

UNHCR has the mandate and responsibility to seek **durable solutions** for displaced persons and communities, whether they are displaced inside or outside their country. In Colombia, UNHCR works to enable victims of forced displacement to **return** to their place of origin if conditions allow, **relocate** them to a safe place, or **integrate** them into host communities, particularly through the regularization of informal settlements. UNHCR supports communities and institutions in addressing the **risks and threats related to territorial informality** (evictions, limitations in accessing public services) and promotes access to housing and land through legal protection on land tenure and the legalization of informal settlements. UNHCR has promoted solutions aligned with legal and jurisprudential updates, in accordance with international protection instruments.

This document summarizes the **prioritized strategic actions** regarding **land** that UNHCR Colombia has been developing as a key approach to displacement solutions.



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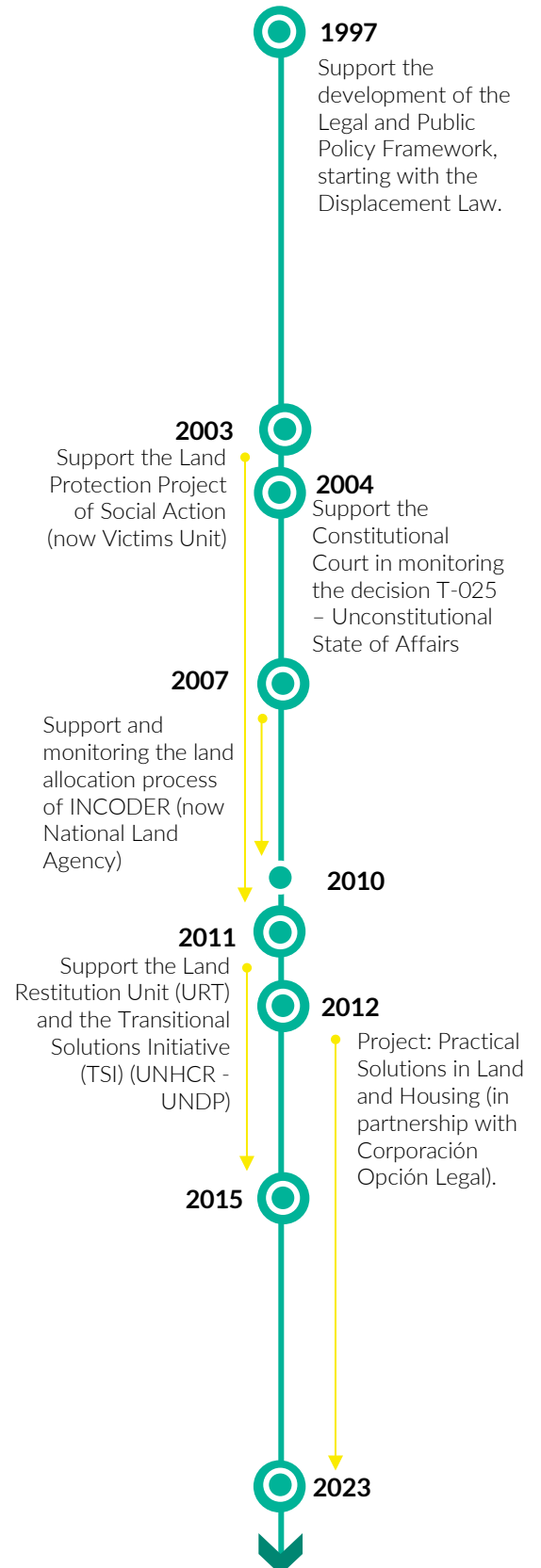
Million displaced persons are eligible for assistance, and reparation of their rights.

Land and territory-related problems have historically been a challenge for the Colombian state, due to high levels of land tenure informality, outdated land registry systems, and multiple interests related to the armed conflict that have created protection risks for communities. Problems related to land and territorial control are one of the leading **causes** and **consequences** of **armed conflict** and **forced displacement** in the country.

In this regard, displacement solutions related to processes of return, relocation, or urban local integration must consider the need for **property regularization**, **legal protection of land**, **restitution**, **land titling**, **collective property constitution**, and the **legalization of informal settlements**.

Therefore, since the beginning of its activities in the country, UNHCR has prioritized, as key solutions, focusing on **property rights**, **protecting rural and urban assets** abandoned by displaced persons, rural land **allocation**, the **expansion**, **constitution**, and **establishment of indigenous reserves**, and **land restitution**.

Figure 1. Timeline: UNHCR's contributions to land and territory issues.



► Strategic Guidelines 2023 – 2024

STRENGTHENING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES



Meeting with communities and institutions. Visit to the neighborhood “Manuela Beltrán”. Cúcuta, Norte de Santander. ©ACNUR.

Strengthening **inter-institutional coordination** with the Victims Unit, the Ministry of Housing, the Land Restitution Unit, and the Ministry of Agriculture, to promote a better alignment between the National Government’s policies and communities. Promoting the coordination between United Nations agencies and development actors to identify ways to expedite land regularization processes for displaced persons. UNHCR acts according to the legal and public policy framework to ensure that the proposed regulation changes preserve the protection of core land rights and territorial rights of displaced or at-risk communities.

RETURN, RELOCATION, AND LAND RESTITUTION

Support the **Land Restitution Unit (URT)** by promoting the dissemination of the Victims and Land Restitution Law (including for victims abroad) and the identification of new typologies of dispossession (including situations that particularly affect indigenous and Afro-Colombian people). UNHCR also supports publicizing the validity of the Single Registry of Territories and Abandoned Properties (RUPTA), by promoting better inter-institutional coordination and involving the Public Ministry institutions (Attorney General and Ombudsperson’s Offices) to enforce Court orders on land restitution. With the **Victims Unit (UARIV)**, UNHCR contributes to strengthening public policies on returns and relocations, which in some cases includes a land component. In this regard, for 2023 it is expected to prioritize three cases (return, relocation, and urban local integration) to develop activities within the framework of return and relocation plans and the Integrated Collective Reparation Plans (PIRC). UNHCR will use these cases as examples, to help expedite durable solutions in these processes, together with institutions and communities.

LEGALIZATION OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS



Informal settlement. Casa Blanca. Puerto Inírida, Guainía. ©ACNUR.

Continue to implement the project **Practical Solutions in Land and Housing**, which provides technical assistance to processes of legalization of informal human settlements, rural relocations, and constitution of indigenous reserves. UNHCR and the Ministry of Housing organize regional fora to disseminate pedagogical mechanisms for urban legalization, jointly developed in 2022. UNHCR advises the Ministry of Housing to update the public policy on legalizing informal human settlements.

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