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 significative 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.

**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 fair 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.

**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.

**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.
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