received hygiene kits



234

people provided with technical or skills certification



506

people linked with a decent employment opportunity

¹ Historical figure registered by the government to the end of December 2024. UNHCR registers active refugee cases in ProGres. Figures to the end of May 2025.

² Preliminary data

*Figure includes people supported through other services beyond those described below.

Operational context

In May 2025, Ecuador registered the highest number of violent deaths ever, with 58% more carried out within the first months of the year (and an average of 26 per day) and surpassing 2023 as the most violent year. This violence continues to put communities at risk, including those inhabited by refugees and other displaced people.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights reported that nearly 83,000 people over the age of 15 were displaced by violence in 2024 alone—a figure echoed by a joint study currently underway between UNHCR, the Ombudsperson's Office and the Government.

This takes place amid President Daniel Noboa's renewed swearing-in and the announcement of his cabinet. While most ministers were retained, notable reshuffles occurred in energy, government, production, health, and environment.

In this increasingly complex context, UNHCR continues to monitor protection needs, advocate for displaced populations, and coordinate with national and local authorities to ensure timely and effective responses. The organization continues to engage with community-based protection mechanisms, enhancing access to legal documentation, and working closely with partners to improve reception conditions and referral systems. However, significant funding cuts are severely straining UNHCR's ability to sustain and deliver these essential interventions, including psychosocial support, and access to basic services and needs. These financial constraints risk leaving vulnerable communities without critical, life-saving assistance. Sustained international engagement, predictable funding, and long-term solidarity are more vital than ever to prevent further cycles of displacement, exclusion, and deepening poverty.

Main populations forced to flee hosted by Ecuador and others of concern

Colombians

According to Government data, 296 Colombians sought asylum in Ecuador in May 2025 (1,963 so far in the year), a 15% decrease as compared to the previous month. This number accounts for 29% of those registered in 2024. 72% of people registered this month arrived in the country in families of two or more. With 2024 registering the highest number of asylum claims filed by Colombians in Ecuador since 2014 and conditions worsening in the country of origin, including with constant internal displacements and confinements in departments at the border with Ecuador, UNHCR projects an important number of asylum claims in 2025.

1,963 Colombians who have sought asylum in Ecuador in 2025²

296 were registered in April



Main needs of Colombians in Ecuador

77% access to food, housing, and clothing⁴

10% Access to rights and services (job, education)⁴

7% access to documentation⁴

Venezuelans

Venezuelans continue to lead in numbers of arrivals in Ecuador, though in declining numbers. 22,860 people entered Ecuador in May 2025 (10% more than the previous month), with a daily entry average of 762 Venezuelans. 21,300 people left the country, a 10% increase as compared to the previous month, leaving a balance of 1,560 people who entered and remained the country during the reporting period (48% less than the previous month). According to Government data, 411 Venezuelans sought asylum in Ecuador in May 2025 (2,378 so far in the year), an 8% decrease as compared to the previous month and less than the number reported in the same month in 2024 (517). 68% of people registered arrived in the country in families of two or more. Since 2022, Venezuela has accounted for approximately 45–50% of the asylum claims processed in Ecuador. This underscores both the continued need for support and the sustained interest in accessing international protection. Moreover, with the conclusion of the second phase of the regularization process, the asylum system has become increasingly relevant for those with protection needs. [Population entry and exit figures have been compiled by the GTRMs in Ecuador's border areas \(Tulcán, Lago Agrio, and Huaquillas\) with qualitative and quantitative information on mixed movement trends. These figures are not triangulated with neighboring countries.](#)

444.778 Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Ecuador²

45% estimated to be between 18 and 45 years old³

25% estimated to have a higher education degree³

Main needs

82% access to food³

67% access to housing or shelter³

57% access to livelihoods or employment³

² According to data estimated by the Refugee and Migrant Working Group (GTRM, by its acronym in Spanish). The GTRM is assessing a new methodology with the Government to estimate the new stock figure. Figures of asylum claims from the Government.

³ Fifth R4V Joint Needs Assessment. www.r4v.info

⁴ 2023 Protection Monitoring Report available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/ecu>

Ecuadorians

Trends in Ecuadorian displacements have shifted, with this nationality dropping to the fifth to cross the Darien, according to [Panamanian authorities](#). 103,000 Ecuadorian asylum-seekers globally were pending a decision on their claims by mid- 2024.

