UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Operational Update

UNHCR in Colombia

2025

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Our response in figures

30 departments
with direct assistance and 396 municipalities

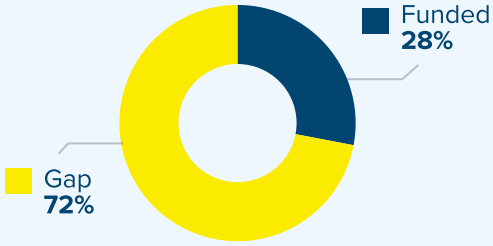
210,228
people assisted by UNHCR and partners

In a context of growing humanitarian needs and constrained financial resources, UNHCR adjusted its response to ensure the most efficient and localized actions to protect and find solutions for forcibly displaced populations and their hosts in Colombia.

With only 28% of the required funding received by the end of 2025, UNHCR reached 58% of the targeted population. Resources were prioritized for life-saving protection and emergency response. Activities supporting longer-term solutions were scaled down or reprogrammed.

Funding

28% of UNHCR's financial requirements for Colombia were funded in 2025.



People assisted by impact area

PROTECT

142,488 people received protection services.

63,571 people received protection counselling and services.

5,092 public officials strengthened institutional responses through trainings.

10,450 people received legal assistance.

1,136 people Assisted through Gender-based violence programmes.

RESPOND

49,414 people supported to satisfy basic needs and wellbeing.

EMPOWER

7,193 people participated in community-based activities.

36 Community-Based Organizations supported.

SOLVE

30,366 people received support through livelihoods, durable solutions and integration activities.

[1]UNHCR Monitoring. Cut-off date: 31 December 2025.

Highlights

Protecting through Information and Orientation Centres (PAOs)

UNHCR sustained a nationwide protection response through 21 fixed Information and Orientation Centres (PAOs) and 4 mobile units. This ensured continued access to critical information and legal assistance for people at risk. The network was reduced from 71 centres, representing a 73 per cent decrease in coverage and a 72 per cent reduction in staff. Despite these constraints, PAOs remained operational, prioritizing border and high-risk areas. Together with partners, UNHCR provided legal counselling, interpretation, and information on asylum, regularization, and access to rights to more than 53,000 people.

Response to the Catatumbo emergency in Norte de Santander

In 2025, the situation in Catatumbo was the most severe humanitarian crisis in the country in a decade.

More than 95,000 people were affected, according to UNHCR monitoring:
- 66,433 people forcibly displaced through large-scale displacement.
- 28,727 people affected by confinement

UNHCR assisted more than 56,604 people through life-saving protection interventions, including:
• Distribution of Core Relief Items (CRIs).
• Monitoring of displacement and confinement events.
• Legal counselling and activation of protection referral pathways.
• Technical support to local authorities and the Local Coordination Team.
• Advocacy to ensure humanitarian access and increased visibility of protection risks, including recommendations to the Constitutional Court on preventing forced displacement and confinement in Catatumbo.

SOMOS: Strengthening community communication capacities

Through the Somos initiative, UNHCR worked collaboratively with communities to develop self-produced videos, following a structured script-based approach.

The process strengthened community-led communication, empowered them to tell their own stories, and enhanced local capacities in content creation and audiovisual production.

Watch here: Bajo Calima video

Voices from the Bajo Calima Community Council ©UNHCR

Durable Solutions

UNHCR advanced durable solutions at national and territorial levels to promote long-term access to rights and stability for forcibly displaced populations.

Strengthening public policy and land legalization. UNHCR supported national institutions in the development of a new public policy on durable solutions (CONPES), a 10-year framework to guide coordinated efforts enabling five million IDPs to fully enjoy their rights. In parallel, UNHCR advanced the legalization of informal settlements where forcibly displaced people reside, contributing to territorial stabilization and generating benefits for both displaced and host communities. Progress toward legal recognition included integration into municipal development plans, strengthened coordination with national institutions, and improved access to public services and infrastructure.

Promoting socio-economic inclusion. Through the *Juntos por la Inclusión* Alliance, UNHCR brought together the private sector, the Ministry of Labour, SENA, and other public actors to expand livelihood opportunities. In its first year as a national strategy, the initiative promoted inclusive hiring practices and provided practical guidance to companies employing refugees and IDPs.

Wayuu women from El Aeropuerto settlement.©UNHCR

Highlight

At the territorial level, UNHCR continued accompanying the land legalization process of the informal settlement El Aeropuerto in Uribia (La Guajira), **benefiting approximately 15,000 people**, primarily from the **Wayuu Indigenous community** who were forcibly displaced.

Read the story here

UNHCR thanks the donors that contributed in 2025 to its operations in Colombia and to global programmes.

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