

Colombia

January - December 2022

PEOPLE WITH AND FOR WHOM UNHCR WORKS

Out of **8.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs)** registered in the National Registry of Victims, **922,591** were displaced since the 2016 Peace Agreement. In 2022, the number of new IDPs reached **260,884**.¹

More than **2.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela** are hosted by Colombia. Around **1.6 million** Venezuelans were granted a **Temporary Protection Permit (TPP)**, which paves the way for their **access to rights and services**.

During the past five years, UNHCR has been supporting the State's response to an estimated **845,000 Colombian returnees** and **binational** population from Venezuela.²

UNHCR provided life-saving assistance to IDPs, refugees and migrants and partners delivering more than **1.2 million assistance services** to direct beneficiaries in 2022. Moreover, UNHCR continued its protection advocacy with the Government of Colombia to advance the rights of all displaced populations.



A sports tournament to promote social integration and commemorate the World Refugee Day in Quibdó, Chocó. 2022. ©UNHCR

Between January and December 2022 UNHCR worked to meet the needs of refugees and migrants from Venezuela, IDPs, Colombian returnees, and their host communities across 31 departments:³



755k

People benefited from **protection services** including individual information, registration, legal support, access to documentation, as well as gender-based violence (GBV) and child protection services.



166k

People benefited from activities related to **healthcare** (health system affiliation, primary healthcare, COVID-19 prevention, sexual and reproductive healthcare, psychosocial support, and prenatal care).



412k

People supported to meet their **basic needs** including access to clean water and sanitation, cash assistance, provision of non-food items, and temporary collective shelters, among others.



205k

Items delivered (including personal protective equipment, non-food items and personal hygiene items).

¹ National Registry of Victims. Government of Colombia 'Victims Unit' (Or UARIV, by its acronym in Spanish).

² Government of Colombia. Updated 31 Aug 2020.

³ UNHCR Response Monitoring (Or MARC, by its acronym in Spanish). January – December 2022.

UNHCR Response

UNHCR’s strategy implies a **continuum in the protection spectrum**: from prevention, protection, and lifesaving assistance to individual and community empowerment, until durable solutions are reached.

Protect

UNHCR’s mandate is to guarantee access to a fair and sufficient protection system in accordance with universal and regional standards.

■ Access to documentation

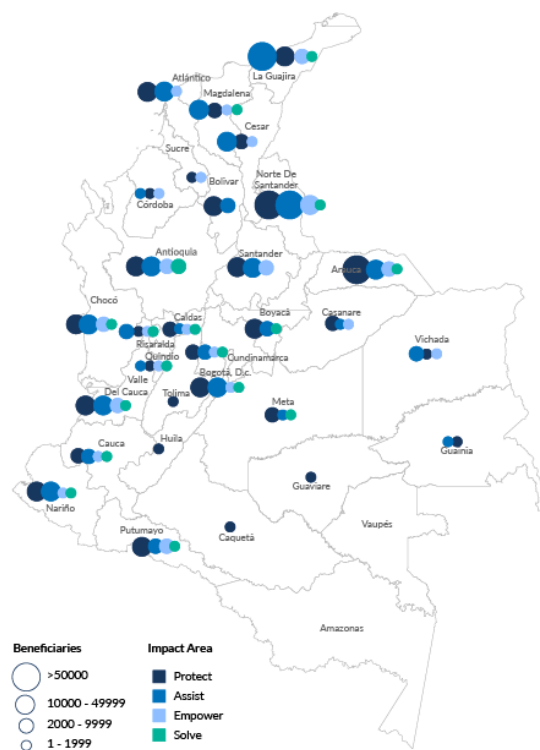
UNHCR played a key role in the implementation of the unprecedented and historic decision, announced by the Government of Colombia on February 8, 2021, of granting a **Temporary Protection Status (TPS)** to more than 1.8 million Venezuelans seeking protection in country. UNHCR donated 15 mobile units to the Colombia Migration authorities as well as 2 million printed plastic cards (with UNDP) to be used in the making of the Temporary Protection Permits (TPPs). Through its [support to the TPS roll-out](#), UNHCR promoted **access to registration and documentation** for Venezuelans and assisted the Government of Colombia in providing information to 70,421 people and supporting the pre-registration of 16,575 people, particularly those in rural areas or areas with difficult access. 1.6 million Venezuelans received the Temporary Protection Permit (TPP) document out of the 2.5 million who had registered (67%). The TPP allows Venezuelans to receive temporary protection, access to basic services and regularize their legal status in Colombia for 10 years.