HUMANITARIANS AT WORK



I'M ROMMEL AND I'VE BEEN WORKING FOR UNHCR FOR 10 YEARS ON BEHALF OF FORCIBLY DISPLACED PEOPLE. ALL THESE YEARS HAVE BEEN A REAL CHALLENGE. I HAVE HEARD MANY STORIES OF PEOPLE WHO MUST LEAVE THEIR COUNTRY SEEKING HOPE IN A NEW ONE. BUT AMONG THOSE STORIES I REMEMBER, AS IF IT WERE YESTERDAY, ONE THAT I KEEP WITH GREAT AFFECTION. ONE DAY A MOTHER ARRIVED AT THE OFFICE ACCOMPANIED BY HER TWO CHILDREN, A BOY AND A TEENAGER. THEY TOLD ME THAT, DUE TO CLASHES, THEY AND MANY OTHER FAMILIES HAD TO LEAVE THEIR SMALL TOWN IN COLOMBIA. "A MASSIVE DISPLACEMENT," THEY CALLED IT.

[Read the full story](#)

DELIVERING PROTECTION

ATACAMES

Enhancing access to rights and services



UNHCR conducted an orientation day in collaboration with HIAS and RET at the La Union office, engaging 28 participants in the session. The attendees, forcibly displaced from their countries, sought stable accommodation. Families were informed about local documentation processes, gaining access to education for their children, and receiving essential protection services. This activity was made possible through the support of donors such as ECHO and Japan.

HUAQUILLAS

Multi-stakeholder dialogue space for unaccompanied and separated youth



A total of 40 representatives from key organizations—including public systems, civil society, and international cooperation—took part in an open dialogue about the protection of children in vulnerable situations. The discussion enhanced responses to various situations and helped develop new strategies, and collaborative efforts across sectors. The contributions of both private and public donors of flexible funding to UNHCR enabled this achievement.

GUAYAQUIL

Enhancing protection responses for displaced children



UNHCR facilitated a workshop on international protection for officers of the Ecuadorian National Police. The session focused on protection pathways, regularization processes, and access to rights for children and adolescents who have been forcibly displaced. This initiative aimed to strengthen institutional understanding and improve protection responses at the local level, helping to ensure more timely and coordinated protection for displaced children and adolescents.

PROMOTING ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

IBARRA

Strengthening health and HIV prevention: Hygiene kit delivery to mitigate risks

To strengthen the availability of sanitary supplies, UNHCR delivered 100 hygiene kits to the Priorato Health Centre. This assistance not only enhanced the centre's capacity, but also contributed to the protection of patients with underlying health conditions and reinforced HIV prevention efforts. This was achieved thanks to the support provided by UNAIDS.



MONTECRISTI

Providing Essential Healthcare

UNHCR organized a medical assistance day providing basic healthcare services to forcibly displaced people and their hosts. The Juana la Avanzadora collective and the local Municipality also participated in this public benefit initiative. In the temporary medical space, approximately 70 people—mostly women and children—received free medical attention. This effort supported vulnerable populations, helped to complement the local healthcare system, and demonstrated a humanitarian commitment to the right of every individual to live a healthy and dignified life. The Republic of Korea made this possible through their generous support.



SAN LORENZO

Improving library services to enhance technological access

UNHCR and GAD San Lorenzo collaborated to improve the conditions of the Municipal Library. The renovation of its facilities led to a significant transformation of the local educational environment. UNHCR contributed by upgrading equipment, modernizing educational resources, and enhancing infrastructure—efforts that increased the motivation of children and parents to use the space for learning. The library aims to offer an inclusive environment and to promote greater community integration. This became a reality thanks to the support from donors like Japan.



PROMOTING SOCIOECONOMIC INCLUSION

MANTA

First edition of the Entrepreneur School launched in 2025



The Entrepreneur School 2025 edition was launched in collaboration between UNHCR, GAD Manta, and ULEAM Ecuador to support the economic advancement of its participants. A total of 58 entrepreneurs took part in the training courses, including 25 refugees. This initiative serves as an inspiration for supporting organizations to further invest in entrepreneurship education and expand opportunities for refugees to develop their talents. Participants gained knowledge to stay aligned with the latest technological and innovative practices. This was supported with contributions from donors such as Republic of Korea and Japan.

GUAYAQUIL

Recognizing inclusive companies and empowering youth through job training



UNHCR organized the employment fair “Futuro en Movimiento”, where 14 companies offered over 120 job vacancies for forcibly displaced people and members of the host community. The event also provided training to 130 young people in customer service, sales, inventory, and logistics. During the event, UNHCR presented the Inclusive Company Seal, recognizing companies that promote the inclusion of forcibly displaced people. The fair helped reduce unemployment while enabling displaced individuals to embrace a new future. Donors such as the Republic of Korea and Japan made this possible through their generous support.

