

Colombia

June 2023

During the first semester, **UNHCR and its 18 partners in Colombia** provided protection and solutions to IDPs, refugees and migrants from Venezuela, people from various nationalities engaged in transcontinental movements and people at risk of statelessness.

UNHCR supported the Ombudspersons Offices of Colombia and Panamá to issue the **first binational alert** about the protection risks for people crossing the **Darien** towards North America, calling for a coordinated action between both governments.

UNHCR is working with the Government of Colombia to prepare for the upcoming **Global Refugee Forum (GRF)**. Colombia is one of the six co-conveners representing the **Americas** region.

KEY INDICATORS

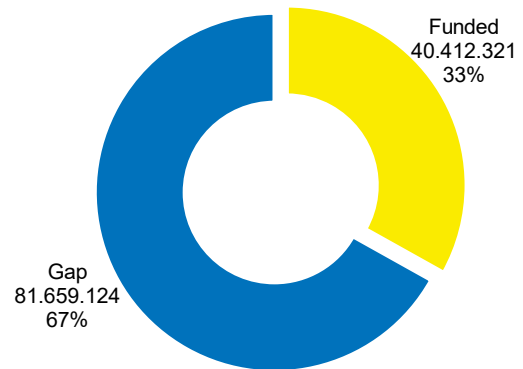
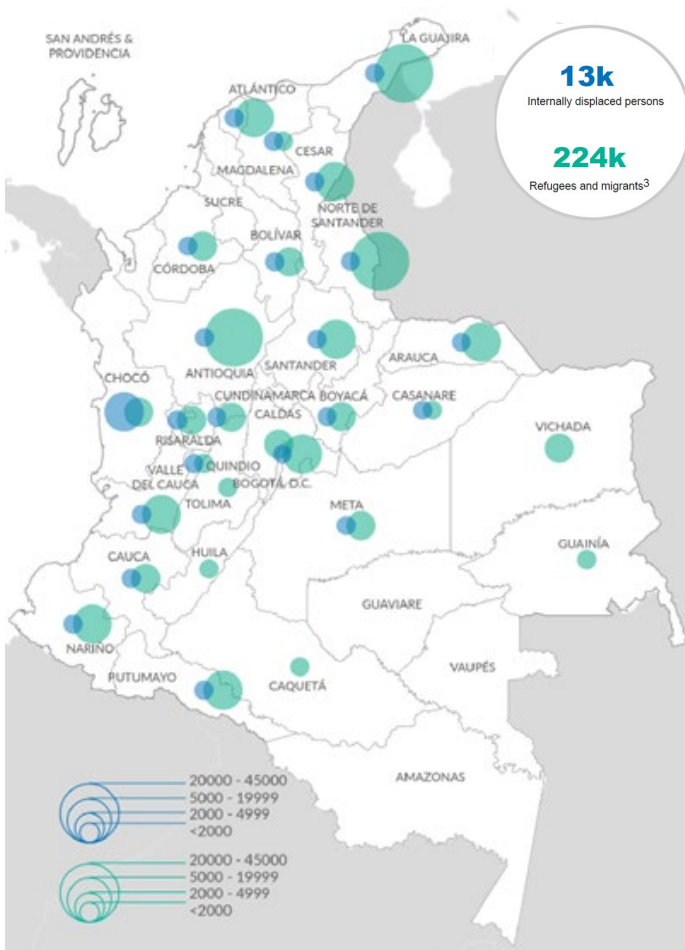
259,066

Interventions by UNHCR and partners to direct beneficiaries. (30 June 2023)

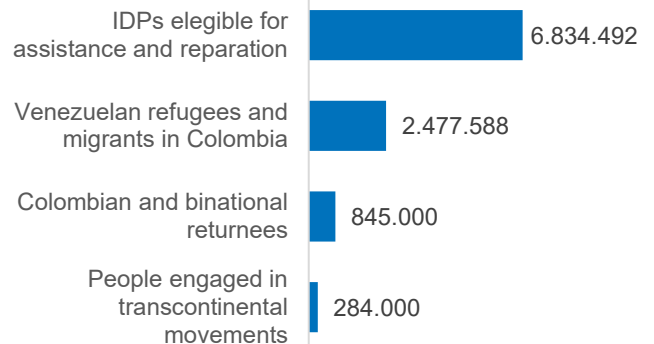
FUNDING (AS OF 30 JUNE)

USD 122.1 million

requested for the Colombia Operation.



PEOPLE WITH AND FOR WHOM UNHCR WORKS



* UNHCR also assists people at risk of statelessness and people of various nationalities who need international protection.

