Protection and Solutions

UNHCR in Colombia progress update

January-June 2026

Publication July 2026

Our response in figures

119,173
people assisted by UNHCR and partners.

74 municipalities
with direct assistance in 22 departments.

17,410 people
received information and guidance.

1,677 people
received child protection services.

627 individuals
received assistance in cash.

1,003 people
received legal assistance and protection services.

1,027 people
strengthened institutional responses through trainings.

288 individuals
benefiting from community strengthening.

93,255 individuals
supported in advancing urban land regularization and/or individual land titling processes.

1,213 individuals
benefited from livelihoods and economic inclusion interventions.

83 individuals
supported through resettlement processes.

20 students
of tertiary education, awarded with a DAFI scholarship.

Source: UNHCR Colombia OSMOSYS. Cut-off date: 30 June 2026

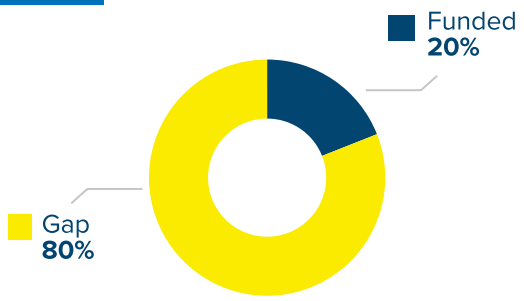
Highlights

- UNHCR's response in Colombia focuses on refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people. Colombia hosts the world's largest refugee population (2.8 million, mostly from Venezuela) and 7.1 million internally displaced people, the second-largest internally displaced population after Sudan. Forced displacement and confinement remain the main protection challenges driving this response.

- By 30 June 2026, according to UNHCR's monitoring, some 17.797 people were affected by large displacement events and 59.989 by confinement due to violence, particulary in Antioquia, Bolívar, Cauca, Chocó, Norte de Santander and Magdalena. UNHCR responded with emergency protection, shelter and cash assistance in the most affected areas.

Source: UNHCR monitoring, cut-off 30 June 2026 (consulted 31 July).

Funding



$107.7 million required in 2026

20% of UNHCR's financial requirements for Colombia were funded as of 2026.

Highlights

- With the national Ombudsperson's Office and the European Union, UNHCR opened *Confined Paradises* in Bogotá, a photographic exhibition showing how armed groups trap entire communities in remote territories, restricting their access to food, health, education and livelihoods, and making one of Colombia's fastest-growing protection risks visible.

Check out the section of "Confined Paradises" on our website. Click here

- As part of the Humanitarian Fund for Colombia (RhPF), UNHCR scaled up a life-saving response in municipalities at heightened severity. The six-month intervention is reaching over 59,000 people with community shelter and habitat kits, legal orientation and protection services, Information and Orientation Centres (PAOs) and cash-based interventions (CBI).

On World Refugee Day, Colombia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNHCR reaffirmed their commitment to refugee inclusion, launching the Decalogue for the Socio-Economic Inclusion of Refugees and advancing Colombia's first long-term National Asylum Policy, built through a participatory process with 670 stakeholders across 14 departments and 32 municipalities.

Protect

- **Asylum system.** By May 2026, Colombia's asylum system reform progressed towards more accessible, efficient and protection-oriented procedures. The UNHCR-GIT Refugio joint work strengthened the country's capacity to identify and respond to people in need of international protection.

- **PAO network.** Over 15,320 people accessed protection, information and referral services through 15 PAOs, four mobile teams and a chatbot run by 20 protection advisors, health services, asylum applications, humanitarian assistance, regularization and protection routes.

- **Legal clinics - ALMA Network launch.** In June, clinics nationwide launched the ALMA Network (Access to Legal Assistance for Migrants, Refugees and Forcibly displaced and Statelessness people), bringing together at least 10 universities that have reported beneficiaries under the alliance. Since 2020, these legal clinics have provided assistance and guidance on access to rights to more than 71.600 refugees and IDPs.

Respond

- **Response to emergencies.** Following the severe flooding in Córdoba in February, UNHCR supported inter-agency coordination to complement the emergency response led by national and local authorities. UNHCR also responded to multiple conflict-related forced displacement emergencies in San José del Guaviare (Guaviare) and Segovia (Antioquia), aggravated by environmental disasters in Briceño (Antioquia), southern Bolívar and Santa Bárbara (Nariño). By June, UNHCR had delivered 2,400 hygiene kits, 5,000 mosquito nets and over 800 solar lamps.

- UNHCR also supported the monitoring of Colombia's response plans, the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) and the Refugee and Migrants Response Plan (RMRP), promoting greater alignment and more integrated, protection-centred and locally driven responses.

Córdoba, 2026. UNHCR supports **locally led humanitarian coordination** in hard-to-reach areas.

