

Ecuador

Operational Update

N.8 | August 2025

Figures at a glance

Population figures

80,589

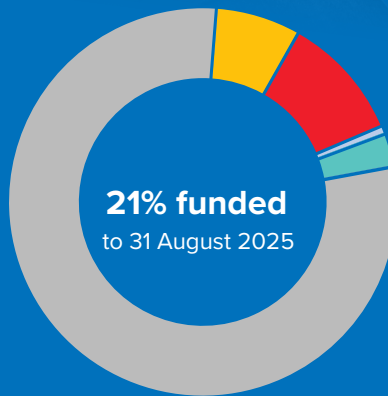
Historical figure of refugees recognized by Ecuador¹

94%

from neighbouring Colombia

68,048

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

"I had always thought of education as a right, but I didn't realize it was such an enabling one. Once I started higher education, I discovered how many doors open just because you are a student."
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Our 2025 response in figures

36,489*

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



24,553

people received orientation and assistance to access asylum services



7,705

people supported with collective emergency shelter



577

people supported with child protection services



3,289

people supported with community - based protection services



3,017

women and girls survivors of violence supported



6,729

people assisted to cover their basic needs and protection²



9,006

people supported with mental health and psychosocial support



4,201

people received hygiene kits



332

people provided with technical or skills certification



1,073

people linked with a decent employment opportunity

¹ Historical figure registered by the government since 1978 to the end of July 2025. UNHCR registers active refugee cases in ProGres. Figures to the end of August 2025.

² Preliminary data

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

Operational context

In August, Ecuador remained at the centre of significant political and security developments with direct implications for human mobility. Engagement with the United States intensified, with visits from senior officials to Quito. Discussions focused on cooperation in the areas of migration management, extradition, and security assistance. These high-level exchanges highlight the stronger bilateral collaboration in addressing organized crime and irregular movements in the region. In parallel, the government highlighted a marked decline in the number of Ecuadorian nationals arriving at the U.S. border, a trend that has shifted Ecuador's position in regional population movements dynamics.

Domestically, the government implemented new measures to address rising insecurity, including the declaration and subsequent extension of states of emergency in several provinces. Security operations targeted organized crime and illicit economies, particularly in border and rural areas. The government's decision to terminate the 15-year Migratory Statute with Venezuela marked an important policy shift, signalling political distancing while reiterating that international protection standards remain intact. Despite this, asylum applications in August reflected continued demand, with Venezuelans and Colombians accounting for the majority of new claims. The asylum system, increasingly

relevant following the conclusion of regularization processes, remains a vital channel for those seeking safety in Ecuador.

Broader structural factors also weighed on the humanitarian landscape. Ecuador's energy crisis fuelled uncertainty, with experts warning of shortages in the coming months despite high hydroelectric reserves. At the same time, displacement dynamics within and beyond Ecuador continued to evolve: government data continued to show a sharp drop in Ecuadorians crossing the Darién, while a new report by the Ombudsperson's Office, with support from UNHCR, estimated that over 315,000 people were internally displaced between 2022 and 2024. Together, these trends shine a light over the complexity of Ecuador's protection environment, where political, economic, and security challenges intersect with sustained needs for international protection and durable solutions.

UNHCR remains at the forefront of supporting the delivery of international protection and solutions to people forced to flee. With support from donors and partners, and despite funding shortfalls, the UN Refugee Agency is providing support to those continuing to arrive in the field in search of safety, supporting access to the asylum procedure, shelter, and other services, while engaging them in avenues for socioeconomic inclusion.

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



Colombians

According to Government data, 199 Colombians sought asylum in Ecuador in August 2025 (2,718 so far in the year), a 35% decrease as compared to the previous month. This number accounts for 40% of those registered in 2024. 64% 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.

2,718

Colombians who have sought asylum in Ecuador in 2025²

199

were registered in August

Main needs of Colombians in Ecuador

58% access to housing⁴

54% Access to food⁴

46% access to employment⁴

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 2025 Protection Monitoring Report available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/country/ecu>

Venezuelans

Venezuelans continue to lead in numbers of arrivals in Ecuador, in slightly higher numbers compared to previous month. 20,888 people entered Ecuador in August 2025 (6,8% more than the previous month), with a daily entry average of 696 Venezuelans. 19,446 people left the country, a 9% increase as compared to the previous month, leaving a balance of 1,442 people who entered and remained the country during the reporting period. According to Government data, 445 Venezuelans sought asylum in Ecuador in August 2025 (3,906 so far in the year), a 37% decrease as compared to the previous month. 66% 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.