UNHCR also supported **Primero la Niñez**, an interagency initiative jointly led with UNICEF and IOM aimed at preventing and ending **statelessness**, granting Colombian nationality to children born in Colombia to Venezuelan parents. Prorogated in 2019 and extended for another two years in September 2021, the measure implemented by the National Civil Registry Office benefited more than **83,000 Venezuelan children at risk of statelessness** (up to September 2022).⁴

■ Legal assistance

UNHCR’s legal partners were present across the country to provide **specialized legal assistance**, among which the **national network of legal clinics**. More than 115,800 refugees, IDPs and host communities received legal assistance in 2022 and were supported with access to rights and institutional repair pathways.³

Figure 1. Number of beneficiaries by impact area in 2022.



Services day to register for the Temporary Protection Status. South of Bolívar. 2022. ©UNHCR

⁴ Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil.

UNHCR consolidated its access to justice strategy based on the coordination of its legal assistance partners, identifying opportunities to **strategic litigation** on main barriers faced to access to rights. 7,520 asylum-seekers and refugees received **legal counselling** regarding **Refugee Status Determination (RSD)** procedures.



Promoting access to the Temporary Protection Permit (TPP) at the Palacio de los Deportes. Bogotá. 2022. ©UNHCR

■ **Protection monitoring**

UNHCR undertook protection monitoring periodically, on its own and through partners, in areas affected by new displacements and ongoing violence, mainly in border regions and along the Pacific coast. UNHCR published **two protection monitoring reports**, which inform advocacy efforts to facilitate and complement the State's response to conflict-affected populations: (i) a [report about all the populations with and for whom UNHCR works \(January-June 2022\)](#), and (ii) a specific [report about transcontinental movements through the Darien](#) (July-November 2022).

■ **Access to asylum**

UNHCR provided comments to the possible modification of Decree 1067/2015 which regulates the refugee status determination in Colombia to ensure its **compliance with international standards** and continued to advocate for asylum seekers to have the **right to work**. UNHCR continued to strengthen the capacity of the asylum system in Colombia through technical assistance, equipment, and office space to ease a backlog of around 27,000 asylum applications.

■ **Institutional support**

UNHCR supported the National Ombudsperson's Office and the **Attorney General Office** to strengthen the State's implementation of IDP protection policies, including to follow-up to the **Unconstitutional State of Affairs** and institutional presence in IDP or at-risk communities.

UNHCR strengthened the presence of the **Ombudsperson's Office** in 12 departments, and the early warning system in areas affected by the conflict (8 departments) with the aim of monitoring and alerting risk scenarios, issuing preventive orders to institutions in charge of the protection of people, and promoting access to rights. Specific monitoring was carried out for the issuance of binational early warnings in the Darien and North Pacific region (border with Panama), and in the border with Ecuador, thanks to UNHCR's support.

Additionally, **76 local Ombudsperson Offices** (personerías municipales) received human resources, lawyers, and financial support from UNHCR. Through this support, advocacy was carried-out with Mayors' offices to include people under UNHCR's mandate in their policies and supported the local Ombudspersons (personeros) receiving declarations of forcibly displaced people (in case of large-scale displacement events), as well as conducted border monitoring activities. More than 63,000 people received assistance.³

UNHCR sought to reinforce institutional risk analysis mechanisms and promoted regional **prevention and protection plans** (e.g., Plan de Choque Chocó). UNHCR also coordinated with and complemented the State's response to new displacements and facilitated access to the National Registry of Victims (RUV in Spanish) for new IDPs. In August 2022, UNHCR and the Victim's Unit (UARIV in Spanish) launched an **App** which allows the taking of individual victimization declarations remotely.

Assist

UNHCR and partners work so that IDPs, refugees and people at risk of statelessness can access their basic rights and meet their most pressing needs.

■ Registration

UNHCR and its partners register persons with international protection needs in its global software system, **PRIMES**, before providing orientation, delivering assistance, and undertaking case management. Between 2020-2022, over **863,000** people were registered in [reception and individuals records in PRIMES](#), a large increase compared to 35,139 people registered between 2018 and 2019.

■ Information and orientation

The people with and for whom UNHCR works accessed to lifesaving, reliable, and updated information [through the toll-free national helpline](#) (LAN-Línea de Atención Nacional, in Spanish), the **60 information and orientation points (PAO)**, in Spanish), and 6 mobile units located in 19 departments and 40 municipalities across the country. Over 100,000 people were informed about multiple issues regarding access to rights.³ Based on the identification of specific protection needs, 22,000 individuals were referred to essential basic protection and specialized services.³

