



## UNHCR Ecuador

### Gender - Based Violence

July 2024

#### Key figures:

2023

**3,861**

GBV survivors identified and assisted

**10,739**

People assisted by UNHCR and partners with specialized GBV services and safe spaces

**2,224**

State, partner and NGO staff trained on GBV issues and response

**3,400**

refugees and locals trained on prevention and mitigation of GBV

**85%**

of people assisted through specialized services by UNHCR and partners manifested their satisfaction with their case management

**75%**

of participants in a survey reported having knowledge of mechanisms against GBV

2024

**1,460**

GBV survivors identified and assisted

**452**

State, partner and NGO staff trained on GBV issues and response

**750**

refugees and locals trained on prevention and mitigation of GBV

#### Operational Context

According to official data, Ecuador hosts 578,169 people forced to flee. Out of this figure, 55% are women and girls, exposed to multiple and greater protection risks like gender-based violence. This type of violence disproportionately affects women and girls around the world, and Ecuador is not far from this reality.

Gender-based violence is a serious issue in Ecuador. The implementation of policies and programmes to promote gender equality, prevent gender-based violence and empower women in various areas are weak. GBV and femicides rates remain high. Inequality, the insecurity crisis

and institutional weakness contributes to its exacerbation and the surge of new profiles of perpetrators linked to criminal structures.

To counteract this reality, UNHCR continues to complement the efforts of the State, civil society and communities in the prevention, risk mitigation and response to gender-based violence, through direct protection support to survivors, their families, and communities. UNHCR carries out advocacy actions, helps in the the development of public policy, interagency coordination, among other actions.

#### Highlight

Between April and December 2023, UNHCR Ecuador issued two thematic reports on gender-based violence and the impact it has on people forced to flee, mainly women, girls, boys and LGBTIQ+ people. Both reports seek to facilitate a better understanding of the problem and to collect data that informs evidence-based decisions to strengthen prevention, risk mitigation and response interventions, putting in the center the voices of the survivors.



**Nuestro derecho a la seguridad**

Our right to safety

Based on perceptions of displaced women. Most frequent violence faced by women are sexual violence during displacement



**Situación de violencia basada en género**

Gender-based violence in Ecuador

Provides an analysis and data on gender-based violence in the country

# MAIN ACTIVITIES

**Assistance for gender-based violence survivors to access the asylum procedure:** UNHCR and the Directorate of International Protection are committed to establishing a comprehensive care protocol for survivors of gender-based violence in the asylum procedure; as well as the permanent strengthening of staff capacities on GBV and international protection.

**Coordination with the Ministry of Women and Human Rights, the governing body in the response to gender-based violence:** UNHCR has an official framework with this ministry to support the implementation of the legal framework that addresses GBV. This includes strengthening the capabilities of its staff, its response services to survivors and their families, advocacy, and developing dissemination materials and knowledge products. The interventions are implemented with the support of UNHCR field offices and the MMDH in more than 12 provinces of the country.

**Technical assistance to local governments and other State institutions:** to promote GBV prevention and strengthen protection pathways for forcibly displaced survivors, UNHCR collaborates closely with several local governments and other related institutions. In the GBV eradication system through awareness campaigns, training, and strengthening of services, with an age, gender, and diversity approach. Between 2023 and 2024, collaborative work took place with the Ministries of Economic and Social Inclusion and Defense as well as the GADs of Esmeraldas, Tulcán, Sucumbíos, Quito, Pichincha, Manta, Manabí, Machala, Cuenca, among others.

**Strengthening response services and GBV case management:** through ongoing training for frontline and protection teams from UNHCR, partners, public institutions, community-based organizations, and other relevant actors. Additionally, UNHCR has developed guidelines, protocols, and tools to further improve counseling and management, as well as to reinforce the use of proGres as the official case management system that ensures consistency with the survivor-centered approach and confidentiality of information. UNHCR and its field offices also strengthen protection and referral routes, like the binational GBV route in Huaquillas; and, communication mechanisms with communities and feedback on GBV like HELP and ChatBot.

**Strengthen and complement specialized services and protection shelters for GBV survivors:** through association agreements with specialized organizations like Federación de Mujeres de Sucumbíos, Movimiento de Mujeres de El Oro and HIAS. These partners have an outstanding track record in case management and protection mechanisms

sensitive to the needs of survivors and their families.

**Community protection interventions to prevent, mitigate risks and respond to GBV:** it involves direct interventions in communities through activities and mechanisms that promote social cohesion and community involvement in taking action to reduce GBV and protect survivors and people at risk of GBV. Highlights include training for UNHCR staff, partners and stakeholders to implement models of primary prevention of gender-based violence in communities such as EMAP (Engaging Men through Accountable Practice); strengthening refugee-led organisations (RLOs) and women-led organisations (WLOs); healing programmes for survivors such as the “women’s circles” carried out in Guayas and Sucumbíos; peer and empowerment groups for women held in Quito and Manabí (Círculos de la Palabra); leadership school for community promoters in Machala and Huaquillas; GBV awareness and self-care sessions in communities of Esmeraldas, Tulcán and Ibarra; focus group discussions and community consultations; and participation of women leaders in relevant dialogues on gender equality and women’s participation at national, regional, and global levels.

**Internal collaboration with technical units and interagency coordination:** articulation with UNHCR technical units is essential to ensure the implementation of the GBV Policy, highlighting the permanent support of the Protection and Program Units and their technical areas to ensure the comprehensive alignment of the policy with the strategic framework of the Operation and guarantee the protection of forcibly displaced persons. In addition, collaborative and advocacy actions on the matter are coordinated with other agencies of the United Nations System like UNFPA, UN Women, UNDP, WFP, IOM, and interagency coordination groups such as the Gender Violence Subsector of the GTRM, the International Cooperation Gender Roundtable (MEGECI) and the Interagency Gender Working Group.

**Ethical commitment to prevent and respond to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PEAS):** the training of UNHCR and partner staff is done regularly, along with updating reporting and feedback channels like mailboxes, email, telephone number and confidential forms. In addition, there is a network of PEAS focal points and since 2023, UNHCR launched a PEAS awareness guide for communities that is implemented in all provinces where UNHCR has coverage. Furthermore, 16 partners implemented PSEA strengthening plans and 13 partners were certified with full capacities.

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

For more information on funding, please visit [reporting.unhcr.org/ecuador](https://reporting.unhcr.org/ecuador)