LAGO AGRIO

Meeting of Opportunities: Business dialogue on advancing diversity in employment



A “Meeting of Opportunities” was organized by UNHCR and GAD Lago Agrio as part of the Congress of Business Leaders to foster dialogue and collaboration. A total of 20 local companies participated in this initiative, which aimed to promote economic inclusion for forcibly displaced people. The event helped expand opportunities for unemployed refugees to secure stable sources of income, while also supporting companies in defining the qualifications of suitable candidates—creating a mutually beneficial, win-win situation. This was supported with contributions from donors such as the Republic of Korea and Japan.

PROMOTING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

QUITO

Celebrating female resilience: Sweat, leadership, and wellness

UNHCR, GAD Quito, and FUDELA celebrated the resilience and courage of women through sports—an approach that transformed the lives of refugee women, athletes, and community leaders, empowering them with leadership skills. During the event, participants shared their personal stories regarding leadership in sports. Simultaneously, this gathering promoted integration of people from diverse backgrounds while underscoring the value of inclusion. Private donors such as LivGolf supported the activity through their generous support.



COTACACHI

Health and non-discrimination: Building an inclusive medical environment

In Cotacachi, UNHCR promoted the value of non-discrimination by facilitating a workshop in coordination with the local Health District. 20 healthcare professionals from the Cotacachi and Intag health centres participated in the session, where they received guidance on identifying and preventing discriminatory practices in medical settings. Additionally, UNHCR provided essential medical supplies to strengthen the centres’ capacity to deliver inclusive and equitable healthcare to different patients.



BOLIVAR

Advancing comprehensive personal development

UNHCR and FUDELA held a self-discovery session aiming at enhancing children’s self-awareness and fostering independent development through art, writing, and games. The initiative sought to emphasize mental well-being, strengthen self-esteem, and support children’s holistic growth. These elements serve as essential pathways to constructing self-identity, scaffolding both self-acceptance and the recognition of difference in relation to the other.



In Chical, training workshops sparked a light of hope

"Now we can share this knowledge in our communities to prevent accidents or fires caused by faulty connections."
© UNHCR/Omar Ganchala



Electrical installations in the northern border town of Chical are often improvised and precarious. The lack of electricians with adequate technical training—along with the town's remote distance from larger cities—has left much of the area without electricity or facing extremely high electricity costs due to poorly done installations.

That's why UNHCR, with support from FUDELA and funding from the Government of Japan, launched a programme to train members of the community - mostly Indigenous Awá community members, some of them displaced from Colombia—in basic electrical work. The goal is clear: to build knowledge and improve livelihoods for this cross-border community, while helping families cut down on electricity costs by improving household and community electrical systems.

Ángel Guanga, a 39-year-old resident of El Pailón (Angostura), took part in the training. Although he works as a day laborer, the lack of opportunities led him to seek other sources of income. Learning about electricity is a new chance for him and others. "We grew up without electricity. It wasn't until 2008 that the Awá sector got connected. At the time, we wired things however we could, which made our power bills very expensive," he explains.

Through the workshops, participants learned about regulations, safety measures, and technical skills for carrying out basic home installations. "Now we can share this knowledge in our communities to prevent accidents or fires caused by faulty connections," he says.

Another participant, Romel Nastacuaz, adds that many communities can't afford certified electricians, which creates safety hazards. "Knowing how to do this helps us avoid danger. We didn't know how to wire our homes, and many are made of wood—more prone to fires."

Trainer and Awá native Jairo Rodríguez notes that poor installations drive up household electricity costs. "People use the wrong cables, leave loose wires, don't use proper safety boxes. That can lead to accidents. We want to strengthen their skills, share knowledge, and promote community development."

Thanks to the workshops, members of the Awá community have improved the wiring in their homes and communal spaces. For many, whose only livelihood was farming, gaining this knowledge has become a beacon of hope, offering new ways to earn an income and support their families.

You can help us continue building a World of Possibilities for thousands of displaced people and their host communities in Ecuador. [Donate now.](#)

We thank the contributions of our donors

31 May 2025

UNHCR Ecuador is grateful for the critical and generous support provided by donors who have contributed with earmarked and unearmarked funding.



UNHCR Ecuador is grateful for the support from private donors



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