■ Direct humanitarian assistance

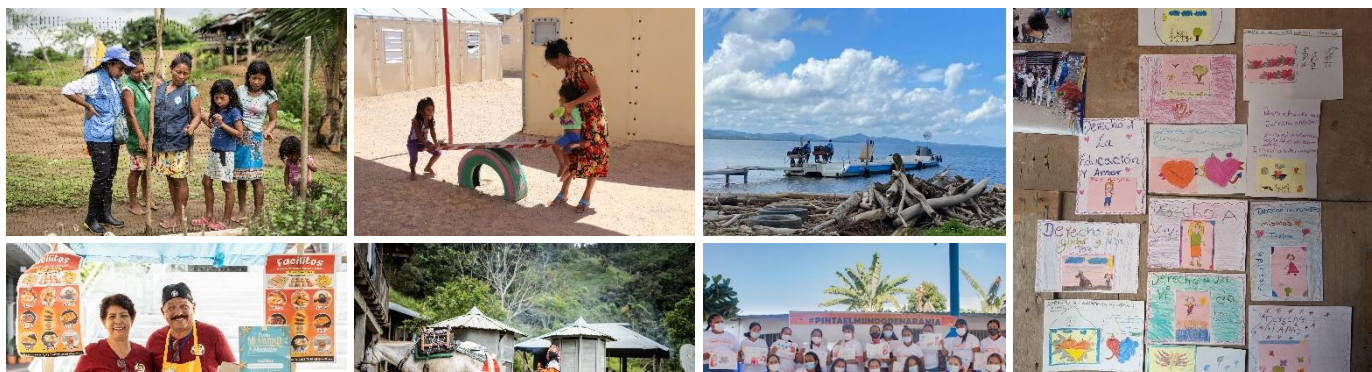
In 2022, [UNHCR Colombia assisted](#) over **944,300 Venezuelan refugees and migrants, and 91,000 IDPs** including those affected by multiple crisis, mainly in Arauca, Chocó, Nariño and Norte de Santander with non-food items (NFIs), orientation, and legal assistance under the umbrella of its interagency emergency response.³

■ Health

UNHCR assisted 64,350 Venezuelan refugees and migrants and Colombian returnees with their [affiliation to the Colombian healthcare system](#), in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection. UNHCR's partner also trained 6,320 government officials on the current normative regulations.

■ Cash based assistance

In 2022, [UNHCR and partners delivered USD 3.2 million in cash-based assistance](#) at least **20,000** Venezuelans, Colombian returnees and host communities with specific protection needs. UNHCR provided multipurpose cash grants (81.6%), and specific programs such as cash assistance for health (4%), funerary costs (4.2%), livelihoods (10%) and cash for documentation (0.2%).



Community orchards, Alto Baudó. CARM, Maicao. Darién, Apartadó. Entrepreneurs market Mi Navidad, Medellín. Indigenous community, Ituango. Safe Spaces Network, Arauca. Art school, Barranquilla. 2022. ©UNHCR/Catalina Betancur

Empower

The effective and differential participation of the people with and for whom UNHCR works is key to our mandate.

■ Community mobilization

UNHCR designed and launched a **Roadmap for Community Mobilization and Empowerment** to consistently advance towards the scale up of the right to participation. The roadmap is a methodological guide to address step by step the consistent sequence of the operation's community-based protection (CBP) strategy. The guide paves the way for a sustained advance towards empowerment involving all UNHCR staff in Colombia.

■ Community engagement

In 2022, UNHCR carried out 192 focal groups as part of 94 participatory assessments consulting **1,309 people**: 777 women (62%), 471 men (38%), and 214 children (17%), divided into different groups categorized by their specific protection needs. This information feeds into UNHCR's programming and supports the agency in materializing its Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) Policy. **16.352** people benefited from community engagement activities.

■ Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

UNHCR also improved the accountability to affected people (AAP) system through the standardization of **feedback** formats, data collection and analysis using an age, gender, and diversity approach. The information collected was shared internally for analysis and to propose adjustments to the response. At least **978 communications** were received through the **PAOs** (physical mailboxes) and through UNHCR's campaign website **Somos Panas Colombia** (digital mailbox).

Solve

Contributing to durable solutions processes, both for displaced people and their host communities, in urban and rural settings, is a priority.

UNHCR worked towards socioeconomic inclusion of refugees through **access to formal employment** and **financial inclusion**. Moreover, UNHCR pursued three durable solutions for IDPs: the **legalization** of informal settlements, **relocation** to safer areas, and **returns** to the place of origin. The project **Practical Solutions in Land and Housing** implemented in partnership with Corporación Opción Legal provided assistance to the communities with their processes of land regularization, formalization, and restitution benefiting over 39,000 persons across 31 settlements. Beyond legalization, UNHCR engages in a range of activities that contribute toward **livelihoods**, community protection mechanisms and basic community infrastructure, and community and institutional capacity building.

■ Combating xenophobia

The anti-xenophobia campaign, **Somos Panas Colombia**, launched by UNHCR in December 2017, reached over 61 million views in 2022 through communication strategies that mitigate xenophobia and promote solidarity between Colombians and Venezuelans. The campaign also provided information to displaced people on how to access to their rights, including to the Temporary Protection Status, and reinforced UNHCR's Communication with