440.450 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

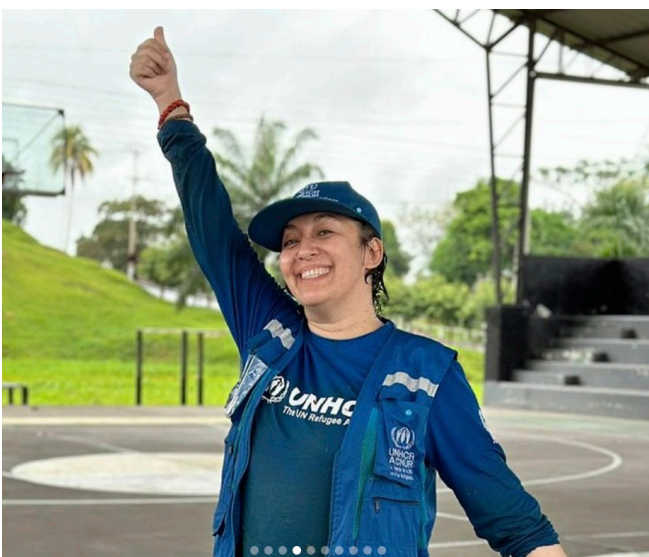
57% access to livelihoods or employment³

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. The Ombudspersons Office, with support from UNHCR and ECHO, launched a report on internal displacement which estimates that over 315,000 Ecuadorians had been internally displaced between 2022 and 2024. See the [executive summary here](#).

HUMANITARIANS AT WORK



MY NAME IS NATASHA AND I'VE BEEN PART OF THE UNHCR ECUADOR TEAM FOR FOUR YEARS.

ALTHOUGH MY WORK IN HUMAN RIGHTS BEGAN LONG AGO, THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE PEOPLE ARRIVING AT A REMOTE BORDER IN MY COUNTRY HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST ENRICHING EXPERIENCES FOR BOTH MY PROFESSION AND MY LIFE.

[Read the full story](#)

DELIVERING PROTECTION

HUACA

Training to strengthen protection



In Huaca, UNHCR trained members of the Cantonal Board for the Protection of Rights on general aspects of international refugee law. This marks another step toward strengthening protection and ensuring appropriate support for those forced to flee. This was made possible thanks to the commitment of our local partners and the support of ECHO and Japan

GUAYAQUIL

Sports and community: safe spaces for children



In Guayaquil, UNHCR promotes safe spaces for children and adolescents through sports and community engagement. In Juan Montalvo, UNHCR organized a Friendly Indoor Football Championship with 34 participants, where every goal was a victory against violence. In the Orquídeas community, short awareness sessions were held before each match to encourage respect, integration, and the building of more supportive communities. These activities were made possible thanks to the commitment of our partners and the support of LivGolf.

EL NARANJAL

Guidance and protection to support displaced people



In Naranjal, UNHCR, HIAS, NRC and the Cantonal Council for the Protection of Rights held a support and information session for forcibly displaced people. Efforts were joined to provide guidance, assistance, and strengthen protection for those who need it most. This activity was made possible thanks to the commitment and the support of LivGolf.

QUITO

Women leaders protecting and transforming



UNHCR, together with UN Women and Redes con Rostro, brought together 17 organizations led by refugee and local women to strengthen community networks. Participants shared experiences, proposals, and commitments to promote integration, protection, and equality within their communities. Their leadership is key to building safe and violence-free spaces. This initiative was made possible thanks to the support of the Republic of Korea.

PROMOTING ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

MONTUFAR

Solidarity that supports futures

In Montúfar, UNHCR supported FUDELA's Donate Your Uniform campaign, which collected 60 uniforms, 3 backpacks, and 10 pairs of shoes. These items will be distributed to local and displaced children and adolescents, promoting inclusion and educational continuity. This initiative was made possible thanks to community engagement and the support of public and private sector donors.

GUAYAQUIL

Protection that expands access to quality services

In Guayaquil, UNHCR trained staff at the RESA shelter on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. Promoting a protection-focused approach enhances shelters' ability to provide safe and dignified support to displaced people, in a World of Possibilities. This initiative was made possible thanks to the support of public and private sector donors.



PROMOTING SOCIOECONOMIC INCLUSION

MANTA

Connecting talent with opportunities



In Manta, UNHCR, GIZ, NRC and HIAS held the Connecting Talent with Opportunities job fair, where 21 companies offered 112 vacancies to over 600 people, promoting the labour inclusion of forcibly displaced people. Additionally, UNHCR signed an agreement with Discovery and Innovation to certify the skills of 60 people through the Ministry of Labour, facilitating access to decent employment. These efforts, made possible with support from the Republic of Korea and Japan, strengthen sustainable livelihoods and show that inclusion means good business.

