UNHCR Ecuador

Tulcán

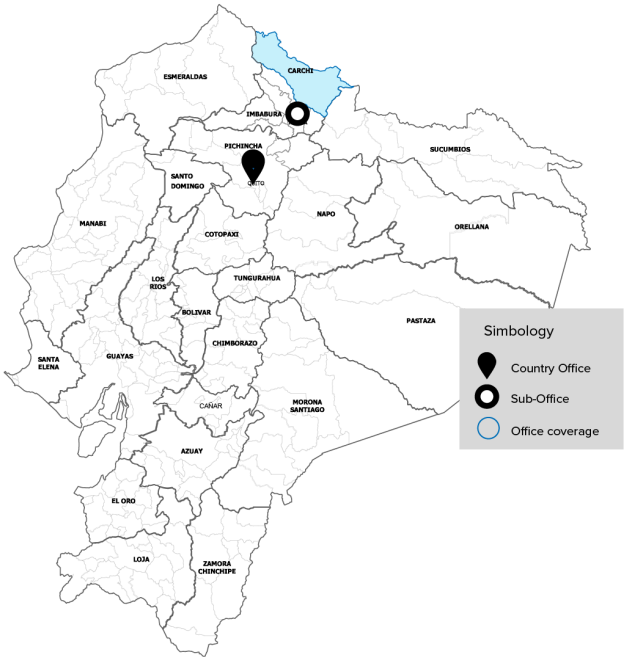
January 2024

Operational context

UNHCR opened the Tulcan Field Office in 2010, covering Carchi Province and Sucumbíos Canton of Sucumbíos Province. Bordering the Colombian department of Nariño, on the northern border of Ecuador, the communities of Carchi have a long tradition of welcoming refugees and asylum-seekers. Tulcan also has the Rumichaca Bridge, one of the main official entry points into Ecuador from Colombia, along with dozens of irregular paths crossing the porous border.

In 2023, Tulcan has received an average 550 of Venezuelans arriving each day. Throughout 2022 and 2023, there has been a steady increase in arrivals of Colombians seeking asylum in Ecuador, as well as third-country nationals (i.e., Haitians, Congolese) transiting through Tulcan into Colombia in an attempt to head north. In 2023, many Ecuadorians began to transit through Tulcan, heading north, and steady trend in 2024. Most refugees, asylum-seekers, forcibly displaced people, and migrants will pass through Tulcan in their journey whether entering or exiting Ecuador.

While a significant number of forcibly displaced people continue onward to other parts of Ecuador or third coun¬tries, others choose to remain in the area to work in agriculture or other income-generating activities. UNHCR continues to work on improving reception conditions, access to humanitarian as¬sistance, local integration, as well promoting inclusion.



Key figures:

Recognized refugees in Carchi Province

5,761 Colombians
168 Venezuelans
24 Others
**Historical figure until 31 January 2024*

So far this year (1-31 January 2024)

367 Colombians
74 Venezuelans
17 Other

Forcibly displaced people registered by HIAS, NRC or UNHCR

6,025 Colombians
21,784 Venezuelans
1,940 Other

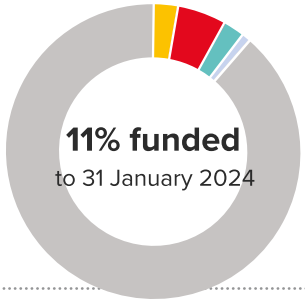
So far this year (1-31 January 2024)

1,341 Colombians
2,488 Venezuelans
130 Other

1,559
asylum claims of Venezuelans and Colombians were admitted for processing, 12% (192 cases) in Imbabura.
Between **(1-31 January 2024)**

So far in 2023 UNHCR and partners delivered:

3,196 Hygiene kits
4214 Cash transfers



73.3M
required for the operation in Ecuador in 2024

- Tightly earmarked
- Earmarked
- Softly earmarked (indicative allocation)
- Unearmarked (indicative allocation)
- Funding gap (indicative)

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

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

Working with partners

UNHCR's Tulcan Field Office implements protection and durable solutions programmes directly and through its partners in accordance with UNHCR Ecuador's Multi-Year Strategy and Global Protection Priorities, and the Regional Response Platform for the Venezuelan population, which it co-leads with IOM. UNHCR works with four partners: HIAS, FUDELA, NRC, and SOS Children´s Villages, and with local governments, public institutions, community organizations, local economic promotion agencies and universities. It also provides technical and capacity-building support to the Ombudsman's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the Directorate of International Protection and the Cantonal Boards for the Protection of Rights in Carchi, and coordinates with 24 organizations within the framework of the inter-institutional response platform for refugees and migrants (GTRM).

Key activities

Protection

UNHCR and partners conduct the following activities:

- Advocacy with government entities and the private sector to facilitate access to services, local integration and exercise of human rights, prevention of evictions and social inclusion.
- Registration with biometrics, case management, provision of protection information and guidance on access to asylum, migration alternatives, access to services and humanitarian assistance programmes.
- Prevention and response to survivors of gender-based violence, and provision of a comprehensive response for unaccompanied children and adolescents.
- Strengthen the refugee status determination process with authorities.
- Provide technical support for legal advice and representation of refugees and asylum-seekers through the Ombudsman's Office and the Public Defender's Office and the Cantonal Systems for the Protection of Rights (SCPD).
- Train public officials on international protection, prevention of gender-based violence, child protection, and forced displacement of LGBTIQ+ people.
- Provide 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.
- Work with civil society organizations, community leaders and municipalities to boost community networks, foster integration and promote peaceful coexistence.
- Improve infrastructure of community centres to promote integration among refugees and locals.
- Provide technical assistance to refugee organizations to promote their participation in the discussion, decision making and development of public policies.
- With support from UNAIDS, train healthcare professionals in the HIV/AIDS response to deliver inclusive health services following the principle of non-discrimination.

Livelihoods and economic inclusion

UNHCR and partners conduct the following activities:

- Coordinate with municipal and provincial authorities for the economic inclusion of refugees in the formalization of businesses, business fairs and other related activities.
- Undertake awareness-raising events with private actors, financial institutions, the public sector and host communities to promote labour inclusion.
- Coordinate with the public sector for the inclusion of refugees in their programmes, including with the national tax agency for the formalization of microbusiness.
- Advocate for the economic inclusion of unaccompanied children and people with disabilities through entrepreneurship schools.
- Develop livelihoods initiatives to prevent the recruitment of young adults and children into criminal groups.
- Foster relationships with financial institutions to help refugees open bank accounts and apply for loans.
- Implement a digital literacy programme to strengthen the use of technology for livelihoods by refugees.
- Coordinate with academic institutions to deliver technical vocational training.
- Promote livelihoods initiatives tailored to the local context, including agricultural, textile circular economy and gastronomy projects.

Durable solutions

UNHCR and partners conduct the following activities:

- Fight against xenophobia and discrimination, together with civil society organizations and public institutions, through information campaigns to promote solidarity and coexistence.
- Improving both access to education and integration, and supporting the initiatives of the Ministry of Education, through the "Respiramos Inclusión" methodology.

Coordination

- Co-leader with IOM in the Working Group for Refugees and Migrants (GTRM).
- Support to the Human Mobility Roundtable of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility.
- Binational coordination with counterparts of the United Nations system (Ecuador-Colombia).

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