

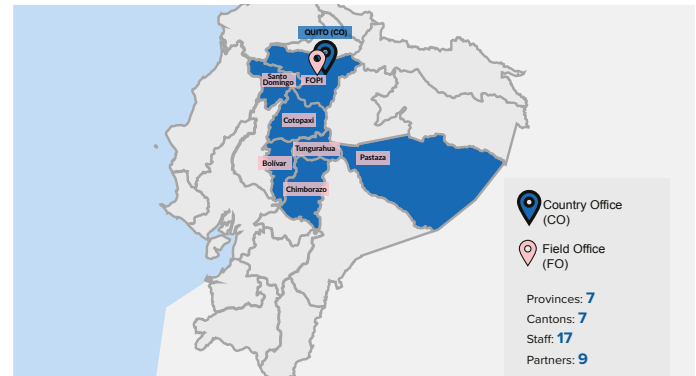
Operational context

UNHCR's Pichincha Field Office (FOPI) is located in Quito, Ecuador's largest city also hosting the highest number of Colombian refugees as well as the largest population of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the country. UNHCR provides protection and promotes the socioeconomic inclusion of Venezuelans, Colombians and others displaced of other nationalities, as well as host communities. The field office in Quito also covers Santo Domingo and the Sierra provinces of Tungurahua, Cotopaxi, Chimborazo, Bolivar and Pastaza.

UNHCR, partners and other stakeholders have identified a monthly increase in the number of new arrivals, mainly from Colombia and Venezuela, in Pichincha and Santo Domingo. In both provinces, refugees are finding a place to settle down, being Quito the major destination, although significant numbers continue onward to other parts of country or third countries like Peru and Chile. Many refugees and other displaced people have resorted to informal sales or begging and are at heightened risk of evictions, job loss, fewer income-generating options, extortions, discrimination and xenophobia. To address this situation, UNHCR and partners continue to provide counselling through face-to-face services, protection hotlines, information in service fairs for refugees and the host community, mobile brigades, referrals to immediate emergency services and local integration programmes. UNHCR and partners distribute hygiene kits along main routes and other goods to strengthen the response at shelters and other

spaces for refugees and host communities, while supporting the response of local governments. It is important to highlight that the deteriorating security context has greatly affected refugees, causing families to move from other provinces like Lago Agrio, Guayas, Esmeraldas to the area of intervention - largely in search of safety due to extortion, child recruitment attempts, persecution, threats and attacks on life and integrity - while also being an area of origin for others fleeing elsewhere in Ecuador.

UNHCR also provides technical and operational support to community-based organizations and local governments to enhance access to essential services and protection routes for refugees and locals, including childcare, gender-based violence prevention, safe temporary shelters management, socioeconomic integration, and access to art, sports, and culture.



Key figures:

Top 2 FOPI locations where refugees and others displaced are registered by the Government to July 2024

26,920 Pichincha
2,660 Santo Domingo

Individuals registered by the government in 2024, by country of origin

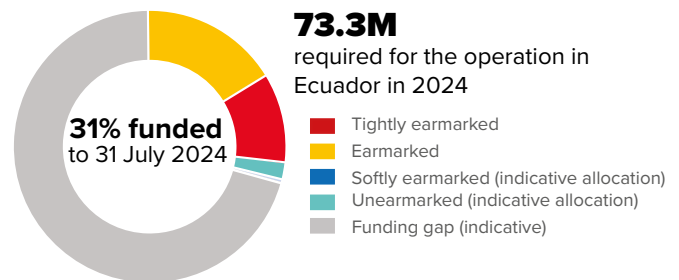
2,075 Colombians
1,591 Venezuelans
217 Others

Top 3 locations where refugees and others displaced were registered by UNHCR and partners in 2024

8,342 in Quito
956 in Ambato
846 in Santo Domingo

In 2024, UNHCR and partners in the areas have provided

19,543 people with legal orientation
1,895 people supported with shelter solutions



41,904 people who accessed the regularization process in all six provinces, including 684 children (35% of them unaccompanied)

UNHCR Ecuador is grateful for the critical and generous support provided by donors who contributed with earmarked and unearmarked so far in 2024.