IBARRA

Hands-on training that opens doors



Through the Practical Training with Companies programme, UNHCR and FUDELA—using the A Ganar methodology—supported 40 forcibly displaced people and members of the host community to complete hands-on training as pharmacy assistants in 12 local pharmacies and hospitals.

This initiative, supported by Japan, strengthens their professional skills and improves access to decent employment.

CARCHI

Field schools boosting livelihoods



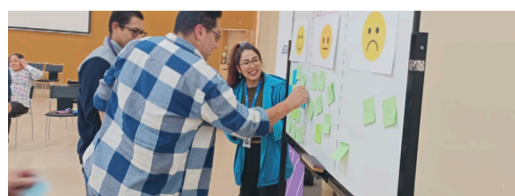
UNHCR, the Carchi Prefecture and local enterprise Nutrite continue to strengthen field schools through training on healthy nutrition and the production of marketable goods such as apple cider vinegar. These activities, supported by Japan, promote sustainable livelihoods and improve access to economic opportunities for displaced people and host communities.

PROMOTING PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

NATIONAL

Allies for a World of Possibilities: a toolkit transforming communities

UNHCR continues to promote safe and inclusive spaces through the “Allies for a World of Possibilities” Toolkit, a methodology that strengthens protection approaches and fosters coexistence free from discrimination and xenophobia. In Tulcán and Huaca, UNHCR presented the toolkit to 30 education authorities and DECE staff at Unidad Educativa Sucre. This process will enable 10 schools to replicate the methodology, helping to build more empathetic and inclusive school environments. In Tulcán, UNHCR finalized a cycle of workshops on self-care, inclusion and non-discrimination for 25 health professionals from the Luis G. Dávila Hospital, helping them deliver inclusive services. In Guayaquil and Machala, UNHCR worked with community organizations to integrate the toolkit into neighbourhood activities, promoting the active participation of displaced people and strengthening social cohesion at the local level. In Quito, UNHCR held a workshop with officials from the National Council for Equality in Human Mobility, the Pichincha Provincial Government, and the Quito Municipality, aiming to incorporate the human mobility approach into public policies and services, and to foster institutional spaces free from discrimination. This toolkit demonstrates that by joining efforts across education, communities, and institutions, it is possible to build a more just, inclusive, and protective world for all. This was possible thanks to the support of public and private sector donors.



STORIES FROM THE FIELD

DAFI scholarship brings hope to displaced youth in Ecuador

"I had always thought of education as a right, but I didn't realize it was such an enabling one. Once I started higher education, I discovered how many doors open just because you are a student."
© UNHCR/Santiago Proaño



"Ever since I was little, I always wanted to be an inventor and create new things," says Miguel Ángel Chávez, who today is making those childhood dreams a reality in Ecuador. In Venezuela, he began studying Electrical Engineering, but insecurity forced him to leave his country and put his goals on hold.

Life as a newcomer wasn't easy, but Miguel Ángel never stopped learning. He developed skills in masonry, carpentry, drywall, and electrical work, and even joined a UNHCR-supported team trained to install solar panels at the Community Development Center in Manta.

With the knowledge he had brought from Venezuela, Miguel Ángel started teaching electrical installation classes to teenagers in his community, between the ages of 12 and 16. "I shared what I knew. Teaching electricity to young people was my way of giving back. When you teach, you also learn. And in that process, you build community," he says proudly. It was in this space that he first heard about the DAFI scholarship program and decided to apply.

The day he received the call confirming he had been selected is still fresh in his mind: "I was putting together some furniture when the phone rang. They told me I had been awarded the

DAFI scholarship and could finally study architecture." For him, the choice was obvious: "I said: this is the perfect career, because it brings together everything I had done before and also my childhood dreams." That's how he began studying Architecture at San Gregorio de Portoviejo University, ready to build the future he had always imagined.

"I had always thought of education as a right, but I didn't realize it was such an enabling one. Once I started higher education, I discovered how many doors open just because you are a student," he says with joy.

The scholarship not only allowed him to continue his studies, it also opened up new opportunities and support networks. Today, Miguel Ángel has already designed and built his first house, and together with an Ecuadorian partner he runs a small business offering architecture services, with the dream of employing and training more people.

And his goals don't stop there: "I'd like to pursue a master's degree in renewable energy and bring all the innovations I learn abroad back to Ecuador, because I believe this country has enormous potential," he says.

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 August 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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