

Ecuador

Operational Update

N.6 | June 2025

"I'd like to tell them to come here and learn—there are a lot of things to do here."
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Figures at a glance

Population figures

80,005

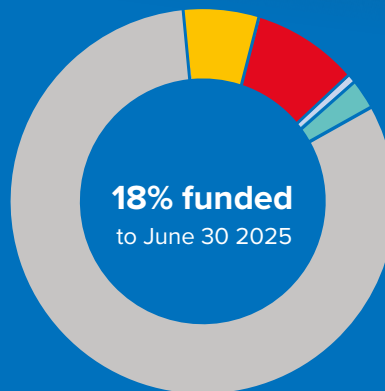
Historical figure of refugees recognized by Ecuador¹

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

29,125*

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



16,970

people received orientation and assistance to access asylum services



5,614

people supported with collective emergency shelter



468

people supported with child protection services



2,482

people supported with community - based protection services



2,369

women and girls survivors of violence supported



5,192

people assisted to cover their basic needs and protection²



6,376

people supported with mental health and psychosocial support



3,440

people received hygiene kits



277

people provided with technical or skills certification



605

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 June 2025.

² Preliminary data

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

Operational context

In June, Ecuador made important changes on the legal and policy front affecting forcibly displaced communities. The National Solidarity Law entered into force, establishing a legal framework for State action amid internal armed conflict—it mandates protection of civilians, repeats respect for International Humanitarian Law, and clarifies Executive obligations toward vulnerable populations.

Under the National Solidarity Law, Ecuador has established a new mandatory transit visa for citizens of visa-requiring countries (including Venezuela). Published after a delayed implementation, the regulations require applications to be submitted at least 20 days in advance. The visa permits a single transit within 30 days, with return transit allowed under justified circumstances. These new requirements may pose additional barriers for forcibly displaced people, particularly Venezuelan citizens, who may be unable to meet the formal criteria and instead rely on informal crossings. This increases their exposure to risks, especially for women and children. UNHCR continues to monitor the situation.

Violence remains volatile across the country, although it has intensified in recent weeks. Recently, several illegal mining camps have been dismantled by the Armed Forces, triggering violent incidents, particularly in areas such as

Esmeraldas and Buenos Aires (in Imbabura province) in the north of the country. The capture of Adolfo Macías, known as ‘Fito’, has also sparked violent events in Manabí province, including massacres. Latest military and police operations have revealed links between organized criminal groups and municipal officials in cities like Manta and Durán. In the latter—one of the most violent cities in the country—the police intervened at the Municipal Transit Agency.

As part of World Refugee Day 2025, UNHCR organized a series of commemorative events across the country to promote inclusion, solidarity, and resilience among forcibly displaced people. In this context, UNHCR presented the 2025 National Trends on Forced Displacement, which revealed key findings: increased regional mobility, changing protection needs at transit points, and new challenges for community integration. In this regard, UNHCR visited several media outlets and shared more detailed information, including figures and the humanitarian response.

However, UNHCR’s ability to sustain protection services, improve reception conditions, and respond to emerging needs remains severely constrained by funding shortages. Continued international support is critical to ensure life-saving assistance reaches the most vulnerable.

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

Colombians

According to Government data, 250 Colombians sought asylum in Ecuador in June 2025 (2,213 so far in the year), a 16% decrease as compared to the previous month. This number accounts for 42% of those registered in 2024. 74% 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.



2,213

Colombians who have sought asylum in Ecuador in 2025²

250

were registered in June

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

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>

Venezuelans

Venezuelans continue to lead in numbers of arrivals in Ecuador, though in declining numbers. 21,900 people entered Ecuador in June 2025 (4% less than the previous month), with a daily entry average of 730 Venezuelans. 19,770 people left the country, a 7% decrease as compared to the previous month, leaving a balance of 659 people who entered and remained in the country during the reporting period (36% less than the previous month). According to Government data, 380 Venezuelans sought asylum in Ecuador in June 2025 (2,758 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 (457). 80% 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

Ecuadorians

Trends in Ecuadorian displacements have shifted, with this nationality dropping to the fifth to cross the Darien Jungle, according to [Panamanian authorities](#). These numbers have decreased dramatically compared to the same period in previous years. 108,000 Ecuadorian asylum-seekers globally were pending a decision on their claims by mid-2024.

HUMANITARIANS AT WORK



I AM MARIANA AND FOR MORE THAN 3 YEARS I HAVE BEEN WORKING AS A DRIVER IN GUAYAQUIL. WORKING AT UNHCR HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST ENRICHING EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE, BOTH PROFESSIONALLY AND HUMANLY. THAT FILLS ME WITH A DEEP SENSE OF PURPOSE. FROM THE FIRST DAY I KNEW THAT IT WAS NOT JUST ANY JOB. BEING PART OF AN ORGANIZATION WHOSE MISSION IS TO PROTECT PEOPLE FORCED TO FLEE THEIR HOMES GAVE ME A PURPOSE BEYOND DRIVING.

