

Climate Action



Climate change is the defining crisis of our time and disaster displacement one of its most devastating consequences. Natural and human-induced disasters only further deteriorate refugees' livelihoods, access to basic needs and rights. UNHCR is stepping up its commitment and ambition to meet the humanitarian and protection challenges already being amplified by the climate emergency. Specifically, UNHCR Ecuador works to strengthen preparedness in affected communities, build resilience, mitigate risk, and enable adaptation to climate change. UNHCR's climate action framework focuses on incorporating climate and environmental considerations in the operational response by improving the impact of the operational footprint and by mainstreaming climate in the protection and solutions interventions.

Mainstreaming climate in our protection and solutions interventions

UNHCR's responses for climate action are to preserve and rehabilitate the natural environment, mitigating environmental degradation in displacement settings; enhancing the resilience of displaced people and host communities to climate-related and other environmental risks, and strengthening preparedness, anticipatory action and response to support protection and solutions for people displaced and their hosts in disaster situations.

This is done through these main areas of impact:

Cash based interventions

Cash-based interventions have reduced logistic needs and costs of meeting the immediate needs of people of concern. This is reflected in Ecuador operation with the provision of multipurpose cash grants through cash transfers which would otherwise require a significant logistical effort (procurement of food and NFI; warehouse and distribution) with connected environmental costs. Also, the operation is planning to ensure the presence of specific collection points for expired cards, which will be recycled.

Natural disaster response

The operation in Ecuador is already working to mitigate the impact of climate change on people of concern and host communities, supporting their resilience to risks by promoting, with key stakeholders, the preservation and rehabilitation of natural environment and minimizing the environmental footprint. The operation, with the support of key stakeholders will analyze risks and advocate for the inclusion of persons of concern in preparedness plans. Also, UNHCR will contribute with its protection, shelter, data, and information management expertise.

Shelter

All new shelter and infrastructure projects will be made with environmental sustainability in mind, building on ongoing initiatives with Bamboo, always aiming to strengthen community response to mitigate climate change.

Livelihoods

Livelihoods interventions will support urban agriculture, hydroponics, organic agriculture, added-value products from sustainable farms and fare trade, as well as increasing sustainable access to and use of renewable energy and energy efficient technologies. Also, the operation will enhance capacity and knowledge on environmental policies, guidance, and best practices in communities.

Engaging with Communities

In community-based protection, the operation will keep raising climate change awareness among refugee's and host communities to strengthen their preparedness and resilience in climate related risks. Also, it will include people of concern in local plan and national frameworks for disaster risk reduction.

Improving operational footprint

Within UNHCR's response for climate action is to reduce our footprint at the office and to adapt its ways of working. The operation will keep improving climate change actions by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and minimizing negative impacts on the environment. UNHCR staff will be encouraged to acquire good environmental practices and work in-house to reduce operational footprint implementing climate-smart strategies and guidance with regards to the following areas:



Energy

UNHCR can have a direct impact by reducing its consumption and switching to renewable sources of energy.



Transport

Air and vehicle transportation is essential to humanitarian work. However, it produces a lot of greenhouse gas emissions and constitutes a significant part of an organization's carbon footprint. UNHCR will optimize travel, as well as introduce eco-driving practices (e.g. reasonable use of air conditioning, turning off the engine during prolonged stops, maintaining a constant speed).



Supply chain

Adjustments to UNHCR supply chain will be promoted, like choosing environmentally sustainable goods and services; including environmentally friendly specifications in call for tender; encouraging suppliers to offer more sustainable goods; align/pool order to consolidate transport when possible.

Best practices



UNHCR works with various communities in the provinces of **Esmeraldas, Carchi, and Sucumbios** facing severe climate-change risks and possible displacement. UNHCR will support them in mitigating the impact of heavy rains and the rise in sea levels through flood-prevention; building resilience from within the community adapting livelihoods, housing, and infrastructure; and in promoting sustainability through knowledge exchange and skill transfer grounded in women leadership, youth activism, and grassroots communication networks.



UNHCR supports the Municipality of Tulcan to **reduce the waste of plastic, cardboard, solid waste and paper**, by promoting its recycling and by generating sustainable jobs, in dignified and safe conditions, both for people in human mobility and for the host community.

UNHCR collaborates with a broad and growing range of partners to mobilize the capacity, resources, knowledge and influence required to meet current and future protection challenges from the climate emergency and to achieve collective outcomes and impacts.

To continue to maximize our efforts, we are committed to enabling innovation that allows us to adapt our response in anticipation of future displacement and protection risks. The constant support of our donors will be vital to allow us to continue protecting and assisting forcibly displaced people that are currently overwhelmed by the consequences of climate change.

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



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