Context

The top priority for the new government during the first semester of 2023 continued to be the ‘[Total Peace](#)’ approach, which includes the establishment of formal dialogues with over 30 irregular armed groups and entities, including a second round of talks with the [National Liberation Army \(ELN\)](#) which started in February in Mexico and resulted in a 6-month bilateral ceasefire, agreed on June 9th.

Despite the decrease in clashes between the Colombian military and the number of irregular armed actors, [confrontations between irregular armed actors](#) have increased since the second half of 2022, notably along the Pacific coast and in the eastern regions of the country.

This has led to [worrying trends in internal displacement](#) during the first half of 2023. According to official figures, over [55,000 individuals](#) were [newly displaced](#) (of which, almost 34,000 in large-group displacement events) and more than [37,000 people confined](#). The recruitment, use and utilization of children and adolescents has been on the rise, yet remains underreported. Threats of child recruitment are among the key triggers of forced displacement. [UNHCR’s monitoring of emergencies from January to June 2023](#) identified 74 large-group internal displacements and 34 confinements.

Displacement

6,886,426	1,007,395	55,078	33,889
Total IDPs eligible for assistance and reparation	Total IDPs displaced after the 2016 Peace Agreement	Total number of people affected by displacement in 2023	Total number of people affected by large-group displacement in 2023

Confinement

37,492
 Total number of people affected by confinement in 2023

Figure 1. Number of people displaced in large-group displacement events (2020- June 2023)

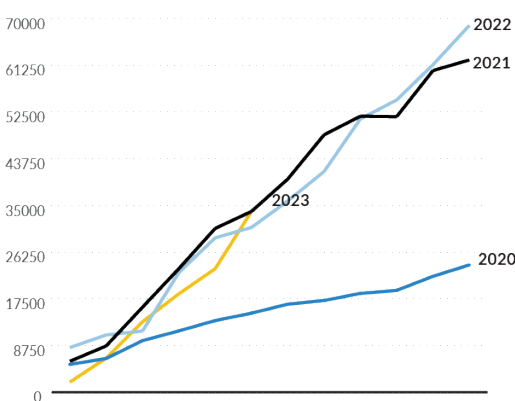
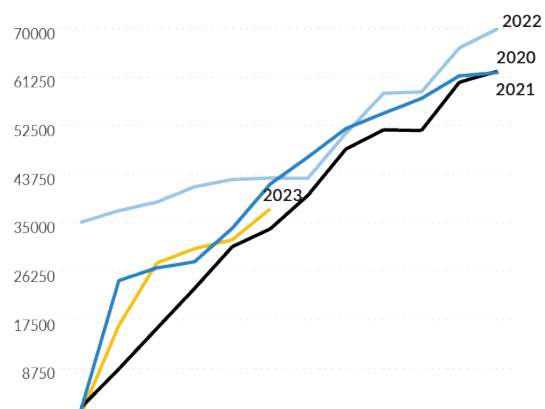


Figure 2. Number of people confined | (2020- June 2023)



Response - Main Activities

UNHCR provided **lifesaving assistance**, promoted **access to rights** and strived to find **solutions** for the people with and for whom it works: internally displaced persons (IDPs), people affected by conflict, Venezuelan refugees and migrants, people with international protection needs caught up in transcontinental movements, Colombian returnees, people at risks of statelessness and their host communities.

Protection

- Supported over **1,000 civil servants** in providing access to **complementary protection for Venezuelans** through the **Temporary Protection Status (TPS)**. **21,784 Venezuelans** received access to information, legal assistance and support receiving their Temporary Protection Permit.



Assistance day in Antioquia ©UNHCR.

- **5,785 civil servants** in **24 departments** and **92 municipalities** received training and technical assistance in protection. UNHCR supported **Colombia's Public Ministry (Attorney General Office, Ombudspersons at national and local level)** in improving access to rights for IDPs, refugees and people who need protection. UNHCR also contributed with financial, human resources and logistical support.

- During the first semester of 2023, UNHCR conducted **protection monitoring** to identify key protection risks and promote an adequate response, as well as support the effective implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement. The report "**Colombia: un lugar de cruce de movilidad humana forzada**" analysed Protection risks for all displaced populations in Colombia to promote a more efficient response.

- UNHCR conducted over **130 field missions** to monitor areas affected by conflict and advocated **with 44 Mayor's Offices** in **14 departments** for **prevention, protection, and solutions** to overcome situations of internal displacement.

- The **asylum system** was strengthened both through human resources and technological support to develop a customized information system called HIT that traces case management, thus improve claim processing efficiency and asylum-seekers' access to rights.