[Read the full story](#)

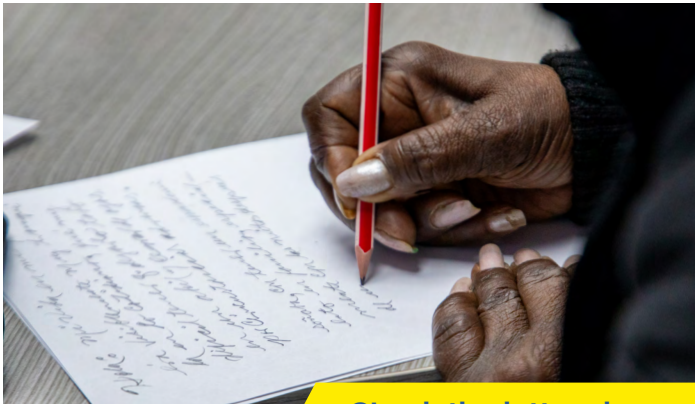
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³ Fifth R4V Joint Needs Assessment. www.r4v.info

SPECIAL FEATURE: WORLD REFUGEE DAY

To commemorate World Refugee Day 2025, UNHCR Ecuador led a series of high-impact activities across the country to show and strengthen solidarity with refugees and migrants.

“Con Amor desde Ecuador”



[Check the letters here](#)

The central feature of this year’s World Refugee Day was the launch of the initiative “Con Amor desde Ecuador”, which raised the voices of forcibly displaced people across the country to share their stories. Refugees across Ecuador wrote heartfelt letters expressing their experiences of fleeing their countries, integrating, sharing their dreams, as well as showing appreciation to the institutions, communities, and individuals who have supported them throughout their journeys. UNHCR carefully compiled these messages into a symbolic collection, [distributing over 246 letters to high-level stakeholders including the Vice President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, mayors, key donors, journalists, content creators, private sector allies, and partners](#). The initiative was a powerful gesture of gratitude and a call for continued solidarity with the forcibly displaced people in Ecuador. The initiative was also coordinated with operations in countries such as Panama and Chile.

Sports features at the centre stage of protection and solutions

UNHCR, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Municipality of Quito hosted a national commemorative event that brought together government, Embassy representatives, private sector, refugee leaders, and humanitarian partners. The event combined a formal ceremony with traditional sports such as relay races, rugby, and local games—highlighting the strength, potential, and cultural richness of displaced communities while promoting social inclusion and cohesion. This was possible thanks to the support donors from the private sector like LivGolf.



[Check out the event](#)

Activities in the field

In local communities across the country, UNHCR Ecuador organized a series of arts and sports-centred to promote inclusion, protection and integration. Through football matches, races, and other recreational and cultural activities, people of all backgrounds came together to celebrate unity in solidarity with refugees. These events showcased the power of sport and arts as tools for protection and social cohesion community integration for forcibly displaced people. These activities were possible thanks to our donors like Japan, LivGolf, Embassy of Korea, and ECHO



Blue Night in support of refugees

In a symbolic show of unity, support and solidarity, iconic landmarks across Ecuador were lit up in blue. Cities such as Quito, Lago Agrio, Manta, Cuenca, Tulcán, and Portoviejo participated in this nationwide activity, sending a message of hope and welcome to those seeking safety and dignity in the country.



[Check out all the monuments that were lit up](#)

In World Refugee Day 2025, through these coordinated efforts, UNHCR Ecuador reaffirmed its commitment to standing with forcibly displaced people and to working hand in hand with local and national partners to ensure their protection, stability and dignity.

DELIVERING PROTECTION

OTAVALO

From displacement to connection: Otavalo's path to community integration



UNHCR coordinated an orientation session to support forcibly displaced individuals in Otavalo. The initiative reached over 200 people, including both forcibly displaced people and members of the host community with comprehensive services and orientation to facilitate integration in the local context. Concurrently, UNHCR promoted community engagement by fostering connections between forcibly displaced people and long-term residents, strengthening social cohesion, and encouraging mutual recognition, inclusion, and respect for diversity. This was possible thanks to the generous contribution of our donors like Japan and ECHO.

TULCAN

UNHCR provides training to prevent violence against women on the northern border



UNHCR conducted training for Tulcán Municipality staff on preventing violence against women. The training addressed topics such as power dynamics, protection pathways, and coordination strategies to strengthen institutional response. Strengthening local capacities is key to ensuring timely and person-centered care for survivors of violence. This initiative, developed with the support of the Republic of Korea, is part of a broader effort to build a world free of violence, where all women and girls can live in safety, dignity, and equality.

PROMOTING ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

BOLIVAR

Enhancing access and support for forcibly displaced populations

With the support of ECHO and Japan, UNHCR, and the Public Defender's Office, assistance sessions are being held for newly arrived forcibly displaced persons who intend to remain in the country. In addition to promoting their right to seek asylum and other essential services, hygiene kits will be distributed to ensure that people have access to their rights. The aim of these services is to bring services closer to people on the move and promote access to their rights, as well as to ensure awareness and referral to protection routes.