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



Working with partners

UNHCR works in Quito, Santo Domingo and Sierra provinces to provide a comprehensive protection response to refugees and other displaced people living these cities with support from 9 partners (ASA, Mision Scalabriniana, FUDELA, World Vision, HIAS, NRC, CorpoAmbato, JRS and Equidad), local governments, public institutions, community-based organizations, economic promotion local agencies and universities. UNHCR also provides technical and capacity-building support to the Ombudsman's Office, Public Defenders Office, the Municipalities and the Cantonal Council for the Protection of Rights, the provincial governments of Pichincha, Santo Domingo and Tungurahua and coordinates with 59 organizations under the inter-agency response platform for refugees and migrants (GTRM) in Quito and Ambato.

Key activities



Protection

In 2024, UNHCR and partners have:

- Provided information, counseling, and registration through face-to-face and hotline services. Refugees and migrants were oriented and referred to partners and key actors for RSD, legal services, specialized services for unaccompanied and separated children and GBV survivors, regularization and documentation, shelter, economic, food assistance and education.
- Coordinated with government social services to provide comprehensive protection responses to people with specific protection needs, in particular survivors of gender-based violence and children at risk.
- Provided technical support on international protection standards and in the design of local routes and public policy for the protection of people in human mobility to strategic actors at the local level.
- Trained public officials on international protection, prevention of gender-based violence, child protection, and forced displacement of LGBTIQ+ people.
- Provided guidance and accompanied asylum seekers in filing claims before the International Protection Directorate through legal partners.
- Improved multi-family housing and temporary shelters to promote the inclusion of refugees in communities and the effective exercise of their fundamental rights.
- Supported through the “Respiramos Inclusión” methodology and “Education Cannot Wait” programmes to guarantee access, promote inclusion and permanence in the educational system. Educational and connectivity kits were also delivered to families.
- Worked with civil society organizations engaged in human mobility issues, community leaders, and municipalities to strengthen community protection networks, foster local integration, and promote peaceful coexistence.
- Improved the infrastructure of community centers to foster spaces between refugees and locals.
- Provided technical assistance to refugee and migrant organizations to promote their participation in discussion, decision-making, and public policy development.
- Conducted sports for protection initiatives including football, baseball, basketball, softball, rugby and kickingball to strengthen community networks and empower communities on rights issues.
- Promoted community gardens led by refugee and local women for the transmission of ancestral knowledge and to prevent gender-based violence.
- Engaged different local government secretariats to strengthen participation and community-based protection processes, seeking the inclusion of refugees through art, sports and culture.
- Promoted integration and peaceful coexistence within the communities, risk analysis, dialogue, and advocacy actions with institutional actors, indigenous leaders and civil society.



Livelihoods

In 2024, UNHCR and partners:

- Worked with the Economic Promotion Agency - CONQUITO to implement programmes for the socioeconomic inclusion of refugees, through technical support on entrepreneurship, providing access to training and follow-up to strengthen their business.
- Engaged with SEK University to improve employability and entrepreneurial opportunities for refugees through the Speed Mentoring programme. Refugees and migrants received specialized training to strengthen their businesses and meet the market demands.
- Supported the labour inclusion of refugees through the referral of candidates to job vacancies in private companies and technical training to strengthen their skills. Facilitated labour inclusion through dual education programmes with companies, to meet labour demands or promote self-employment opportunities.
- Through the Development Agencies, partners, local actors and allies, strengthened business ideas, facilitated access to markets or commercialization networks, guaranteeing sustainability and positioning in the market of products and services of refugees.
- With the support of cooperatives and banks, facilitated access to financial education through workshops and access to financial services like savings accounts.



Coordination

- UNHCR contributes to the Human Mobility Working Group in Quito, Ambato and Santo Domingo to articulate the protection response led by the local governments.