Assistance

- Through our network of **Information and Orientation Centres (PAOs)** **72,408 persons** received guidance how to access rights and services. **36%** enquired about access to asylum or to the Temporary Protection Status, **30%** about accessing protection services, and **25%** about access to healthcare.

- UNHCR and its partners conducted case management for **88,967 individual cases** with **specific protection needs** (children, survivors of gender-based violence).

- UNHCR provided **complementary humanitarian assistance in emergencies** (i.e. large-scale displacement events and confinements). Over **8,500 people** received emergency response and **2,516 Core Relief Items (CRI)**.

- UNHCR promoted access to **public services**: supporting the affiliation of **5,260 people** were affiliated to the public healthcare system and supporting **890 children** to access and stay enrolled in school.



An assistance information and Orientation Center (PAO) in Antioquia ©UNHCR.

- **12,384 people** received **cash assistance** in form of **multi-purpose grants**.

Community Empowerment

- UNHCR contributed to the strengthening of **community structures** and **organizations**, particularly first and second level **ethnic authorities**, to improve their self-protection mechanisms, foster community leadership and expand spaces for their effective participation and advocacy in local and national planning and decision-making fora.
- UNHCR promoted the **participation** of women, children, youth, LGBTQI+ people in community processes. UNHCR consulted 646 people through **participatory assessments**.
- UNHCR supported a network of **community outreach volunteers** to identify and support people facing heightened protection risks.



UNHCR, partners and communities commemorate together the World Refugee Day 2023 in Putumayo, Colombia, ©UNHCR Colombia.

Durable Solutions

- UNHCR strived to support affected populations from the emergency phase of their displacement to their full **socio-economic inclusion** by facilitating **access to formal employment, entrepreneurship**, and **self-employment** opportunities, as well as processes aimed at **financial inclusion**.
- With partner Corporación Opción Legal (COL), UNHCR continued to support **return and relocation plans** of ethnic communities to pave the way for the **reparation** of their **rights**.
- Supported the **legalization of informal settlements** in urban centers populated by displaced Colombians.
- UNHCR commemorated the **World Refugee Day** and launched a new communications strategy – **Millones de Razones** - with the **Somos Panas anti-xenophobia campaign** meant to promote integration while countering xenophobia and discrimination.

UNHCR Team



Staff: 408 (56% women, 43% men, 1% non-binary)
 370 National Staff (including interns).
 38 International Staff (including deployees).

Working with Partners

UNHCR leads the **Protection Cluster** since 2006, with NRC and DRC. The Protection Cluster is one of seven humanitarian response sectors under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator supported by OCHA. The Protection Cluster promotes a rights-based approach in the humanitarian response to the effects of the armed conflict. Moreover, UNHCR leads 4 out of 11 **Local Coordination Teams** (LTCs or ELC in Spanish) in departments of Antioquia, Arauca, Nariño and Putumayo; as well as **5 Protection Working Groups** (GTP in *Spanish*) in departments of Cauca, Chocó, Nariño, Norte de Santander and Valle del Cauca.

UNHCR co-leads since 2016 with the IOM the **Inter-Agency Mixed Migration Flows Group** (GIFMM in Spanish), which includes **80 members**: UN agencies, international and local NGOs and members of the Red Cross movement. Its main objective is to coordinate the response to the needs of Venezuelan refugees and migrants, Colombian returnees, mixed and transcontinental movements and the host population in a complementary manner with the Government. There are **11 local GIFMMs** co-led by UNHCR and IOM in Antioquia, Arauca, Bogota and Cundinamarca region, Bolívar, Costa Caribe, Cesar, La Guajira, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Urabá and Valle del Cauca.

Eighteen (18) implementing partners support UNHCR throughout Colombia in materializing its protection and solutions mandate through partnerships with local NGOs, international NGOs and UN agencies.

A special thanks to each of them:

Local Partners (12): Comfenalco Antioquia, Consultoría para los derechos humanos y el desplazamiento (CODHES), Corporación Ayuda Humanitaria, Corporación Colectiva Justicia Mujer (CCM), Corporación de Profesionales para el Desarrollo Integral y Comunitario (Corprodinco), Corporación de Sedecom, Federación Nacional de Personerías de Colombia (Fenalper), Fundación Renacer, Fundación Save the Children Colombia, Opción Legal Colombia (COL), Universidad de Antioquia, y Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social (SNPS).

International Partners (6): Cuso International, Federation Humanity and Inclusion, Fundación Capital, Heartland Alliance International (HAI), HIAS inc., Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

Financial Information

UNHCR thanks its donors for their contribution to fulfil its **Operation Plan**.



Private Donors from Australia, Spain, Italy, Japan and Korea

Contacts

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Links

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