LAGO AGRIO

Out of the shadows: Protecting vulnerable children through education

Thanks to ECHO and the Embassy of Korea, UNHCR and the Federación Mujeres de Sucumbíos launched an initiative targeting 28 teachers at the Dr. Camilo Gallegos Domínguez Millennium Educational Unit. This intervention seeks to improve the quality of school education by strengthening teachers' knowledge of international protection principles, as well as improving care and teaching approaches for all children, especially those at risk. Through this program, UNHCR seeks to support vulnerable children and integrate them into a more inclusive and protective learning environments.



PROMOTING SOCIOECONOMIC INCLUSION

IBARRA

Empowering Futures: UNHCR hosts resume workshop for “A Ganar” participants



With the aim of strengthening the job skills of forcibly displaced persons, UNHCR, in collaboration with FUDELA, held a workshop on resume writing and review for 43 participants in the “A Ganar” program. With the support of the government of Japan, participants learned how to write high-quality resumes and received useful information and advice for job interviews. The workshop boosted their confidence, improved their skills, and brought them one step closer to decent employment opportunities and sustainable livelihoods.

QUITO

UNHCR and BRITCHAM unite to promote economic inclusion in Ecuador



UNHCR signed a working agreement with the Ecuadorian-British Chamber of Commerce to jointly promote the economic inclusion of forcibly displaced persons in Ecuador. This partnership will connect companies belonging to the Chamber with a broader pool of qualified candidates within the refugee population, while improving their corporate visibility and social impact. At the same time, it will contribute to strengthening the livelihoods and economic resilience of displaced persons throughout the country.

PROMOTING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

LAGO AGRIO

Supporting teachers to build classrooms free from discrimination

UNHCR trained 24 teachers from northern border areas on the right of asylum-seeking children and adolescents. The training session included information on how to seek asylum, tips for an inclusive classroom atmosphere, and lectures on how to end discrimination and xenophobia. Throughout the sessions, UNHCR emphasized the importance of inclusion, empathy, and respect in the field of education, where all children regardless of their nationalities or status can thrive. This was possible thanks to donors from the private and public sector who actively contribute to UNHCR to foster inclusive environments for forcibly displaced children in Ecuador.



PUGACHO (IMBABURA)

Towards inclusive care: Training for dignity and equity in health services

As part of the commitment to equitable healthcare, UNHCR conducted specific training sessions for healthcare staff to prevent discriminatory practices and promote inclusive services for asylum-seekers, and other forcibly displaced people at the Pugacho health centre, ensuring that everyone has access to dignified and fair medical care. Through targeted support for local healthcare providers, UNHCR is helping to build more resilient and compassionate health systems that leave no one behind. This was made possible by our donors from the private and public sector who actively contribute to UNHCR to build a better health-service system for forcibly displaced people in Ecuador.



STORIES FROM THE FIELD

By the sea, Eric develops his artistic talents in the San Mateo community

"I'd like to tell them to come here and learn—there are a lot of things to do here."

© UNHCR/Omar Ganchala

SAN MATEO

Eric Juan Alonso Sánchez is 12 years old. In Venezuela, Eric loved to study and dreamed of becoming a firefighter. His mother enrolled him in kindergarten at a very young age, and because of this, he watched his classmates move up a grade while he had to repeat it, as he wasn't old enough to enroll in primary school. Despite that, Eric remembers his early school years with great joy, surrounded by friends and a safe, family-oriented environment.

When Eric and his family arrived in Manta, at Ecuador's Pacific Coast, everything felt new and exciting. "What impressed me the most were the beaches," he says. Despite coming from Venezuela—a country famous for its stunning beaches—Eric had never been to one. So, when they settled in San Mateo, and the ocean became their neighbour, he was amazed.

Upon arrival, Eric started school and began building a network of new friends. "School is great, although it's different. Back in Venezuela we didn't have recess, but here we do. There we had to bring our own food, but here there's a snack bar to buy food," he explained.

Eric is part of UNHCR's community programmes implemented

in collaboration with the Humor y Vida Foundation and with support from Japan, in San Mateo. The foundation operates the Buque Azart, a space dedicated to promoting art and culture and organizing artistic and sports activities focused on protection. These programmes welcome children and teens from San Mateo and surrounding areas. They help build support networks, foster friendships, and keep kids away from street violence.

This is one of the places Eric holds most dear. "They call it the crazy ship," he says, referring to the Buque that has become a centre for learning and fun in the neighbourhood. There, Eric discovered his passion for dance and theatre. "I've learned to dance, to try new things, to respect others." Alongside Eric, other community members rehearse plays and dances that they later performed aboard the ship and at other community spaces.

Life in Ecuador has brought Eric joy and opportunities to grow, and he wants others to have the same chance. To the kids who haven't yet arrived, "I'd like to tell them to come here and learn—there are a lot of things to do here." In this new community, Eric has not only found friends and hobbies, but also a place to keep dreaming and build his future.

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

30 June 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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