- **Humanitarian Reset.** UNHCR advanced decentralized, localized humanitarian coordination, leading 10 Local Coordination Teams (ELC) and 6 Local Protection Groups (GLP) across Antioquia, Urabá, Arauca, Norte de Santander, Valle del Cauca, Putumayo, Chocó, Cauca, Córdoba, Nariño, La Guajira, and Magdalena Medio (based in Barrancabermeja).

- The ELCs and GLPs have integrated three crisis drivers, human mobility, armed conflict, and climate variability, into their analyses and geographic scope, promoting area-based coordination.

- **Collective shelter in Medellin.** UNHCR rehabilitated and fully equipped the Temporary Collective Shelter (ACT) of the Mayor's Office of Medellín, strengthening the city's institutional capacity to provide safe, dignified, and protection-sensitive emergency accommodation and assistance for forcibly displaced people through a sustainable, government-led response model.

Empower

- **Inclusive participation.** UNHCR supported nearly 700 stakeholders, including refugee-led organizations and refugee, asylum-seeker, youth, indigenous, LGBTIQ+ and women's voices, in shaping Colombia's first National Asylum Policy (2026), helping build more inclusive asylum, protection and local integration frameworks.
- **Innovation for protection.** UNHCR's environmental projects turn ecological action into protection, inclusion and livelihoods: La Honda Con-Vida (waste management and inclusion of informal recyclers); Guardianes del Mangle, Turbo, Antioquia (mangrove restoration and livelihoods with conflict-affected communities); and a 2026 Buenaventura pilot (Lleras) turning recyclable waste into musical instruments to protect children from forced recruitment and reinforce Afro-Colombian Pacific identity.

Click here to see a community turning environmental risk into opportunity.

- **Protecting children in conflict-affected areas.** UNHCR's ADN Paz methodology operates in conflict-affected areas, through the Conexión Catatumbo initiative (with UNICEF and the Diócesis de Tibú) and in Arauca since April 2026, fostering peaceful coexistence, emotional well-being and protection of children from violence, and strengthening local protective networks and the resilience of children, caregivers, teachers and communities.

Solve

- **Juntos por la Inclusión.** On 20 May 2026 in Cali, the Government of Colombia, UNHCR and public, private and international partners launched Juntos por la Inclusión, a joint strategy to advance the socio-economic integration of refugees and internally displaced people. Aligned with the Global Compact on Refugees and gathering over 120 stakeholders, it brings actors together to reduce barriers to formal employment and promote inclusive hiring, benefiting displaced people, businesses and host communities.
- **Graduation Model.** UNHCR advanced the Graduation Model in Cali, supporting 100 forcibly displaced households in extreme poverty with comprehensive livelihoods and self-reliance interventions, with early results showing improved savings and financial resilience.
- **CONPES 4180 in the territories.** UNHCR supported the Government in disseminating the National Policy on Durable Solutions for IDPs, CONPES 4180 (2025). Sessions in Medellín, Tumaco, Cali, Buenaventura, Cúcuta and Quibdó gathered over 350 authorities, victims' representatives, community leaders and partners in territorial dialogues to advance durable solutions led by local and regional actors.

UNHCR's **Graduation Model in Medellín** helped 66 refugee and displaced families strengthen livelihoods and self-reliance toward local integration.

- **Wings for a New Future.** 25 refugees from Venezuela who had sought protection in Colombia took up jobs at Rome Fiumicino Airport through a UNHCR-supported complementary-pathways initiative with Aviapartner, expanding safe, skills-based legal pathways to the Italian labour market.
- **Land and housing.** UNHCR supported settlement legalization and access to land processes in 32 communities through its Land and Housing project, following up cases on 20 municipalities across 10 departments to advance tenure security and durable solutions for displaced communities.

Stories from the field.
A welcoming Colombia: lives being rebuilt

On World Refugee Day 2026, UNHCR and Colombia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with support from the European Union, shared three stories of people who fled Syria, Venezuela and El Salvador and are rebuilding their lives in Colombia: Almotaz, who built a restaurant in Bogotá; Miguel and Carolina, who gained refugee status, work and a home; and Mirleidy, who founded a community organization and now aspires to study law. Together, their stories show that protecting refugees builds more inclusive, secure societies.

Read this and other stories at: ACNUR, la Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados | ACNUR Colombia | ACNUR Colombia

In focus

Global Report 2025

On socials

On World Refugee Day, **UNHCR High Profile Supporter Lucy Bronze**, visited Colombia and played football with children who have been forced to flee their homes. A reminder that every child deserves safety, dignity and the chance to build a future.

UNHCR thanks the donors that contributed in 2026 to its operations in Colombia and to global programmes.

And thanks the following private donors for their support

Australia, Germany, Korea, Spain, Italy and Japan.

Interested in learning more?

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